



FAIRFIELD COUNTY CATHOLIC

OCTOBER 2022 | VOLUME 39, NUMBER 9 | AUTUMN ISSUE

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Around the Diocese

Autumn activities underway!

New Catechetical at the Cathedral

CATECHISTS MEET—The Cathedral Parish of St. Augustine recently celebrated Mass and blessed catechists as the new Catechetical year begins. Father Art Mollenhauer, (top row, right) pastor of the parish, said “We celebrate you today because of the ministry you have been called to and for the commitment you have made for the youth of this parish.” He reminded the parish family that we must include those that teach our children in our daily prayers. Father Augustine Nguyen, episcopal vicar for Vietnamese Catholics, (top row, left) joined in the celebration and photo, which included religious education staff, catechists and altar servers.



A Legacy Of Heroism And Self-Sacrifice

In a solemn and moving service at St. Augustine Cathedral on Sunday, September 11, Bishop Frank J. Caggiano remembered



all those who have died as a result of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, and said they have left us a legacy of heroism and self-sacrifice in service of others. Uniformed Police, Fire and EMTs from Bridgeport, Fairfield, Norwalk and other towns formed the Color Guard, while members of the Knights of Columbus served as Honor Guard for the Mass, which commemorated the twenty-first anniversary of 9-11. Speaking directly to the first responders who turned out for the annual Mass, he thanked them for attending and said, “You who are here today represent the ranks of heroes with whom you serve. We pray for you now and every day.”

Bishop Caggiano Visits Lauralton Hall

Bishop Frank J. Caggiano recently visited Academy of Our Lady of Mercy, Lauralton Hall in Milford to celebrate its Opening Mass, tour the new science lab and meet with students and faculty. The school community gathered in the historic chapel with the Bishop Caggiano of the Diocese of Bridgeport, presiding. In his homily, the Bishop reminded the Lauralton community that being a disciple of Christ is a lifelong journey



that we make one day at a time, and he spoke of his own personal journey and challenges in living as a Christian in action.

Restless Catholic Young Adults

“Restless” turns 100! Begun by Catholic young adults from Stamford, “Restless Catholic Young Adults” is a radio show/podcast from our diocese which is featured on EWTN. Four



zany young adults, led by Father Joseph Gill, discuss work, relationships, fun, and faith from a Catholic perspective! With a blend of humor and inspiration, it’s a great show for all ages. On Friday, October 1 they released their 100th episode! You can find it on Veritas Catholic Network (1350AM or 103.5 FM) or online at restlesscatholicmedia.podbean.com.

Knights Mini-Golf Seeking Sponsors

SHELTON—After a three-year hiatus, due to COVID-19, Council 1350 Knights of Columbus is resuming its Mini-Golf Tournament. The event will take place on Sunday, October 23, at the Sports Center of CT, 784 River Road in Shelton. It will begin with a shotgun start, at 1 pm. All are invited to participate in this family event. Foursomes are \$40, while singles are \$12. The entry amount include all fees banquet admission, and prizes A hot dog and hamburger banquet will be available to all immediately upon completing the course. For more information on



registering for the tournament or serving as a sponsor email Robert Zaleski: rzaleski01@snet.net

Make checks payable to: Council 1350 Knights of Columbus. c/o Robert Zaleski, 3 Walnut Tree Hill Road Shelton, CT 06484

ON THE COVER

Bishop Frank J. Caggiano presented St. Augustine Medal of Service awards to 150 men and women throughout the diocese in a joyful ceremony at St. Matthew Church.
(PHOTOS: AMY MORTENSEN)

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Diocesan News

All Souls Day Masses set for November 2

By BRIAN D. WALLACE

BRIDGEPORT—Bishop Frank J. Caggiano will celebrate All Souls Day Mass at Gate of Heaven Cemetery, in Trumbull on Wednesday, November 2, at 11 am.

It is one of six All Souls Day Masses that will be celebrated in cemeteries throughout the diocese on the morning of Wednesday, November 2, at 11 am. All Masses will be held rain or shine. Tents, seats and portable facilities will be provided at each site.

Other All Souls Day Mass locations and celebrants are: St. Peter Cemetery, Danbury, Father Michael Dunn; St. Mary-Putnam Cemetery, Greenwich, Father Richard Murphy; St. John Cemetery, Darien, Father John

Connaughton; St. John Cemetery, Norwalk, Father Ralph Segura; St. Michael Cemetery, Stratford, Father Jose Vasquez.

All are welcome to attend the outdoor Masses, which will be offered for the repose of the souls of all the faithful departed. Holy Water from Lourdes will be distributed after Mass at each location.

The bishop thanked the pastors and priests who will be celebrating this year's Masses and encouraged Catholics throughout the diocese to pray that all those who have died may rest in the peace of Christ.

November is the month of the Holy Souls in Purgatory and All Souls Day is a special day in particular during which we pray for



their loved ones and all the faithful departed.

"Christians overcome death by dying to themselves and learning to live in Christ. In order to be victorious over death, we need to

seek it every day, and embrace every moment of our lives in Christ," Bishop Caggiano said at last year's Mass. "You and I are disciples of the crucified Christ. Let us die to ourselves, die to sin

every moment, so that we may join others in the victory that awaits all who have the courage to die to this world so we might live forever."

Traditionally, Catholics visit cemeteries on All Souls Day to remember the dead and pray for their souls. During the Mass, the celebrants will remember in a special way all deceased bishops, priests, deacons, consecrated men and women and lay faithful.

Arrangements and logistics for the day are supported by Catholic Cemeteries. The diocese sponsors and maintains ten active cemeteries in Fairfield County. For information on Catholic Cemeteries, call 203.742.1450, Option 5 or go to www.ctcemeteries.org or info@ctcemeteries.org. ■

Bishop outlines new vision at Catechetical Summit

By BRIAN D. WALLACE

STAMFORD—"I'm here to suggest that you and I have to discern a new methodology to pass on the faith, one that involves both evangelization—that is the proclamation of the Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ—and the formation of the whole person in that proclamation," said Bishop Frank J. Caggiano at the recent diocesan Catechetical Summit.

About 150 pastors, directors of religious education, and catechists turned out for the summit at Holy Spirit Church in Stamford. The meeting was hosted by the Institute for Catholic Formation under the leadership of Dr. Patrick Donovan, executive director.

The bishop began his presentation with a sense of urgency about the need to catechize the young people of the diocese, along with the awareness that many parents have stopped going to Church—often casting young people adrift spiritually in a world that is increasingly secular in its outlook and values.

As a result, the number of young people enrolled in religious education programs is dropping at the same time that many catechists are retiring, he said.

"We now have the beginning of a third generation that has not been catechized the way we would want them to be. And you can see the



devastating effect that has had on the sacramental numbers," he said, noting a decrease in the number of baptisms and other sacraments.

He called for a new approach to forming people in the faith—one that goes beyond a classroom experience to creating a new Catholic culture that fully engages and supports people in their spiritual journey.

"It's less a program and more a strategy. We are going to commit ourselves to use every means available to foster encounters, plural, with Jesus Christ, soul, spirit, mind, body, and community," said the bishop, as he presented basic guidelines and principles to those in attendance.

He cautioned that the new approach to forming young people in the faith will not simply be found in a textbook or a religious education classroom.

"The textbooks have never been better. And yet, we have fewer in the classrooms now than we did when the work started 27 years ago," he said, referencing the number of years that the Church has been approving texts. "So we are losing ground, and we have to re-imagine our approach."

The need to find new ways to form people in the faith is not only a challenge in the diocese, but in parishes across the country, said Bishop Caggiano who is serving as chair of the subcommittee and founding member of the Institute on Catechism mandated by United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

This fall, the USCCB will launch its own approach to reimagining faith formation. "The conversation our diocese is having, eventually will be had in every diocese and archdiocese in the whole

country. We are the first out of the gate, and I'm hoping together we would lead the rest of the country in the conversation."

The bishop outlined six principles that he believes can renew catechesis; evolution as opposed to revolution, subsidiarity, learning within a community, a results-oriented approach, cultural diversity, and listening to the Holy Spirit.

"I believe very much in maximum flexibility for every parish community. We can arrive at the same goals, perhaps using a slightly different path—one size will never fit all," he said to the pastors and catechists, encouraging them to share what works.

"We are in this together. This is a family. We are going to learn from each other in humility and thanksgiving."

The bishop said that learning the faith within the context of culture is one of the strongest forms of transmission of the values and of passing down the faith. He and past generations not only learned the faith through catechetical instruction, but absorbed it through community life.

"Culture is the great medium to pass on the faith. We have to admit that in the Church of our youth there was a culture that allowed formation to be direct and indirect. One of the great realities we need to understand is that the most powerful formation is often indirect,"

he said.

Recalling his own childhood at Sts. Simon and Jude School in Brooklyn, the bishop said his experience would be very familiar to the older generation of Catholics in the diocese who are now grandparents.

"We all may have different stories in the way we were raised, but I think there's a commonality in the past. I am the product of formation that did not occur just in the classroom with the Dominican Sisters who taught me, which were tremendous, but it happened in my neighborhood too. It happened in the street. It happened when I sat at meals with my parents, it happened with the cultures I had as an Italian-American. It happened with the rhythm and calendar that we all followed."

Bishop said that world which provided "indirect formation" is not available to most young people today. "So I am here to tell you the obvious—that culture is essentially gone. We are living in a secularized post-Christian world. It is as simple as that."

He said that while the challenges are formidable, he remains hopeful because of his faith in the power of the Holy Spirit, and also the response of pastors, lay leaders of faith formation, directors of religious education and their willingness to work together along with the Institute for Catholic

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Annual Bishop's Appeal

More than just a fundraiser



BRIDGEPORT—"The Annual Bishop's Appeal is more than a fund raiser, it's a major instrument for uniting the diocese in faith and service and supporting new opportunities for evangelization and fellowship," said Joe Gallagher, chief development officer of the Diocese of Bridgeport.

The 2022 Bishop's Appeal, A Bridge Home has raised \$7,695,000, and is at 95 percent of goal including projected contributions from the one We Stand with Christ parish, St. Aloysius. There are 40 parishes over goal for a total of \$447,545, said Gallagher.

He is pleased with the response, but believes there are many other people who can step up and make the Appeal a success for the diocese as it seeks to meet growing needs and ongoing missions.

Mike Hanlon, CPA, chief financial officer of the diocese, agrees that the Bishop's Appeal

unites the diocese in ways that may not always be visible to people, but he says the Appeal is an essential form of support for the Bishop's vision of renewal, and also for the major ministries and programs that people throughout the diocese have come to rely upon at times of need and crisis.

"People understand the need to support their parishes, but they don't always understand how important it is to participate in the Annual Bishop's Appeal," said Hanlon, who was pleased to report a projected balanced operating budget for the fiscal year. *(see story on page 8).*

Hanlon said the diocese simply couldn't do all that it does to help people in crisis, to strengthen our parishes and to promote the faith without the Bishop's Appeal," says Hanlon.

"Giving is the one thing we can all do together. It's not sim-

ply out writing a check, it's an act of faith and unity of the diocesan family, as Bishop Caggiano has often stated," he said.

Hanlon said Bishop's Appeal provides funding for many programs that parishes can't do alone, particularly the new initiatives that are designed to foster renewal and create a more vibrant and welcoming local Church.

"The Bishop's Appeal supports diocesan mission related programs within the following categories of Preaching and Teaching the Faith, Serving Those in Need, and Building Communities.

Preaching and Teaching the Faith programs include ministry to youth, priest formation, and tuition assistance to families through the Bishop's Scholarship Fund for Catholic education in our diocesan schools.

The Serving Those in Need programs are highlighted by the

work of Catholic Charities, St. Catherine for Special Needs and Pastoral care to the Sick and Elderly.

"The appeal also helps to build faith based communities through programs including Campus ministry, support for retired priests and the Sacred Heart Guild," Hanlon said.

Pam Rittman, Director of the Annual Appeal, says that the Parish Partnership Program introduced as part of the 2021 ABA has brought parishes together in faith and charity, and has served as a lifeline to parishes that are pastorally vibrant but financially challenged.

"This program affirms the solidarity and subsidiarity of the Church. It is inspiring and unifying, and we're thankful for all of the donors and pastors who have participated in the pro-

gram," she said.

Rittman said that the parishes that have designated over-goal donations to poorer parishes are helping to create a new era of parish collaboration in the diocese. Parishes that have benefitted from the over-goal program are using the fund for a wide range of needs including basic parish operations, necessary repair of buildings and grounds, reaching out to the hungry and homeless, providing religious education, and engaging youth.

