



FAIRFIELD COUNTY CATHOLIC

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE



5 *Diocesan Youth Choir to perform on December 18*



9 *Sister Mary Grace Walsh headed for Archdiocese*

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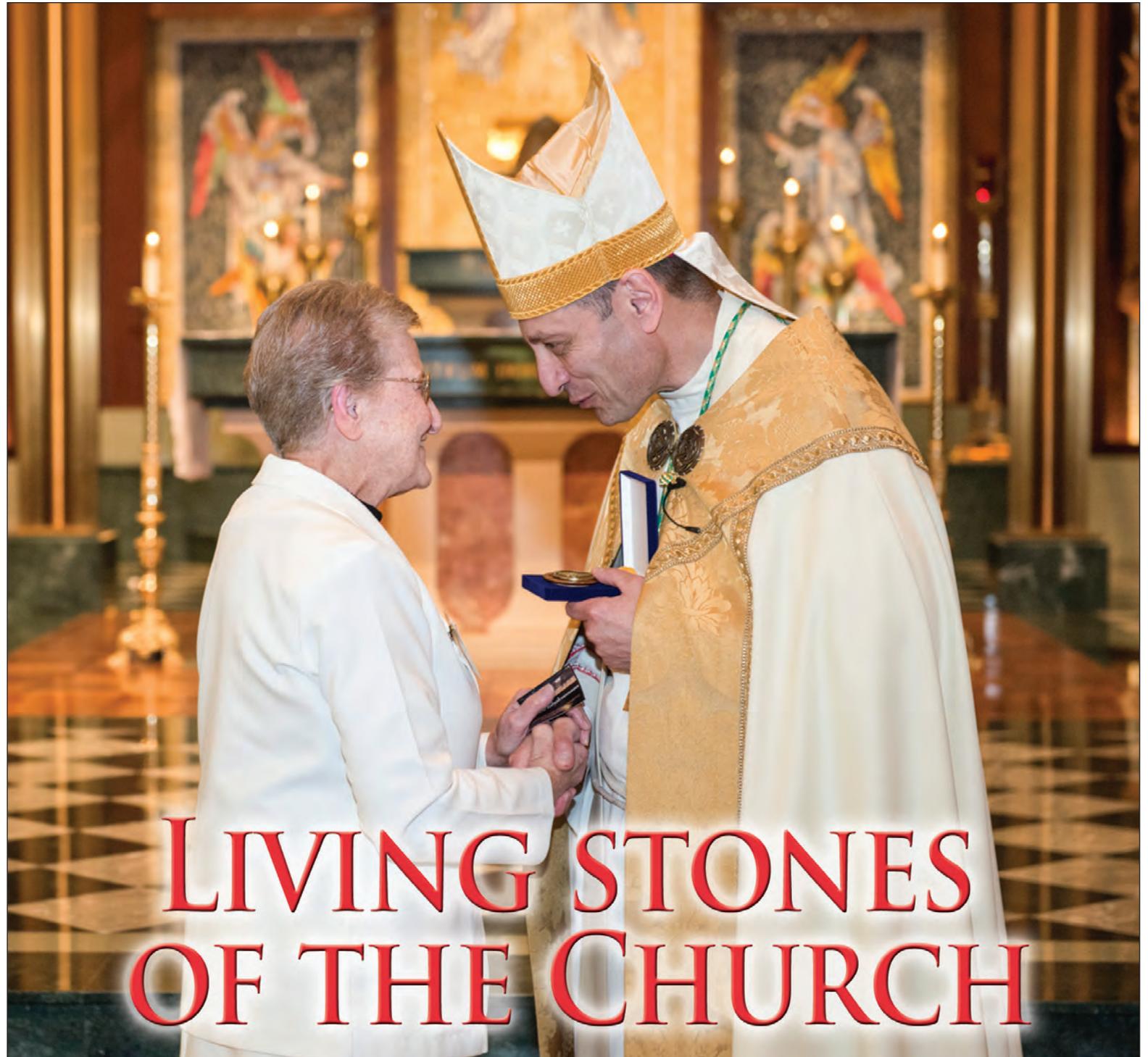


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State of the Diocese

Bishop: Synod provides roadmap for change

NORWALK—At his second annual “State of the Diocese” speech, Bishop Frank J. Caggiano painted a picture of a diocese that has made significant gains in the past year but continues to face financial challenges as it seeks to renew its ministries and services.

“If anything, I stand before

Bishop Caggiano said the diocese had produced its first balanced budget in years, reduced its short-term debt, updated its Safe Environments programs and created a new Education Commission to guide the schools.

He said the real forward motion of the diocese will be

278,000 registered individuals.

However, Mass attendance has been declining with an average of 65,061 weekly (down from 85,000 in 2009), with 420 Masses offered each weekend in a total of

14 languages.

Last year, the 82 parishes throughout the diocese recorded a total of 3,267 baptisms, 4,131 confirmations, and 623 marriages, representing a slight decrease

from the previous year and a downward trend since 2014. The diocese also finalized 50 annulments.

Referring to the decline in
▶ *CONTINUED ON PAGE 29*



STATE OF THE DIOCESE—“The Holy Spirit is powerfully at work in our lives,” the Bishop said to begin his State of the Diocese Address in Norwalk.

you even more confident today than last year. The Holy Spirit is powerfully at work in our lives. If we’re ready to roll up our sleeves when we come back next year, we’ll have even better news to celebrate,” he said.

Speaking to a gathering of more than 200 at All Saints School auditorium in Norwalk, he said the recently completed synod, attended by more than 8,000 at Webster Bank Arena, energized the diocese, and “created a roadmap” that will guide the diocese into the future.

He said that for most Catholics, “the lived experience of their faith is in our parishes,” and that synod plans to revitalize parishes are now underway through the Pastoral Planning process begun in October.

In a 90-minute talk including a question and answer session,

seen as it implements new synod initiatives, including the Catholic Service Corps, the Diocesan Leadership Institute and other initiatives to renew the diocese at every level.

In response to financial challenges, the bishop announced plans for a Financial Summit on November 14, which will bring together the Diocesan Finance Council, Real Estate Committee, and Strategic Planning Committee “to focus on a master plan to create a path to stabilize our financial position, free up investment capital and create a new strategy to help schools recover.”

In his statistical overview of the diocese, the bishop reported that a total of 435,000 people identify as Catholics in Fairfield County. That number includes 113,000 registered families and

Remembering Cardinal Egan

By BRIAN D. WALLACE

It was a party that was planned almost a year ago, and when the host could no longer make it, the guests arrived anyway and turned it into an affectionate tribute.

More than 80 friends of the late Edward Cardinal Egan and St. John Fisher Seminary, which he founded, turned out for a special evening of remembrance at the Yale Club alongside of Grand Central Station on October 26.

The cardinal had begun planning the evening after attending the 25th anniversary of St. John Fisher Seminary in the summer of 2014. It was one of his last visits to the Diocese of Bridgeport, which he led from 1988 to 2000.

Father Michael Jones, Vicar for Diocesan Development, and former priest secretary to Bishop Egan when he served as third Bishop of Bridgeport, told the gathering that Cardinal Egan was working on the guest list for the reception on the day he died.

“The list was on his table and your names were on it,” he said. “We’re all here because he invited us,” said Father Jones, who helped to

coordinate the evening.

At the reception and dinner, held in the Yale Club’s “Trumbull” Room, Cardinal Egan was remembered as a great friend, a man who never turned his back on Bridgeport even after being elevated to lead the nation’s largest archdiocese, and a bishop

dinner.

“He was a remarkable man and a mentor to me,” said Bishop Frank J. Caggiano. “When I was named bishop, he invited me to his home here in New York City three times, and I came away from those visits with a sense of the



CARDINAL EGAN REMEMBERED—Fr. Michael Jones, Vicar for Diocesan Development and former priest secretary to Bishop Egan, delivered an affectionate and elegant remembrance of the third Bishop of Bridgeport at the Yale Club to launch the campaign for St. John Fisher Seminary.

who took great joy in ordaining priests.

The evening was hosted by Mollie and John Callagy of St. Thomas More Parish in Darien. It featured a video of the seminary and a slide presentation on Cardinal Egan. Several speakers shared their memories during the

great affection he had for our diocese.”

Bishop Caggiano thanked guests for their generosity in supporting the seminary over the years and asked them to support the Campaign for the Expansion of the Seminary and

▶ *CONTINUED ON PAGE 29*

ON THE COVER

CONTENTS

Bishop Frank J. Caggiano presents the St. Augustine Medal of Service to Sister Donna Brodman, O.P. of Sacred Heart Parish in Stamford at the recent awards ceremony held at St. Augustine Cathedral. The bishop described the 120 medal recipients as the “living stones of the Church.”
ABOVE THE FOLD: The bishop congratulates Janice McNamara of Sacred Heart Parish in Danbury.
(PHOTOS BY MICHELLE BABYAK)

7 **RESTRUCTURING THE TRIBUNAL**
Msgr. Dariusz to lead effort

8 **JUBILEE OF MERCY SET TO BEGIN**
December 8 at St. Augustine Cathedral

11 **VATICAN REFORMS ARE WORKING**
CAPP Communion Breakfast

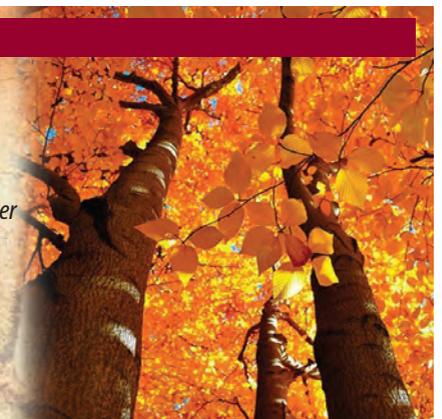
15-21 **ST. AUGUSTINE MEDALS**
Special section inside

24 **IMMACULATE HIGH SCHOOL**
Celebrates 50th

27 **CELEBRATING SPECIAL PEOPLE**
Special Needs Mass at St. Catherine Center

31 **ST. MARGARET MARY PARISH**
Parish and spiritual renewal

32 **COLUMNIST JOE PISANI**
On giving thanks...



Local News

Father Connaughton named director of vocations

BRIDGEPORT—Father John Connaughton, a native of Trumbull, has been named director of vocations of the Diocese of Bridgeport. His appointment, made by Bishop Frank J. Caggiano, will be effective January 1, 2016.

He succeeds Father Sam Kachuba, who has held the post since 2013. Father Kachuba is pastor of St. Pius X Parish in Fairfield.

Father Connaughton will be responsible for overseeing the entire process of recruitment and formation of seminarians. He will also continue to serve as parochial vicar at St. Thomas More Parish in Darien.

The bishop said that the diocese has recently completed a new strategic plan for vocations that defines the work within the framework of accompaniment as understood in *Evangelii Gaudium*, the first Apostolic Exhortation of

Pope Francis.

“Our Holy Father speaks of evangelization as first and foremost a personal accompaniment, and there is no better role for a priest than to walk alongside of those who seek the Lord,” said Bishop Caggiano. “Father Connaughton brings the spirit of accompaniment to his new role as director of vocations. He will encourage men to respond generously to the Lord’s call to become priests, laborers for the harvest with the help of others.”

“As Father Connaughton prepares to begin his new assignment, I ask the faithful across the diocese to please pray for the vocations and seminary team and our seminarians. In addition, pray that the Lord of the harvest will continue to send us many good laborers for the vineyard,” said the bishop.

Father Robert Kinnally, rector of St. John Fisher Seminary and



FATHER JOHN CONNAUGHTON

director of Seminarian Formation, welcomed Father Connaughton’s leadership and said the new strategic plan offers a framework for nurturing and increasing vocations in the diocese with the support of pastors and priests.

“While our diocese enjoys

a good number of priests who remain active in ministry, there is a great need to have more men in formation to meet the needs of the diocese in the years ahead,” Father Kinnally said. “The number of retirements far outweighs the number of entering seminarians, and an ever-changing demographic requires particular gifts in catechesis, language, and cultural sensitivity.”

Father Connaughton will report directly to the bishop and work with the vicar general. In addition to recruitment and formation of vocations, he will also develop a plan for each seminarian and be responsible for overall communications. He will work with assistant directors of vocations and others including spiritual directors, lay volunteers, Serra Club members, Knights of Columbus, chaplains and others in the position to encourage vocations.

Father Connaughton was

born in Manhasset, NY, and grew up in Trumbull where he attended St. Theresa elementary school. His parents, John and Anne Connaughton, continue to be parishioners at St. Theresa Parish.

After graduating from St. Joseph High School, he earned a bachelor’s degree from the University of Dallas in Irving, TX. He worked several years for Alliance-Forest Products. Later, while attending the University of Connecticut Law School, he worked for the State of Connecticut Judiciary.

In 2008, shortly after having received his law degree, Father Connaughton entered St. John Fisher Seminary in Stamford. He completed his priestly formation at the North American College while studying theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. During formation,

▶ CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

Faith Formation welcomes new leaders

BRIDGEPORT—The diocese has announced new leaders for the Office of Faith Formation, which was restructured based on recommendations from Synod 2014. The appointments were made by Bishop Frank J. Caggiano and will be effective November 23.

The newly-created Faith Formation ministries are part of the Secretariat of Catholic Education. The office was restructured based on synod recommendations and the need to create a new generation of programs to meet contemporary catechetical challenges, particularly for youth and young adults.

“Renewing the ministry of faith formation throughout our diocese was one of the global challenges of the synod,” Bishop Caggiano said. “Leading each person to a deepening relationship with the Lord Jesus in and through his Church begins with a clear, authentic teaching of our Catholic faith.”

“Our new team is the result of a national search. They are excited about the opportunity to create new programs. We welcome their

enthusiasm, experience and faithfulness at a time when the diocese is moving ahead,” he said. “Please pray with me that the renewal of the Office of Faith Formation in our diocese will bear fruit in abundance and lead our children, youth, young adults and families closer to the Lord Jesus.”

The bishop said that synod delegates requested that faith formation be offered in holistic and age-appropriate ways that promote knowledge of faith, liturgical education, moral formation, prayer and education for community life

Rose Talbot-Babey has accepted the position of Coordinator of Childhood Formation. She is coming to the diocese from Port Charlotte, Fla., where she most recently served as the director of Faith Formation, Youth and Parish Ministries at St. Charles Borromeo Church and School. She earned a B.S. degree in finance and psychology from Westfield State College and an M.A. degree in applied theology from the College of Our Lady of the Elms in Chicopee, Mass. In addition to her ministry in

several parishes, she has served as a facilitator of Adult Education at the Institute for Catholic Formation and Education in the Diocese of Venice. In addition to the opportunities presented in the new model of Faith Formation, she will be responsible for the DREs, RCIC, Catechetical Congress and curriculum development for elementary school children in Catholic schools and Religious Education.

Evan Psencik has accepted the position of coordinator of Youth and Young Adult Formation. Psencik joins the Diocese of Bridgeport from the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, where he most recently served as the associate director of the Office of Adolescent Catechesis and Evangelization. He earned a B.A. in theology and philosophy from the University of St. Thomas and an M.A. in theological studies from the University of St. Thomas, School of Theology at St. Mary’s Seminary. He served in parish ministry prior to his ministry in the archdiocese and has experience in a variety of formation programs and

conferences. He is active in the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry, the National Conference for Catechetical Leadership and the National Catholic Young Adult Ministry Association. In addition to the opportunities presented in the new model of Faith Formation, Psencik will be responsible for youth ministers, young adult outreach, and curriculum development for high school students in Catholic schools and parish programs. He will serve as the liaison from the Secretariat to the World Youth Day Committee, Catholic Underground and the Newman Center/Campus Ministry programs.

Kim Quatela has accepted the position of Coordinator of Family Formation. She joins the diocese from her most recent position as chastity education coordinator in the Family Life/Respect Life Office of the Archdiocese of New York for the past six years. She earned a B.S. degree from James Madison University and a master’s degree in elementary education from Towson University. In her service in the Archdiocese

of New York, she developed and presented formation talks for archdiocesan teacher training and authored programs for both religious education programs and Catholic schools. She is experienced in curriculum revision, and has coordinated major archdiocesan conferences and programs. In addition to the opportunities presented in the new model of Faith Formation, Quatela will be responsible for the Marriage Preparation Program, Marriage Anniversary Celebrations, Family Catechesis and Support, RCIA/Rite of Election, and Women’s/Men’s Conferences. She will also serve as the liaison between the four positions in the Office of Faith Formation and the Secretary of Catholic Education and Faith Formation.

Maria Cerdena, the coordinator of High School Apostles, will continue to serve in the Office of Faith Formation in the Secretariat. **Maureen Ciardiello**, director of Respect Life Ministry and Project Rachel, will continue in the same capacity but her responsibilities will be under the Office of the Vicar General. ■

News

VOCATIONS
FROM PAGE 3

he worked in the diocesan Communications Office and assisted in media relations for the North American College.

He was ordained on May 26, 2013 and celebrated his first Mass at St. Theresa's.

As he assumes his new post, the diocese is also moving ahead with plans for the relocation and expansion of St. John Fisher Seminary, currently located in Stamford, to Daniel Farm Road in Trumbull, the site of the bishop's residence. It has launched a \$2.875 million capital campaign in honor of Edward Cardinal Egan, who founded St. John Fisher Seminary in 1989 while serving as the third Bishop of Bridgeport. The new 11,500 square foot facility, where the bishop will maintain an apartment, will contain 22 single bedrooms and suites that will accommodate up to 35 students. ■

Strategic Plan for Vocations

As the diocese moves forward with its plan to relocate and expand St. John Fisher Seminary Residence, it has also developed a new Strategic Plan for Vocations. At present, 23 men are discerning their vocations and preparing for priesthood in the diocese. Since St. John Fisher Seminary was opened in 1989, one hundred men have been ordained to the priesthood. The passages below offer a quick glimpse of the new Strategic Plan.

Framed in the Spirit of Accompaniment

In *Evangelii Gaudium* (EG), Pope Francis speaks of personal accompaniment, grounded in the mission of evangelization, as a way to lead others closer to God and help them make "truly free and responsible decisions." (EG, n. 171) "In our world ordained ministers and other pastoral workers can make present the fragrance

of Christ's closeness and his personal gaze. The Church will have to initiate everyone—priests, religious, and laity—into the 'art of accompaniment,' which teaches us to remove our sandals before the sacred ground of the other." (EG, n.169)

With respect to the "qualifications" of those who accompany, *Evangelii Gaudium* provides a practical outline: "Today more than ever we need men and women who, on the basis of their experience of accompanying others, are familiar with processes which call for prudence, understanding, patience, and docility to the Spirit... We need to practice the art of listening, which is more than simply hearing... only through such respectful and compassionate listening can we enter on the paths of true growth and awaken a yearning for the Christian ideal: the desire to respond fully to God's love and to bring to fruition what he has sown

in our lives." (EG, n. 171)

Discernment:

The discernment of a vocation to the priesthood is a process that is both deeply personal and ecclesial. Thus, a man considering a vocation to the priesthood must discern this call both in his own heart, as well as with the assistance of the Church.

Goals:

- Help promote a culture in every parish and school community that views the Eucharist and priesthood as essential to our lives as Catholics
 - Encourage families to pray that a son, grandson, nephew, cousin, or friend might respond with joy to the Lord's call to priesthood
 - Provide prudent, understanding, patient helpers who are
- docile to the Spirit and will accompany men who are discerning through ordination day
 - Invite men to experience the Lord who says, "Come, and see" by welcoming them to prayer and meals at St. John Fisher Seminary, regular retreats, conversations with our bishop, and other events that will assist in their understanding of what God is asking of them
 - Assist the priests of the diocese to grow in their own fraternity and joy and to provide them with resources to invite men to say "yes" to Christ's invitation to share in His priesthood.
 - Take a proactive approach to recruiting vocations to the priesthood by utilizing all means of social and electronic media available and improving existing resources. ■

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Catholic Charities

Knights team up with Charities' food program

By KAREN KOVACS DYDZUHN

Some might call it a "Hail Mary" play.

As the time clock was winding down, Home Delivered Meals, a meal program for homebound seniors, was desperately seeking a kitchen to continue its service. The Knights of Columbus of the Lafayette Council No. 109 tackled the problem and scored the winning goal.

They offered Maureen Neuberger, director of Senior Nutrition for Catholic Charities, a place to heat up and chill food in the kitchen of their Stamford facility after Charities lost its existing location.

Owned by the St. Augustine Building Association, for years the Knights have used the Stamford site as the fraternal organization's home. It also serves as a catering hall. Gary Sessa, president of the St. Augustine Building Association, and currently the Faithful Navigator of Assembly No. 109, said the teamwork with Home Delivered Meals has been positive.