(If you have not made your gift to the 2022 Bishop's Appeal, please help the Diocese reach its goal. Your gift means so much to so many who are need and for the future of our faith and Church. Please visit 2022BishopsAppeal.org, or text the word, APPEAL, to 475.241.7849.

► CONTINUED ON PAGE 25

faith hope and love—

I hope and pray that I can count on your support!

the greatest of these is love

Love never fails

Love, expressed through service, sacrificial giving, and charity, builds bridges to all those in need—and also builds up our diocesan community. The Bishop's Appeal is our way of building bridges to those who urgently need nutrition, housing and psychological support.

In addition, the Bishop's Appeal builds hope by providing tuition assistance for over 1,200 children to attend a Catholic school, formation for our seminarians and diaconal candidates, care for senior priests in their dignified retirement, and many other pastoral programs.

Now more than ever we hold fast to our belief that our love for one another through Christ makes all things new. It asks us to become living bridges to our brothers and sisters in need.

Please join as a family to meet our diocesan goal. So much depends on it.

Donate at 2022BishopsAppeal.org or call 203.416.1470

Does your company participate in a matching gift program? Your gift may be doubled or tripled, contact the Development Office for more info.

Thank you for your generous support, may God bless you!

Pathway to Higher Education

Fairfield U-Diocese announce Bellarmine location

FAIRFIELD—Fairfield University and the Diocese of Bridgeport are pleased to announce that Fairfield Bellarmine, a new academic unit that will offer a two-year associate's degree program, will open in Fall of 2023 at the site of the former St. Ambrose School on Boston Avenue in Bridgeport, Conn. The new campus will initially occupy the St. Ambrose rectory and convent.

Fairfield Bellarmine will prepare students for transition to a bachelor's degree program at a variety of four-year institutions, or for meaningful employment. The creation of this two-year associate's degree program designed to serve students in the Bridgeport community, is part of the University's strategic partnership with the Diocese of Bridgeport, "Pathways to Higher



THE NEW ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE program will serve students from the Bridgeport region, making Jesuit Catholic higher education more accessible for all.

Learning."

"Animated by a fundamental mission to accompany our youth on a hope-filled future, Fairfield University is committed to advancing access to our val-

ues-based, student-centric, outcomes-focused education in ever more modern ways," said Fairfield University President Mark R. Nemec, PhD. "As educators we believe in the dignifying and trans-

formative power of education. We are grateful to be working with the Diocese of Bridgeport, as the Bellarmine initiative is another innovative partnership providing greater opportunities and pathways to achievement for students of promise."

"This is a moment we've all looked forward to, and I believe one that will have lasting implications for the educational and personal success of our young people. By creating a pathway to higher education, we're also creating a pathway to hope and to achievement for students with untapped promise and potential. I'm grateful to Fairfield University for their leadership and commitment to this effort, which will transform lives and strengthen our community," said the Bishop Frank J. Caggiano.

Renovation plans for the facili-

ties and a site plan for the campus are underway. Several buildings will house instructional, student life, community engagement, and administrative spaces. Small class sizes and cohorts will ensure one-on-one attention, dedicated faculty, and strong support services.

Students will benefit from mentoring, including peer tutors. The University's writing and math center staff will have a presence on the Bellarmine campus, and students will be actively engaged in planning and forming a student government, clubs, athletic activities, and social and faith-related events at the Bellarmine campus. Students will have the opportunity to participate in University clubs, activities and intramural and club sports, as well as have access to facilities on Fairfield's main campus. ■



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Locations throughout Fairfield County



Young Adults

YCP finds a home in Fairfield County

By ROSE BRENNAN

BRIDGEPORT—Across the United States, many urban areas have established chapters of an organization called Young Catholic Professionals: a non-profit organization seeking to bring together professionals in their 20s and 30s united by their Catholic faith. And recently, one of its newest chapters made its home right here in Fairfield County.

The effort to bring YCP to Fairfield County was spearheaded by Fayne Mascarenhas and Stephanie Vargas, now the president and director of marketing of

the Fairfield County chapter. The two attended a larger YCP conference and felt Fairfield County might be a suitable location for a chapter, given the concentration of corporate businesses in the area.

In addition, Fairfield County is also the fastest-growing county in the state, and Connecticut is the third most Catholic state in the country, according to YCP Fairfield County's website. All of these factors contributed to the thought that Fairfield County could be an ideal home for YCP.

With the approval of Bishop Frank J. Caggiano and the Diocesan Young Adult

Council, as well as a grant from Foundations in Faith, the Diocese of Bridgeport was on their way to becoming home to a YCP chapter.

The group kicked off with a launch party earlier this year on March 19—the Feast Day of St. Joseph—at Church of the Holy Spirit in Stamford. This was apt for the organization, who calls St. Joseph its patron.

According to Diane Kremheller, the director of evangelization for YCP Fairfield County, the launch party both surpassed her expectations and really allowed the organization to hit the ground running.



“We had a line of people out the door,” Kremheller said. “People didn’t want to leave. The feedback that I got afterwards from friends and family ... they just thought it was phenomenal.”

Since launching, YCP Fairfield County has offered a variety of events focusing on career development, networking, volunteering and faith formation. The chapter hosted Tom Kolenberg for its first executive speaker series in June.

Kolenberg, a senior vice president at Merrill Lynch, discussed how he lives his faith at work, engaging his clients in conversations about God and encouraging them to return to the sacraments.

Kolenberg’s speech particularly resonated with Kremheller.

“Faith can’t be something that you put in the corner for Sunday,” she said. “It has to be lived every day. And YCP, I think, is going to be very important in sort of enabling people to do that and giving them ideas of how to go about that.”

YCP also offers volunteer opportunities and collaborates with other organizations on faith-based events. The group volunteered at Malta House, a transitional housing program for pregnant women, in July. They also recently collaborated with the Stamford young adult group for its monthly young adult Mass in September.

As YCP looks forward, there are a few other exciting events on the calendar before the end of the year. They plan to host Stephen Auth, a board member of the Lumen Institute, in early October. Founded in New York in 2005, the Lumen Institute provides faith-based formation for business and cultural leaders.

As the chapter’s director of evangelization, Kremheller plans to bring a hallmark of YCP to the Fairfield County chapter: St. Joseph Saturdays. According to YCP’s website this program offers “free half-day retreats for busy professionals wanting to re-center themselves.”

“Young professionals can’t always go away for a whole weekend and travel and all that,” she said. “They basically encourage each chapter to once a quarter have these St. Joseph Saturdays, where you go to a church ... and you do Mass, Adoration, and you have a talk, things like that.”

YCP membership is open to young Catholics in their 20s and 30s. To learn more about the organization’s Fairfield County chapter and its upcoming events, visit ycpfairfieldcounty.org.

The present and future Church:

FIF invests in young adults

By ROSE BRENNAN

BRIDGEPORT—As the month of October begins, the feast day of St. John Paul II approaches. Much of his papacy’s mission was focused on bringing young people to the forefront of their faith formation, with the ultimate goal of forming leaders of the Church.

Foundations in Faith is especially devoted to this same mission. And fittingly, much of the support it provides to young adult programs comes through a fund named after St. John Paul II himself.

According to Kelly Weldon, the foundation’s director, supporting young adult ministry is a key part of the missions of both Foundations in Faith and the Catholic Church as a whole.

“Often people will say young people are the future of the Church, but I think that’s a bit misguided,” Weldon said. “Actually, they are both the present and the future of the Church. And so I believe it is essential to invest in their faith formation, both now and down the line.”

Foundations in Faith has provided support to several young adult initiatives throughout the Diocese of Bridgeport.

For instance, the foundation provided a mini grant to purchase microphones for the Restless podcast for young adult Catholics. The podcast recently celebrated its 100th episode with a pizza and dance party at Church of the Holy Spirit in Stamford, which also doubled as a fundraiser for Veritas Catholic Network, the platform that airs Restless.

But the success of the Restless podcast goes beyond that. It was also named as a syndicate of EWTN, and can be found on the organization’s website.

Foundations in Faith has also provided funding for Catholic Adventures, one of Stamford’s young adult groups. The foundation’s funding has proven pivotal for several programs provided by the group, including a now-monthly young adult Mass celebrated at different parishes across the Diocese of Bridgeport. In the same city, the Basilica of St. John the Evangelist also received a grant from Foundations in Faith to support the parish’s young adult group.

The foundation’s commitment also reaches to has also supported a few young adult ministries in the northern confines of Fairfield County. St. Edward the Confessor Church’s young adult

group in New Fairfield received a Youth in Action grant to help expand the ministry’s program offerings. And in Danbury, Our Lady of Aparecida Parish received two grants to support its young adult group, Jovenes Sem Fronteiras. One supported a weekend retreat for the young adult group back in March, while the other sponsored a catechetical scavenger hunt in July.

All of the above grants were provided through the St. John Paul II Fund for Religious Education and Faith Formation. However, young adult ministries have also received grants from the St. Therese Fund for Evangelization. Last year, the Diocesan Young Adult Council received a grant to support the launch of a Fairfield County chapter of Young Catholic Professionals, which came to fruition in March.

More recently, Foundations in Faith awarded a grant to the Guild of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, which helped support the monthly “Heart to Heart” Eucharistic revival nights currently taking place in the Diocese. The next Heart to Heart event will be held at Church of the Holy Spirit on October 22 at 7 pm.

Foundations in Faith also provided a grant to kickstart the

Catholic Bridge program in the Diocese of Bridgeport. This program will provide both faith and career mentorship between young adults and older adults in similar career fields.

But it isn’t just about career support, after all. The foundation awarded a grant to the Parish of St. Cecilia-St. Gabriel in Stamford, which will support the launch of a pilot program called *Communio*, intended to support and provide faith formation for married couples. According to the program’s website, *Communio* “consults with churches equipping them with proven strategies and technologies to solve our nation’s family and faith crisis.”

To Weldon, investing in young adult ministry is essential at all levels of the Church. And if she has anything to say about it, those ministries have a friend in Foundations in Faith.

“This truly was an exceptional year in terms of the foundation supporting young adults and their ministries,” Weldon said. “And that’s a trend we’re hoping to continue in the coming years. As long as those young adult ministries keep applying for grants, we’re eager to keep awarding them.” ■

Catholic Charities

Rescuing food to combat hunger in Fairfield County

By **EMILY CLARK**

Six hundred pounds of food. Thirty boxes of produce. Dozens of bagels and containers of yogurt. Such surplus quantities of fresh and non-perishable goods could go uneaten and unused in Fairfield County, squandering resources and creating unnecessary waste. Instead, Catholic Charities programs such as the Thomas Merton Center in Bridgeport and New Covenant Center in Stamford are benefitting due to a variety of rescue efforts.

Food Rescue US is one of the many non-profits and volunteer groups that deliver rescued food throughout the week to social service agencies.

What began eleven years ago with two men from southwestern Connecticut setting out to address food insecurity and food waste has

grown into a national movement that has rescued millions of meals in 20 states. For those working and volunteering in the Diocese of Bridgeport though, the mission is local and the answer is simple.

"There is so much need," said Diane Geisert, a member of St. Anthony of Padua Church and the sustainability liaison for Food Rescue US – Fairfield County. "We can reduce food insecurity and at the same time look at the environmental impact of food waste."



According to Geisert, this organization sources edible food that will not be used or sold from grocers, farmers markets, and similar businesses, keeping it out of the waste stream and into the hands of those most in need. This service, she said, unites three stakeholders – food donors, social

service agencies, and volunteers.

When a donor such as Trader Joe's in Darien has canned goods with a "sell by" date about to pass or Fairfield University has leftover food from an event, they will arrange for a rescue. This ensures that these extra fresh and shelf-stable goods will benefit guests at food pantries and soup kitchens in the diocese or be composted at nearby farms.

"Without Food Rescue, our Eat Smart Pantry would not be as stocked as it is!" said Sabine Kuczo, operations coordinator at the Thomas Merton Center which accepts deliveries from Food Rescue four days a week. "This is a great cycle. These leftovers enable us to serve those in need which helps fulfill our mission."

Once donors such as these have boxes packed and ready, Food Rescue volunteers can sign

up to transport goods through a unique software program that posts available rescues, collects data, sends a nightly email, and keeps track of volunteers. According to Haley Schulman, the Food Rescue—Fairfield County site coordinator, this system allows for a seamless transfer of donations.

"Once you see an open spot that fits your schedule, you can access so many details about the rescue—the day and time, who receives it, even the exact place to park. And the agencies are always so grateful," Schulman said.