"It's been a great marriage," Sessa said. "We've always given money to Catholic Charities," he noted. "The money we earn from the catering hall is always given to needy recipients."

So when the Knights learned about Neuberger's dilemma, they

were quick to offer their facility. "They help some of the same people we do, and now we can help them."

Neuberger, too, is pleased. "Our partnership is going really, really well."

She said that the Knights of Columbus catering hall perfectly fits all of the food program's needs. Her team is able to get in early and not interfere with the Knights' schedule.

"My goal is to run under the radar," Neuberger said. "We don't want to get in anyone's way."

Home Delivered Meals provides an important service for seniors that goes far beyond the 200 nutritious meals served



HEATING UP HOME DELIVERED MEALS—The Knights of Columbus in Stamford came to the rescue of area seniors when Catholic Charities was seeking temporary use of a kitchen to heat home delivered meals daily. The Knights offered use of their kitchen at the 507 Shippan Avenue banquet facility while the Charities program seeks to find a new site.

weekly, she continued. "Studies have shown that for some homebound seniors the driver who delivers their meals is the only person they might see all day," Neuberger said. "Seniors get attached to them, and they will even call us if a different driver comes to their home because they're concerned about their regular delivery person. They need this human contact and they come to rely on seeing the same face every day."

Neuberger said she was given ample time to find a new kitchen. The program is funded by federal grants, which are distributed through the Southwestern CT Agency on Aging. That meant there were strict guidelines to follow in securing a site. Neuberger grew up in Stamford and was familiar with buildings that might suit their needs. In fact, at the end of the winter Neuberger thought she had identified a place. Unfortunately, she soon realized that its refrigerator could not accommodate the program's food.

"We need to have a space where we can heat up food in ovens when they're delivered from the caterer, and we need to maintain the required temperature for foods that are meant to be served cold," Neuberger explained.

A typical lunch for seniors includes a protein such as chicken, a vegetable such as green beans, and a starch such as mashed potatoes. Nutrition guidelines for the meal's ingredients—for example, no salt is added—and recommended portion size are strictly maintained.

Depending upon their needs, clients receive either lunch or dinner or both. To qualify for the program, seniors have to be at least 60 years old and homebound. Income levels for a single person cannot exceed \$2,000 per month, and for a couple, \$2,600.

(For more info on Home Delivered Meals and Catholic Charities Senior Nutrition Program in Stamford, contact Maureen Neuberger: 203.324.6175 or mneuberger@ccfc-ct.org.)



MUCH TO BE THANKFUL FOR

Thanks to the generosity of donors to the Annual Catholic Appeal and the diocesan ministries it serves, the Diocese of Bridgeport reaches out as a community of faith and service:

- 9,000 children and youth people were educated and formed in the faith in 30 diocesan elementary and high schools
- 38,000 children participated in religious education programs
- Catholic Charities served more than one million meals to the working poor, elderly, and homeless of all faiths throughout Fairfield county
- 15,000 clinical counseling sessions were provided by Catholic Charities to individuals and families struggling with personal issues
- New Covenant Center in Stamford moved into its new 8,000 square foot facility to better serve the poor and offer comprehensive services
- The new Bishop's Scholarship Fund doubled aid to elementary school families and served over 1,500 students
- The new Diocesan Youth Choir sang at the Synod Celebration Mass and will perform in Christmas Concert on December 18 at Norwalk Concert Hall
- 104,000 copies of Fairfield County Catholic were mailed into homes on a monthly basis, and the diocese launched news social media platforms
- Successful campaigns are underway for the expansion of Queen of Clergy Residence for Retired Priest and the relocation of St. John Fisher Seminary to Trumbull
- 8,000 faithful attended the Synod Celebration Mass at Webster Bank Arena after a year long process involving 350 delegates and six General Sessions
- 21 seminarians are engaged in continuing discernment and preparation for their priesthood
- 420 Mass are celebrated each weekend in 14 different languages



To learn more about the good work of the diocese visit www.bridgeportdiocese.org or friend us on Facebook: [DioceofBridgeport](https://www.facebook.com/DioceofBridgeport); Twitter: [@dobevents](https://twitter.com/dobevents)



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Process pertaining to Annulments

Diocese to restructure the Tribunal

BRIDGEPORT—Bishop Frank J. Caggiano has announced plans for the restructuring of the Diocesan Tribunal, which will result in the closing of the office on December 1, 2015, and reopening on February 1, 2016.

The changes are a response to the September 8, 2015, Apostolic Letter by Pope Francis entitled *Mitis iudex dominus Iesus* (MI), regarding the restructuring of the Tribunal's (diocesan court) process pertaining to marriage annulment cases. The new law will take effect on December 8, 2015.

The bishop has asked Msgr. Dariusz Zielonka, a canon lawyer, to serve as adjutant judicial vicar for the month of December. On January 1, 2016, Msgr.

Zielonka will officially assume the role of judicial vicar in the diocese. In this new role, he will serve both as a judge in the Tribunal, and as director of the Tribunal responsible for canonical affairs of the diocese. Msgr. Zielonka will also continue to serve as pastor of St. Jude Parish in Monroe.

"I have every confidence in Msgr. Zielonka, who led us so well through the recent synod general session process. His training as a canon lawyer, organizational skills and embrace of new technology will begin a new era for the Tribunal consistent with directives of our Holy Father," the bishop said.

The bishop also announced that the diocese would no longer charge fees related to the annulment process.

The Tribunal is the forum in which the judicial authority of the bishop is exercised. It is responsible for investigating and adjudicating matters that need to be resolved according to the norms and procedures established by Church law. Most of the work of the Tribunal is devoted to processing marriage nullity cases.

The bishop said that the diocese has already begun preparing for the implementation of the new canon law because the changes are extensive and will involve new procedures.

In making the announcement, the bishop praised Msgr. Jerald Doyle, judicial vicar, and Msgr.



NAMED TO HEAD the restructured Diocesan Tribunal, Msgr. Dariusz Zielonka, a canon lawyer, will officially assume the role of judicial vicar on January 1, 2016. Msgr. Zielonka, pastor of St. Jude Parish in Monroe, previously served as director of the Fourth Diocesan Synod. (PHOTO BY AMY MORTENSEN)

James Cuneo, adjutant judicial vicar, who have guided the work of the tribunal for four decades.

"I would like to express my sincere appreciation for their many years of faithful service in the Tribunal. They have processed hundreds of marriage nullity cases during their ministry in the diocese. Both of them will retire as of December 31, 2015, with our gratitude for their deeply faithful and valued service," the bishop said.

"As the people of our diocese know, in addition to serving as judicial vicar, Msgr. Doyle very ably and faithfully served as diocesan administrator after Bishop William E. Lori's departure. For his leadership and all his service we owe him a great deal of gratitude. Likewise, Msgr. Cuneo has brought great perspective, learning and wisdom in his service as adjutant judicial vicar and was recognized for his spiritual guidance of the St. Thomas More Society at the recent Red Mass for legal professionals," said the bishop.

The bishop added that both men will be available to serve as resources to the diocese in matters of canon law.

Msgr. Zielonka said the temporary closing of the Tribunal offices would allow for the many important changes that have to be made in order to make the Diocesan Tribunal ready for the transition. He added that the planning phase now underway

has allowed the diocese to study the differences in processes and research proper canonical, human resources and technological solutions.

The restructuring over the next two months will involve re-indexing of the current files and setting priorities; implementation of the new technologies (hardware and software) to manage court cases and canonical procedures; training of the Tribunal staff and the diocesan clergy; and development of new forms and literature for Petitioners, Responders, Advocates, and the clergy.

Msgr. Zielonka said there is much interest and some misinformation because of extensive media coverage that surrounded the Pope's comments on the annulment process.

"The media's coverage of the new procedural law issued by Pope Francis was quite extensive. Unfortunately, their interpretation of the new law was not always accurate and sometimes even misleading. I invite you to read about the new procedures on the diocesan website," said Msgr. Zielonka, who prepared an analysis of the law and practical points about it.

Those who have already submitted their cases will be assigned priority status in the new Tribunal, and he expects that all will be processed faster with new procedures.

"Likewise, under the new norms, any sentences issued by

the new Tribunal will not be required to go for approval of the Second Instance Tribunal in Hartford. The Petitioner, Respondent or Defender of the Bond might choose to appeal the decision to the Second Instance, but if not, Bridgeport Tribunal's decision will become executable within 15 days of the sentence," he said.

An annulment is a declaration by a Church tribunal (a Catholic Church court) that a marriage thought to be valid according to Church law actually fell short of at least one of the essential elements required for a binding marriage consent. The party who petitions the Tribunal is called the "Petitioner" and the other party is called the "Respondent."

Msgr. Dariusz J. Zielonka

Msgr. Dariusz J. Zielonka, was named director of 2014 Diocesan Synod by Bishop Frank J. Caggiano in March 2014, and pastor of St. Jude Parish in June 2014.

He served as priest secretary to Bishop William E. Lori and vice chancellor of the diocese from 2002 to 2009. In 2008, he was named Chaplain to His Holiness with the title of Monsignor, receiving Papal Honors from Pope Benedict XVI.

In March 2013, he was appointed a judge to the Marriage Tribunal after completing his graduate studies at Catholic University of America, where he earned a doctorate in canon law, *Juris Canonici Doctor*; J.C.D.

Msgr. Zielonka, 47, was born in Piotrków Tryb, Poland. He entered the archdiocesan seminary in Łódź, Poland, and completed his theological studies at Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary in Wynnewood, PA.

He was ordained at Saint Augustine Cathedral in 1995 by the late Edward Cardinal Egan, then Bishop of Bridgeport. Msgr. Zielonka served as parochial vicar at St. James Parish in Stratford and St. Aloysius Parish in New Canaan prior to becoming priest secretary. He is also a secretary of the Diocesan College of Consultors.

As part of its restructuring, the Tribunal will introduce a new website outlining the new process and including online forms. Please check the Tribunal section of the diocesan website at www.bridgeportdiocese.com.

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Jubilee of Mercy

Diocese to begin Jubilee of Mercy observance

BRIDGEPORT—The Diocese of Bridgeport will begin its observance of the Jubilee of Mercy with the opening and blessing of a Jubilee Holy Door for use by diocesan pilgrims at St. Augustine Cathedral, on Tuesday, December 8, at 7:30 pm.

The observance is the response to a declaration by Pope Francis for an extraordinary Holy Year called the Jubilee of Mercy, beginning on December 8, 2015, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, and concluding on November 20, 2016, on the Feast of Christ the King.

“Our Holy Father has asked each diocese to sponsor events on the local level including a pilgrimage. It is fitting that we begin the observance on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary,” said Bishop Frank J. Caggiano.

The bishop said that the diocesan observance will culminate in a pilgrimage to the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C., on November 5, 2016. “On that day I will consecrate the Diocese of Bridgeport to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, complementing and completing our consecration to

the Immaculate Heart of Mary, which I carried out at the Closing Mass of the Synod on September 19,” said the bishop.

Pope Francis formally declared the Jubilee of Mercy on April 11, 2015, to emphasize the importance of mercy and to keep alive a sense of encounter and openness in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council.

The Pope has urged dioceses across the world to create a Holy Door, “to become a Door of Mercy through which anyone who enters will experience the love of God who consoles, pardons, and instills hope.”

The bishop formally dedicated a Holy Door in the diocese on September 19, the morning of the Synod Celebration, when he led a Holy Hour for diocesan youth at St. Augustine Cathedral and then processed to Webster Bank Arena. In anticipation of the Jubilee of Mercy year, the Holy Door was officially sealed at the ceremony.

In Church tradition, Holy Doors are normally sealed shut from the outside and opened during Jubilee years when pilgrims enter to seek reconciliation and gain indulgence related to the



ST. AUGUSTINE CATHEDRAL—Observance of the Jubilee of Mercy year in the diocese will begin on Tuesday, December 8, 7:30 pm with the opening and blessing of the Holy Door at the Cathedral. The Pope declared the Jubilee to emphasize the importance of mercy in our lives.

Jubilee. Throughout year, area Catholics will be encouraged to visit the cathedral for prayer and also to participate in the sacrament of reconciliation.

Father Joseph Marcello, pastor of St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Nichols, is chairing the Jubilee of

Mercy committee for the diocese.

Father Marcello said that the diocese is in the process of identifying parishes around Fairfield County that will serve as “Centers of Mercy” by offering expanded opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The chosen parishes will offer the Sacrament of Reconciliation each Tuesday evening from 7-8:30 pm.

Another five parishes, one in each Vicariate, will offer the Sacrament of Reconciliation each Thursday evening from 7-8:30 pm.

“The goal of all of this is to provide the Sacrament of the Lord’s mercy more abundantly around the whole diocese, so that no one will need to go more than two or three days without regularly-scheduled Confession times at a parish in their area,”

Father Marcello said.

As part of the year-long observance, the diocese will also increase opportunities for corporal and spiritual works of mercy by working with Catholic Charities and the newly-estab-

lished Catholic Service Corps to create service opportunities grounded in prayer.

“Our goal is to build upon existing opportunities for extending the Lord’s mercy through feeding the sick, reaching out to the homeless, the imprisoned, and those with pressing physical needs. Similarly, we will expand spiritual formation opportunities, with particular emphasis on those who have drifted from the practice of the faith, those who are searching, and for young people,” said Father Marcello.

Serving on the Jubilee of Mercy Committee are John Grosso, diocesan social media leader; Father Krsztyzof Kuczynski, parochial vicar of St. Rose of Lima Parish in Newtown; Deacon Jerry Lambert, deacon of St. Mary Parish in Ridgefield; Sister Deborah Lopez, ASCJ, principal of St. Raphael Academy in Bridgeport; Msgr. Kevin Royal, pastor of Holy Spirit Parish in Stamford; Michael Tintrup, LCSW, COO/chief operating officer and vice president of quality and compliance for Catholic Charities of Fairfield County; Tom Vita, state deputy of the Knights of Columbus in the State of Connecticut.

(News on upcoming events and observances will be found in *Fairfield County Catholic* and online at www.bridgeportdiocese.com.)



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Diocesan Schools

Sister Mary Grace Walsh to go to Hartford Archdiocese

BRIDGEPORT—Sister Mary Grace Walsh, ASCJ, Ph.D. will leave her post as Superintendent of Schools of the Diocese of Bridgeport on December 31 to accept the newly-created position of Provost for Education, Evangelization and Catechesis of the Archdiocese of Hartford. Her new position will be effective January 1, 2016.

The announcement was made jointly by Archbishop Leonard P. Blair of the Archdiocese of Hartford and Bridgeport Bishop Frank J. Caggiano.

Archbishop Blair said the position of Provost has grown out of the Pastoral Planning process of the archdiocese. "I am happy to welcome Sister Mary Grace to her new position with the Archdiocese of Hartford," said Archbishop Blair. "Her many personal gifts, talents, and wealth of experience will enable her to bring vision and leadership to the newly-formed Department of Education, Evangelization and Catechesis."

As Provost, she will work closely with a broad coalition of archdiocesan leadership, staff and parishes to develop a plan for the educational and developmental needs of school children, teenagers, adults and consecrated women and men.

"Although we are at a transforming moment in the life of the Diocese of Bridgeport where Sister Mary Grace's exceptional leadership would be essential, I must respect the movement of the Holy Spirit in all of this," said Bishop Caggiano. "It is clear that the archdiocese needs Sister Mary Grace right now. I say that with conviction but also with tremendous sadness because I have the greatest respect and admiration for Sister, and I will miss her terribly."

Sister Mary Grace was named superintendent of schools for the Diocese of Bridgeport by Bishop Caggiano in October 2013, almost immediately after his installation. She was responsible for more than 9,000 students and 1,000 faculty members in the 31 elementary and high schools sponsored by the diocese.

As part of the diocesan reorganization undertaken by the

bishop in October 2014, she was also named Secretary for Catholic Education and Faith Formation. In that position, she played a role in the integration of the Faith Formation Office into the new secretariat that included schools.

Sister Mary Grace said she spent much time in prayer and reflection when the new position was created. "I am grateful to Bishop Caggiano for the many opportunities he gave me and for the honor of serving as both superintendent and secretary," she said. "In my 10 years of service in the diocese, I have witnessed our schools flourish with the assistance of parents who, as the primary educators of their children, choose to entrust their children to our schools—often at great sacrifice. I want to express my gratitude to all those who worked to make our schools faith-filled communities—the parents, faculty, clergy, school advisory boards and generous donors who embrace the mission of Catholic education."

About Sister Mary Grace Walsh:

Sister Mary Grace Walsh, ASCJ, Ph.D. is a member of the Apostles of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which has its U.S. provincialate in Hamden.

She served as deputy superintendent of schools for the Diocese of Bridgeport from 2006-13, when she was named acting superintendent after Dr. Margaret Dames, the previous superintendent, accepted a position in the Archdiocese of Newark, N.J. During that time she also functioned as interim principal at St. Thomas Aquinas School, Fairfield from August 2007-July 2008.

In the past, she has served as principal in the Archdiocese of New York and the dioceses of Metuchen, NJ and Providence, RI, and as a teacher K-12 in the Archdioceses of New York, St. Louis and the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

Born and raised in New Haven, she earned her Ph.D. in educational administration and supervision/church leadership from Fordham University, and an M.A. in education administration

and supervision from Saint Louis University, St. Louis, MO. She is a graduate of Albertus Magnus College in New Haven.

She had served in the past as a member of the Archdiocesan School Board for the Archdiocese of Hartford and as co-chair of the Professional Development Committee of the New England CACE (Chief Administrators of Catholic Education), Professional Development. Her areas of interest and research include Catholic school governance, mission effectiveness, institutional leadership, Catholic identity, school change, strategic planning, administrator and teacher formation, curriculum design.

The Diocese of Bridgeport will begin a national search for



FAREWELL SISTER MARY GRACE—Sister Mary Grace Walsh has accepted the newly created position of Provost for Education, Evangelization and Catechesis in the Archdiocese of Hartford. The bishop praised Sister Mary Grace for moving the schools ahead academically while strengthening their Catholic identity.

a new superintendent of schools immediately.

(For more info about Catholic

schools in Fairfield County, visit www.bridgeportdiocese.com, or phone 203.416.1380.)

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Cardinal Shehan Center

Shehan breakfast raises \$50,000 for youth

BRIDGEPORT—Money and the new media have changed college football dramatically over the past 20 years, but the game is still played with great passion, said ESPN senior writer Ivan Maisel at the 28th Annual Cardinal Shehan Celebrity Breakfast.

“The pressure of the money has increased and the pressure of the media has increased,” said the award-winning sports journalist and host of a regular podcast, creating more turnover of coaches and making recruitment difficult for colleges that do not have new arenas and indoor practice facilities.

More than 400 friends of the downtown youth center turned out at the Bridgeport Holiday Inn for the breakfast, which raised



ESPN SPORTSWRITER AND BLOGGER—Ivan Maisel addresses the gathering of more than 400 men and women at the recent Cardinal Shehan Celebrity Breakfast. He said that “money and the media” have changed college football, but it’s still played with great passion and excitement.

\$50,000 for after-school, mentoring and recreation programs it provides young people of all

faiths. The breakfast was sponsored by Webster Bank. The breakfast attracted many



VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR — Alexandra Wallace Currie (l) of Fairfield was recognized for teaching children Arts and Crafts at the center.

YOUTH SPEAKER—Milanis Mejia, a seventh grade student at Catholic Academy, St. Augustine campus, said the after-school programs at Shehan built her confidence and language skills.

business and political leaders, including outgoing Bridgeport Mayor Bill Finch who was given a standing ovation for his leadership and work on behalf of the young people of Bridgeport. “A man never stands as tall as when he stoops to help children,” said Shehan executive director Terry O’Connor.

Noting that six college coaches have already lost their jobs in the new season, Maisel said their “six and seven figure salaries have ratcheted up expectations” and also shortened the patience of many alumni who take to chat boards and social media.

He mentioned that the great Virginia Tech coach Frank Beamer had six losing seasons before going on to becoming the active coach with the most wins (276).

He said the best college coaches are “instinctively teachers and its great to see them working with the kids.”

Bishop Frank J. Caggiano delivered the invocation and thanked the men and women for supporting the work of the Shehan Center.

Referring to Pope Francis and his often-repeated theme of accompaniment, the bishop said “we need a Church that accompanies people on their journey and walks alongside them,” and he thanked those in attendance for making it possible for the Shehan Center to accompany youth as they grow and learn.

Shehan Center youth speaker Milanis Mejia, a seventh-grade student at the Catholic Academy, St. Augustine Campus, said the Shehan Center changed her life in a positive way by building her confidence and helping her to meet new friends.

“Both of my parents read and speak only in Spanish and I was



having trouble with reading,” she said. Her grades immediately rose when she was referred to the after-school program at the Shehan Center. She also joined a volunteer effort to help the elderly and enrolled in the Sailing Program.