"We rely completely on volunteers to pick up the donations and deliver them directly to [places] that assist people facing food insecurity," Geisert added.

While some volunteers assist occasionally throughout a given

➤ *CONTINUED ON PAGE 21*

Mass and Dinner to launch Seton Collaborative

By **BRIAN D. WALLACE**

BRIDGEPORT—Bishop Frank J. Caggiano will formally launch the new Seton Collaborative with a Mass and Dinner on Wednesday, October 26 at Fairfield University, 1073 North Benson Road, Fairfield, CT 06824

Mass will begin at 6 pm in the Egan Chapel of St. Ignatius Loyola and dinner will follow at 7 pm in the Dogwood Room of the Barone Campus Center, adjacent to the chapel.

The purpose of the evening is to create awareness and build support for the collaborative, which was announced in the Fall of 2021. The collaborative is designed to partner with both Diocesan schools and parishes to provide them with financial and operational expertise and support including information technology.

"The collaborative represents an exciting and innovative opportunity to re-imagine how we manage the business side of Catholic education and provide support to each of the schools and parishes in the Diocese. I'm grateful to all of those who are interested in providing financial support to this effort and are also willing to share their considerable expertise



Seton Collaborative

and experience to help us launch this vital initiative," said Bishop Caggiano.

The bishop said each of the 77 parishes and 25 school campuses in the diocese strive to offer the best service possible to all, and to do so they need reliable business practices and information technology (IT) services.

"Though each school and parish is unique in character and size, all require similar infrastructure and expertise to provide these services in today's world. Common improvements are needed in critical areas like IT/computer services, business and finance, development, and marketing across the diocese."

The kinds of upgrades needed in the business and communications environment require significant time and resources, which are not always affordable and available at the individual parish and school level, the bishop said.

"The Seton Collaborative will provide such support, allowing pastors and school leadership to

focus their resources and talent on our primary mission—the ministry and education of our parishioners and students!" he said.

Elise Major of Weston, board chair of the Seton Collaborative, said that by providing an operational support network, the collaborative will "allow pastors and Catholic school leadership for focus their precious resources and talents on what they do best, ministry of our parishioners and education of our students."

Kevin Lawlor, executive director of The Seton Collaborative, said that the Collaborative is managed by an experienced board of subject matter experts who have responded to the Bishop's call for renewal and the most efficient use of resources.

"We're grateful that successful entrepreneurial leaders from various sectors of business, technology and education have stepped up to share their talents and offer guidance as we seek to strengthen schools and parishes," said Lawlor, who formerly served

as the Chief Operating Officer at Fairfield University.

Lawlor said much has already been accomplished by the collaborative. Payroll and accounting systems have been streamlined and additional training and support have been provided to ensure stronger financial systems.

In the area of IT, schools will be supported this fall with our first ever IT help desk and other improvements to benefit our students. As the Seton Collaborative continues to expand, parishes will also be able to take advantage of additional, new financial, IT and

other shared services.

The bishop will be hosting a Zoom session on October 25 from 7:30-8:15 pm to discuss the opportunities offered by the Seton Collaborative. Anyone interested in joining to learn how they can support the work of the Seton Collaborative is asked to contact Chief Development Officer for the diocese: Joe Gallagher at; jgallagher@diobpt.org.

(For information on attending the event, RSVP Kevin Lawlor, executive director, Seton Collaborative Kevin.lawlor@setoncollaborative.org or 203.708.7820. ■

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Diocesan Finance

Diocesan operating budget

BRIDGEPORT—Bishop Frank J. Caggiano and the Finance Council of the Diocese of Bridgeport have approved a fiscal year ending June 30, 2023 operating budget with a total of \$21,673,286 in revenues and \$21,630,100 in expenditures, representing a \$43,186 projected surplus.

The approved budget projects revenues to decrease approximately \$1.1 million to fund decreased expenses of \$1.4 million. Projected revenue decreases are anticipated within contributions and also Small Business Administration (SBA) Payroll Protection Program (PPP) funding received in the prior year, a one-time revenue source.

“We are stewards of all funds entrusted to us as we continue fiscally responsible and prudent decision making at all levels of the diocesan management team,” said Michael Hanlon CPA, Chief Financial Officer (CFO). “Additionally, we continue our practice of financial transparency called for by Bishop Caggiano as we outline our diocesan budget and release audited financial statements annually.

Hanlon said the prior-year budget adopted for fiscal year ending June 30, 2022 reported a projected deficit, totaling \$243,440.

“Last year, we continued with the pandemic uncertainty related to revenue sources to support operations and that budget reflected those conditions,” said Hanlon, who added that preliminary financial reports for fiscal year ending June 30, 2022 project a surplus.

“The surplus was realized as additional contributions were received throughout the diocese from our generous donors for designated programs and other support and some budgeted expenses were not utilized due the continued pandemic during this fiscal year,” said Hanlon.

Hanlon said the development of this fiscal year budget ending June 30, 2023 was equally as difficult as the prior year’s with continued uncertainty related to contributions and other revenue sources, and inflationary pressures on expenses.

He said that enhanced pastoral and mission related programs to fulfill Bishop Caggiano’s vision of renewal require increased funding. The additional staffing for these programs and staff needed for administrative support also result-

ed in additional expenses.

“Although the diocesan goal has been not to use one-time revenue sources within our budget to support operations, as we continue to recover from the pandemic, this year’s budget includes approximately \$400,000 of one-time revenue sources to support new initiatives and programs,” he said.

The Annual Bishop’s Appeal (ABA) and Cathedraticum tax are the major sources of revenue for the annual operating budget. The ABA supports diocesan mission related programs and Cathedraticum, is the traditional assessment on parishes to support the administration and operating costs of the diocese, he said.

The Cathedraticum assessment declined slightly (\$50,000) for budgetary purposes. The assessment calculation returned to an annual amount of offertory and other revenue whereas last year was based on a three-year revenue average calculation due to the pandemic and suspension of masses.

Cathedraticum revenue is projected at \$6.2 million for fiscal year ending June 30, 2023 significantly lower than budgeted amounts prior to the pandemic periods.

Parish Offertory Recovering
“Parish offertory is recovering from the decline during the pandemic as Masses were suspended. Offertory is one components of the Cathedraticum tax assessment and this year’s budget is estimated based on a continued recovery” he said.

“Parishes and parishioners also continue to recover from the pandemic as pastors have returned to full Mass schedules and seeking to increase attendance,” Hanlon said.

The diocese is considering partnering with parishes on an enhanced giving program in 2023 to assist parishes increase offertory and support as they continue to plan for continued financial strength.

During the budget planning process department leaders submitted their preliminary budgets to finance and after initial review, proposed expenses were adjusted to reduce requested expenses to minimums necessary to functionally operate based on estimated revenue.

All departments have been operating under-staffed, and this year’s budget adds some much needed positions to support pastoral programs as well as administrative functions.

Positions and additional funding were added to support the bishop’s mission related pastoral programs and to focus on strategic and pastoral planning, campus ministry and vocations.

The diocesan Development Office has received additional investment funding as Chief Development Officer Joseph Gallagher expands development functions to focus on areas of planned giving and major gifts. Success in this area will strengthen the diocese financially for many future years, Hanlon said.

Additional administrative support positions were budgeted to provide relief to several understaffed departments.

Deacon Patrick Toole, Chancellor and Episcopal Delegate for Administration, previously conducted a study related to identifying potential operational efficiencies within the Queen of Clergy priest’s retirement home in Stamford. With the hiring of Patrick Leydon as Queen of Clergy’s operations and property manager he has identified efficiencies and savings in operations without reducing the quality of services provided to our retired resident priests.

PPP Loans Aided Schools
PPP loans were received by all our schools and 70 parishes totaling approximately \$14.6 million. All but \$60,000 was forgiven. An additional \$3.0 million in PPP 2 funding was received by several schools who met new eligibility requirements.

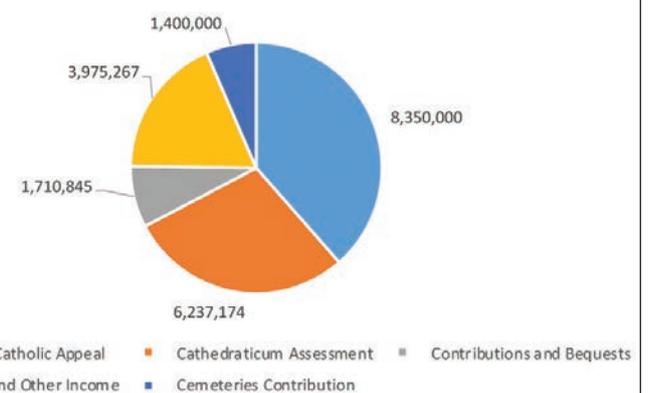
“This large infusion of one-time cash allowed our parishes and schools to remain financially solvent during an extremely difficult period. This cash allowed many of these entities to pay bills to the diocese which include the Cathedraticum assessments (parishes only), and medical and self-insurance allocations,” Hanlon said.

The diocese is currently working with a consultant to assist parishes, schools and other related entities to determine eligibility on the CARES ACT—Employee Retention Credit (ERC). This credit offers the opportunity for significant tax refunds to the Diocese, our parishes, schools and other affiliate entities. Preliminary review of calculations for various parishes and schools projects refunds and another infusion of one-time cash.

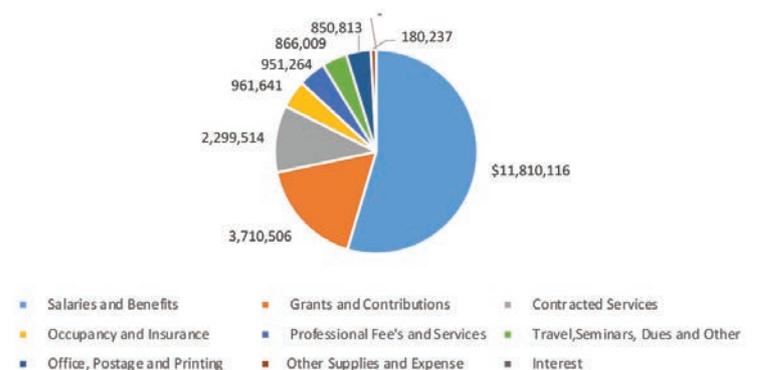
The Bridgeport Roman Catholic Diocesan Corporation Operational Budget — July 2022 to June 2023

Revenue	
Annual Catholic Appeal	\$8,350,000
Cathedraticum Assessment	6,237,174
Contributions and Bequests	1,710,845
Rental and Other Income	3,975,267
Cemeteries Contribution	1,400,000
Total Revenue	\$21,673,286
Expenses	
Salaries and Benefits	\$11,810,116
Grants and Contributions	3,710,506
Contracted Services	2,299,514
Occupancy and Insurance	961,641
Professional Fees and Services	951,264
Travel, Seminars, Dues and Other	866,009
Office, Postage and Printing	850,813
Other Supplies and Expense	180,237
Interest	—
Total Expenses	\$21,630,100
DEFICIT FROM OPERATIONS — BEFORE DEPRECIATION	\$43,186

Operational Budget
July 2022-June 2023
Total Budgeted Revenue \$21,673,286



Operational Budget
July 2022- June 2023
Total Budgeted Expenses \$21,630,100



Contributions and grants allocated from the Annual Bishop’s Appeal to diocesan mission-related entities represent approximately 17.2 percent

of this budget. These contributions and grants support the missions of Catholic Charities of Fairfield

➤ CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

Diocesan Finance

FINANCIALS FROM PAGE 8

County, St. Catherine Center for Special Needs, the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport, the Cardinal Shehan Center and the Bishop's Scholarship Fund within Foundations in Education. Additionally, these funds support vocations, seminarians and retired priests.

Salaries and benefits represent approximately 54.6 percent of the overall budget, Hanlon said, noting, "market-rate salary increases have been budgeted for January 1, as our employees are dedicated to their work and are always doing more than expected. Inflationary pressures and a reduction of the eligible employment pool is increasing salaries for new employees and we need to be fair to our long term dedicated employees."

Managing Healthcare Costs

He said the diocese continues to work to manage and control healthcare related expenses and benefits while providing affordable comprehensive coverage for employees and their families.

"Although we have attempted to manage our costs with progressive initiatives, budgeted healthcare benefit costs continue to rise greater than inflation rates annually. The diocese pays 80 percent of employee healthcare costs and 100 percent for our clergy," he said.

To counter this, the diocese conducted a "request for proposal" for medical brokerage services earlier this year and after review of proposals will change to the "Reta Trust" starting January 1, 2023. The Reta Trust (a not-for-profit trust) has operated for more than 45 years providing health coverage that aligns with the teachings of the Catholic Church, to employees and religious staff of Catholic institutions. Many U.S. dioceses have joined and members total in excess of 350,000. This provides purchasing power for benefits that was lacking with our current plan. As a not-for-profit trust annually dividends are returned to each diocese that should reduce future increases in medical premiums.

Andrew Schulz, Director of Real Estate and Anne McCrory, Chief Legal and Real Estate Officer, have continued to identify new areas of revenue sources while overseeing the diocesan property portfolio.

"They continue to do a remarkable job in identifying opportunities to generate alternative sources of revenue from property leases by marketing vacant diocesan owned buildings for use," he said.

The long-term underfunded liability obligations related to the frozen diocesan lay employee pension plan (frozen since 2008) continue to be a major area of concern and challenge for the diocese.

Although steps have been taken to reduce this underfunded liability based on a strategy developed by the lay pension committee, consisting of finance council members,

the long-term pension liability remains one of our largest financial challenge. Additional solutions and funding sources continue to be explored funding sources to fulfill all future pension benefit payments to the pension participants.

In December 2013, Bishop Caggiano took a major step toward financial transparency when he released the audited financial state-

ments for years 2010, 2011 and 2012. Audited financial statements for the subsequent periods ending December 31, 2013 and 2014, as well as financial statements for the periods ending June 30, 2016 through June 30, 2021 have been released annually. All reports can be found online.

The Diocesan commitment to full financial transparency under Bishop Caggiano's leadership is

evident by a recent Voice of the Faithful nationwide annual report on diocesan financial transparency practices and policies where the Diocese of Bridgeport was one of only four Dioceses in the country achieving a 100 percent score for its published policies and disclosures toward financial transparency.

(To learn more, visit: www.bridgeportdiocese.com/financialreports.)

www.scinto.com

A riddle from Bob Scinto

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

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

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



EDITORIAL

Congratulations!

Our gratitude and admiration go out to this year's St. Augustine Medal of Service recipients who were recognized recently at a Daytime Prayer Service (see story on page 13) held at St. Matthew Church in Norwalk.

It was a moment of pride and joy for those who have given great service to their parishes and to the Church. Some tended parish gardens or made beautiful music. Others led prayer groups, reached out to the homebound, cooked for poor and elderly parishioners, helped to run special events, and served on parish councils. Many have given a lifetime of service to the Church.

Following the prayer service and conferral of medals, the bishop thanked the priests, deacons and faithful who attended, and challenged all with one final thought:

"We live in time where institutions are not trusted and leaders are held in suspicion. From where will the renewal of the Church come? he asked. "The renewal has already begun in you and in your countless ways of bringing Christ's forgiveness, mercy and love to all those willing to receive it."

In this issue, we're more than pleased to shine a light on them—their search for holiness, their self-sacrifice and their compassion for others.

The Joy of the Gospel

In his talk delivered at the American Society of Missiology (ASM) annual meeting, Bishop Caggiano explored the "Conversion of the Missionary" in a secular culture. While he described profound challenges, he also noted there is much opportunity for evangelization. He told members that the best antidote to hostility and indifference is to live with joy. (The following is an excerpt from the bishop's talk.)

"If there has been a leader among us who has emphasized the power of joy, it has been Pope Francis. From the beginning of his pontificate, he has challenged us to unleash the joy of the Gospel. Pope Francis reminds teachers of moral theology that 'Rather than experts in dire predictions, our judges bent on rooting out every threat and deviation, we should appear as joyful messengers of challenging proposals, guardians of the goodness and beauty which shines forth in a life of fidelity to the gospel.'

We live in a nation that has epitomized the pursuit of happiness, as promised in the Declaration of Independence. In recent times, this pursuit has been lived in ever more unbridled and reckless ways. While the pursuit of happiness can be noble and humanizing, it is also limited by its very nature and can easily lead to deep frustration. Its limitation arises from its dependence upon the circumstances of our lives that easily change, for better or worse. Seeking happiness in an unbridled manner creates the need to manipulate the conditions and people around us so that we can remain happy—a situation that cannot escape its own fragility. In contrast, Christian joy is a deep abiding contentment that arises from humbly trusting in the love that Christ has for each of us.

I ask you, where do you find joy in your heart? How can we work together to strengthen the joy in each other's hearts? Our joy must radiate not just in our words, but in our actions, behavior, temperament and disposition, so that those who are suffering, facing anxiety or loneliness, can glimpse in us the author of our joy and the promise that there is hope in Him. In this time of unique challenges and corresponding opportunities to go forth in Christian mission and to be the bearers of the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ, perhaps our work can begin by looking in a mirror and asking basic questions. Am I a person who is willing to surrender to the Lord and His will each day? Do I truly wish to be humble of heart? Do I strive to be a joyful person?"

His plenary talk will be printed in full in the January issue of Missiology. (For more info visit: www.asmweb.org.)

EDITOR'S CHOICE

A place of Peace, Prayer, and Solace

BLESSING THE CORNERSTONE—Bishop Frank J. Caggiano blessed the cornerstone on the new St. Catherine of Siena Mausoleum in the Gate of Heaven Cemetery on Wednesday, October 5 during a brief ceremony in Trumbull.

"Congratulations to all who played a role in this great achievement that will stand for years. This is a monument to the Catholic faith and a place of great beauty, prayer and reflection, It's a place to pray in peace and solace for our loved ones," said the bishop.



Dean Gestal, executive director of Catholic Cemeteries, welcomed the invited guests including pastors and deacons of nearby parishes, funeral directors, diocesan leaders, cemetery staff, and others who gathered for brief remarks before the Blessing. He thanked everyone for working through the Coronavirus pandemic and supply chain problems to complete the mausoleum.

The bishop then stepped outside on a rainy day and assisted by Deacon Pat Toole, chancellor of the Diocese, and Joe McCurdy, cemeteries director of operations, blessed the cornerstone and thanked all for attending.

Workers are still putting the finishing touches on the mausoleum that will include Choose from 600 fully body crypts and 500 cremation plus niches. Four Trumbull parish "wings" chapel sections are included in

the Mausoleum including Christ the King, St. Catherine of Siena, St. Theresa and St. Stephen. There is an Italian marble statue of the Risen Christ in the foyer, and an open atrium in the center of the Mausoleum which is surrounded by with Terrazzo flooring and custom built benches for visiting with loved ones. Multi-colored glass mosaics of the eight Beatitudes surround the atrium which connects to the St. Monica Mausoleum via a glass walkway.

The St. Catherine of Siena Mausoleum will be open to visitors following the All Souls Day Mass to be celebrated by Bishop Caggiano on November 2, 11 am in the Mausoleum located at Gate of Heaven Cemetery, 1056 Daniels Farm Road in Trumbull. Monitors, seating and facilities will be provided and carnations and bottles of Lourdes holy water will be distributed at the conclusion of the celebration. The Mass is held rain or shine. An outdoor tent, seating and facilities will be provided.

(For more information or inquiries, visit www.stcatherinemaus.com, call: 203.742.1450, ext 155 or email: info@ctcemeteries.org.)

CLERGY APPOINTMENTS



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

PASTOR

REVEREND ELIO SOSA, appointed to Pastor, Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, Danbury. Effective date was October 1 for a term of six years.

REVEREND IAN JEREMIAH, appointed to Pastor, Saint Ann Parish, Bridgeport. Effective date was October 1 for a term of six years.

PAROCHIAL ADMINISTRATOR

REVEREND RICHARD D. MURPHY, appointed to Parochial

Administrator, Saint Michael the Archangel, Greenwich. Effective date was October 1.

EPISCOPAL CHAPLAIN

REVEREND PHILIP PHAN, appointed to Part time Episcopal Chaplain, Immaculate High School, Danbury. Effective date was October 1. Father Phan will continue ministry as the Priest Moderator for the Holy Vietnamese Martyrs Catholic Quasi-Parish.

RETIREMENT

DEACON ANDREW J. DZUJNA, retired from the Diocese of Bridgeport. Effective date was August 24.

IN RESIDENCE

REVEREND CLAUDIU-GABRIEL NECULAESI, appointed temporary residence, Saint Theresa Parish, Trumbull. Effective date was September 1.

Reverend Francis T. Hoffmann
Vicar for Clergy — October, 2022

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Editorial



God of New Beginnings

COLLECTING MOMENTS

BY EMILY CLARK

Emily Clark is a writer and teacher, and member of St Theresa Parish in Trumbull.

GratITUDE and pride. Anticipation and worry. Excitement and hope. These were just some of the feelings I experienced in the days leading up to moving our older daughter to college last month. Throughout the summer, we shopped for the essentials and packed all the boxes. She chose her classes and FaceTimed her roommate. As

move-in day drew closer, the preparation seemed complete—at least the physical preparation. We didn't know how to prepare emotionally for the day when we'd arrive on campus with four of us in a packed car and then leave with only three in an empty one.

But arrive we did, and Abigail settled in quickly. The rest of us were busy too, helping to arrange the room, plug in the fans, unroll

the rug, and hang up the clothes. The whirlwind of activity kept ourselves—and our minds—occupied, until we finally paused late in the afternoon and took a seat for Mass, just outside the college chapel, and reality hit. We'd be saying good-bye in less than an hour.

Fighting a range of emotions, I made myself focus on the entrance hymn, but it was the words of the chaplain's prayer that caught my attention: "God of new beginnings, as we open this academic year, we ask that You bestow on these students . . ." This truly was a new beginning for all the young people, a beginning to be celebrated, even for the parents about to leave and return to their routines, minus one. And who better to leave them with than God?

As Mass continued, my mind

wandered back to the chaplain's words, and I remembered how God had been with Abigail during all her other "new beginnings." He walked beside her on the first

"Even when we couldn't be there to protect her, God was, and I knew He would continue to be"

day of school. He swam and played with her during the weeks at sleepaway camp. He was in the backseat of the car during her first excursion on the highway. He sat next to her on the airplane when she first flew alone. Even when we couldn't be there to protect her, God was, and I knew He would

continue to be.

That is what I held onto as Mass continued. Still, I wondered where she would go and what she would do once we were back home. We couldn't imagine all the excitement and challenges she would experience in the next days, weeks, or months, only God could, for He said, "I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Following Communion, families stood, and the chaplain conferred a blessing on members of this incoming class. As the three of us placed our hands on Abigail's shoulders, I knew that we would miss her, but I also knew that we were leaving her in the right place and in the presence of her God of new beginnings. ■



Is it possible to forgive 77 times?

SWIMMING UPSTREAM

BY JOE PISANI

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

When I was at daily Mass recently, the Gospel recounted the time Peter goes up to Jesus with a trick question. Let me quote from the account so I don't get accused of making this up or perpetrating fake news, or even worse, fake Bible stories:

Peter: "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother (or sister) who sins against me? Up to seven times?"

Jesus: "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times."

Sometimes I wonder whether St. Matthew recorded everything exactly as it occurred because I suspect he left out a portion of that exchange, which might have gone something like this:

Peter: "How many times should I forgive?"

Jesus: "Seventy-seven times."

Peter: "Easy for you to say, you're not married."

To which I would add, "And you don't have kids."

We know Peter was married because Jesus cured his mother-in-law of a fever. However, there are no accounts of his wife saying, "Aren't you spending a lot of time with that fellow Jesus and your friends?"

Plus, we have no record of whether there was a Peter Jr., who took over the family fishing business when Peter left it all behind to follow Jesus. (Raising kids is a challenge unlike any other.)

When I asked my wife about forgiving 77 times, she insisted she's reached at least the 777 mark ... and enough is enough.

Who can forgive the same person that many times? In marriage, you're with the same person so much it comes down to either forgiving and moving on or harboring a grudge that only festers and turns into a resentment that can inhibit the spiritual growth of your relationship, which I've been told is what marriage is all about, even though it can be difficult to make progress on some days.

Marriage reminds me of the line alcoholics in AA often use: "We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection." To which my spouse would probably respond: "Then progress a little faster please."

One of my friends had grandparents who were notorious for bickering, and when they celebrated their 60th anniversary, she asked them, "What's the secret to staying married so long?" Without looking up from his newspaper, her grandfather grumbled, "Giving in." Wiser words were never spoken.

My friend Ann, who was married 70 years, when her beloved husband Paul passed away, has often told me there's a simple dynamic when it comes to marital disputes: Someone has to give

in first. Of course, if both people refuse to give in, there will be a worse stalemate than the U.S.-Soviet relations during the Cold War.