“I learned how to use the rudder and to duck as the boom comes around,” she said, drawing laughter and applause. “The Shehan Center is the perfect place to make friends and enjoy things.”

Alexandra Currie was recognized as the Cardinal Shehan Center Volunteer of the Year for leading the arts and crafts workshop and a new sewing class as part of the Shehan after-school program. She was also honored for refurbishing the Arts and Crafts room with new painting, cabinets and supplies.

The proprietor of “A Little Square” arts and crafts shop in Fairfield said she got involved because children need more creative outlets in their lives. “I come from a long line of volunteers,” said the mother of three children, “and I’m a breast cancer survivor. I do this because you must give back.”

(Founded in 1962, the Cardinal Shehan Center is located at 1494 Main St, in Bridgeport. For more info, call 203.336.4468 or visit www.shehancenter.org.)

Join Bishop Caggiano for the 23rd Annual Norwalk Celebrity Breakfast

<p>Bishop Frank J. Caggiano Diocese of Bridgeport</p>	<p>Guest Speaker <i>Rev. Charles H. Allen, S.J.</i></p> <p>University Chaplain and Executive Assistant to the President of Fairfield University</p>
<p>Rev. Charles H. Allen, S.J. Fairfield University</p>	

Bring a toy to support the **St. Nicholas Boutique!**
Toys benefit the children served by the **Room to Grow**
Preschools and **Behavioral Health** services in Norwalk.

<p>DATE: Thursday, December 3, 2015 TIME: 8 am LOCATION: Saint Matthew Church, 216 Scribner Ave, Norwalk CT 06850</p>	<p>facebook.com/CCFAIRFIELD twitter@CCFairfieldDOB</p>
<p>RESERVATIONS OR MORE INFORMATION GO TO: https://norwalkbreakfast.eventbrite.com</p> <p>RESERVATIONS: \$50 PER PERSON, \$300 FOR A TABLE OF 10</p> <p>Or Mail your Reservation Donation to: Catholic Charities Norwalk Breakfast 238 Jewett Ave, Bridgeport, CT 06606</p> <p>If have any questions, please call (203) 273-9483</p> <p>All proceeds benefit the Norwalk programs of Catholic Charities of Fairfield County. Serving people of all faiths since 1916.</p>	

Local News

The Vatican reforms are working says economist

FAIRFIELD—"The reforms are working," said Joseph F. X. Zahra, Vice Coordinator of the newly established Council for the Economy of The Holy See, said at the 9th Annual Centesimus Annus Pro Pontifice (CAPP) Communion Breakfast held at Fairfield University.

Speaking to a gathering of 150 Fairfield County Business leaders in the university's Oak Room, the highest ranking lay member of Pope Francis' ad-hoc cabinet, said that the Vatican has adopted new standards of transparency and accountability backed by the increasing involvement of lay experts from around the world.

"We were using obsolete accounting practices that were 50 to 100 years old. No one understood what was happening in the Vatican," he said because they were out of step with international standards.

The Vatican has since adopted "the correct application of accounting principles" after being advised by a panel of international experts including representatives of the "Big Four" American accounting firms, Zahra said.

Zahra said a February 24, 2014 Apostolic Letter by Pope Francis established three new reform structures "that are in place today," the Council for the Economy, Secretariat for the Economy and a new Auditor General.

He described the creation of the Auditor General as an "earth shaking" appointment because it is an "autonomous and independent" position led by a layman with the powers to investigate.

"Today these three structures are operating efficiently and effectively with an underlying professionalism and transparency," he said. "It's a journey but we can see the light at the end of the tunnel."

The Maltese economist said that in July 2013, just two months after Pope Francis was elected, he received a call from the Vatican asking him to consider chairing the new pontifical commission to reform administrative and financial practices.

"While I've said yes immediately to Prime Ministers when

they've asked me to chair a council, I asked for twenty-four hours to pray and to think about it," said Dr. Zahra.

The commission held its first meeting held on August 2, when most of Rome is on summer holiday. Zahra said he remembers staying at Domus Santa Marta, where the Pope resides, and running into the Pontiff in the hallway.

After asking Dr. Zahra how things were going, the Pope said, "Hurry, Hurry."

The Communion Breakfast began with Mass in the Egan Chapel celebrated by Bishop Frank J. Caggiano and presided over the Theodore Cardinal McCarrick, Archbishop Emeritus of Washington D.C., who described Dr. Zahra as "the highest ranking layman in the

Church."

During his homily Bishop Caggiano said the Gospel story of the widow who gives all she has to charity not only challenges us "to give sacrificially to help the poor and needy, but also to go deeper. Can you name one reality you can't live without? The Lord says it's time for you and me to give it away."

In particular, the Bishop said that "in this time of turmoil," we should be willing to give up "our own opinion of how things should be and how the world should be run, even if we're right, because the it's the Lord who will guide us."

During the breakfast Brian Moran, a parishioner of St.



CAPP AWARD—(l) William Fox, former President of the CAPP Fairfield County Chapter, presents the CAPP Business Leader Award to Attorney Brian Moran, a parishioner of St. Aloysius Parish, for his work on behalf of prison reform. VATICAN

REFORMS—(r) Maltese economist Joseph F. X. Zahra, often described as the "architect" of vatican financial reforms, says they're working.

Aloysius Parish in New Canaan, was recognized with the CAPP Business Leader Award for his philanthropic work and for serving as writer of the "The Justice Imperative: How Hyper-Incarceration Has Hijacked the American Dream" (Significance Press). The book was a project of the Malta Justice Initiative.

Moran, an attorney and member of CAPP, said he accepted the award on behalf of the Malta initiative, and that he was

inspired by Pope Francis and his teaching that "everyone matters and is entitled to a dignified life."

Moran said that in the U.S. inmates and ex-offenders "need a path toward redemption," because they are often treated like the "modern equivalent of lepers, and are the least-served segment of our society," and that many are locked away for a long time for minor offenses and totally unprepared to be re-integrated into their communities. ■

Bishop speaks of friendship and dialogue at B'nai Israel

BRIDGEPORT—"While the work of theologians is important to foster a greater theological understanding between religious communities, there can be no substitute for friendship among neighbors to create lasting unity and peace," said Bishop Frank Caggiano at a recent Shabbat service at B'nai Israel Congregation in Bridgeport.

The bishop was invited to speak at the service and dinner that followed by Rabbi James Prosnit, of Fairfield, spiritual leader of Congregation B'nai Israel, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the publication of the *Nostra Aetate* (In Our Day) proclamation on Oct. 28, 1965 made by Pope Paul VI.

Nostra Aetate discussed relationships between the Church and other non-Christian religions, but focused primarily on Judaism. The document is often heralded as a new starting point in the Church's relationship with Judaism.

"I am so deeply grateful for the gracious hospitality that

Rabbi Prosnit and his congregation extended to me and the large number of priests and Catholic faithful from the neighboring parishes who also attended the service and dinner," said the Bishop.

"We're deeply honored that Bishop Caggiano joined us. Since coming to the area he has done much to build bridges of learning and tolerance throughout the community," said Rabbi Prosnit, spiritual leader of the greater Bridgeport area's oldest and largest synagogue, located at 2710 Park Avenue, Bridgeport.

The bishop spoke at the 6 pm Shabbat service and again during a private dinner that evening at the Temple.

Rabbi James Prosnit, of Fairfield, spiritual leader of Congregation B'nai Israel, said *Nostra Aetate* discussed relationships between the Church and other non-Christian religions, but focused primarily on Judaism.

"In it the Church repudiated anti-Semitism and laid foundations for mutual recognition and reconciliation. Liturgies and catechetical texts with references to



CELEBRATING *NOSTRA AETATE*—Bishop Frank J. Caggiano, pictured with Rabbi James Prosnit, recently spoke at the Shabbat service of Congregation B'nai Israel in Bridgeport. He was invited by the Rabbi to reflect on the 50th anniversary of the document by Pope Paul VI, which repudiated anti-Semitism and created a new starting point in the Church's relationship with Judaism.

Jews being accursed and unloved were eliminated," said Rabbi Prosnit.

At the dinner that followed the service, the bishop and Rabbi and guests shared about 40 minutes of open discussion on a number of issues related to the document and other topics.

"Overall, I was deeply impressed at the shared genuine concern that was expressed by

Jews and Catholics alike over the same issues, including the need to evangelize our young people, a commitment to seek ways by which we can overcome division in our community and a deep desire to promote charity and justice in our society," said the bishop.

Rabbi Prosnit said the seeds for *Nostra Aetate* were planted

► CONTINUED ON PAGE 22

EDITORIAL

Season of the secular
and sacred

This month we look forward to two major observances, Thanksgiving on Thursday November 26, closely followed on November 29, by the First Sunday of Advent—the beginning of the Church's Liturgical year and Christmas season. At a moment in our country when sharp lines have been drawn between the secular and the sacred, it is well to remember that both observances are a time of prayer and true thanksgiving for our lives and families.

Seen from this intersection of the sacred and secular, those who would dismiss the religious foundation of our nation leave out the core of our history and values; while others who decry the influence of the secular culture miss the point: the U.S. is still a profoundly religious land where nine out of ten people profess belief in God and, according to the latest Pew Research Study, 78 percent are religiously affiliated. In fact, we have a higher rate of Church attendance than most Western countries.

We are a nation of spiritual seekers, whether through the world's great religions or "New Age" trends (which are unlikely to replace traditional belief). The challenge is to meet that need by becoming a more loving, welcoming and open Church that draws others in by our witness and example. That's what our Bishop has been telling us since the day he walked in the door of the Catholic Center—and that's something to be thankful for.

Synod: the next steps

If you've harbored concerns that Synod recommendations might remain on a shelf somewhere, you should take note of the Day of Training, Preparation & Prayer held last weekend at St. Matthew Parish. More than 400 trustees, finance and parish council members and their pastors filled the Great Room of the parish to begin the implementation phase of the Fourth Diocesan Synod.

"Between this meeting and the first day held at St. Pius X in Fairfield, we have gathered about 800 pastoral leaders in the diocese," the bishop noted in his homily. "The Spirit is at work and we're going to get this done. We are ready together to bring spiritual renewal to the diocese."

By September 31, of next year all 82 parishes are expected to submit a strategic plan in response to synod initiatives and to create a road map for their future growth. Each parish is now putting together pastoral planning task force to lead the effort.

Meanwhile, this month the diocese announced three new leaders of the Faith Formation Office and expects to name the first director of the new Catholic Leadership Institute. The bishop also formed new Presbyteral and Pastoral Councils and a Liturgical Commission along with a task force to study Faith Formation in the diocese—all recommended by the Synod.

While many programs are underway, the bishop has asked us to remember that the Synod must be a living expression of faith. "I don't want this to be just another program. We must make it a spiritual journey so that we become a living, vibrant community of sisters and brothers who worship and serve the Lord and give the Good News to the world that he is alive here."

Our thanks go out to all those who have done so much to support the work of the Synod, and for their enthusiasm and prayerful commitment to the work of renewing the diocese.

Arise and Shine!

It's not too early to make plans to attend "Arise and Shine," the Christmas Concert featuring the new Diocesan Youth Choir. The concert, under the leadership of Mary Bozzuti Higgins of Wilton, will be held on Friday, December 18, 7:30 pm at Norwalk Concert Hall, and it's a great way to celebrate Christmas while affirming our young people and contributing to programs that enrich their lives with learning, formation, and spirituality. Proceeds will benefit the new Bishop's Scholarship Fund, and youth services and ministries throughout the diocese. Please plan on joining Bishop Caggiano for this memorable evening and the beginning of a new Christmas tradition in our diocese. For tickets go to C4YCHRISTMASCONCERT.EVENTBRITE.COM

EDITOR'S CHOICE

CHD Collection set for November 21-22

The Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD), held the weekend before Thanksgiving, November 21-22 this year, is dedicated to breaking the cycle of poverty by funding community programs that encourage independence. You are essential to its success.

For over 46.5 million Americans, there is a thin line: between eviction and home, between hunger and health, between unemployment and work, between anxiety and stability.

Fully 25% of each CCHD collection's proceeds stay in the local diocese to fight poverty and

defend the dignity of our neighbors. That is particularly important in Fairfield County, an area

with large income disparity.

Projects supported by CCHD work to build healthy, sustainable

futures for communities. Your generous donations will give those in poverty the support they need to make lasting changes. Together, we can make a difference in families and communities across the United States.



CLERGY APPOINTMENTS

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

PASTOR

REVEREND MICHAL A. NOWAK, O.F.M. CONV., Parochial Vicar, Saint Michael the Archangel Parish, Bridgeport to Pastor, Saint Michael the Archangel Parish, Bridgeport. Effective date was November 1.

JUDICIAL VICAR

REVEREND MONSIGNOR DARIUSZ J. ZIELONKA, to Adjutant Judicial Vicar. Effective date is December 1. Then to Judicial Vicar. Effective date is January 1, 2016. Monsignor will remain as Pastor, Saint Jude Parish, Monroe.

PAROCHIAL VICAR

REVEREND STEFAN MORAWSKI, O.F.M. CONV.,

Pastor, Saint Michael the Archangel Parish, Bridgeport, to Parochial Vicar, Saint Michael the Archangel Parish, Bridgeport. Effective date was November 1.

REVEREND SILVESTRU R. BALAN, new to Diocese, to Parochial Vicar, Saint Leo Parish, Stamford. Effective date was November 1.

SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR

DEACON THOMAS MASARYK, to Spiritual Director for the English speaking Cursillo Movement. Effective date was November 1. Deacon Masaryk will remain as Deacon, Saint James Parish, Stratford.

RESIDENCE

REVEREND STEPHEN J.

BALINT, Retired, Catherine Dennis Keefe Queen of the Clergy Residence, to Maplewood at Darien. Effective date was October 14.

REVEREND GEORGE S. SANKOORIKAL, Retired, Trumbull to Palm Coast, Florida. Effective date was October 18.

OTHER

REVEREND MONSIGNOR THOMAS W. POWERS has been appointed to serve as a member of the Sacred Arts Committee. Effective date was September 1.

Reverend Ian Jeremiah, Episcopal Vicar for Clergy November, 2015

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Editorial



Giving thanks increases blessings

SWIMMING UPSTREAM

BY JOE PISANI

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

As I was passing through Grand Central Terminal and its collection of eateries and boutiques, I came upon a kiosk that sold trendy stationery with New York City images, so I stopped to browse through the merchandise to buy a memo pad for my “Things to do” list. Sad to say, my daily life revolves around that list.

Instead, I found something more valuable—pads decorated with artwork of taxi cabs and the Empire State Building that said, “Today I Am Grateful For ...” and you could list five things.

I suspect all of us could come up with five reasons to be thank-

ful with minimal effort. It just takes a little time to develop the habit. As the Psalmist says, “Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, his love endures forever!”

What a great motivational tool, especially for someone who doesn’t tend to be grateful. I’ve always believed in the importance of giving thanks because when I’m not counting my blessings, I’m counting my misfortunes and quite honestly, blessings are much better. Let me put it this way, I’m prone to complaining and grumbling, often unnecessarily.

I want to cultivate what my father, who was in Alcoholics

Anonymous the last 25 years of his life, called “the attitude of gratitude.”

Giving thanks is a wonderful form of prayer that has spiritual and health benefits. In recent years, a number of studies have concluded that saying “thank you” leads to even more blessings in your life. You’ll be happier, live longer, face challenges with faith and equanimity, and be generally positive about life ... despite what may happen.

Gratitude even ensures a stronger marriage. Researchers at Georgia University surveyed 468 married people about their finances, communication style and gratitude toward their partner and discovered that being grateful is a consistent indication you’ll be happy in marriage even during times of crisis. Saying “thank you” is a form of insurance that your relationship will endure.

We often get reminders of the importance of giving thanks in the most unlikely places. Every day when I take the commuter train into the city, I see an enormous billboard, towering above

the South Bronx, which simply says, “Grattitude.” (The word is intentionally misspelled by the artist with an extra ‘t’ to emphasize the importance of being thankful.)

And on a recent weekend while my wife was away, I went to Wendy’s for some fast food

“Have a blessed day.” I stopped and smiled and said, “You too.” There was a lot I could learn from him.

That word “blessed” is code word among people who are prone to “count their blessings” and realize all good things come from God.

Or as the author of *Ecclesiastes* said, “In the day of prosperity be joyful, and in the day of adversity consider: God has made the one as well as the other.”

The famous hymn “O God Beyond All Praising,” proclaims, “We can only wonder at every gift you send, at blessings without number and mercies without end.” And the final verse, adds, “Whether our tomorrows be filled with good or ill, we’ll triumph through our sorrows and rise to bless you still.”

As St. Paul said: “Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you” (1 Thessalonians 5: 18).

I put my new pad in my pocket and vowed to start my day—and end it—by showing gratitude to God for what I had to be thankful for. ■

“We often get reminders of the importance of giving thanks in the most unlikely places.”

instead of trying to cook a meal that I suspect would have been uneatable for the most part.

At the drive-up window, while I was paying for my double cheeseburger and fries, the young man who took my cash was excited because this was his first day there, and he was grateful to have a job. As I pulled away, he said,

Take the wife-gripping somewhere else

A DAD’S VIEW

BY MATTHEW HENNESSEY

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



I can’t listen to a guy complaining about his wife. It’s my least favorite thing that men do.

Honestly, my friends are a pretty satisfied bunch. Every once in a while, though, you meet someone who wants to give a lecture about just what a monster his bride is.

“She spends too much on clothes,” says the fellow who drops \$100 on a bottle of scotch.

“She busts my chops about watching the game,” says the dad who considers himself off-the-clock after kickoff on a Sunday.

“She’s always after me to change the way I eat,” says the guy who probably should change the way he eats.

“She’s so controlling,” says the workaholic tied more to his phone than his family.

I can’t listen to it. Even before I was married I found such talk distasteful. I once knew a guy who referred to his wife—a woman I’d never met—as “Momo.” He didn’t mean it in a good way. We didn’t hit it off.

I can put up with a lot from a friend. You can talk smack about your boss all day long. I’m

fine with that. You can drink too much and break my phone. I’ll get a new one.

But if you need someone to nod his head in agreement while you badmouth your “old lady,” count me out.

In his letter to the Ephesians, Saint Paul lays down the law for us married guys: “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church and handed himself over for her.”

How did Christ love the Church? Well, you might have heard of a little episode having to do with crucifixion under Pontius Pilate. Put it this way: He suffered death and was buried.

Christ gave everything to His church, and that’s what marriage is: Total giving.

It’s a tall order, no question, but it’s what you signed up for when you put that ring on. It’s what we all signed up for.

Paul continues: “So [also] husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.”

This part is easier to wrap your head around. Love your wife as you love yourself. It’s the Golden Rule: Household Edition. And it sings in harmony with the view of marriage outlined in the Book of Genesis—man and wife become one body.

“They are no longer two but one flesh,” says Jesus (Mark 10:8).

In the eyes of the Church, you and your wife are the same body.

Don’t treat her differently than you treat yourself. When you badmouth her, you badmouth yourself.

Look, I understand the issues. Raising kids is stressful. Money is sometimes tight. And no, you’re not crazy—there is such a thing as the right way to load the dishwasher.

But nobody said it was going to be easy. In good times and in

bad, remember? In sickness and in health.

My advice? Take a look in the mirror. You ain’t no prize yourself most days.

I read recently that a husband’s job is to get his wife into

“It’s a tall order, no question, but it’s what you signed up for when you put that ring on it.

It’s what we all signed up for.”

heaven—and vice versa. If you look at marriage that way, it becomes a little easier to put up with the occasional gripe about the toilet seat being left up.

Women complain about their husbands (I’m told). I don’t have any close female friends, so I wouldn’t know. Actually, I do have one.

And she’s better at her job than I am at mine. ■

Synod: The Next Step

Prayer and training begin pastoral planning

By PAT HENNESSY

“Bishop Caggiano wants a task force formed in each parish to implement synod initiatives,” said Father Michael Dogali, episcopal vicar for strategic planning for the Diocese of Bridgeport. “The parishes are where the rubber hits the road.”

Beginning a comprehensive pastoral planning process was among the major initiatives approved by delegates to the Fourth Diocesan Synod in May.

The first Day of Prayer and Training was held on October 10; the second on November 7. Nearly 320 pastors, trustees and council members attended the first session; an even larger number came to the second one.

In his homily for the first

session, Bishop Caggiano set the tone for the day, based on the Gospel of Mark “As soon as the grain is ripe, he wields the sickle, because the harvest has come” (Mark 4:29).

“The bishop was urging us to take all the enthusiasm of the Synod Celebration Mass, roll up our sleeves and get to work,” said Patrick Turner, director of strategic and pastoral planning, who assisted Father Dogali in the day’s organization and presentation.

After Mass, a team from the Catholic Leadership Institute in Wayne, Pa., gave a presentation on the responsibilities of each group involved in parish ministry, from the pastors and trustees to finance and parish council members.

“The emphasis was on descriptions of responsibilities,”

explained Father Dogali. “To do your job right, you have to know your responsibility.”

At its most basic, it is the responsibility of every parish official, starting with the pastor, to build up the Kingdom of God in their parish. Trustees are the pastor’s eyes and ears in the community and can provide thoughtful counsel on issues. The finance council, mandated by Canon Law, assists the pastor in short and long-term financial plans. Parish council members help the pastor and parish staff in the liturgical, educational and social aspects of the



A ROADMAP FOR PARISHES—Parish leaders joined pastors and diocesan officials recently at the first Day of Prayer and Preparation toward developing strategic plans for each parish in the diocese. The process is designed to help implement Synod initiatives and help parishes plan for the future.

parish.

This last area is broadest and most diffuse. Parish council members may set a welcoming tone for families by seeing that coffee and munchkins are available after Masses. They can suggest ways to integrate Catholic school and religious education programs, plan a summer Bible study, or work on ways to increase parents’ involvement in parish programs.

After the presentation, break-out sessions gave priests and laity a chance to reflect and add their own personal responses.

“The bishop was very encouraging in our priests’ session, quick to thank us for our pastoral leadership,” said Father Norman Guilbert, pastor of Holy Family Parish in Fairfield. “I saw a sincerity and a deep love of Christ in him, and he wants to see that it’s shared. It’s energizing me.”

“Speakers helped us understand what the synod hopes to accomplish—what we’re expected to do and how to go about it,” said Rick Palanzo, a parish council member from St. Peter Parish in Danbury. “At St. Peter’s, we have very good communication with our pastor, Father Greg Mecca. He is willing to empower the laity in their area of expertise for the good of the parish.”

St. Peter’s, a city parish, has a large number of Hispanic and Brazilian parishioners, who also have representatives on the parish council. The group from St. Peter’s shared their experiences with representatives from Our Lady, Star of the Sea Parish in Stamford—a parish far from theirs in composition.

“At Star of the Sea, they had a great program for re-learning the tenets of our faith,” Palanzo recalled. “That’s something all of us can find useful. We’re going to bring that suggestion back to St. Peter’s.”

The next step is for pastors to form a pastoral-planning task force of about 10-12 people, expected to be in place in all parishes by February of 2016. Although many of those who participated in these sessions may be on the task force, a pastor may also name other parishioners whose contribution he deems useful. Their goal will be to assist the pastor in forming a three-year pastoral plan.

“There are many tasks to be done, so we’re asking the task force to pick one aspect of parish life to work on first,” said Father Dogali. “Each parish is different, and each pastoral plan will be different.”

The first phase of the plan should be completed by the fall of 2016.

Ultimately, the task force will help the pastor create a plan for the future of the parish, incorporating the five global challenges identified by the Fourth Diocesan Synod: Liturgy and Worship, Family Life, Evangelization, Leadership and Catechesis and Education. ■

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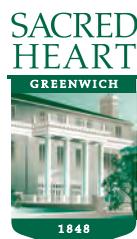
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(PHOTO BY MICHELLE BABYAK)

‘Living stones of the Church’

By BRIAN D. WALLACE

Referring to the 120 recipients of the 2015 St. Augustine Medal of Service as the “living stones of the Church,” Bishop Frank J. Caggiano said that they have created a vibrant Church through their love of God and love of neighbor.

More than 600 friends and family members filled St. Augustine Cathedral for what has become one of the happiest events of the year for the diocese as men and women throughout Fairfield County are recognized for their faithful service.

Among this year’s honorees were synod delegates and men and women who have given a lifetime of service to their parishes and the diocese. Many serve on parish councils and boards, lead prayer groups, reach out to the poor, visit the sick, serve as lectors and Eucharistic ministers and help out with many parish social activities.

Describing the medals as a “small, heartfelt and tan-

gible token of our thanks,” the bishop told recipients that they have built up the Church “through the witness of your own life and by living what you believe.”

Pastors and priests throughout the diocese who had nominated the recipients accompanied them as they came forward to receive their medals.

The service began with prayer, song and Scripture reading. The bishop then blessed the medals and sprinkled them with holy water.

As people came forward to receive their medals and have their pictures taken, the bishop could be heard exchanging joyful pleasantries with them, many of whom he personally knew through his frequent visits to parishes.

During his homily, the bishop referred to St. Augustine of Hippo (354-430 AD) a bishop and Doctor of the Church after whom the Bridgeport Cathedral is named. He said that St. Augustine taught that all Church buildings and temples will eventually fall, but that the “living temple” of faith and love is everlasting.

He noted that when St. Augustine’s parishioners told him they were concerned that some people might abandon the parish and move to a new church being built nearby, St. Augustine told them, “When we gather at church, sing twice as loud,” and it worked!” the bishop

said, drawing laughter.

The bishop then told honorees that “by the singing of your lives you have given great glory to God and have brought many to the faith and kept them here by your faithful witness.” He also praised those who work in soup kitchens and food pantries, for “standing next to poor and marginalized people the world would like to forget.”

“Keep singing because we have a world to bring to Jesus Christ,” he exhorted those in attendance.

Al Barber, president/CEO of Catholic Charities, read the name of recipients from the pulpit, while William McLean, chief development officer and Debbie Charles, executive administrative assistant to the bishop, assisted with the presentation of medals. Music was provided under the direction of diocesan music consultant Thomas Marino.

A reception followed in the Kolbe Cathedral High School auditorium, which shares the St. Augustine campus.

The St. Augustine Medal of Service was instituted in 2005 to recognize the “unsung heroes” who unselfishly give of their time and talents to build up parish communities. On one side of the medal is an image of Saint Augustine of Hippo, patron saint of the diocese. The reverse features the coat of arms of the diocese. ■

2015 Saint Augustine Medal of Service



(Editor's note: The recognition of award recipients below has been edited to fit the print edition. Full submissions can be found online at www.bridgeportdiocese.com)
Photos by Michelle Babyak



BASILICA OF ST. JOHN PARISH, STAMFORD: MS. JUANITA EVANS — "Juanita brings a deep faith and devotion to her many volunteer activities. Most recently as a Synod Delegate, she worked with Bridgeport Police to plan for security for the Synod Celebration."
— Reverend Monsignor Stephen DiGiovanni



BASILICA OF ST. JOHN PARISH, STAMFORD: MR. NICHOLAS TROILO — "Nicholas served as a faithful representative of the parish at the recent Synod. His perceptions, candor and leadership along with his concern for the poor inspired many delegates."
— Reverend Monsignor Stephen DiGiovanni



BLESSED SACRAMENT PARISH, BRIDGEPORT: MS. EVA MARIA FERNANDES — "Eva, as a faith filled parishioner and as a medical professional, has humbly cared for the parishioners and staff of our parish for many years. She is a Parish Nurse and Eucharistic Minister."
— Reverend Skip Karcinski



CATHOLIC CHARITIES, FAIRFIELD COUNTY BOARD OF DIRECTORS: MR. JIM MCPARTLAN — "Though on the CFC Board for only two years, Jim has added a level of commitment rarely seen by visiting all of our 30+ programs, and co-chairs the agency's 100 year anniversary collaboration."
— Mr. Al Barber



CATHOLIC CHARITIES, NORTHERN FAIRFIELD COUNTY/GREATER DANBURY: MS. LISA DONOVAN — "Lisa has worked to bridge the efforts of the Friends of Morning Glory and Northern Fairfield County advisory boards to create more cohesion in the region."
— Mr. Al Barber



CATHOLIC CHARITIES, ROOM TO GROW, NORWALK: MS. ANA ARISTIZABAL — "Ana is a former parent at Room To Grow and continues to support all events. For more than 15 years, she has provided assistance at the annual picnic and graduation, from cooking on the grill to setting up the buffet."
— Mr. Al Barber



CATHOLIC CHARITIES, NEW COVENANT, STAMFORD: MR. TERRY LAUGHREN — "Terry has been a very active force in the repositioning and relocation of the New Covenant Center in Stamford. He has provided generous financial support for operations and the capital campaign."
— Mr. Al Barber



CATHOLIC CHARITIES, NEW COVENANT, STAMFORD: MR. RANDY SALVATORE — "Randy has made the new facility a reality. He provided project management services for the entire facility on a pro bono basis and his team brought the project below cost projections and on time."
— Mr. Al Barber



CHRIST THE KING PARISH, TRUMBULL: MS. MARIAN MCCARTHY — "Marian has served for 15 years as a Lector; laundered altar linens and taught students in the Religious Education program. She also set up the weekly adult Bible Study which she continues to moderate."
— Reverend Lawrence Carew



CHURCH OF THE ASSUMPTION PARISH, WESTPORT: MS. CONCETTA LUPINO — "Connie is Chair of the Social Concerns Parish Ministry and serves on the Parish Council. Together with her committee, she plans many outreach programs."
— Reverend Thomas Thorne



HOLY CROSS PARISH, FAIRFIELD: MR. AND MRS. JOSEPH CSOM — "Joe has served in many capacities: President of Parish Advisory Board, Finance Board and Lector, and volunteered in innumerable ways to help the parish. Marie has been a faithful member of the Altar Society."
— Reverend Alfred Pecaric



HOLY FAMILY PARISH, FAIRFIELD: MS. SUSAN BARRETT — "Throughout the years, she has given of her time and has been involved in many parish ministries. Susan helps coordinate the Lector/Eucharistic Minister schedules. Susan is always ready to lend a helping hand."
— Reverend Guido Montanaro



HOLY NAME OF JESUS PARISH, STAMFORD: MR. ZDZISLAW GORSKI — "Zdzislaw is a dedicated member of the parish since 1978. During that time he has been generous in serving the parish in many ways: most of all by handling construction projects."
— Reverend Pawel Hrebenko



HOLY NAME OF JESUS PARISH, STRATFORD: MR. AND MRS. LARRY WELLS — "Both have served in a variety of ministries. Larry is a member of the Finance Board. Mary Ann is the coordinator of the parish Tag Sale. Both are longtime Eucharistic Ministers."
— Reverend Andrew Marus



HOLY SPIRIT PARISH, STAMFORD: MR. AND MRS. JOSÉ RIVERA — "José serves on the Parish Advisory Council, while Sandy is a Catechist and is involved with the SOUL ministry. They both assist behind the scenes, volunteering for Social Concerns."
— Reverend Monsignor Kevin Royal



HOLY TRINITY PARISH, SHERMAN: JANICE JORDAN, PH.D. — "A Eucharistic Minister and active member of the parish, Janice demonstrates her love for the faith as the parish volunteer RCIA Coordinator and in her one-on-one tutoring of Faith Formation students."
— Reverend Richard Gemza

2015 Saint Augustine Medal of Service



IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY PARISH, DANBURY: MR. AND MRS. MANUEL HENRIQUES — “Marie has been a parish Catechist for more than 30 years and Manuel is a member of the Legion of Mary, visiting patients. As a couple, they are deeply involved in Cursillos.” — *Reverend Jose Martins*



NOTRE DAME OF EASTON PARISH, EASTON: MS. VIRGINIA O'BRIEN FORTIN — “Virginia has been a very generous and spiritual part of Notre Dame Parish, where she has been active in the Religious Education program and the Ladies Council for many years.” — *Reverend Michael Lyons*



OFFICE OF EDUCATION, BRIDGEPORT: MR. ROGER FOX — “Roger has served as chair of the Trinity Catholic High School Advisory Board. He is the Finance Committee Chair at St. Cecilia Parish and is an example of an outstanding Catholic layman.” — *Sister Mary Grace Walsh*



OUR LADY OF FATIMA PARISH, BRIDGEPORT: MS. AMELIA D. COELHO — “Amelia is a dedicated Eucharistic Minister and devoted volunteer. She helps in all aspects of parish life” — *Reverend Jose D. Alves*



OUR LADY OF FATIMA PARISH, WILTON: MR. AND MRS. J. CHRISTOPHER TERRANOVA — “Chris and Patty epitomize the word ‘servant’ just as Our Lord and Savior preached. They are the first to show up and the last to leave, and they work in many ministries.” — *Reverend Reggie Norman*



OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL CHAPEL, BRIDGEPORT: MRS. ANNA DOMINGUEZ — “Anna is a Lector and also takes care of the chapel linens and participates in all the fundraisers. She has done so for many years.” — *Reverend Eugene R. Szantyr*



OUR LADY OF GRACE PARISH, STRATFORD: MR. AND MRS. DONALD BABIAN — “Don and Carol have been members of the Religious Education volunteers for more than 15 years. They have taught the children and inspired them by their faith and example.” — *Reverend Monsignor Martin Ryan*



OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE PARISH, DANBURY: MR. EDWIN GONZALEZ — “Edwin is a very responsible and caring young man who gives his time and talent to the parish community. He doesn't hesitate to spend hours on a project and is great working with children and youth.” — *Reverend John Perez*



OUR LADY OF PEACE PARISH, STRATFORD: MS. MILDRED KELLY — “Millie has gone over and beyond the call of duty for many, many years. She was very active with the Rosary Society and the parish is happy that she is still an active member of the Parish Family.” — *Reverend Nicholas Pavia, Jr.*



OUR LADY OF THE ASSUMPTION PARISH, FAIRFIELD: MR. AND MRS. JOE ALMEIDA — “Both Joe and Kathy have served the parish as Lectors and Eucharistic Ministers for many years. They have served throughout the years and are pillars of our parish community.” — *Reverend Peter Cipriani*



OUR LADY STAR OF THE SEA PARISH, STAMFORD: MS. ROBIN BUGHMAN — “Robin has been the backbone of the RCIA, including preparing lessons, instructing, encouraging and inspiring catechumens and candidates preparing to enter into full communion with the Church.” — *Reverend Piotr Smolik*



SACRED HEART PARISH, DANBURY: MS. JANICE MCNAMARA — “Janice serves with a sense of joy and humility, never seeking recognition. Her service is an inspiration to many, both within and outside the Church, and has proved contagious.” — *Reverend Peter Towsley*



SACRED HEART PARISH, GEORGETOWN: MR. AND MRS. MICHAEL NOVITSKY — “Michael and Ann have served the parish in many ways over the years. They are members of the parish Prayer Line, the Folk Choir and they decorate the church at Christmas and Easter.” — *Reverend David Leopold*



SACRED HEART PARISH, GREENWICH: MS. JAN GUNNIP — “Jan is a most efficient, gifted and humble person. Through her administrative skills, she has contributed toward the growth of the parish at all times, especially during challenging circumstances.” — *Reverend Bose Selvaraj*



2015 Saint Augustine Medal of Service



SACRED HEART PARISH, STAMFORD: SISTER DONNA BRODMAN — “Sister Donna Brodman, O.P. has used her time and talent to serve tirelessly the Church community in bringing the love of Jesus to their lives. We are blessed by her presence.”
— Reverend Alfonso Picone



SACRED HEART PARISH, STAMFORD: DR. ARTHUR A. IACUZIO — “Dr. Iacuzio is a Trustee of Sacred Heart Church and a lifelong parishioner. He has served on the Diocesan Board of Education and was a member of the committee to build Stamford Catholic High.”
— Reverend Alfonso Picone



SAINT BRIDGET OF IRELAND PARISH, STAMFORD: MR. AND MRS. JOHN ROEMER — “Janet is Parish Council President and John is a Finance Council member. Together they chair social events, such as the annual St. Patrick’s Dinner. John is a Co-Chair for Octoberfest.”
— Reverend Edward McAuley



ST. AGNES PARISH, GREENWICH: MS. MARSHA CASEY — “Marsha has been an active member of the parish since the day she arrived. She faithfully serves on the Finance Council. She is a person who always offers solutions rather than problems.”
— Reverend James McDevitt



ST. ALOYSIUS PARISH, NEW CANAAN: MR. AND MRS. NICHOLAS YANICELLI — “Nicholas and Carroll are active in the parish and take part in church activities sponsored by the Order of Malta. They contribute to the vibrant life of the parish.”
— Reverend Monsignor William Scheyd



ST. ANDREW PARISH, BRIDGEPORT: MR. ALEX SCHILLACI, SR. — “Not only is he a founding member but he physically helped build the building. Over the years, Alex has been an example of stewardship in action. Today, at 90 years old, he serves as an Usher.”
— Reverend Eugene R. Szantyr



ST. ANN PARISH, BRIDGEPORT: MR. TOM CORBI — “Tom has been a devoted member of St. Ann Parish since 1961. He is the glue for the Parish Buildings and Grounds Committee and has been a member of the Parish Council since 2005. He is always willing to help.”
— Reverend Peter Lynch



ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA PARISH, FAIRFIELD: MRS. CHRISTINE FERRARA — “Chris is the parishioner every parish would love to have: a Trustee, Parish Council member, a Catechist, a Lector at daily Mass, a Special Minister of the Eucharist, and a member of the Adult Choir.”
— Reverend John Baran



ST. BENEDICT PARISH, STAMFORD: MS. SILVIA AGUILAR — “Silvia’s generosity is truly unconditional. She has assisted the Virtus Training; prepared Religious Education programs and attended Synod sessions. She does all of this while wearing the most welcoming smile.”
— Reverend Gustavo Falla



ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA PARISH, RIVERSIDE: MR. AND MRS. DOUGLAS PULLICK — “Doug and Cyndy volunteer their time to the New Covenant Soup Kitchen in Stamford, are actively involved in the St. Catherine’s Players and have served on the Parish Advisory Council.”
— Reverend Monsignor Alan Detscher



ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA PARISH, TRUMBULL: MR. CARMINE ADIMANDO — “Carm is the longtime chair of the Parish Finance Council. He continues to give generously of his many talents to the parish and beyond.”
— Reverend Joseph Marcello



ST. CECILIA PARISH, STAMFORD: MR. BRUCE VUKSON — “Bruce is an Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist and a valuable member of the Social Concerns Team for the parish. Bruce oversees the annual Thanksgiving and Easter Food Drives.”
— Reverend Albert G. Pinciario III



ST. CHARLES BORROMEO PARISH, BRIDGEPORT: MR. MIKE BASSO — “Mike has fully dedicated himself to the growth of the parish by dedication to the Knights of Columbus and the Parish Pastoral Council. He always goes above and beyond what is asked of him.”
— Reverend Frank Gomez



ST. CLEMENT PARISH, STAMFORD: MRS. DEL SHEEHAN — “Del is always giving of her time and talents to whatever project she is asked to help out with such as the Parish Council, Ladies Guild and Novena. She is an example of living the joyful Christian way of life.”
— Reverend Joseph Molloy



ST. EDWARD THE CONFESSOR PARISH, NEW FAIRFIELD: MR. AND MRS. DANIEL HITE — “Daniel and Andria are a treasured part of the parish family, where they serve as a mentor couple in the Marriage Preparation program, Eucharistic Ministers, and Youth Ministry.”
— Reverend Nick Cirillo



ST. ELIZABETH SETON PARISH, RIDGEBFIELD: MR. AND MRS. JOHN BURNS — “They have been taking care of many newborns until the child is placed in the right home or with parents who have chosen to adopt these children. They are pro-life every step of the way.”
— Reverend Joseph Prince



ST. EMERY PARISH, FAIRFIELD: MR. HENRY KUTASH — “Henry, a life-long parishioner, is always readily available to volunteer for parish activities: bingo, parish picnics and parish meals. Henry has also assisted with the upkeep of the various parish buildings.”
— Reverend Guido Montanaro

2015 Saint Augustine Medal of Service



ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI PARISH, WESTON: MS. KAY BYRNES — “Kay is co-leader of the annual homefront project for 21 years. She has been a Soup Kitchen leader for 25 years, a Eucharistic Minister and scheduler for 20 years, member of the Senior Lunch Team for 10 years.” — *Reverend Michael Dunn*



ST. GABRIEL PARISH, STAMFORD: MR. JOSEPH RAINONE, JR. — “Joe reflects a very fine, generous spirit, sharing his time, talent and treasure as a Religious Education teacher, exquisite baker and dedicated Usher. Thank you Joe!” — *Reverend William Quinlan*



ST. GEORGE PARISH, BRIDGEPORT: MS. ANA E. RIVERA — “Ana lives a good life as a Catholic. She is a wonderful mother and grandmother, a Minister of the Eucharist and a home visitor to the sick and needy. She is very generous and loving.” — *Reverend Elio Sosa*



ST. GREGORY THE GREAT PARISH, DANBURY: MR. PAUL VALERI — “Paul is the ‘go-to’ person, whether it be a leaking roof, broken water main or a thousand other things. Intelligent, capable and friendly, he embodies the servant heart.” — *Reverend Angelo Arrando*