Remember that tremendously popular tear-jerker "Love Story"

"Another piece of AA wisdom that's worth remembering is the slogan 'A day at a time.' With marriage and parenthood, it's the only way"

with Ryan O'Neal and Allie McGraw back in the 70s, based on the bestseller by Erich Segal? It popularized the smarmy line, "Love means never having to say you're sorry." It sounds very profound, but I have my doubts.

Pope Francis turned that logic on its head when he told married couples the three most important words in any marriage are "Please, thanks, and sorry." (Of course, that's easy for him

to say. He's never been married. At least St. Peter knew what he was talking about.)

Nevertheless, the pope's advice is valuable for anyone who wants their marriage to last. He also wisely advised them never to go to bed without reconciling.

Another piece of AA wisdom that's worth remembering is the slogan "A day at a time." With marriage and parenthood, it's the only way. The quarrel that had you angry with each other one day you probably won't even remember in a month.

The Gospels never tell us whether St. Peter had kids. I like to think he had a son who took over the family fishing business when Dad left to follow Jesus. Imagine this exchange between father and son:

Peter: "The catches are down since you took over. I have a church to run, and I can't keep my eye on you all the time."

Peter Jr.: "Dad, I'm working as hard as I can. I never asked for this. Show a little forgiveness, will ya?"

Peter: "Forgiveness? I've been counting. You're way past 77 times."

Peter Jr.: "I am? Well, all I can say to you is 'What would Jesus do?'" ■

Catholic Men's Conference

Eucharist brings hope to shattered society

By JOE PISANI

WEST HARTFORD—Bishop Frank J. Caggiano told almost 600 men at the Connecticut Catholic Men's Conference they live in a "post-Christian, secular and ever-more atheist world ... and we have to do something about it," urging them to become Marines for Christ and men of hope whose lives are centered on the Holy Eucharist.

Bishop Caggiano was the keynote speaker at the 15th annual conference, held Saturday at Northwest Catholic High School in West Hartford. After two years of being hampered by COVID, the conference attendance almost doubled, attracting men from 13 years old to 85 from parishes throughout the state.

The theme "The Most Holy Eucharist" was selected as part of the National Eucharistic Revival initiated by the U.S. bishops "to restore understanding and devotion to this great mystery here in the United States." (For more

information, visit www.eucharisticrevival.org)

"The Holy Spirit brought every single one of us here today for a reason, as brothers in faith, because you and I are living in a unique moment in the life of our country and of our Church, unique in time because the challenges we face continue to grow," the bishop said. "We have come here to be resolved in courage and to make decisions in grace so that we answer those challenges together, just as in the Ancient Church, where the Fathers with their people faced similar challenges and rose to the occasion. Are we ready now to rise to the occasion?"

He told the audience that "the world out there is a mess, an absolute mess" and asked, "What are you and I going to do about it?"

The scope of that mess, he said, includes secularization that has taken hold of our country and culture, which has devolved to the point "where many people believe they themselves are the

standard of truth and goodness and all that matters is me or you."

"Scripture teaches us we are made in the image of God," he said, "But the world out there teaches God is made in my image, and he will do what I want him to do."

The bishop also discussed the effects this attitude has on families and politics. Pointing to the disintegration of political dialogue, he said, "Look at our political world; it is one step above chaos, where there isn't a sense of the common good, and we cannot have a rational dialogue among those whose disagree."

Secular culture also attacks our religious freedom. "We live in a time now that more and more to be a Christian is to live and walk in a hostile world, where what we believe is being attacked simply because we believe it," he said.

Bishop Caggiano cited challenges within the Church, including the faithful who "have fallen into the sin of complacency and mediocrity, which says, 'I'm good enough. I do enough and don't ask for anything else.' How many of us have fallen into a religion where we fulfill our obligations, but don't ask, 'Lord, what do you want me to do outside my comfort zone?'"

The Eucharistic Revival is long overdue, he said, because a majority of Catholics no longer believe in the Real Presence. One study found that 15 percent of those who don't believe "actually believe the Church, itself, does not believe in the Real Presence."

Many have left the Church, he said, "because they believe in a God that was taught to them by CNN and not the Catechism of the Catholic Church." Recalling his work with young adults, he said many leave the faith because "they see a lack of authenticity among Catholics — that is we say one thing and they see us do another ... and that applies to bishops, priests, deacons and religious."

"I believe in my heart of hearts that this is not the time for us to give up," he said. "This is not the time we run. This is the time we have to stand on what we believe and make a conviction to



ST. ROSE PARISH ATTENDEES, (l-r) Mike Mancusi, Pat Gorman, Rick Thurlow, Tony Vas, Joe Rahtelli, Tony Evertetz, Chris Kirkman, Mark Renzi, Mike Stutman, Deacon Michael Ronan.

become heroes for Jesus Christ, no matter what work or sacrifice it demands."

He urged them to unleash the power of the gifts God gave us on the day of our baptism, when we received the three theological virtues of faith, hope and love.

"The time has come for us to unleash the power of Christian hope. Now, more than ever, you and I are called to be Christian men of hope," he said. "We have to roll up our sleeves as Marines for Christ and go into the battle wherever that is and lay aside our safety and comfort, and sacrifice so that Christ's Will will be done."

"If we do not choose Jesus Christ to be the center of our lives, it will make no difference who is in his place," he said. "Our captain is always there with us, and he will allow us to be messengers of glad tidings that the mess will not have the final word."

His words were met with a sustained standing ovation.

The conference concluded with Archbishop Leonard P. Blair concelebrating Mass with the priests and thanking the organizers for developing a program that reinforces the efforts of the national revival. During his homily, he encouraged the men to be advocates of justice in a troubled society and to defend the poor, recognizing that poverty is not just material, but also moral and spiritual.

All of their efforts, he told them must be "connected to the mystery of the Holy Eucharist."

"Let's live the Eucharist and be close to Jesus when we leave here," Archbishop Blair said.

Deacon Richard Lawlor of St. Mary Church in Ridgefield, who is a member of the conference's leadership committee, said, "This

conference is so important for Catholic men because we live in an evil world. Our culture, our society love to tell us lies, and men need to recognize that and make Jesus the central part of their lives."

Dan Joslin of St. Edward the Confessor Parish in New Fairfield said that if Catholic men keep themselves centered on the Eucharist, they will appreciate the importance of humility, and it will lead them to be less self-righteous and have more empathy and compassion for others.

Thirteen-year-old Peter Carmody of St. James Church in Stratford was the youngest man to attend the conference. He had been confirmed two weeks ago by Bishop Caggiano and went to talk with him after his presentation.

"It is inspiring to see so many different people who all have been touched by God," he said. "And the Catholic Men's Conference brings them together to share our faith."

His father, James Carmody, who has attended several conferences, said: "All of the speakers were excellent. I always enjoy the Men's Conference because it renews my faith. The great conversations and engaging presentations never disappoint. I learned a lot about the Eucharist, and I feel I can now explain to others why the Eucharist is the source and summit of our faith. What a great way to start the Eucharistic Revival."

James Driggs of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Fairfield was equally moved by the conference and said, "Christ lives within all of us, and today's spiritual retreat confirms my conviction in this message. There is a living God, and I urge others to find him daily in their life as I did today." ■

St. Edward's Group led attendance at Men's Conference

NEW FAIRFIELD—St. Edward the Confessor Church once again led diocesan attendance at the Connecticut Catholic Men's Conference with 21 men from the parish taking part, according to Don Mallozzi, co-captain of the parish conference with Otis Shelton.

They joined almost 600 Catholic men, from 13 years old to 85, for the 15th annual conference and heard a keynote address by Bishop Frank J. Caggiano, who said it's time to bring Christ back to a troubled society, guided by the power of the Holy Spirit and nourished by the Holy Eucharist.



2022 Saint Augustine Medal of Service

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



(SAINT AUGUSTINE MEDAL PHOTOS BY AMY MORTENSEN)

‘You are a Living Medallion’

By **BRIAN D. WALLACE**

BRIDGEPORT—“You are a living medallion,” Bishop Caggiano said to the nearly 150 recipients of the 2022 St. Augustine Medal of Service during a Daytime Prayer service and award ceremony held at St. Matthew Church in Norwalk.

The St. Augustine Medals were presented in morning and noon-time sessions with proud family members and friends filling the Church to show their support and admiration for the recipients, who included many married couples.

The Daytime Prayer included the chanting of Psalms, and a reading from Galatians (5:25-6:10), “If we live in the Spirit, let us allow follow the Spirit.” Following the joyful service, the Bishop greeted the recipients and their family members in the bright sunshine outside of the Church for photos and best wishes.

As he blessed the medals before the altar, the bishop said “We are here today to confer the St. Augustine Medal upon those men and women who have been recognized by their pastors and parishes as having demonstrated a profound level of dedication to Christ and to his Church as evidenced in the extraordinary level of service given to their parishes, schools, and to various charitable works across the diocese.”

“I have the privilege to give you this medal named for St. Augustine our patron and spiritual father. It is just a meager symbol of what you already are—a living medal-

lion in the image of Christ in the world.”

On one side of the medal is an image of St. Augustine of Hippo, patron saint of the diocese. The reverse features the coat of arms of the diocese.

“Wear this medallion with the thanks of the great people of this diocese, but remember what it means. It’s only an invitation for others to look beyond it to your heart, spirit and soul, and finally to that the Lord and savior of us all,” he said.

The bishop began his homily by noting that medals have been presented to people throughout recorded history as a symbol of honor and gratitude, and also as a sign of a the relationship between the recipient and a higher power.

However the medals presented by the Church are different than that of other organizations and institutions, because they are presented in the name of Jesus Christ to men and women who seek to mold themselves in Christ’s image.

“By presenting the medals we are celebrating something quite mysterious, sublime, and profoundly beautiful. What we do here, we do in the life, power and grace of Jesus Christ. Jesus is the model of every human life.”

The bishop noted that the process of making medals hasn’t really changed over the centuries. It begins with an artist making a cast or mold to symbolize the significance and spirit of the achievement, and it involves shaping the medal in fire.

He said that the recipients were filled with the fire

of the Holy Spirit at a time when the fires of faith are dimmed in so many spiritual lives.

“We give you thanks in the name of Christ. You could not have done all the good you have done to this point in your life if you did not allow the Holy Spirit to mold and purify you by the power of grace.”

He praised the recipients for performing many sacrificial and selfless acts, “even menial tasks, that no one in your parish every saw, but in doing so, you were doing were the hidden hard work that allows family to prosper and grow. You did it not for recognition and honor, but out of love for your sisters and brother in Christ, in whose name we have gathered.”

“Allow me to simply say thank you for striving for holiness in life, being servants of one who came not to be served, for being light in a world that has become very dim, and for allowing the Spirit to lead you to this point,”

Among this year’s recipients was Al Barber, retired Catholic Charities executive, who has called the recipients forward each year. His name was read by Anne McCrory, Chief Legal and Real Estate Office of the Diocese.

Following the prayer service and conferral of medals, the bishop thanked the pastors, deacons, religious and all those who attended.