ST. JAMES PARISH, STRATFORD: MS. MARCY KELLY — “Marcy has a great spirit of hospitality, and has a passionate love for the poor and marginalized. She gives witness to Matthew 25 — ‘what you do to the least of your brothers and sisters, you do to me.’” — *Reverend Thomas Lynch*



ST. JEROME PARISH, NORWALK: MR. WILLIAM J. O’CALLAGHAN — “Billy has been in the parish for 47 years and spends his life serving others. He has been a member of at least 20 Emmaus Retreat Teams and helps with every parish event. ‘Billy is a saint.’” — *Reverend David Blanchfield*



ST. JOHN PARISH, DARIEN: MR. RICHARD SLAGLE — “Dick has faithfully served as the chair of the Parish Finance Council for the past six years and brings both a faithful and professional approach to all of his work for the Church.” — *Reverend Frank Hoffmann*



ST. JOSEPH PARISH, BROOKFIELD: MR. PETER BRADY — “Peter is the founder of Handy Dandy Handy Man, a ministry to assist seniors and low income people with critical repairs to their home and property and of other services performed in the name of Jesus Christ.” — *Reverend George O’Neill*



ST. JOSEPH PARISH, BROOKFIELD: MS. PATRICIA THARRINGTON — “Pat has been a ‘go to person’ in times of need. An Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist, Lector, Pro-Life Chair, and 8th Station Bereavement Ministry co-ordinator, and much more.” — *Reverend George O’Neill*



ST. JOSEPH PARISH, DANBURY: MR. AND MRS. ERNEST LECLERCQ (POSTHUMOUSLY) — “Ernie and Anne devoted their time, talent and treasure for the good of the community. Anne is a Lector and Bible Study facilitator, while Ernie was an Usher and Scoutmaster.” — *Reverend Samuel Scott*



ST. JOSEPH PARISH, NORWALK: MRS. DOROTHY ROMANELLI — “Dorothy has been married to her husband, John, for 50 years and has been an active Eucharistic Minister, member of the raffle committee, ParishSoft coordinator, Soup Kitchen and Fiesta Dinner volunteer.” — *Reverend Jhon Gomez*



ST. JOSEPH PARISH, SHELTON: MS. FRANCES FREER — “For her selfless dedication to welcoming all who visit the ‘Coffee Café’: which is provided as a fellowship and gathering place after all weekend Masses.” — *Reverend Monsignor Christopher Walsh*



ST. JUDE PARISH, MONROE: MR. AND MRS. JOHN MERCALDO — “John and Nora have been active in St. Jude Parish for 39 years. John recently retired from the Parish Finance Council after many years of service. Together, they chair the Hospitality Ministry.” — *Reverend Monsignor Dariusz Zielonka*



ST. LADISLAUS PARISH, NORWALK: MS. RUTH ALTPFORT — “Ruth has been very faithful to the parish. She has been in charge of many activities and is very dedicated to her duties. She is still very active and at her advanced age, is always willing to help.” — *Reverend Juan Acosta*



ST. LAWRENCE PARISH, SHELTON: MR. CARLOS PEREZ — “As a Lector, Eucharistic Minister, Parish Council member, Knight of Columbus and Parish Chef and Maitre’d, Carlos’ generous service and hospitality is an inspiration to the parish.” — *Reverend Michael Jones*



ST. LEO PARISH, STAMFORD: MR. AND MRS. JOHN ROTHERMICH — “Helen and John are lifelong faithful members of St. Leo Parish. They are involved in every spiritual, charitable and social endeavor in the parish. They are both daily communicants.” — *Reverend James Grosso*

2015 Saint Augustine Medal of Service



ST. LUKE PARISH, WESTPORT: MR. AND MRS. STANLEY BRYK — “Stan and Laura are faith-filled people who serve the parish and beyond in many ways: Flower Committee, fundraising events for the Charitable Outreach and Soup Kitchen Ministry.” — *Reverend Monsignor Andrew Varga*



ST. MARGARET MARY ALACOQUE PARISH, SHELTON: MR. AND MRS. LOUIS SALEMME — “A very devout Catholic couple, the Salemmes are both dedicated to the service of the parish with faithfulness and humility. Louis, is a member of the Parish Council. Rayna is the Parish Nurse.” — *Reverend Ciprian Bejan*



ST. MARGARET SHRINE, BRIDGEPORT: MR. AND MRS. RICH LORIS — “Rich and Peggy are volunteers extraordinaires, who help wherever there is a need, whether taking care of the grounds or leading Virtus Training. They don’t know how to say ‘no’ to anything.” — *Deacon Donald Faust*



ST. MARGUERITE BOURGEOYS PARISH, BROOKFIELD: MS. MARY FRANK — “Mary’s continued support for vocations shows her deep love for the priesthood. She is always ready to lend her talents and time whenever volunteers are needed at the parish.” — *Reverend Shawn Cutler*



ST. MARK PARISH, STRATFORD: MR. JOSEPH DIPRONIO — “Joe is a dedicated Sacristan, Altar Server, Eucharistic Minister and a volunteer in the Ministry of the Sick. He is a man of deep faith.” — *Reverend Birendra Soreng*



ST. MARY PARISH, BETHEL: MR. AND MRS. JOHN STOCKS — “Mary and John are dedicated parishioners working in ministries such as the Confirmation Program, Youth Group, Religious Education, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion and Knights of Columbus.” — *Reverend Corey Piccinino*



ST. MARY PARISH, BRIDGEPORT: BENIGNO MONTALVAN — “Benigno has been a valuable parishioner for many years, helping in the many projects of the parish, directing the Holy Name Society and the Ministry of Hospitality.” — *Reverend Rolando Torres*



ST. MARY PARISH, BRIDGEPORT: LYDIA OROZCO — “Lydia has been a great help to the parish for many years, directing the Ladies Guild, the Ministry of Hospitality and being always ready to get involved, share her faith and reach out to others.” — *Reverend Rolando Torres*



ST. MARY PARISH, GREENWICH: MR. CARMINE TOSCHES — “Carmine is a longtime member of St. Mary Parish. He assists in counting the weekly collection and is always prepared to help for the good of the parish.” — *Reverend Ciprian LaPastina*



ST. MARY PARISH, NORWALK: MR. AND MRS. CARLOS MARIO OSORIO — “Carlos Mario and Ana Deisi are outstanding examples of what it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ and to be members of his body, the Church. Their service is wide and deep.” — *Reverend Richard Cipolla*



ST. MARY PARISH, RIDGEFIELD: MRS. MARGARET SCALLY — “For the past 15 years, Margaret has generously given of her time and talent to Religious Education. In addition to the Adult Scripture Study, she is a member of the Women’s Ministry.” — *Reverend Monsignor Laurence Bronkiewicz*



ST. MARY PARISH, STAMFORD: MS. SHARON MACKNIGHT — “From being the in-house photographer to running a highly efficient Religious Goods Sales operation, Sharon is always doing something for the benefit of the parish, while chairing the Annual Raffle!” — *Reverend Gustavo Falla*



ST. MATTHEW PARISH, NORWALK: MR. AND MRS. JOSEPH SQUEO — “Over the years, both have served as Eucharistic Ministers and Catechists. Aggie also chairs the St. Matthew Fitness Club and the Flower Ministry for the church, assisted by her husband.” — *Reverend Monsignor Walter Orlowski*



ST. MAURICE PARISH, STAMFORD: MRS. ELMIERE “SAM” HAMMOCK (POSTHUMOUSLY) — “‘Sam’ Hammock was overwhelmingly, and selflessly active in parish life for many years. Uncomplaining and uncompromising, she witnessed by her life and in her suffering.” — *Reverend Alfred A. Riendeau*



ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL PARISH, BRIDGEPORT: MS. MARY SALWIER — “Mary has been a dedicated, active member for the past 60 years. She is a member of the Parish Council, as well as a Lay Member of the Parish Finance Council, and Vice President of the Senior Club.” — *Reverend Stefan Morawski*



ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL PARISH, GREENWICH: MS. DOROTHY RIERA — “Dorothy has made a noteworthy contribution to St. Michael Parish for over 25 years as a volunteer, Pastoral Council Member, leader and communicator.” — *Reverend Ian Jeremiah*

2015 Saint Augustine Medal of Service



ST. PATRICK PARISH, REDDING: MR. AND MRS. BRIAN COURTNEY — “Brian and Carol have been members of the parish for 40 years. Brian was a key figure on the Building Committee of the new church, and Carol is a Past President of the Women’s Guild.” — *Reverend Joseph Cervero*



ST. PAUL PARISH, GREENWICH: MS. MARIANNE GILL — “Marianne is always willing to fill in, whether it’s as a Eucharistic Minister, Lector, Offertory Counter, or with the altar linens, the Women’s Guild, Saturday Rosary Group, and prayer services at the local nursing homes.” — *Reverend Frank Winn*



ST. PETER PARISH, BRIDGEPORT: MR. RICHARD DAVIS — “Richard does great volunteer work and is a Parish Finance Council member. He is a committed parishioner who dedicates many hours to the parish and is always willing and able to give a helping hand.” — *Reverend José Rebaque*



ST. PETER PARISH, DANBURY: MS. ANA ESPINAL — “Ana is a tremendous help in the parish office, and she also serves as an Usher and Eucharistic Minister at Mass. She leads the Rosary prior to Mass and is present at Baptisms to welcome and direct families.” — *Reverend Gregg Mecca*



ST. PHILIP PARISH, NORWALK: MR. MICHAEL J. MARINO — “Michael exemplifies living the Liturgy in a full, active and conscious style, totally and willingly. His spirituality and compassion are indeed graces and blessings, that enrich the parish in countless ways.” — *Reverend Michael Boccaccio*



ST. PIUS X PARISH, FAIRFIELD: MR. AND MRS. ANDREW TONER — “The Toners have served the St. Pius X community for many years. They have a strong faith, which they shared with their children and others. St. Pius Parish is deeply blessed by their presence.” — *Reverend Sam Kachuba*



ST. ROCH PARISH, GREENWICH: MR. AND MRS. STEVEN WORTMAN — “Debbie is a Parish Trustee and member of the Prayer Shawl/Knitting Angels Group and Woman’s Guild, and Steve has served as Chair of the Finance Committee.” — *Reverend Matthew Mauriello*



ST. ROSE OF LIMA PARISH, NEWTOWN: MR. AND MRS. ALBERT KEOGLER — “Al and Adrienne are daily communicants, Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist, Catechists, Youth Group volunteers, teachers in parish natural family planning and delegates to the Synod.” — *Reverend Monsignor Robert Weiss*



ST. STEPHEN PARISH, TRUMBULL: MR. DAVID FERENCE — “David is Chair of the Finance Council, and he and his wife served as lay Co-Chairs of the 2015 Catholic Appeal. In short, Dave has been a great asset to the pastor and the parish of St. Stephen’s.” — *Reverend Christopher Samele*



ST. THERESA PARISH, TRUMBULL: MR. AND MRS. STEPHEN AMBROSE — “Steve and Louise have given outstanding generous service to St. Theresa’s for many years, including Our Lady’s co-fraternity, home and hospital visitation and much more.” — *Reverend Brian Gannon*



ST. THOMAS AQUINAS PARISH, FAIRFIELD: MR. AND MRS. JOHN LETT — “Jack and Janet have been active members of the parish and school, since their arrival in the parish in 1989. Jack serves on the Parish Finance Board, while Janet is a Eucharistic Minister.” — *Reverend Victor Martin*



ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH, DARIEN: MS. CHRISTINE BELDEN TSCHERNJOWSKI — “Chrissy has served in many parish ministries: Religious Formation, Appalachia Social Outreach and the Parish Nursing Ministry. She is a model of the good and faithful steward.” — *Reverend Paul G. Murphy*



ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE PARISH, NORWALK: MS. ELLEN MORRONE — “Ellen has been a member of St. Thomas for over 60 years and has served selflessly as a Eucharistic Minister and a Catechist. She is a faithful servant to our Lord.” — *Reverend Mirek Stachurski*



ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE PARISH, NORWALK: MR. AND MRS. STEPHEN WEGIEL, JR. — “The Wegiel’s joined St. Thomas in 1975 and have been faithful servants to the parish. They are Lectors and Eucharistic Ministers, true parish leaders and tireless volunteers.” — *Reverend Mirek Stachurski*



THE CATHEDRAL PARISH, BRIDGEPORT: MR. THOMAS GAUDET — “A member of St. Augustine Church and The Cathedral Parish for 15 years, Tom serves as a liaison between the two churches of The Cathedral Parish. He also serves as Master of Ceremonies.” — *Reverend John Ringley*



THE OFFICE OF DEVELOPMENT-CATHOLIC CENTER, BRIDGEPORT: MR. AND MRS. ROWAN TAYLOR — “Julie and Rowan led the Annual Catholic Appeal, not only as Chair Couple, but as generous donors. Their unique style of speaking at receptions inspired many.” — *Mr. William McLean*



St. Vincent's Workplace Spirituality

Lunch & Learn refreshes the spirit

By PAT HENNESSY

"I try to spread hope—to share the tools that have helped me," says Steven Hodson at a "Lunch & Learn" talk sponsored by Workplace Spirituality at St. Vincent's Medical Center. "Most of all, through my music and talk I hope to bring some of the inspiration I've received through my devotion to our Blessed Mother."

The Lunch & Learn series is one of the many programs of Workplace Spirituality, part of St. Vincent's Mission Services. "Workplace Spirituality functions give staff the opportunity to deepen their own spiritual life, and they connect them to the wider community St. Vincent's serves," says coordinator Lucinda Ames.

With that end in mind, Ames invited volunteers in parish Comfort Shawl programs and other pastoral services to attend the talk.

"To come and have your spirit refreshed—it's wonderful," says Sue Kiley, who runs a free yoga program for cancer patients and survivors through SWIM Across the Sound.

Hodson has been a music minister for over 25 years, serving

the parishes of Holy Name of Jesus and Our Lady of Peace in Stratford, St. Gabriel in Milford and St. Theresa in Trumbull. He has recently entered the deaconate program in the Diocese of Bridgeport and belongs to the Sons of Saint Joseph prayer group and Knights of Columbus at St. Theresa. The owner of Hodson Realty, he lives in Trumbull with his wife, Susan. The couple has four children.

During his talk, he shared inspirations that have been beneficial to his spiritual growth, including simple practices like saying the Rosary daily on his drive to work, Eucharistic Adoration, and frequent Mass. His uplifting music was interspersed with personal dialogues with the Blessed Mother, messages from the reported Marian apparitions in Medjugorje, Bible quotes and reflections of the saints.

The music and lyrics from a variety of sources, most of them fresh and original, gave added emphasis to his contemplative message. "Mary points to Jesus. That's her goal, to lead everybody to her son," Hodson said.

He has compiled his experiences and quotes into a book, "That

All May Know," about how his devotion to Mary has enriched his life. It is available through Amazon and Barnes and Noble. "Mary can bring you peace, so that you can bring the peace of the Lord to other people," he says.

His contribution to Lunch & Learn had a positive impact on his listeners. "It opened me up to realize how Mary is there for us with Jesus," says cancer survivor Cindy Held, a member of St. Jude Parish in Monroe.

Additional Lunch & Learn talks are planned for Advent and midwinter.

Throughout the year, St. Vincent's offers a number of activities both to deepen spiritual life and to express it in practical ways. A Farmer's Market provides healthful, locally grown food available to those in the community who need it most. Later in the season, the House of Hope collects non-perishable items to donate to local food banks.

Veteran's Day provides another opportunity to express St. Vincent's spirit. "In the past we have had posters of employee family members who are in active service," Ames says. "This year I am creating one of current

employees who are veterans."

Before Thanksgiving, "Bread & Blessings," with fresh-baked rolls and prayers will be offered in several languages by staff members, reminding them that their community is built on the strength of different backgrounds and faith traditions.

As the weather turns colder, a collection drive will be gathering new coats for patients who get discharged without appropriate clothing. Giving Tree collects toys and clothing for patients in need at Christmas.

A memorial service headed by Deacon Tim Bolton in the Pastoral Care Department in November will remember deceased employees and volunteers and the families of our current staff and volunteer corps.

Jewish staff members and St. Vincent's Jewish chaplain will take charge of a menorah lighting for the eight days of Hanukkah (December 6-14 this year), and Workplace Spirituality holds a Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony in the main lobby, where the 2015 Employee of the Year will put the angel on the tree, accompanied by choirs from local schools.



MUSIC, MESSAGES and spiritual reflection by Steven Hodson brought a contemplative spirit to a Lunch & Learn talk at St. Vincent's Medical Center. The talk was one of the many programs sponsored by Workplace Spirituality at St. Vincent's.

"There's lots more, from future Listen & Learn talks to Three Kings Day and on to Easter," says Ames. "Don't get me started or I'll get carried away!"



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B'NAI ISRAEL FROM PAGE 11

by the French Jewish historian Jules Isaac, who had a private audience with Pope John XXIII. Isaac's family was killed by the Nazis during the Shoah. After World War II, he devoted himself to researching the origins of cultural and religious anti-Semitism. During his meeting with John XXIII, he summarized in a portfolio his research into the history of the Christian "teaching of contempt" for Jews and Judaism.

"This meeting is generally credited with being a major impetus for the Pope's decision to direct Cardinal Augustin Bea to draft a declaration on the Catholic Church's relationship to the Jewish people for the Second Vatican Council," said the Rabbi.

At the end of his remarks, the bishop offered one concrete way by which inter-religious dialogue could develop further. In many ways, it is the same way that can be used by people of good will to overcome much of the polarization and division that now marks our society.

"The way is a simple one. It is a personal commitment to seek and foster friendship with those with whom we share our neighborhoods and community. While the work of theologians is important to foster a greater theological understanding between religious communities, there can be no substitute for friendship among neighbors to create lasting unity and peace," the bishop said.

Since its proclamation fifty years ago, *Nostra Aetate* has been praised by the U.S. Congress, which passed a resolution acknowledging *Nostra Aetate*, and the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C. The anniversary has also been remembered at the Vatican's Gregorian University itself and at major centers of Christian-Jewish understanding around the United States.



WESTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY NEWMAN CENTER Mass Schedule



The WCSU Newman Center has offered Catholic Mass in the area for over 10 years. Like other universities in the area, Newman is now offering a public Mass. The Newman Centers were inspired by Cardinal John Henry Newman in order to provide Catholic services and programs to help form young Catholic adults during their collegiate formation.

NOVEMBER SCHEDULE

November 1, 2015
November 8, 2015
November 15, 2015
November 22, 2015

DECEMBER SCHEDULE

December 6, 2015
December 13, 2015

JANUARY SCHEDULE

January 24, 2016
January 31, 2016

FEBRUARY SCHEDULE

February 7, 2016
February 21, 2016
February 28, 2016

MARCH SCHEDULE

March 6, 2016
March 13, 2016

APRIL SCHEDULE

April 3, 2016
April 10, 2016
April 17, 2016
April 24, 2016

MAY SCHEDULE

May 1, 2016
May 13, 2016

SPECIAL MASSES

Immaculate Conception

December 8, 2015

Ash Wednesday

February 10, 2016

Ascension Thursday

May 5, 2016

Mass is celebrated on the WestSide Campus in the Classroom Building, Room 218 at 8:00pm. Follow signs for parking.

"With everyone's busy lifestyle, 8pm Mass offers everyone a greater chance to worship. It's a great way to end your day." Fr. Jeffrey Couture, Newman Center Chaplain (couturej@wcsu.edu)

Music is performed by a select group of students from the WCSU Music Department. The music is contemporary and up to date. Songs from Chris Tomlin, Lauren Daigle, Matt Redman and many more Christian artists are being performed. **Come celebrate Mass with us!**

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Catholic Schools

Catholic Academy dinner surpasses goal

BY SUSAN CECERE

More than 55 people from Fairfield and Westchester counties turned out for an intimate fund-raising dinner at Polpo Restaurant in Greenwich, donating more than \$224,000 to the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport.

With its four campuses of St. Andrew, St. Ann, St. Augustine and St. Raphael, the Catholic Academy educates 940 students, most from inner-city Bridgeport.

"We are completely thrilled and overwhelmed," said academy executive director Sister Joan Magnetti. "Our faithful supporters turned out tonight, as well as so many new donors who really believe in our mission and our students. This will further our commitment to raise over \$2 million annually for scholarship awards."

Guest speaker Bridgeport

Police Chief Joseph Gaudett, an alum of St. Augustine's, put it best when he said, "The Catholic Academy offers three things: faith, hope and love. Some of these students feel helpless in their surroundings and wonder about their future. Our schools offer them a safe alternative, caring staff, and faith they won't find anywhere else."

One of the highlights of the evening was a personal testimony by Dennis Boyd, a former Catholic Academy Board member who sponsors a student through the academy's Leaders of Tomorrow program, which allows an individual or group of individuals to contribute \$4,000 per school year toward a child's tuition.

"For the past three years I've gotten to know my student, Maria, through handwritten cards, artwork and report cards

that I receive throughout the year. I even had the opportunity to meet her, along with her principal, at her school recently. It was priceless," Boyd said.

"Sometimes my own daughters will call me from college asking for money and I tell them, 'Maria needs it more.' She's really a part of our family and even my own kids look forward to her letters," Boyd quipped.

Ron Rosa, Polpo's owner, graciously hosted and underwrote the food for the entire event for the second year in a row. The menu included chopped salad with ricotta salata and Granny Smith apples, orecchiette alla Barese, Branzino al Forno, Chicken Martini, Veal Carciofi and a sampling of Polpo's beloved desserts—tiramisu, napoleon, cannoli, cheesecake and apple pie.

(The Catholic Academy of



DINNER AT POLPO—Jim and Kathy Colica were among the 55 special guests at a recent fund raising dinner at Polpo Restaurant in Greenwich. In addition to enjoying a delicious meal the guests donated more than \$224,000 to the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport.

Bridgeport will host its next fundraiser, a Ladies Luncheon, at Woodway Country Club in Darien on March 2,

2016. For more information, please contact Susan Cecere: scecere@diobpt.org or 203.362.2990.)

Immaculate H.S. celebrates 50th!

DANBURY—In celebration of 50 years of pride, tradition and excellence, Immaculate High School held a series of events over Columbus Day Weekend, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the first graduating class.



MONSIGNOR JOHN HOSSAN (l-r) (first Principal of Immaculate High School), The Most Reverend Frank J. Caggiano, and Rev. William Carey (former faculty member of Immaculate High School), at Immaculate High School's 50th Anniversary Jubilee Mass.

Immaculate High School, the premiere college prep school in Western CT, kicked off the celebration with a Friday evening football game featuring a special halftime ceremony emceed by former longtime principal Robert Gerwien. A sold-out alumni tailgate event and fireworks display added to the evening's festivities. Saturday morning included a run at Tarrywile Park, a family festival in Mustang Valley, a pancake breakfast and school tours. Saturday night featured a 50th Anniversary reunion event, in which over 300 alumni came "home" to celebrate 50 years of excellence.

A beautiful Jubilee Mass, celebrated by Bishop Frank J. Caggiano, was held on Sunday morning. The Immaculate gymnasium was filled with students, families, alumni, and current and former faculty and staff. A breakfast was served following the Mass, as hundreds said farewell to a weekend filled with Mustang spirit and pride.

Director of Alumni Relations and IHS alumna, Denise (Henry) Suarez commented, "This is a true milestone in the life of the school, and we were excited to welcome back alumni from all

➤ CONTINUED ON PAGE 29

An Advent Lecture for Thomas Merton's 100th Birthday Year

Rev. Daniel P. Horan, OFM

"Thomas Merton and the 'Advent' of Christ in Our Lives"

Date: Saturday, December 12, 2015

Time: 1- 3 pm

Place: Dolan School of Business, Fairfield University
1073 North Benson Road, Fairfield, Connecticut 06824

Light Refreshments Provided

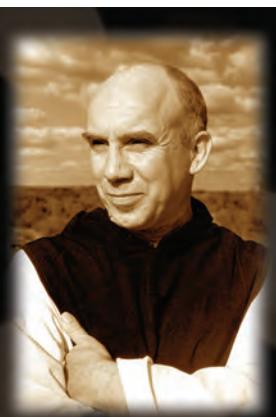
A FREE Event Sponsored by the Diocese of Bridgeport Year of Consecrated Life Committee

The public is welcome!

For our planning, by December 3rd, RSVP to:

Sr. Nancy Strillacci | 203.416.1511 | srstrillacci@diobpt.org

Rev. Daniel P. Horan, OFM, is a Franciscan friar residing at St. Anthony Shrine in Boston, a columnist for America Magazine, and the author of the award-winning book *The Franciscan Heart of Thomas Merton: A New Look at the Spiritual Influence on his Life, Thought, and Writing.*



Consecrated Life

Sisters of the Company of the Saviour

Meet the Sisters of the Company of the Saviour, who have a convent in Bridgeport: Sister Arceli Fernández, Sister Constanza López, Sister Maria Alguacil and Sister Isabel Soto. Their order is a relatively new one, founded in Spain and approved by the Holy See in 1952.

Hometown: All the Sisters come from Spain, where their order was founded. Sisters Isabel and Maria come from Madrid, Spain's capitol, in the center of the country. Sister Araceli comes from Palencia, in the north, and Sister Constanza from nearby Valladolid.

Order/Institute/Congregation: The Company of the Saviour, founded by Mother María Félix Torres. A teaching order, it follows the Ignatian (Jesuit) tradition. Like the Jesuits, they take a fourth vow of obedience to the pope. Of the choice of name for the order, Mother María Félix wrote: "It is a name of light and sweetness; it contains all mysteries of God's love."

Teaching is the charism of the order. The Company of the Saviour has schools and a House of Spirituality in Spain and a number of other countries. Last year, they opened their newest school in Benin, Africa. Although it is specifically a Catholic school, most of the students are Muslims whose parents are drawn to the school by the Sisters' spirituality.

Years in Vowed Profession: Sister Arceli professed her final



WITH A CHARISM OF EDUCATION, the Sisters of the Company of Our Saviour in Bridgeport assist in four parishes in this diocese: (l-r) Sister Maria Alguacil, Sister Araceli Fernández, Sister Constanza López and Sister Isabel Soto Jiménez.

vows in 1968, Sister Constanza in 1972, Sister Maria in 2005 and Sister Isabel, the youngest, in 2010.

Ministry, now or formerly: The Sisters came to St. Mary Parish in Bridgeport in 1961 to work for the education of African-American and Puerto Rican children. They now serve in religious education at St. Mary's, Blessed Sacrament and St. Peter parishes in Bridgeport and Assumption Parish in Fairfield.

"In Caroline House, with the children in the daycare center, we feel like we're at home," says Sister Constanza.

"I love teaching," says Sister Arceli. "I've been teaching kindergarten in the Diocese of Bridgeport for 33 years."

A favorite image or title for

Jesus that resonates with me: God's love is at the heart of the images each Sister holds dearest. Sister Maria loves the picture of the Prodigal Son. "Jesus is the father in that story, embracing and kissing the son who had abandoned him."

For Sister Arceli, it's the figure of Jesus knocking at the door. "He's always knocking at our hearts." Sister Isabel loves the Divine Mercy image. "Jesus is looking at us directly, blessing us with his hand, while mercy flows from his heart."

Sister Constanza loves representation of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus teaching the Beatitudes. "It tells me that real happiness comes from living the Beatitudes—not just for Sisters but for everyone."

And, of course, all the Sisters love images of Jesus teaching the

children who surround him.

Person who influenced my faith life: The Sisters give full credit to the strong faith and devotion of their parents, and to the joy of the Sisters who they knew as children. "It was my grandmother most of all," says Sister Arceli. She took me to Mass every day. Mass and the Rosary—I had to go, whether I wanted to or not."

A Connecticut place I especially like:

"As a community, we like to go together to St. Mary by the Sea and say the Rosary as we go along the walkway," says Sister Arceli. Sister Maria adds, "The people like to see us in our habits. They always stop to talk to us."

The Sisters also enjoy the sweeping view from the lawn

behind Bellarmine Hall at Fairfield University. "You can see for miles, all the way back to the Sound," says Sister Isabel.

If I could have lunch with a saint it would be:

"I would not be able, because I would have to have such a big party!" says Sister Isabel. Sister Arceli has a large number on her lunch list, too. "St. Ignatius and St. Francis, who had such a big influence on our order," she says. "And then St. Teresa of Avila—such a strong woman, and very funny, too. And St. Therese, the Little Flower, for her humility."

Something I most appreciate about community life: "You share not only your gifts but the gifts that each person has," says Sister Arceli. "It helps our

▶ CONTINUED ON PAGE 33



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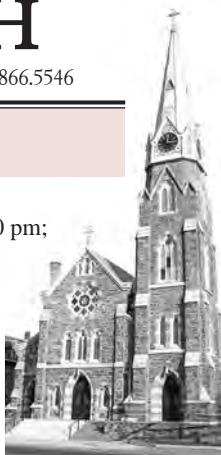
Sunday: 8:00 am, 9:30 am **Latin High Mass,**
11:30 am English High Mass,
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Annulment: New Short Process

Procedures pertaining to the marriage nullity cases

By **MSGR. DARIUSZ
ZIELONKA, J.C.D.**

On September 8, 2015, the history of the Church was marked by the promulgation of new procedural norms and the new law pertaining to marriage nullity cases handled by the diocesan tribunals. Pope Francis issued that day two documents describing these changes: *Mitis Iudex Dominus Iesus* [MI] (Lord Jesus the Gentle Judge) for the Latin Church and *Mitis et Misericors Iesus* (Gentle and Merciful Jesus) for the Catholic Churches of Eastern Rites. Though the changes introduced only 14 new articles on procedural rules, and 20 new canons (1671-1691) out of 1752 total canons in the 1983 Code of Canon Law, they significantly alter current Tribunal operations. The Tribunal will undergo a three-stage restructuring: planning (currently underway); implementation (December 1, 2015–January 31, 2016) and reopening of the Tribunal on February 1, 2016.

The implementation stage requires many tasks to be accomplished: personnel and clergy training; implementation of the new technology (hardware and software); testing; development of the new forms and literature; creating a new website; indexing and prioritizing of the current cases. What needs to be noted is that the implementation stage takes place around the Christmas and New Year holiday season.

The changes announced by the Pope received quite a bit of attention from the media. Some of the media outlets ventured to interpret the new law. While some changes are obvious, and do not require much interpretation, others were presented in a confusing way, as the rest of the canons (in the current 1983 Code of Canon Law) were not taken into consideration. Hence, I thought it is a good time to talk about the changes included in MI from a canon lawyer's perspective.

The Changes in General

(1) There are several changes that apply to the general procedures of the Tribunal. First is the removal of the automatic appeal to the Second Instance Tribunal.

Before the MI change, each marriage nullity case, when

completed by a First Instance Tribunal, and if the decision was affirmative (that is: the nullity of the marriage has been proven), was automatically submitted to the Second Instance Tribunal. If both courts agree on the decision, it became executable; if the courts differ in decisions, the case was judged as not proven. The parties in the case or the Defender of the Bond could request an appeal to the court of Third Instance: Roman Rota. Such cases could go on for many years.

With the MI changes, the Pope removed the automatic Second Instance appeal. That means that the decision of the First Instance Tribunal (your diocesan court) becomes executable after 15 days if no one appeals. If, however, one of the parties or Defender of the Bond decides to appeal, they can do so in the Hartford Archdiocesan Tribunal (Second Instance for Bridgeport Diocese) or directly to Third Instance: the Roman Rota.

(2) Another change to the process is removal of administrative fees for cases submitted after December 8, 2015. The Pope strongly suggested that, having in mind salaries of the Tribunal workers and administrative expenses, the nullity cases should be free of charge (MI: Fundamental Criteria: VI). Bishop Caggiano decided to remove administrative fees for the nullity cases submitted after December 8, 2015. However, some cases and some grounds of nullity require by law an expert opinion before the judge can issue his or her decision. These expert fees will vary and the parties in the case (Petitioner and/or Respondent) will be directly responsible for them at the time of the visit with the expert. The experts can be: a psychologist, a psychiatrist, a doctor issuing a medical opinion, etc. These expert opinions, though private, have to be released to the judge(s) and in some form to the parties.

(3) Some of the media erroneously reported that the new law changed or added new grounds for a marriage nullity process. They quoted Article 14 §1 of MI as the source of their information. In fact, this is not so.

The Shorter Process (*Processus Brevior*)

Now we move on to discuss the new process introduced to canon law by Pope Francis: the shorter process of nullity in the Tribunal. The new process envisions that AFTER the case was accepted by the Tribunal the grounds and proofs are so clear that within the next 30 days the bishop may decide on it. His decision would become an executable sentence after an additional appeal period of 15 days. Easy, right? Well, let's dig into the law.

The first condition to qualify for this process is an agreement (positive, not presumed) of BOTH parties to request the nullity process (c. 1683 MI). Without such an agreement the case cannot be admitted to the shorter process. Also, if one of the parties withdraws such an agreement, for instance after formulation of the grounds, the case has to transfer to the ordinary process.

In addition, the couple has to use an advocate or parish priest to help them with the gathering evidence that needs to be submitted with their application for the nullity process (c. 1684 MI). Some nullity grounds might be challenged by the advocate who will help the couple gather the proper documents, witnesses, medical records, etc., prior to petition. Though further evidence can be submitted up to 27 days after the grounds were formulated by the Judicial Vicar, it is presumed that most of the evidence is attached to the petition. The case cannot be directed to short process if there is no sufficient evidence submitted with the petition.

The Judicial Vicar reviews every case that comes to the Tribunal (c. 1676 MI) and if he sees proper evidence, he accepts the case, directs it to the ordinary or the shorter process, and notifies the Defender of the Bond giving him/her 15 days to express his or her views on the petition. After these 15 days, the Judicial Vicar formulates the grounds for the nullity case (c. 1685 MI) and the 30-day clock starts! The date of session when the bishop is presiding as the judge is sent to the parties. If the parties and their advocates wish to attend the session, they may do so.

At the session the bishop might announce his decision immediately, or do so via letter shortly thereafter. There are only two possibilities for the bishop to consider: he can give an affirmative decision (nullity of marriage was proven) or if he does not have moral certitude, he will direct the case to the ordinary process of the same Tribunal.

After the bishop renders an affirmative decision, the parties and the Defender of the Bond have 15 days to appeal this decision. The appeal would go to the Archbishop of Hartford or to Roman Rota. If no appeal was submitted, the decision is executable after 15 days from the sentence.

To summarize the shorter process, if all evidence is present and submitted at the time of petition, and if there is no appeal or other special circumstances, the shorter process takes about 90 days from submission of the case to the end of the appeal time. Again, to qualify for such process both parties (the Petitioner and the Respondent) have to agree to it explicitly. Grounds have to be clearly supported by the evidence. If even one of these conditions is not fulfilled, the case will be automatically directed to the ordinary process.

What happens when the Tribunal is closed?

The Tribunal of the Diocese of Bridgeport will be closed from December 1, 2015 to February 1, 2016. Many things need to be accomplished in that time: upgrading of the technology (hardware and software for case and document management), proper training in the new law for the staff and clergy, taking inventory of the current cases and inputting them to the case management software, creating of the new literature and forms, new website. Many of these are already in process, but it will take time to make sure we are prepared and fully operational on February 1, 2016.

My case is already in the Tribunal. What next?

The current cases will be reevaluated and assigned priority before new cases are accepted. If possible and the transition goes

according to plan, the staff of the Tribunal will be working on cases in January prior to official reopening. We will do our best to expedite them, but the cases will take a few months. Moreover, the decisions in these cases will not automatically have to go to the Second Instance Tribunal. The decision will be executable after 15 days, unless one of the parties chooses to appeal. Some of these cases are partially or fully prepaid. A possible refund would be considered only if the parties prove real hardship. If the case was submitted but not paid as it was not yet accepted, no fee will be assessed by the Tribunal. Parties still might be required to pay for an expert report directly to the expert.

When and how do I submit my new case?

Please consider waiting until February 1, 2016. All new cases will require new forms and directions which will be posted on the diocesan website (Tribunal section) sometime in January 2016. Since the new law introduces new process, old forms will not be accepted after December 8, 2015. Moreover, since the Tribunal will be officially closed until February 1, all new cases (with the new forms) which were mailed in prior to that day will be considered as if arrived to the office on the opening day, February 1, 2016.

Other languages?

Yes. The Tribunal will offer the process in other languages, especially in Spanish. They might not be ready by February 1, but we will continue to work on forms and directives as well as advocates who can speak other languages.

I hope that this article helped somewhat in answering your annulment cases questions. After the priests and deacons of the diocese attend training in new law (January and February) they will be able to answer some of your questions in your parishes. As mentioned, please check the diocesan website in January for more directives and the new Tribunal forms.

(Please refer to the fuller version of this article under the Tribunal tab online at www.bridgeport-diocese.com.)

St. Catherine Center

Mass celebrates people with special needs

FAIRFIELD—The sun shone through the stain-glass windows of Holy Cross Church as Bishop Frank J. Caggiano welcomed all to the annual Mass hosted by St. Catherine Center for Special Needs.

During Mass, students from St. Catherine Academy and two parishioners, one from St. Joseph Parish in Shelton and one

out the mission of the center and we are very grateful.”

St. Catherine Academy students, Vanessa Gomez, Patrick Nolan, Joanne Lindsay Paul, Jonathan Teixeira, Ellen Skoronski from St. Joseph’s and Francesco Cipollone from St. Edward’s were confirmed. Heriberto Moya, a St. Catherine Academy student, received his



from St. Edward the Confessor in New Fairfield, received Sacraments of Initiation witnessed by over 150 family and friends in attendance.

“Today we gather as a faith community to witness the loving presence of Jesus in these young people and adults,” said Helen Burland, executive director of St. Catherine Center for Special Needs. “All seven participants have prepared for their sacraments working with their teachers at St. Catherine Academy or within their parishes,” she continued. “These teachers are carrying

First Holy Communion and Anthony Virgile, also a student at St. Catherine’s, was baptized and received his First Holy Communion.

Father Robert Kinnally, chancellor of the diocese and rector of St. John Fisher Seminary, celebrated and Peter DeMarco and Sharon Christie led the congregation in song.

Following Mass, everyone proceeded out of church and headed behind the academy building for the dedication of the new, wheelchair-accessible garden. The garden was made possible through



the efforts of Andrew Aoyama, whose Eagle Scout project created the raised beds, and the generosity of donors, especially the CT Area Association of the Order of Malta.

“We gather today to bless this garden and remember Kay and Jerry Luff,” Burland said at the beginning of the dedication ceremony. “Their vision and dedication to the mission of St. Catherine Academy set an example for all of us. The children and young adults here are living examples of Jesus in our midst. This garden will serve as both

an area for quiet reflection and active learning.”

In attendance were Kelly Luff Weldon, a member of the Board of Directors of St. Catherine Center for Special Needs, Jennifer Luff Mitchell, Brad Luff and their families.

Bishop Caggiano proceeded to bless the garden and the crowd. Following the dedication, the crowd filtered through the academy building and headed to the gym for refreshments and photographs. It was a wonderful day of celebration filled with hope and joy.

**Gratitude and Blessing
to all those who coordinate,
teach, and volunteer in
Faith Formation
for the children and adults
of our parish.**

**St. Rose of Lima Parish
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Newtown, Connecticut

*Jesus said, “Let the children come to me
and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of God
belongs to such as these. — Luke 18:16*

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Your response to offering our future Disciples of Christ the very best we can offer in faith is evident in our program’s success. We are most proud of you.

We also thank our parents who sacrifice so much to allow their children to participate in our program. Your sacrifices today will assist them to become truly committed Catholic Christians in the future.

*Keep planting those seeds!
God bless you all!*

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*Thank you,
The St. Pius X Parish Family*

Sports

Revitalizing Trinity Catholic hockey

By **DON HARRISON**

Mike Bernard operates an exterminating business in his native Stamford, but he's still known as a "hockey guy." He's spent some 30 years in the game as a player, coach and, most recently, as the father of three sons who play the sport extremely well.

So now he's returning to Trinity Catholic High School as head coach to revive a program that endured a 4-16 season a year ago. Two of his three sons, Dan, a senior, and Kyle, a sophomore, are among the nucleus on which he will build.

"Last year was one of the worst years in the history of the

program," Bernard says. "It really needs to be put back together. There's no place to go but up."

Two winters ago, when Bernard served as an assistant

"We welcome
Mike's return
to the Trinity
family."

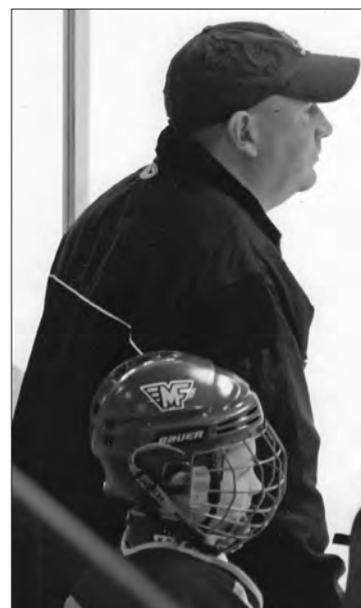
coach under Ken Smith, the Crusaders won their first eight games en route to a 15-7-1 record and berths in the FCIAC and state tournaments. Smith, though,

resigned to become the facilities manager at the Terry Conners Ice Rink, and a newcomer, Johnnie Chiapperino, stepped in as head coach and fared poorly last winter.