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 and in Diocesan ministries. ■

2022 Saint Augustine Medal of Service



SAINT JOHN PARISH, DARIEN:
MR. RAYMOND SLAVIN
— Nominated by Reverend William M. Quinlan



SAINT GEORGE PARISH, BRIDGEPORT:
MS. AILEEN JOANNA BAUTISTA
— Nominated by Reverend A. Alexis Moronta



SAINT GEORGE PARISH, BRIDGEPORT:
MR. KEVIN ALEJANDRO MENDOZA
— Nominated by Reverend A. Alexis Moronta



SAINT PETER PARISH, BRIDGEPORT:
MR. BERNARDO AND MRS. KARINA CASTANEDA
— Nominated by Reverend Jhon J. Gomez



SAINT MARGARET SHRINE, BRIDGEPORT:
MR. THOMAS CARRANO, SR. DANIELLA MARIE O'SULLIVAN, SSND
— Nominated by Reverend Peter Lenox



SAINT MARGUERITE BOURGEOYS PARISH, BROOKFIELD:
MRS. STEPHANIE ROSSI
— Nominated by Reverend Shawn W. Jordan



SAINT MARGUERITE BOURGEOYS PARISH, BROOKFIELD:
MR. JOHN SICLARI
— Nominated by Reverend Shawn W. Jordan



SACRED HEART OF JESUS PARISH, DANBURY:
MS. NANETTE SCUDIERO
— Nominated by Reverend Norm J. Gilbert



OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE PARISH, DANBURY:
MR. ALBERT AND MRS. MONICA COLLADO
— Nominated by Reverend Pedro A. Sosa



SAINT THOMAS MORE PARISH, DARIEN:
MRS. SUSAN LATTIMER
— Nominated by Reverend Paul G. Murphy



HOLY CROSS PARISH, FAIRFIELD:
MR. JOHN AND MRS. HELEN DE CARO
— Nominated by Reverend Alfred F. Pecaric



HOLY FAMILY AND SAINT EMERY PARISH, FAIRFIELD:
MR. BRIAN AND MRS. LISA PARISI
— Nominated by Reverend Sean R. Kulacz



SACRED HEART AND SAINT PATRICK PARISH, GEORGETOWN:
MR. TOM AND MRS. PEGGY SULLIVAN
— Nominated by Reverend Terrence P. Walsh



SACRED HEART AND SAINT PATRICK PARISH, GEORGETOWN:
MRS. SUSAN BARNETT
— Nominated by Reverend Terrence P. Walsh



SAINT ROCH PARISH, GREENWICH:
MR. FRANK CORTESE
— Nominated by Reverend Carl D. McIntosh



SACRED HEART PARISH, GREENWICH:
MR. PETER AND MRS. KATHLEEN WIEGAND
— Nominated by Reverend Mark D'Silva



SAINT MARY PARISH, GREENWICH:
MRS. DOLORES D'ELIA
— Nominated by Reverend Michael K. Jones



SAINT JUDE PARISH, MONROE:
MR. PAUL AND MRS. NANETTE SEPERACK
— Nominated by Reverend Joseph Gill



SAINT MARY PARISH, NORWALK:
MR. CHARLES KRIEWALD
— Nominated by Reverend F. John Ringley, Jr.



NOTRE-DAME DU PERPÉTUEL SECOURS, NORWALK:
MR. MICHEL APPOLINAIRE, MS. MARIE A. CLEBERT
— Nominated by Reverend Guy Dormevil

2022 Saint Augustine Medal of Service



SAIN'T THOMAS THE APOSTLE PARISH, NORWALK:
MRS. JACQUELINE AUSTIN —
Nominated by Reverend Mirek Stachurski



SAIN'T JEROME PARISH, NORWALK: **MR. JAMES AND MRS. DINA HOWE** — Nominated by Reverend Rojin Zacharias Karickal Mammachan



SAIN'T ELIZABETH SETON PARISH, RIDGEFIELD: **MR. CHRISTOPHER RUGGIERO AND MRS. JACQUELINE ABARR** — Nominated by Reverend Alphonse Arokiam



SAIN'T CATHERINE OF SIENA AND SAINT AGNES PARISH, RIVERSIDE: **MRS. RHONDA MORLEY** — Nominated by Reverend William F. Platt



SAIN'T MARGARET MARY ALACOQUE PARISH, SHELTON:
MRS. PATRICIA GEISSLER — Nominated by Reverend Joseph Cervero



SAIN'T JOSEPH PARISH, SHELTON:
MR. MATTHEW QUIRK — Nominated by Reverend Michael F. Dogali



SAIN'T JOSEPH PARISH, SHELTON:
MS. MARY JANE PARIS — Nominated by Reverend Michael F. Dogali



SAIN'T JOSEPH AND SAINT LADISLAUS PARISH, SOUTH NORWALK: **MR. JOSEPH YORKO, MRS. MAGALIE ROMEUS** — Nominated by Reverend Edison H. Orozco



SACRED HEART PARISH, STAMFORD:
MISS KAREN SABIA — Nominated by Reverend Alfonso Picone



SAIN'T CLEMENT OF ROME PARISH, STAMFORD:
MR. ANDREW DELLACORTE, MRS. FRANCES MOAVERO — Nominated by Reverend Carlos Rodrigues



SAIN'T MARY PARISH, STAMFORD:
MRS. SULLY MORENO, MS. ROCIO MELENDES — Nominated by Reverend Gustavo A. Falla



SAIN'T LEO PARISH, STAMFORD:
MR. THOMAS AND MRS. KAREN BENNETT — Nominated by Reverend James D. Grosso



SAIN'T BRIDGET OF IRELAND PARISH, STAMFORD:
MR. DENNIS JULIANI — Nominated by Reverend James K. Bates



SAIN'T BRIDGET OF IRELAND PARISH, STAMFORD:
MRS. VIVIAN LUCHERINI — Nominated by Reverend James K. Bates



SAIN'T MAURICE PARISH, STAMFORD:
MRS. LINDA NARDOZZA — Nominated by Reverend James K. Bates



SAIN'T MAURICE PARISH, STAMFORD:
MRS. MARY LAMONTE — Nominated by Reverend James K. Bates



SAIN'T CECILIA-SAIN'T GABRIEL PARISH, STAMFORD:
MR. ANTHONY PRAMBERGER — Nominated by Reverend John P. Connaughton



SAIN'T CECILIA-SAIN'T GABRIEL PARISH, STAMFORD:
MR. WILLIAM NAGLE — Nominated by Reverend John P. Connaughton



HOLY NAME OF JESUS PARISH, STAMFORD:
MRS. KRYSZYNA KOPEC — Nominated by Reverend Pawel M. Hrebenko



OUR LADY STAR OF THE SEA PARISH, STAMFORD:
MR. JEFF AND MRS. DEB HARRINGTON — Nominated by Reverend Piotr K. Smolik



OUR LADY OF GRACE PARISH, STRATFORD:
MS. MARIE RADCLIFF — Nominated by Msgr. Martin P. Ryan



OUR LADY OF GRACE PARISH, STRATFORD:
MS. SUZANNA ZELLO — Nominated by Msgr. Martin P. Ryan



SAIN'T STEPHEN PARISH, TRUMBULL:
MR. JOHN FRACASSINI — Nominated by Reverend Henry J. Hoffman



SAIN'T CATHERINE OF SIENA PARISH, TRUMBULL:
MR. ROBERT AND MRS. JEANNIE CAVALLERO — Nominated by Reverend Joseph A. Marcello

2022 Saint Augustine Medal of Service



SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI PARISH, WESTON:
MR. DENNIS AND MRS. AMY JUNG
— Nominated by Reverend Augustine Nguyen



CHURCH OF THE ASSUMPTION PARISH, WESTPORT:
MR. TIMOTHY ROMANO
— Nominated by Reverend Cyrus M. Bartolome



CHURCH OF THE ASSUMPTION PARISH, WESTPORT:
MRS. NANCY ENGEL
— Nominated by Reverend Cyrus M. Bartolome



HOLY VIETNAMESE MARTYRS, BRIDGEPORT:
MR. DOAN AND MRS. HOA NGUYEN
— Nominated by Reverend Lahn T.X. Phan



CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF FAIRFIELD COUNTY, BRIDGEPORT:
MR. MICHAEL TINTRUP
— Nominated by Mr. Michael Donoghue



CATHOLIC CHARITIES – NEW COVENANT CENTER, BRIDGEPORT: **MS. LISA KOSLO**
— Nominated by Mr. Michael Donoghue



CHANCELLOR AND EPISCOPAL DELEGATE FOR ADMINISTRATION, BRIDGEPORT: **MR. ALBERT F. BARBER, JR.**
— Nominated by Deacon Patrick Toole



SAINT MARY PARISH, BETHEL:
MR. THOMAS REESE, MS. ROSANNA LIFRIERI
— Nominated by Reverend Corey V. Piccinino



SAINT MARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL, BETHEL:
MR. MICHAEL BECHER
— Nominated by Mr. Scott Smith



SAINT ANDREW PARISH, BRIDGEPORT:
MRS. KATHLEEN CASHMAN
— Nominated by Reverend Milan Dimic



SAINT ANDREW PARISH, BRIDGEPORT:
MR. MARK STRAMOSKI
— Nominated by Reverend Milan Dimic



SAINT ANN PARISH, BRIDGEPORT:
MR. CRAIG B. VAN STEENBERGEN
— Nominated by Reverend Elio Albano Sosa



SAINT ANN PARISH, BRIDGEPORT:
MS. KARLA D. PALMA ALEJANDRO
— Nominated by Reverend Elio Albano Sosa



SAINT MARY PARISH, BRIDGEPORT:
MRS. CRUCITA TROCHE
— Nominated by Reverend Rolando Torres



SAINT CHARLES BORROMEIO PARISH, BRIDGEPORT:
MRS. NANCY RATTANAPHONE KEOVILAY, MR. LANCE KINGKITTISACK — Nominated by Reverend José Vásquez



SAINT ANDREW CATHOLIC SCHOOL, BRIDGEPORT:
MS. DIAMANTE AVELLANET
— Nominated by Mr. Gene Holmes



SAINT AUGUSTINE CATHOLIC ACADEMY, BRIDGEPORT:
MS. JEANINE KURTZ
— Nominated by Dr. Allison Hurtt



SAINT MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL PARISH, BRIDGEPORT:
MR. RICHARD AND MRS. JULIANN JANOWSKI — Nominated by Reverend Norbert Siwinski, O.F.M. Conv.



SAINT RAPHAEL CATHOLIC ACADEMY, BRIDGEPORT:
MRS. ROBIN LYNCH
— Nominated by Sr. Elizabeth Doyle



KOLBE CATHEDRAL CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL, BRIDGEPORT: **MR. KEVIN GRIMES**
— Nominated by Mrs. Camille Figliuzzi



THE DEVELOPMENT OFFICE, BRIDGEPORT:
MRS. KELLY ANNE MURPHY
— Nominated by Mr. Joseph Gallagher



THE INSTITUTE FOR CATHOLIC FORMATION, BRIDGEPORT:
DR. JAMES AND MRS. CAROLANN STEFFEN
— Nominated by Dr. Patrick Donovan



SAINT GREGORY THE GREAT PARISH, DANBURY:
MR. RODNEY BOURDEAU
— Nominated by Reverend Michael L. Dunn



SAINT GREGORY THE GREAT PARISH, DANBURY:
MRS. MARIANNE FAHEY
— Nominated by Reverend Michael L. Dunn

2022 Saint Augustine Medal of Service



SAINT PETER PARISH, DANBURY:
MR. MICHAEL LIDDANE
— Nominated by Reverend Gregg D. Mecca



SAINT PETER PARISH, DANBURY:
MR. JORGE ORDONNEZ
— Nominated by Reverend Gregg D. Mecca



SAINT JOSEPH PARISH, DANBURY:
MR. MARTIN AND MRS. GLORIA NISSLY
— Nominated by Reverend Samuel V. Scott



SAINT GREGORY THE GREAT CATHOLIC SCHOOL, DANBURY:
MR. BRIAN LAMP
— Nominated by Mrs. Suzanne Curra



SAINT GREGORY THE GREAT CATHOLIC SCHOOL, DANBURY:
MRS. HANORA LOPEZ
— Nominated by Mrs. Suzanne Curra



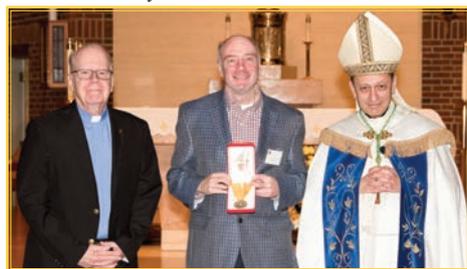
SAINT JOSEPH CATHOLIC SCHOOL, DANBURY:
MR. PATRICK AND MRS. MARGARET HERON
— Nominated by Dr. Louis Howe, Jr.