"Mike is a very knowledgeable hockey guy," Smith says. "He's been involved with hockey 30-odd years and really knows the game. He ran our offense when he was my assistant."

Bernard has a long, and far-ranging, association with the school. His wife, Megan Carroll, is a 1993 graduate of what was then Stamford Catholic. Their oldest son, Colin, was a first-team All-State defenseman at Trinity Catholic during the Crusaders' superb 2013-14 season (he's completing his high school education at Brunswick in Greenwich), while Dan and Kyle are T-C students now. The Bernards' daughter, Katie, 13, will enter T-C next fall.

Mike Bernard attended Stamford Catholic for two years, playing varsity hockey for the late, legendary Mickey Lione Jr. in the 1983-84 season before transferring to Avon Old Farms for his junior and senior years. "I played center and forward, and we had a good team that made the FCIACs and States,"



TRINITY CATHOLIC'S Mike Bernard is at home coaching youth hockey or on the high school level. (PHOTO BY MEGAN BERNARD)

he recalls. "When Mickey Lione taught you something, you never forget."

Much later, Lione would be the driving force, as coach, when Trinity Catholic won its second state hockey championship in 1998. He died a year later.

At Avon Old Farms, Bernard teamed up with Brian Leetch—the Cheshire resident who excelled with the New York Rangers and was elected to the NHL Hockey Hall of Fame—to spark the prep school to the finals

of the New England Division-I Championship.

Bernard moved on to play three seasons of varsity hockey at Iona College, captaining the Gaels as a senior, and exited with a degree in criminal justice.

Despite an all-encompassing life as a husband, father and operator of All County Pest Control, Bernard has continued to devote many of his "off" hours to hockey. He began coaching as an assistant at Trinity Catholic under Peter Grant and, more recently, he assisted Smith for two seasons. He's also coached mid-Fairfield Youth Hockey, Stamford Youth Hockey and the Connecticut Yankees AAA Youth Hockey.

"I'm happy to be returning to Trinity Catholic," Bernard says. "I think with the staff we've put together and the support I've already received from the administration and alumni, we can return to being a perennial contender quickly."

"We welcome Mike's return to the Trinity family," said Dr. Joe Gerics, who was appointed principal by Bishop Frank J. Caggiano last summer. "His coaching philosophy reflects our overall commitment to excellence in academics, athletics and extracurricular programs. Mike will help our student athletes to achieve their best in the classroom and in our community, as well as on the ice."



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who share their faith
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We greatly appreciate your dedication!

Rev. Victor T. Martin
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Mrs. Lori Paladino, Assistant
Mrs. Jean DesRochers, Confirmation

Diocese

SYNOD FROM PAGE 2

the number of baptisms as a “disturbing statistic,” the bishop said the Church must do a better job of evangelizing young adults who are raising children, and he mentioned that synod recommen-



dations for outreach to divorced Catholics, improving Liturgy and Worship, and strengthening family life should make a difference.

“If we tackle the global challenges outlined by the synod, those numbers will rise,” said the bishop, who added that synod initiatives have given the diocese the tools to address its financial and pastoral challenges.

School enrollment stabilized at about 9,000 students, but many of its 32 elementary and high schools continue to face enrollment and financial challenges. Total school debt, including closed schools, is \$23 million, which is owed to the diocese. Much of the debt is related to the school’s inability to pay health-care costs.

“We can’t continue this way,” the bishop said. “We have to change the narrative. Our next step will be to create a strategic plan for every school,” he said, noting that much of the debt is in the elementary schools that are struggling with decreasing enrollment.

The diocese also moved forward on special building proj-

ects including the relocation of St. John Fisher Seminary from Stamford to Trumbull and the expansion of Queen of Clergy retired priests’ residence in Stamford. Fundraising for both projects is underway and they are expected to break ground in the coming year.

Other achievements include the launch of the Bishop’s Scholarship Fund, which delivered financial aid to 1,500 students, and plans to take 303 young people to Krakow for World

Youth Day in 2016, making Bridgeport the largest diocesan delegation in the U.S. to attend the event.

Catholic Charities served over 1 million meals to the poor, homeless and elderly and provided 15,000 counseling sessions in addition to many other programs. It will also be involved in the implementation of the new Catholic Service Corps and the Jubilee of Mercy year proclaimed by Pope Francis.

“Catholic Charities is at the arch of mercy and charity,” the bishop said. “Their programs show the world that charity is not just something we say we believe in, but we do it every day.”

The bishop praised *Fairfield County Catholic*, which now goes directly into 104,000 homes across the diocese and he said the new diocesan social media programs are both “informing and forming” young Catholics and have been recognized around the country. He said his ultimate goal for the program is “to create digital missionaries to proclaim the Gospel in the new continent” of information. ■

IMMACULATE H.S. FROM PAGE 24

decades to join us in celebrating Immaculate’s great history. Our over 6,000 alumni are proud of Immaculate’s past and excited about the future. They have graciously given back of their time, talents and treasure in helping us to prepare for this anniversary year.”

To learn about additional celebratory events being held throughout the school year, or to view pictures of the Columbus Day Weekend festivities, please visit www.immaculatehs.org/50th.

Immaculate High School, a Catholic college preparatory school located in Danbury, is leading the way in 21st Century education and learning. Accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, IHS serves more than 26 towns in the greater Danbury area, including Putnam and Dutchess Counties in eastern New York.

Students at Immaculate live the motto “Respect, Responsibility and Reverence” not only in the classrooms, but also on the athletic fields, the stage, and in their daily lives. ■

CARDINAL EGAN FROM PAGE 2

its relocation from Stamford to Trumbull, the present site of the bishop’s residence on Daniels Farm Road.

“My prayer is that a year from now, those of us who are gathered in this room reassemble for the groundbreaking and dedication of the seminary,” said the bishop. “We will dedicate this new building to Cardinal Egan as a lasting permanent legacy to honor his name.”

The bishop said that under the expansion plan, the seminary will be “coming back home” to Trumbull, where it first opened its doors in a former convent.

Father Jones drew an affectionate portrait of the Cardinal as a man who loved New York City and who believed “his most important work was ordaining men to the priesthood.”

“It was his first project as Bishop of Bridgeport and he believed his most important legacy,” Father Jones said.

Father Jones had the privilege of being in Rome in another capacity when Cardinal Egan was first installed as a bishop, and the bishop later returned the favor when he ordained Father Jones to the priesthood in Bridgeport.

Father Jones said the 6 foot 4 inch fellow Chicagoan drove through the streets of Rome in a tiny Fiat, and had the distinction of “being the tallest man I ever saw in the smallest car.”

Likewise, when Bishop Egan first came to the diocese his residence was a cramped bungalow in Stratford that made it tough for more than a couple of people to sit around the kitchen table.

In a personal reflection, noted financial commentator, CNBC-TV Senior contributor and economist Larry Kudlow remembered Cardinal Egan as a priest and a friend who changed his life.

Kudlow said that he experienced one of the most moving moments in his life on Holy Thursday when he was selected for the Washing of Feet by Cardinal Egan in St. Patrick Cathedral. “A wave of goodness and faith washed over me during the ceremony and I had tears of joy,” said Kudlow. “I felt as if the Cardinal were looking after me. He welcomed me to the Church and kept track of me for all those years I knew him. I’m very grateful.”

Msgr. Stephen DiGiovanni,

first rector of the seminary and pastor of the Basilica of St. John the Evangelist in Stamford, delivered closing remarks and the final prayer of the evening. He said that he and Bishop Egan wrangled over which saint



the seminary would be named for and finally chose St. John Fisher, “because he was loyal to the Holy Father to the point of martyrdom, had a devotion and love for the priesthood, and he was a diocesan priest.”

“He was the best priest I’ve ever known,” said Msgr. DiGiovanni, who noted that 100 men in the diocese have been ordained to the priesthood out of St. John Fisher Seminary.

(To make a gift to the St. John Fisher Seminary Campaign, call the diocesan development Office at 203.416.1473) ■

With thanks
and blessings
to
Ms. Kathleen
Rooney
and our entire
religious
education team



Our Lady of Fatima
Wilton

God Bless You and Thank You
to our entire Religious Formation Team



for your continued
commitment
to teach our children.

St. Thomas the Apostle
Norwalk

Thanks and God bless you



to
our entire
Religious
Education
team!

St. Aloysius
Parish
New Canaan

Obituaries

Missionary to the poor: Father Francis Posluszny

Father Francis Posluszny died on October 6 in Olsztyn, Poland, where he had retired after serving tirelessly in the mission field. Father Posluszny was born on June 18, 1938, in Rzeszow, Poland, and attended area elementary and high school there. He was prepared for the priesthood at St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary, in Tarnow, Poland. His ordination took place there on June 24, 1962.

Father Posluszny first ministered as a diocesan priest in parishes in his home diocese. In 1966 he came to the United States to serve Polish parishioners here, especially at Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Stratford and Holy Name and St. Leo parishes in Stamford.

On January 20, 1975, Father Posluszny was incardinated into the Diocese of Bridgeport. He had parochial vicar assignments at St. Paul and St. Agnes parishes in Greenwich; St. Rose of Lima Parish in Newtown; and St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Fairfield.

In 1980 Father completed sabbatical studies at the School of Theology in Weston, Mass. He was also a member of the Diocesan Priests' Council and served as a confessor for the Bernardine Franciscan Sisters in Stamford.

In 1982, the Diocese of Bridgeport allowed Father Posluszny to study the culture and languages of South America at the Maryknoll House of Studies in Cochabamba, Brazil. Following that, he was missioned in St. John Vianney Parish in Chiclayo, Peru. He served as assistant and, later, as the pastor there.

His tireless work among the poor, first at St. John Vianney and later at St. John the Apostle, also in Chiclayo, was recognized by the Peruvian government in two prestigious awards. The first was given to Father Posluszny on November 7, 2012, by the Order of National Awards of Peru. Called the "Gold Medal of Three Precious Stones," it recognized his "brilliant contribu-

tion to the fight against poverty and the development of peace in the nation, extending it through his great vocation of service to families in extreme poverty, thus acting in his life as a leader and noble religious pastor."

The second award was given to him on January 30, 2013, by the National Council of Awards and the Institute of Social Action and Development in Peru. This award was given "in recognition of his labor benefitting the poor both in and outside the Department of Lambayeque," to which Chiclayo belongs.

At the end of June 2015 Father Posluszny concluded his years of missionary pastoral ministry. Because of declining health, he decided to return to his native Poland and spend time with his



FATHER FRANCIS POSLUSZNY

family in Poland and his many friends in Peru and Connecticut.

He will also be remembered for his quiet, selfless zeal for evangelization. Among others, the Office for the Propagation of the Faith received a letter remembering his kindness to the Morning Star Seminary in India. Although he had never served in that country, he was as generous as possible in assistance to their seminarians.

"His generosity cannot be forgotten and the seminary continues to be grateful to him with prayerful heart," Father Santhanam, J.A., the rector of Morning Star Seminary wrote. The seminary offered a Mass in Father Posluszny's memory, with all the staff and their 155 seminarians taking part. ■

extended family.

Arrangements for the Mass of Christian Burial and interment were made in Poland. Father Posluszny is mourned by his

FUNERAL GUIDE

DECEASED CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE
OF BRIDGEPORT: NOVEMBER 15—DECEMBER 19

NOVEMBER

15	Rev. M. Steven Barrett, S.S.	2000
	Rev. John P. Odie	1999
19	Rev. Rocco D. Nadile	1978
20	Rev. Francis J. Fulop	1957
	Rev. John F. Culliton	1967
20	Rev. Hugh A. Coffey	1975
21	Msgr. Edwin F. Burke	2004
22	Rev. Stephen J. Panik	1953
	Msgr. Joseph N. Murphy	1988
23	Rev. Robert G. Pohley	2006
26	Deacon Joseph Lawrence Rowan	2013
27	Deacon John Barton	2012
	Rev. Myron V. Miller	1961
28	Deacon Wayne E. Malloy	2011

DECEMBER

1	Rev. Michael E. Kearney	1956
	Msgr. Alfred J. Sienkiewicz	1996
	Deacon Robert W. Becker	2000
3	Msgr. John E. Gilmartin	2011
	Rev. Thomas Gwozdz, OFM Conv.	2007
	Rev. Joseph A. Pisarcik	1956
4	Msgr. Joseph M. Fitzgerald	2005
5	Rev. Vincent J. O'Connor	1985
7	Deacon George Saulnier	1997
8	Rev. Rufin Kuveikas, OFM Conv.	2008
10	Msgr. Bartholomew J. Skelly	1967
	Rev. Ambrose Walas, OFM Conv.	1967
	Rev. Paul M. Spodnik	1976
13	Rev. Alfred E. Russo	2009
15	Msgr. Lawrence J. McMahan	2009
17	Rev. Kieran T. Ahearn	1997
19	Rev. Philip Morrissey	2008

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St. Margaret Mary

Spiritual renewal leads to physical renovation

By STEPHANIE SPINETTI

St. Margaret Mary Alacoque parish in Shelton officially declared its recent renovation initiative complete on October 16 as it celebrated the rededication of the church with Bishop Frank J. Caggiano.

Since Father Ciprian Bejan's installation as pastor last year, there has been a palpable spiritual renewal within the parish. Ministries and parish groups have been flourishing, and parishioners have been encouraged to take a more active role in their faith together with new study and learning programs, as well as special events, which have drawn the church family closer together and with a stronger focus on understanding and living out our faith as a community.

Amidst all this, however, Father Bejan noted a stark disconnect between this new enthusiasm and focus of the Church (the family of believers), and

the church as the physical building in which we worshipped. The sanctuary of St. Margaret Mary Church, which was often described as "simple" and "humble," had been largely unchanged for decades, and there still existed subtle scars of the sad time when the church was vandalized in 2013. Considering its mainly bare walls and modest décor, Father Bejan decided there needed to be a physical transformation to match the spiritual one that was taking place in the hearts of the parishioners, to truly reflect and encourage the renewed focus on the Eucharist.

Once begun, the renovation process was swift. Father Bejan worked with church interior designer and architect Renzo D'Anselmi to plan out the design, and with a whole host of contractors to determine how the work was to be done. The details of the proposed changes were announced at the end of May and work began almost immediately.

Throughout the summer and into early fall, the changes ranged from small and subtle, like replacing the choir chairs, to large and striking, like the installation of a wooden framework on the rear wall of the church to ensconce a new crucifix and tabernacle. To match the new woodwork, the altar, pulpit, and baptismal font were also replaced, and the altar platform was redesigned to better accommodate the new layout. Details such as marble tiling to replace the plain blue carpet at the altar, along with gold leaf accents around the stained glass windows and throughout the church, bring a grander sense of majesty to the sanctuary.

During the renovation planning process, it was noted that there were a large number of statues from the original construction of the church that were either damaged, in storage, or hung in odd corners of the building. Parishioners and talented artists were enlisted to repaint the plain



BISHOP CAGGIANO BLESSES the new altar at St. Margaret Mary Parish in Shelton. "These walls cannot go out and bring people to the love of Christ," the bishop said during his homily. "We are the church, and we are called to bring them here."

wooden statues and breathe into them new life. These statues now feature prominently throughout the sanctuary, including three shrines to St. Peregrine, St. Jude, and the Sacred Heart of Jesus (near and dear to St. Margaret Mary!).

The large wooden crucifix, which originally hung in the gymnasium of the old St. Margaret Mary School (now the Shelton BOE) while the church was being built, has received a weather-sealing treatment and now hangs prominently on the front of the church façade over the main doors. Other changes included replacing the large bowl lights in the sanctuary, new holy water fonts, a new sanctuary lamp, along with the recent renewal of

the family room.

The rededication Mass was held on October 16, the feast of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque. Bishop Caggiano led the parish in a Holy Hour in front of the Blessed Sacrament, including recitation of the Rosary, a consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus (as written by St. Margaret Mary), and other devotions. Mass followed, during which the bishop blessed the new elements of the church, as well as consecrating the new altar with holy chrism.

In his homily, the bishop recognized the parish as being known for its "heart," and in acknowledging the new beauty of the church building, challenged

► CONTINUED ON PAGE 32

Catholic Underground set

DANBURY—Sammy Blaze, a Hispanic rapper and Christian Hip Hop artist born in Texas, is performing at the Catholic Underground on November 14, at 7:30 pm at Sacred Heart Church in Danbury.

The guest artist joining Sammy Blaze (Argumaniz) will be DJ dU\$t, Dustin Seiber, also webmaster of www.phat-mass.com.

More than 200 people attended the first Catholic Underground in the diocese held in October at St. Ann Parish in Black Rock, Bridgeport.

Catholic Underground offers a reverent evening, beginning with a Holy Hour, with Adoration, Evening Prayer and Confession, and concluding with a Catholic culture experience of art and music.

The Catholic Underground



movement, a cultural apostolate of the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal, got its name from its origins in the basement of Our Lady of Good Counsel Church on East 90th Street in Manhattan, and it has earned the respect of many for its faith filled and vibrant approach to communal prayer. It formed as a response to St. John Paul II's teaching that the Gospel lives in conversation

with culture. Bishop Frank J. Caggiano invited Catholic Underground volunteers Valerie Tarantino, Paul Chu and Julian Revie to bring the Catholic Underground experience to the diocese.

(Catholic Underground meets monthly. For more info, call the participating parishes or visit www.catholicunderground.net/home.html.)



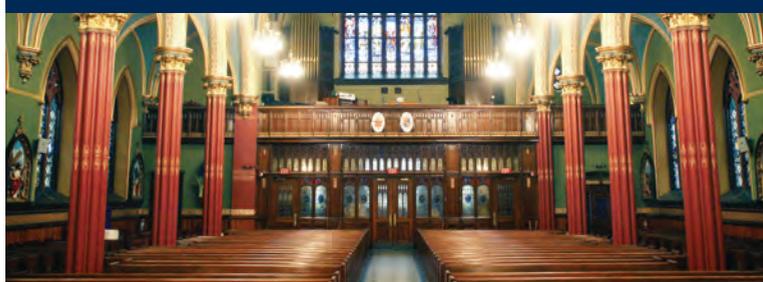


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Film Review

Spotlight

BY JOHN MULDERIG
CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

NEW YORK—The clergy abuse-themed drama “Spotlight” (Open Road) is a movie no Catholic will want to see. Whether it’s a film many mature Catholics ought to see is a different question entirely.

This hard-hitting journalism procedural—which inescapably invites comparison with 1976’s “All the President’s Men”—recounts the real-life events that led up to the public disclosure, in early 2002, of a shocking pattern of priestly misconduct within the Archdiocese of Boston. In the process, the equally disturbing concealment of such wrongdoing on the part of high ranking church officials also was laid bare.

One of the picture’s themes is the way in which Beantown’s inward-looking, small-town mentality contributed to the long-standing cover-up. For the supposed good of the community, locals suppressed the knowledge of what was happening, subconsciously choosing not to see what was transpiring just behind the scenes.

So it’s appropriate that the

whitewash begins to peel away with the arrival of a stranger to the Hub, the newly imported editor of the Boston Globe, Marty Baron (Liev Schreiber). Marty’s outsider status isn’t just based on his geographical origins; he’s also Jewish.

Perplexed that his paper has devoted so little attention to the earliest cases in what would become, over time, an avalanche of legal actions against clerics, Marty commissions the investigative unit of the title, which specializes in in-depth investigations of local stories, to dig deeper.

Led by even-keeled Walter ‘Robby’ Robinson (Michael Keaton), the Spotlight team—which also includes tightly wound Mike Rezendes (Mark Ruffalo), intrepid Sacha Pfeiffer (Rachel McAdams) and relentless research whiz Matt Carroll (Brian d’Arcy James)—uncovers a widespread and sickening scandal involving scores of clergymen and hundreds of young victims.

Director and co-writer Tom McCarthy maintains a taut rhythm as he focuses primarily on the dogged professionalism required to breach the walls of secrecy surrounding a respected, and therefore protected, institu-

tion. And his script, penned with Josh Singer, apports blame across a broad spectrum that includes the Globe itself—John Slattery plays veteran editor Ben Bradlee Jr., whose semi-willful blindness to the problem typifies the attitude discussed above.

Like most of his colleagues, Slattery is a former Catholic, distanced from, but not—initially at least—embittered toward, the faith in which he were raised. Witnessing the further fraying of the reporters’ already fragile ties to the church adds to the overwhelming sense of grief Catholic viewers will feel throughout “Spotlight.” Yet this generally accurate chronicle can provide them with a valuable insight into one of the darkest chapters in ecclesiastical history.