SAINT PETER CATHOLIC SCHOOL, DANBURY:
MR. WILLIAM McALLISTER
— Nominated by Mrs. Mary Lou Torre



IMMACULATE CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL, DANBURY:
MR. ANTHONY AND MRS. PAMELA CIRONE
— Nominated by Ms. Wendy Neil



OUR LADY OF THE ASSUMPTION PARISH, FAIRFIELD:
MR. DAVID VAN VLACK
— Nominated by Reverend Peter A. Cipriani



SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS PARISH, FAIRFIELD:
MR. GARY AND MRS. DIANE CAMILLO
— Nominated by Reverend Victor T. Martin



ASSUMPTION CATHOLIC SCHOOL, FAIRFIELD:
MS. STEPHANIE SANTIAGO
— Nominated by Mrs. Stacy Clements



SAINT MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL PARISH, GREENWICH:
MRS. THOMAS S. KNIGHT, JR.
— Nominated by Reverend Ian M. Jeremiah



SAINT PAUL PARISH, GREENWICH:
MRS. MARGARET RIEMER
— Nominated by Reverend Leszek P. Szymaszek



GREENWICH CATHOLIC SCHOOL, GREENWICH:
MR. BRENDAN AND MRS. JACQUELYN BREW
— Nominated by Ms. Rebecca Steck



SAINT ALOYSIUS PARISH, NEW CANAAN:
MR. SCOTT AND MRS. MELANIE BARNARD
— Nominated by Reverend Robert M. Kinnally



SAINT EDWARD THE CONFESSOR PARISH, NEW FAIRFIELD:
MRS. PATRICIA HOENNINGER
— Nominated by Reverend Robert Wolfe



SAINT ROSE OF LIMA PARISH, NEWTOWN:
MR. JOHN McMAHON
— Nominated by Msgr. Robert E. Weiss



SAINT ROSE OF LIMA PARISH, NEWTOWN:
MR. PETER McNULTY
— Nominated by Msgr. Robert E. Weiss



SAINT PHILIP PARISH, NORWALK:
MRS. DEBORAH STADLER
— Nominated by Reverend Sudhir D'Souza



ALL SAINTS CATHOLIC SCHOOL, NORWALK:
MRS. REBECCA DE LALLO
— Nominated by Mrs. Linda Dunn



SAINT MARY PARISH, RIDGEFIELD:
MR. JAMES AND MRS. MARY LOUISE O'ROURKE
— Nominated by Msgr. Kevin T. Royal



SAINT LAWRENCE PARISH, SHELTON:
MRS. THERESA REICHENBERGER
— Nominated by Reverend Ciprian Bejan



HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC ACADEMY, SHELTON:
DR. KATHLEEN LOZINAK
— Nominated by Mrs. Lisa Lanni



SAINT ALOYSIUS CATHOLIC SCHOOL, STAMFORD:
MRS. MAURA GAYER
— Nominated by Mr. Adam Fielding

2022 Saint Augustine Medal of Service



SAINT JAMES PARISH, STRATFORD:
MS. MARY CLEMENTS
— Nominated by Reverend Peter J. Adamski



SAINT JAMES PARISH, STRATFORD:
MR. JASON LAMBERT
— Nominated by Reverend Peter J. Adamski



HOLY NAME OF JESUS PARISH, STRATFORD:
MR. GEORGE ANDRISO
— Nominated by Reverend Albert G. Pinciario



SAINT MARK PARISH, STRATFORD:
MR. RUDOLF AND MRS. MARGARET NIEDERMEIER
— Nominated by Reverend Birendra Soreng



SAINT JAMES CATHOLIC SCHOOL, STRATFORD:
MRS. JAIME BERESKI
— Nominated by Mr. Christopher Robertson



SAINT MARKS CATHOLIC SCHOOL, STRATFORD:
MR. STEVE AND MRS. CHRISTINE FLAIG
— Nominated by Mrs. Melissa Warner



SAINT THERESA PARISH, TRUMBULL:
MR. ARTHUR AND MRS. MARY JO PRANGER
— Nominated by Reverend Brian Gannon



SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA SCHOOL, TRUMBULL:
MR. JEFFREY AND MRS. LEAH DeVITO
— Nominated by Mrs. Patrice Kopas



SAINT THERESA CATHOLIC SCHOOL, TRUMBULL:
MR. EUGENE AND MRS. TINA COLACO
— Nominated by Ms. Barbara Logsdail



SAINT LUKE PARISH, WESTPORT:
MR. JOSEPH BOGGIO
— Nominated by Reverend Kumar Xavariapitchai

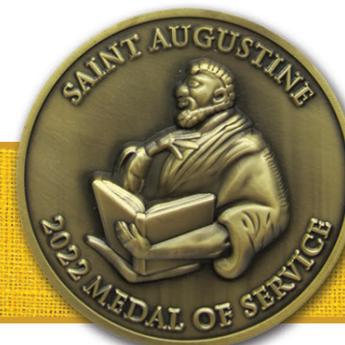


SAINT LUKE PARISH, WESTPORT:
MRS. MARIE HANULIK
— Nominated by Reverend Kumar Xavariapitchai



OUR LADY OF FATIMA PARISH, WILTON:
MRS. IDA EVERSON
— Nominated by Reverend Reginald D. Norman

Medal Award Recipients who were unable to attend the Prayer Service



SS. CYRIL AND METHODIUS PARISH, BRIDGEPORT:
MR. T.R. AND MRS. MICHELLE ROWE
— Nominated by Reverend Canon Francis X Altieri

OUR LADY OF FATIMA PARISH, BRIDGEPORT:
MR. WILLIAM POWE, MRS. MARIA ISILDA ROSA
— Nominated by Reverend Rogerio Perri

SAINT JOSEPH PARISH, BROOKFIELD:
MRS. MARIA FERNANDES & MRS. MARY CLAXTON
— Nominated by Reverend George F. O'Neill

SAINT MARGUERITE BOURGEOYS PARISH, BROOKFIELD:
MR. JOHN SICLARI
— Nominated by Reverend Shawn W. Jordan

NOTRE DAME PARISH, EASTON:
MRS. CHRISTINE LINLEY
— Nominated by Reverend Michael P. Lyons

SAINT ANTHONY OF PADUA PARISH, FAIRFIELD:
MR. ALLEN AND MRS. MAUREEN WALLACE
— Nominated by Dr. Eleanor Sauers

SAINT MARY PARISH, NORWALK:
MR. THOMAS B. HECKEL
— Nominated by Reverend F. John Ringley, Jr.

SAINT MATTHEW PARISH, NORWALK: MR. DOUGLAS (POSTHUMOUSLY) AND MRS. PHYLLIS REID
— Nominated by Reverend Jeffrey W. Couture

SAINT MARGARET MARY ALACOQUE PARISH, SHELTON:
MR. MARK CIUCHTA
— Nominated by Reverend Joseph Cervero

CATHOLIC CHARITIES – THOMAS MERTON CENTER, BRIDGEPORT: MR. MARK AND MRS. PAMELA KELLY
— Nominated by Mr. Michael Donoghue

CATHOLIC CHARITIES – NORWALK FAMILY LOAN AND COMMUNITY ADVOCACY PROGRAMS, BRIDGEPORT: MR. ROBERT LYONS
— Nominated by Mr. Michael Donoghue

THE CATHEDRAL PARISH, BRIDGEPORT:
MR. GERMAN AND MRS. VIRGEN TEJADA
— Nominated by Very Reverend Arthur Mollenhauer

SAINT ANN CATHOLIC ACADEMY, BRIDGEPORT:
MRS. VALERIE KING
— Nominated by Mrs. Patricia Griffin

SAINT AUGUSTINE CATHOLIC ACADEMY, BRIDGEPORT:
MR. JOHN KREITLER
— Nominated by Dr. Allison Hurtt

THE DEVELOPMENT OFFICE, BRIDGEPORT:
MR. DANIEL MURPHY
— Nominated by Mr. Joseph Gallagher

CHRIST THE KING PARISH, TRUMBULL:
MR. MICHAEL AND MRS. LINDA LISI
— Nominated by Reverend Terry Walsh

SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS CATHOLIC SCHOOL, FAIRFIELD: MR. PETER AND MRS. PAMELA RAUSCH
— Nominated by Dr. Patrick Higgins

SAINT MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL PARISH, GREENWICH:
MS. KRISTINA MATHIAS
— Nominated by Reverend Ian M. Jeremiah

SAINT PAUL PARISH, GREENWICH:
MR. MICHAEL BENNETT
— Nominated by Reverend Leszek P. Szymaszek

SAINT EDWARD THE CONFESSOR PARISH, NEW FAIRFIELD:
MR. MICHAEL COHEN
— Nominated by Reverend Robert Wolfe

SAINT ROSE OF LIMA CATHOLIC SCHOOL, NEWTOWN:
MR. KEVIN AND MRS. KATHERINE O'CONNOR
— Nominated by Dr. Bardhyl Gjoka

SAINT MARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL, RIDGEFIELD:
MR. JOHN AND MRS. REBECCA GALLAGHER
— Nominated by Mrs. Rachel Ambrosio

SAINT LAWRENCE PARISH, SHELTON:
MRS. JEANETTE GONOS
— Nominated by Reverend Ciprian Bejan

THE CATHOLIC ACADEMY OF STAMFORD, STAMFORD:
MRS. ROBYN NETO & MRS. DANIELLE JAHN
— Nominated by Ms. Patricia Brady

SAINT ALOYSIUS CATHOLIC SCHOOL, STAMFORD:
MR. EDWARD GAYER
— Nominated by Mr. Adam Fielding

HOLY NAME OF JESUS PARISH, STRATFORD:
MS. DOLORES MIHALIK
— Nominated by Reverend Albert G. Pinciario

SAINT JAMES CATHOLIC SCHOOL, STRATFORD:
MR. JAVIER SANTIAGO
— Nominated by Mr. Christopher Robertson

OUR LADY OF FATIMA PARISH, WILTON:
MRS. MARY MORRISSEY
— Nominated by Reverend Reginald D. Norman

Sisters of Life

The dignity of womanhood

By KATHY-ANN GOBIN

STAMFORD—Celebrating the dignity of womanhood was the theme of a morning brunch with the Sisters of Life.

About 50 women, aged 15-40 gathered at Villa Maria Guadalupe retreat center to connect over faith, fellowship and fertility. The morning brunch at the Sky Meadow Drive retreat was sponsored by Project Beloved, a non-profit organization that exists to establish a life-affirming medical center in Connecticut.

“While our mission is to open this center, our higher calling is to restore femininity and family in the culture and specifically each woman’s understanding of her own identity as a Beloved Daughter of God,” said Founder and President of Project Beloved Noelle Amann in her opening

remarks to those gathered. “The Lord has something really special for all of us today.”

Theresa Barry and her daughter Sarah, who often volunteer at Villa Maria Guadalupe, attended the event together.

“It feels like such a place of joy and light,” said Theresa Barry, of the international retreat center of the Knights of Columbus which is operated by the Sisters of Life.

The Sisters of Life is a contemplative and active religious community of women founded in 1991 by John Cardinal O’Connor for the protection and enhancement of the sacredness of every human life.

“I’m preparing to be a young woman in this world and getting ready to go to college. I want to be around women talking about living out their faith,” Sarah Barry said.

“I am hoping for a new perspective on womanhood, on how to live in the secular world,” Sarah Barry said. “I want to re-ground myself with young women and the Sisters of Life to reaffirm my own perspective.”

Theresa Barry said it’s important to her that her daughter be with women who support her beliefs.

“It’s important to stand strong in the faith although there’s so much in the secular world telling you to do otherwise,” said Theresa Barry.

Sister Gianna Maria, S.V., spoke to the group of young women encouraging them to maintain their dignity.

“We, all of us here, are part of an incredible line of women,” said Sister Gianna Maria, but despite that she said, many women have been hurt during the



journey of life. She said that hurt comes in many forms including the pain of having to dress a certain way to impress others.

“In different ways, all of us have suffered for not being seen and loved for whom we are, the beloved creations of God,” she said.

“Our worth is based on being created by God,” she said. “We are beautiful and loved and good.”

Father Joseph Gill, pastor of St. Jude in Monroe, said the morning mass following Sister Gianna Maria’s speech and emphasized how women should reflect God’s goodness.

“Men and women mirror God in different ways,” he said. “Men

with their strength, women with their beauty, tenderness and love. Both of those are meant to be complementary to reveal God in His fullness.”

“Women can do something only God can do, give life. They are co-creator with the Lord. Women are to reveal God’s beauty and love to the world by being vulnerable, by radically trusting others.”

Both Father Gill and Sister Gianna Maria agreed that trust starts with a relationship with God.

Sister Gianna Maria implored all gathered to bring whatever is on their hearts to the Lord, “He wants to bring us

▶ CONTINUED ON PAGE 25

40 Days for Life

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BRIDGEPORT—The Diocese of Bridgeport Fall 2022 Campaign runs from September 28 to November 6, 2022—Protect mothers and children by joining this worldwide campaign for an end to abortion! Through prayer, fasting, peaceful vigils and community outreach, 40 Days for Life has inspired more than 1,000,000 volunteers! Please join us at one of the three vigil sites in the Diocese; Bridgeport, Danbury and Stamford.

For the Bridgeport location information visit 40daysforlife.com



com/Bridgeport or contact Barbara at bgrabows@aol.com.
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Cardinal Shehan Center

Developing new programs to inspire youth

By **JOE PISANI**

BRIDGEPORT—Lorraine Gibbons has always understood the importance of financial literacy. Maybe it was that program she took in investor relations at the University of Connecticut or the various positions she held in banking and the corporate world.