The movie is open to a few criticisms, large and small, however. The portrayal of Boston’s then-archbishop, Cardinal Bernard Law (Len Cariou), is predictably negative. But it also includes details that are subject to interpretation.

Thus Cardinal Law’s gift to Marty of a copy of the “Catechism of the Catholic Church” is treated as a both a religious and social snub. Yet



Cardinal Law played an important role in translating that landmark text into English, so his gift may have been motivated more by a sense of pride in one of the most significant accomplishments of his career than by a desire to cut the newcomer down to size.

Much more significantly, the screenplay’s uncritical adoption of the results of research conducted by ex-priest A.W. Richard Sipe (a figure heard but not seen) opens its analysis to legitimate

questioning.

The thesis that the scandal was the inevitable outcome of the Latin church’s tradition of priestly celibacy—a discipline Sipe maintains is routinely violated by fully half the clergy, thus creating a culture of secrecy among them—is ill-founded, to say the least. To dispute that theory, however, is not at all to downplay the horrifying nature of what unfolds under this otherwise painfully illuminating “Spotlight.” ■

RENEWAL FROM PAGE 31

the parish, saying, “These walls cannot go out and bring people to the love of Christ. We are the church, and we are called to bring them here.”

In his closing remarks Father Bejan also challenged the parish: “Now, as the church has been renewed, so too must our hearts turn to the Eucharist and be shaped to reflect it in our lives.” He went on to share the significance of the Latin phrase on the main arch, from Psalm 73:26, which reads, “Deus cordis mei et pars mea Deus in aeternum,” meaning, “God is the rock of my heart and my portion forever,” a fitting and constant reminder to the parish of the devotee of the Sacred Heart. ■

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Column: Thomas Hicks



Insistently a time of remembering

POTPOURRI

BY THOMAS H. HICKS

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

“**B**ald November reigned outside. Lawn chairs had been taken in. The outdoors was bare as a house after the movers had come” (John Updike, *The Witches of Eastwick*, p.156)

It is the bedtime of the year. Our northern land begins to tuck itself in for the coming winter. We watch the sun go out a little earlier each day and one can almost hear the deepening quiet.

November is the bare branches, the early setting sun, the busy squirrels, the raucous and self-important crows, the cold rain - cheerless and filled with winter’s warning. The wind has its November sound.

Robert Frost wrote positively of November.

“She loves the bare, the withered trees...

Thinks these dark days of autumn rain

Are beautiful” (My November Guest)

There are two unrivaled happenings in November. The first is that November nights are star

nights. The leaves have thinned away so that lifted eyes can see a whole sky, and what one sees is the Constellations array themselves. There’s the Dipper and Cassiopeia, Orion the Hunter, Taurus the Bull. There’s the Pleiades. And all across the sky sweeps the Milky Way, intensifying with the chill until it fairly dances and glitters.

The other special delight of November is the beautiful tranquil days of Indian Summer, which usually occur during the third week of November. There is that brief resurrection of summer, as someone put it, “like the lambent gleams from an expiring lamp.” It is as if November is looking back over her shoulder.

Still, William Cullen Bryant

wrote: “The melancholy days are come, the saddest of the year” (“Death of the Flowers.”)

November is for me a time of gentle melancholy. It is insistently a time of remembering. All Saints and All Souls stand at the door of the month calling us to remember those with whom we shared the precious past; calling us to remember so many graves—graves of the people we loved and who were taken from us in the terrible mysteries of death. So many deaths, so much ended. They passed from my world, and it seems strangely empty.

“But here the Autumn melancholy dwells...

She sits and reckons up the dead and gone.”

(Thomas Hood, Ode-Autumn)

November does bring for me a haunting sorrow for people I have known and loved, people long dead, people now buried in the earth, all those people who were gone and will not come again. Will they live again for me as they did once? By faith in the God Who raises the dead, I believe that I shall see their faces again and hear their voices and see them again as they walk toward me from their graves,

telling me that all will be again as it once was. All things will live again as they did once.

And there is she. She left and

“The other special delight of November is the beautiful tranquil days of Indian Summer.”

life seemed ruined and broken, there was the silence and absence, and all that keeps going on and on without her. Never to touch

her, to hold, to have her palpable warmth for my own again. Where is she now? I sometimes wonder when I see her again, after so many years, will she remember me, will she know who I am, will she still love me? I do believe that she is watching over me from somewhere. Her affection did not die with her body. At times I feel the gentle presence that stops the panic. I feel like one who is waiting and waited for. Someday, there she will be, after so many years, waiting in sunlight, all covered in roses.

The aged year is near its end. Our trip through winter looms ahead. What will we experience before the snows are gone? ■

CONSECRATED LIFE FROM PAGE 25

spiritual life—when you are low, someone else can help you with your relationship with God.”

What I would say to someone considering choosing Consecrated Life:

Sister Isabel, who is 35 years old, has had young women in the youth group ask her this very question. “Get close to Jesus in his Sacred Heart through prayer, Eucharist and Reconciliation,” she says. “At the same time, continue your normal life and enjoy every minute of it. Keep your heart open and the Lord will show you the way.” ■

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HOLIDAY CRAFT FAIR and bazaar held at St. Marguerite Bourgeoys Parish, Brookfield, Sat., **Nov. 14**, from 10 am-4 pm. For more info, contact Pat: 203.775.9236 or visit www.stmarguerite.org.

OPEN HOUSE at St. Mark School, Stratford, for Pre-K and Kindergarten will be held Sun., **Nov. 15**, from 9 am-1 pm. Meet faculty and school community. For more info, call 203.375.4291 or visit www.stmarkschool.org.

MASS OF HEALING AND HOPE will be celebrated Mon., **Nov. 16**, at 7:30 pm at Christ the King Parish, Trumbull, with Fr. Larry Carew. For more info, contact the Charismatic Renewal Office: 203.268.8253.

CURSILLO ULTREYAS are held around the diocese: Mon., **Nov. 16**, at St. Bridget of Ireland Parish, Stamford, at 7:30 pm; and Thurs., **Nov. 19**, at St. Mary Parish, Bethel, at 7:30 pm. On Tues., **Dec. 1**, there will be a Central Ultreya at Our Lady of Fatima Parish, Wilton. Fellowship 7 pm; ultreya 7: For more info, contact Anne Marie: amromano@att.net.

WINE TASTING to benefit Caroline House, held Fri., **Nov. 20**, from 7-10 pm at the Fairfield Museum & History Center, 370 Beach Road, Fairfield. Tickets: \$40; available at www.thecarolinehouse.org.

ENCOURAGE apostolate for friends and family of loved ones with same sex attractions meets the third Saturday of the month (**Nov. 21**) at 10:30 am and is strictly confidential. For more info, contact the Norwalk chapter: EncourageNorwalk@gmail.com.

MOHEGAN SUN bus trip sponsored by St. Patrick Church

(Bridgeport) K of C, takes place Sat., **Nov. 21**. Bus leaves St. Patrick's at 10 am, returning at 6 pm. Cost: \$50 includes food voucher, bus ride and \$15 to gamble. For more info, call George: 203.258.2516.

VENDOR AND CRAFT SHOW to be held at St. Stephen Parish, Trumbull, Sat., **Nov. 21**, from 9-4 pm and Sun., **Nov. 22**, after all morning Masses. For more info, call 203.268.6217.

WOMEN SUFFERING from a past abortion can begin a healing journey and experience God's love at "Entering Canaan" a day of prayer and healing, on Sat., **Nov. 21**. Time and location are confidential. For more info and for registration, contact Maureen at Project Rachel: 203.416.1619 or projectrachel@diopbt.org.

CHRISTMAS BOUTIQUE will be held at Saint Bridget of Ireland Parish, Stamford, on Sat., **Nov. 21**, from 9 am-4 pm. Over 30 vendors and a bake sale. For more info, call the parish: 203.324.2910.

WORKSHOP: "Spirituality and the World's Major Religions:" Sat., **Nov. 21**, from 9 am-5 pm at St. James Parish, Stratford. Presenters are Dr. Sr. Patty Cook, RSM and Dr. Maria Decsy. Cost: \$50 prepaid; \$60 day of event. Fee includes lunch. For more info or to register, call the parish: 203.375.5887.

VENDORS NEEDED for holiday boutique at Sacred Heart Parish, Stamford, to be held Sat.-Sun., **Nov. 21-22**. For more info, call Rose: 203.968.1234 after 6 pm.

HOLY SPIRIT FRATERNITY invites everyone to St. Emery Church, Fairfield, on Sat., **Nov. 21**, at 9:30 am. Msgr. Ernest Esposito will celebrate Mass, followed by a

social. "Come and See" if you are being called to a vocation in the secular Franciscan order. For more info, call Pat Heile, OFS: 203.255.8801.

CATHOLIC YOUNG ADULTS of Greater Danbury (ages 18-35) meets at the Newman Center (off the campus of Western CT State University) #7 8th Avenue, Danbury. Thanksgiving pot luck and movie night. Tues., **Nov. 24**, from 6:30-8:30 pm. Bring a dish and bring comfortable cushions to sit on. Feast of the Immaculate Conception, Mass and social, Tues., **Dec. 8**, from 6:45-9 pm. For more info, email catholic.ya.danbury@gmail.com or call 203.417.2695.

HARVEST ARTS FESTIVAL held Sat., **Nov. 28**, at St. Andrew Parish, Bridgeport, from 11 am-5:30 pm. Arts, photography, seasonal market items including jams/jellies, candles, organic soaps, harvest soups, basket raffle, flowers. AJ's honey will be here with a demonstration on beekeeping. For more info, call 203.374.8118.

ST. JUDE MISSION is running its annual Christmas Gift Drive for the children of Good Shepherd Catholic Mission in Whitley City, Kentucky. Donations are needed to cover cost of shipping the gifts. Donation deadline: Mon., **Nov. 30**. For more info, contact the parish: 203.261.6404.

AUDITION CALLS for St. Catherine's Players, Riverside, 2016 production of Peter Pan will be held Mon., **Nov. 30**, and Tues., **Dec. 1**, at 7:30 pm in the parish hall. Bring a prepared song and sheet music in your key for the accompanist. A group dance audition will be held each eve-



A CLASSIC NEOPOLITAN PRESIPIO is the latest addition to St. Margaret's Shrine in Bridgeport. The Nativity scene, sponsored by the Bridgeport Area Cultural Italian Organization (BACIO) and designed by artist Armando Palumbo, it will be dedicated by Bishop Frank J. Caggiano on Sun., **Dec. 13**, after the 9:30 am Italian Mass at the Shrine. The Presepio will be open for viewing during the Christmas season: Mon.-Fri., 12 noon-4 pm; Sat., 3-6 pm; Sun 9 am-1 pm. For more info, call St. Margaret's Shrine: 203.333.9627 or email saintmargarets Shrine@gmail.com.

ning. In addition, please bring a list of your rehearsal and production date conflicts (January through mid-March). Rehearsals begin on Mon., **Jan. 4**. For more info, or to volunteer, visit: www.stcatherinesplayers.com or email stcatherinesplayers@gmail.com.

O COME LET US ADORE HIM! Take a break from the holiday scurrying and come and rest for a while in silence with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament for Advent Adoration in St. Patrick Church, 169 Black Rock Turnpike, Redding Ridge, CT, every Tuesday night in Advent (**Dec. 1, 8, 15, 22**) anytime between 7-9 pm.

JOIN BISHOP CAGGIANO for the annual Norwalk Celebrity

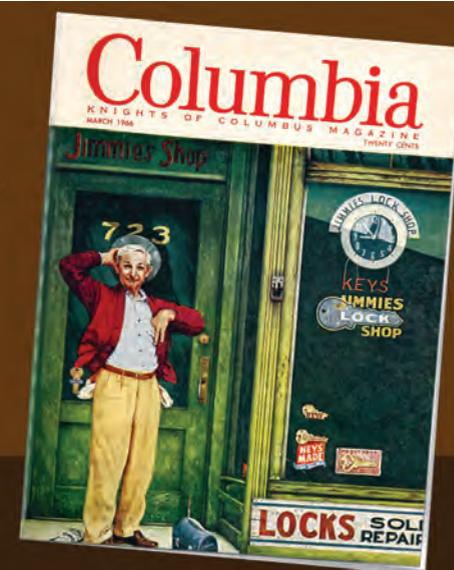
Breakfast with Fr. Charles Allen, SJ, on Thurs., **Dec. 3**, at 8 am at St. Matthew Parish, Norwalk. Bring a toy to support the St. Nicholas Boutique. Toys benefit children in the Room to Grow Preschools and Behavioral Health services in Norwalk. Cost: \$50; \$300 for a table of 10. For more info or for reservations, go to <https://norwalk-breakfast.eventbrite.com> or call 203.273.9483.

VINES & STEINS wine and beer tasting with hors d'oeuvres by Shawn Russell of Cinch will take place Thurs., **Dec. 10**, from 6:30-9:30 pm at St. Joseph High School, Trumbull. Cost: \$40/person; \$75/couple. Please register online by Thurs., **Dec. 3**. For more info, con-

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CHRISTMAS CONCERT with CantiamoCHOIR directed by Marlane Tubridy will be held Fri., **Dec. 4**, at 7:30 pm at Westport Town Hall Auditorium. Traditional carols and Christmas Favorites and Carols from around the world. Donations benefit local charities. Suggested donation: \$15. For more info or to reserve tickets, go to www.artsforthecommunity.org or call 203.454.9023.

LIVING NATIVITY will be presented outside St. Aloysius Church on the corner of South Ave. and Cherry St. in New Canaan, on Fri., **Dec. 4**, beginning at 6 pm in conjunction with the town's Holiday Stroll. The birth of Jesus is brought to life by Confirmation students and features live animals. For more info, contact Mary Karen Keneally: 203.652.1173.

EMMAUS 77 TEEN RETREAT sponsored by Danbury Emmaus for anyone from grades 8-12 on **Dec. 4-6**, at the Seton Newman Center in Danbury. Emmaus is Faith, Friends, Fun, and PLENTY of delicious Food. For more info, call Anne-Marie DeDomenico: 203.512.6367 or Tyler Moore: 203.826.4038, or visit www.danburyemmaus.org.

"COME AND SEE" if you are being called to a vocation in the Secular Franciscan Order. The Secular Franciscan Holy Spirit Fraternity invites everyone to St. Emery's Church, 838 Kings Hwy. East, Fairfield, on Sat., **Dec. 5**, at 9:30 am. Father Eugene Szantyr will celebrate a Mass in church followed with our annual Christmas Party in the Parish Hall. All are welcome! For more info, call Pat Heile, OFS at 203.255.8801 or pheile5713@aol.com.

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS DINNER at Sacred Heart Parish, Stamford, held Sat., **Dec. 5**, at 6 pm. Traditional Christmas eve dinner (pasta with bread crumbs and anchovies, fried zeppoli, strufoli, torrone, wine, soda, DJ. Cost: \$45/ person. For more info, call Rose or Jeff: 203.968.1234.

CHRISTMAS FAIR at St. Jude Parish, Monroe, will be held Sat., **Dec. 5**, from 10 am-4 pm. There will be crafters, religious items, the St. Jude Cookbook, raffles, prizes, food and fun! For more info, call the parish: 203.261.6404.

"CHRISTMAS MAGIC" benefit concert for Malta House, featuring the NY Tenors, will be held Wed., **Dec. 9**, at 7:30 pm at the Stamford Palace. To attend the 6 pm VIP reception, including special seating, call Malta House: 203.857.0088 or visit www.

maltahouse.org. Regular seating tickets at \$30, \$50 and \$80 are available at the Palace box office: 203.325.4466.

ADVENT LECTURE: "Thomas Merton & the 'Advent' of Christ in Our Lives" with Fr. Daniel Horan, OFM, will take place Sat., **Dec. 12**, from 1-3 pm at the Dolan School of Business at Fairfield University. Light refreshments provided. Free event sponsored by the Year of Consecrated Life Committee. RSVP requested by Thurs., **Dec. 3**. For more info or for reservations, contact Sr. Nancy Strillacci: 203.416.1511 or srstrillacci@diobpt.org.

PILGRIMAGE TO HOLY LAND with Fr. Arthur Mollenhauer is during winter vacation, **Feb. 11-21, 2016**. A 9-day visit to the Holy Sites in

Israel. Cost: \$3,285 includes round-trip flight from NY, 8 nights' accommodation double occupancy w/breakfast & dinner, most lunches, farewell dinner at a local restaurant, tour guide, transportation, all entrance fees and tips. For more info, call Sharon MacKnight: 203.327.1806 or

email smacknight@optonline.net. **PROJECT RACHEL MINISTRY** offers free and confidential help to those seeking healing from the wounds of abortion. To experience God's love and mercy, contact Project Rachel: 203.416.1619 or projectrachel@diobpt.org. Visit our website: www.projectrachelbpt.com. ■



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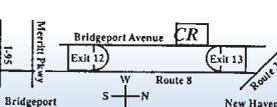
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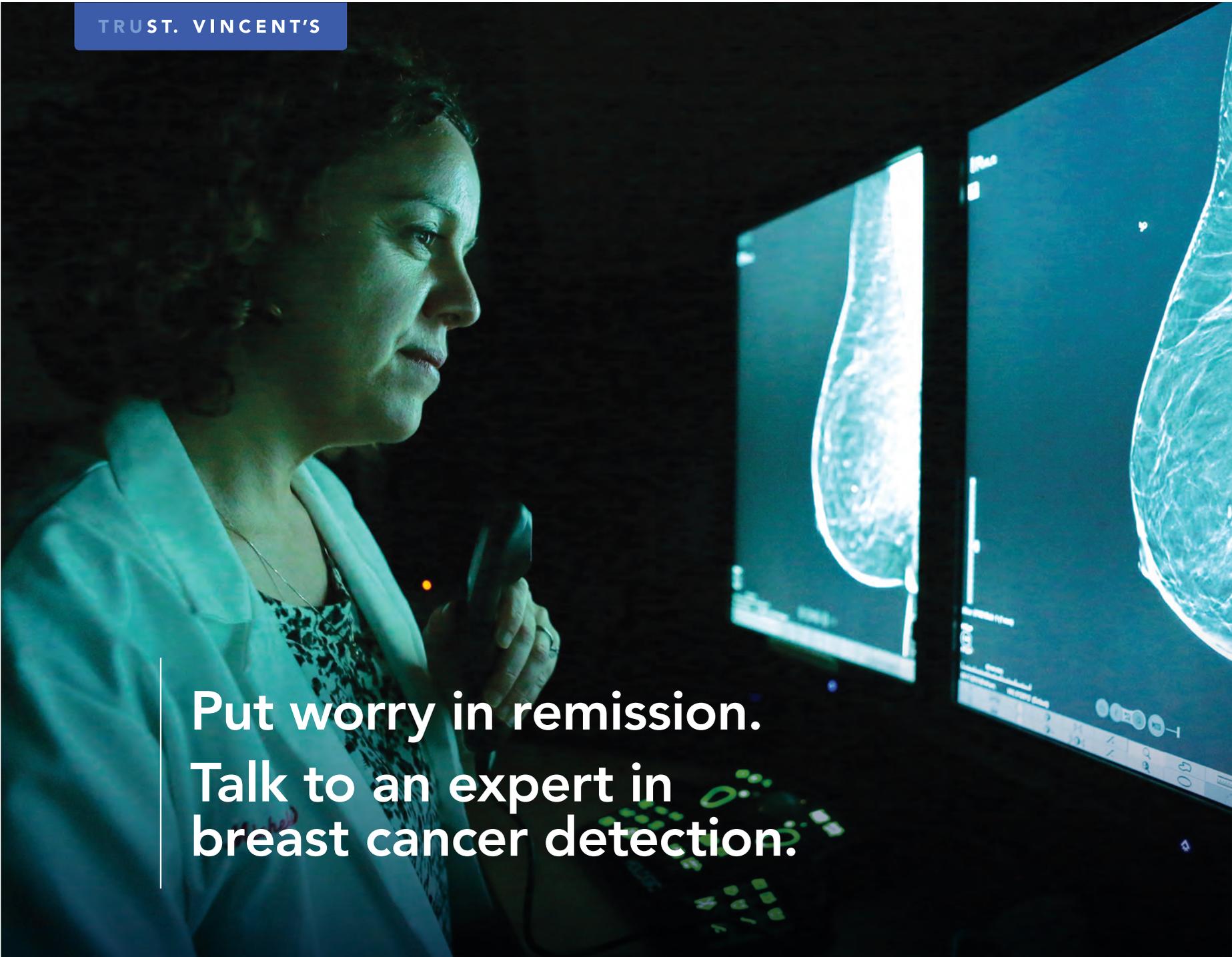
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