Today, as executive director of the Cardinal Shehan Center and the McGivney Community Center, two agencies of the Diocese of Bridgeport that serve youth, she is bringing those skills to young people with an Economic Empowerment Program that teaches them the fundamentals of finance, investing and the stock market, with a ticker tape that lets them see in real time how stocks like Nike, Apple and Disney are performing.

“The only other place in

Bridgeport that has a ticker tape is a high school,” Gibbons said. “It was so heartwarming this summer when I walked in—while giving a tour to executives from United Illuminating—and was able to show them our Economic Empowerment Zone. Our math instructor was explaining the market to second- and third-grade boys, when one of them asked, ‘You mean to tell me I could own a share in one of those companies?’ He looked at the stock ticker tape and smiled.”

Gibbons, who is in her fourth year as executive director of the center, which recently celebrated its 60th anniversary, said she strives to develop programs that aren’t typically taught in schools.

“As an after-school provider, our mission is to enrich lives through learning, and I really take that to heart,” she says. “We want to offer an open door so



that our students will be exposed to opportunities they might not otherwise get.” And she is doing just that.

The financial literacy program started in the summer of 2021 on a small scale but really took off in March, propelled by the creation

of the Smith Family Economic Empowerment Zone, funded by Mark Smith, a Senior Vice President of Wells Fargo who is an alumnus of Shehan Center, along with his siblings Michael, who works for Google, and Rayah, an employee of Optibus, a transportation management software company.

The Zone was completed last year, and Gibbons found financing to install the ticker tape.

Another new initiative at the Shehan Center is the Skilled Trades Program, which encourages students to look into alternative career paths. Gibbons said the inspiration came from her father, Owen Chambers, 94, a retired tailor from Jamaica who lives in New Haven. The program, which ran from October to May, will resume this month.

“We looked at the data, and from what we determined, some students are not going to college,” she said.

Her father put her in touch with his electrician Kingsley from West Haven, who even in retirement is being called back to work three days a week because of the shortage of skilled tradespersons.

“He said that in the next five years, we’re going to have a rude awakening because of a shortage, which will be made worse by the number of people planning to retire,” Gibbons said.

She presented the idea to the board, and one member, Willie McBride, owner of WC McBride Electrical Contractors LLC, embraced it and even gave a presentation to the 6th, 7th and 8th grade boys and girls about his trade ... and brought along a female electrician to assist him.

In April, Gibbons organized a skilled trades fair at Shehan, which attracted more than 200 students and featured presentations by manufacturing and transportation companies, designers, draftsmen and tradespeople, including carpenters, plumbers and electricians.

“It gave the kids an opportunity to use the tools and do all kinds of things with different craftsmen, and it exposed them to careers they never knew about,” she said. The program is being coordinated by Jim Connors, who retired from Bridgeport Fitting.

Gibbons also plans to begin a media program, which will feature a regular podcast for students to tell their personal stories. She expects to launch it in October for boys and girls from fourth to eighth grade.

When she considers the countless young people the Shehan Center has helped over the years, Gibbons recalls what her mother Beulah, who never graduated from high school, always told her six children: “Education is the gateway out of poverty.”

In honor of her mother, Gibbons, who is a mother of two daughters, personally funds the Beulah Barbara Goodall Chambers Scholarship. This year’s recipient was Kendra Hill, who was active at the center and has begun studies at Hampton University in Hampton, Virginia.

As the Cardinal Shehan Center celebrates 60 years of service, Gibbons looks to the future with other plans to enrich the lives of young people. “My role is not to sustain the Shehan Center,” she says, “but to grow it and keep our mission front and center.”

Lorraine Gibbons will be one of six fundraising professionals who will be honored by The Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) Fairfield County Connecticut and Connecticut Chapters at its Annual Connecticut’s National Philanthropy Day Celebration, Friday, November 18, 2022, at Vazzano’s Four Seasons, Stratford, Conn. Selected from nominations across the state, the 2022 Connecticut National Philanthropy Day Awards honor those organizations and individuals who have helped make a positive change in their communities. Tickets are on sale now. at AFPFairfield.org/NPD2022. ■



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St. Gregory the Great

Fun and scary Forest of Fear

DANBURY—Something scary is brewing behind Saint Gregory the Great Church as the Forest of Fear is coming alive with eerie scenes of Halloween to frighten all who dare to enter.

"This is the fourth year for the Forest of Fear," said Pastor Father Michael Dunn. "It's really taking off every year. The lighting and sound effects are always improving," he said. "We even added smells."

The quarter-mile wooded trail behind the Great Plain Road parish is packed with gruesome scenes and situations that test the senses and sometimes seem to suspend reality. Last year, it was rated the best haunt in the area by i95 radio station.

Father Dunn works with Gene McNamara, Bob Novella and Dave Knight to design, develop and improve the Forest of Fear, adding new attractions every year. The three men bring their collective experience of creating a popular corn maze in the neighboring town of Brookfield, years ago.

"Every year we add something," McNamara said. "We change up different areas, so it's always new and different."

McNamara, a computer engineer, said he enjoys working with his son, Jake, as they get the

Forest of Fear ready this year.

"It's very rewarding working together and being part of the engineering mind to construct the haunt," he said. "This is a professional level haunt."

McNamara said the haunt is increasingly becoming high tech with motion sensors installed to trigger the unexpected for unsuspecting guests.

"It's very high tech. It's very Hollywood like," Father Dunn said, adding that last year drew the biggest crowd so far.

"We were not looking to make this a big fundraiser but now this is our major fundraiser for the year," Father Dunn said. "It's bigger than all our other fundraisers combined."

The creativity of the haunt is as important as the convincing creepy characters that inhabit the haunted trail.

"Performance is important because we are putting on a show," said Father Dunn, adding that many of the volunteers are staff and students, including students from Immaculate High School.

"High school students play a big part in the Forest of Fear. They really embrace the role as an actor," Father Dunn said.

From a haunted cemetery to a

disturbing hospital and a creepy dollhouse, volunteers help the haunt come alive.

Katie Haug, who grew up in the parish, has been volunteering at the event with her family for the past four years and says the experience is thrilling for everyone involved.

"Halloween is something I really enjoy," she said. "I'm trying very hard to hide this year and keep my face covered to really startle people."

Katie's husband Dave said one of his favorite parts of the experience is "to see all the kids come through the 'not so scary hour,' smiling and enjoying it."

The children's hour allows the younger ones, often dressed as little princesses, action heroes and monsters, to experience the Forest of Fear before the sun goes down and with friendly and welcoming ghouls and goblins.

The Haugs agree the Forest of Fear is much more than just creating a fun Halloween experience.

"We've gotten closer to people we've known for years and we've gotten together for the main goal to help out our school and our church," Katie Haug said. "I feel like we've built a new community and made new friends," she said.



McNamara, a parishioner of Saint Gregory the Great, agreed.

"It's one thing to go to church and see people and it's another to see people outside of church and interact with them in another way," McNamara said, referring to the camaraderie and friendships that have blossomed throughout the years of working on this event.

The Forest of Fear not only brings the community together but it also helps to bring families together too. "It's gives us something to bond over and share stories about it," said Dave Haug. The Haug's teenage children are also involved in the activities, whether it's playing a character, building props, setting-up or working the concessions stands.

"I know so many people enjoy it. There's an air of mystery about it. We want it to be fun and exciting," Katie Haug said. "If we can do something to help the parish we're in, especially if it's fun," she added.

All the characters in the forest pride themselves on not giving away any secrets as they prepare for the annual October scare and they also try very hard not to be

recognized by family and friends.

"The best part about it is you just laugh all night long while scaring people," McNamara said. "It's a lot of fun. More and more people realize that and they join us in scaring people."

In fact, about 100 people attended an event held to help ready volunteers for this year's Forest of Fear.

"It's definitely worth the surprises," said Dave Haug, who for the first two years assisted with security but now participates as one of the characters in the forest.

"It's going to be a great time," Dave Haug said. "It's a lot of fun. If you like being scared, this is the place for you."

The Forest of Fear will be open from 5:30-9 pm on both Friday and Saturday nights on the weekends of October 14/15, 21/22, 28/29. The not so scary children's hour is from 5:30-6:30 pm. Rain dates will be the Sundays of October 16, 23 and 30 at the same time. Admission is \$20 per person. The not so scary hour is \$15 per person. Tickets can only be purchased on site on the nights of the event. Forest of Fear Haunted Attraction in Danbury, Conn.

RESCUING FOOD FROM PAGE 7

month, others choose to adopt a site and commit to a weekly rescue, creating a relationship between the donor and the receiving agency. Despite the frequency of the commitment or the size of the donation, the goal is to get the rescues covered.

Since its inception over a decade ago, Geisert said that Food Rescue US—Fairfield County has saved nearly 40 million pounds of food, stressing the environmental impact of the organization's work. Gutman also shared how the Thomas Merton Center and New Covenant Center check all donated goods, placing the best of each product on their shelves and then composting the rest. Through the efforts of so many throughout the region, excess food now benefits families in need as well as the environment.

John Gutman, executive director at New Covenant Center, agrees. In addition to what is stocked on the shelves, he said that some of the food goes toward meal services. "The wonderful variety of produce allows our chefs to create healthy

and robust meals," he added. Food Rescue provides New Covenant Center with donations like groceries and baked goods seven days a week from partners including Costco and Whole Foods.

Gutman added that many groups including the soup kitchens themselves are involved in food rescue throughout Fairfield County, and that he is grateful to Food Rescue and all those who have joined this innovative initiative to feed those who are food insecure and keep food from going to waste and filling area landfills.

"Connecticut Food Share, the recently-merged entity that serves as the State's single largest resource of food to most Food Pantries and Soup Kitchens, and the Food Bank of Lower Fairfield County, have also been excellent partners," he said.

(To learn more about how you can assist Catholic Charities nutrition programs, visit: www.ccfairfield.org. To volunteer for Food Rescue US—Fairfield County, visit foodrescue.us or contact Diane Geisert at diane@foodrescue.us.)



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Parish News

Founder of Walking with Purpose to speak

Are you tired of feeling overwhelmed? Longing for peace? Lisa Brenninkmeyer, creator of the popular “Walking with Purpose” Catholic Bible Study Program for women, will touch your heart with her all-new talk: “Strong yet Tender: Building

will be with you.”

Gather your girlfriends—it will be a wonderful night out! Lisa’s talk will take place in the Church with refreshments and book signing to follow in the Great Room. Register for this event here and learn more: www.shop.walkingwithpurpose.com/products/wwp-live-with-lisa-brenninkmeyer-at-st-matthews-norwalk-ct-on-october-20.



Resilience in an Age of Trauma,” at St. Matthew Church in Norwalk, Thursday, October 20 at 7 pm.

Despite the most challenging circumstances, trauma does not have the last word. This is God’s promise to you and your families in Isaiah 43:2: “When you pass through the waters, I

will be with you.”

Lisa Brenninkmeyer is a dynamic speaker and author who created Walking with Purpose out of a desire to see Catholic women come to know Christ personally. “Since its arrival in the

Diocese of Bridgeport, Walking with Purpose has deepened the faith of thousands of women who have attended its courses,” said Bishop Frank J. Caggiano. Today, more than 49,000 women, young women, and girls participate in WWP each year.

Lisa has been recognized by the Catholic Leadership Institute as a National Catholic Leader and was a presenter at the USCCB Convocation of Catholic Leaders. Lisa has authored 16 Walking with Purpose Bible studies. Her first book, Walking with Purpose: Seven Priorities that Make Life Work, has sold more than 80,000 copies. Lisa holds a B.A. in psychology from St. Olaf College and is pursuing her master’s degree in Theology from Franciscan University of Steubenville. She and her husband Leo have seven children and three grandsons.

St. Matthew Church is located at 216 Scribner Avenue, Norwalk, CT 06854. For further information, please visit StMatthewNorwalk.org. ■

Parishes learn and pray together

When Bishop Frank J. Caggiano revised the norms for liturgical ministers in the Diocese of Bridgeport, he encouraged all Readers and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (EMHC) to commit themselves to lifelong formation.



To assure this, he required that every mandated Reader or EMHC to participate in formation once every six months.

To make it easier, some parishes, like St. Stephen, Trumbull and St. Jude, Monroe, are hosting in-person sessions to gather ministers for formation. These two parishes, challenged by the bishop to find ways to collaborate last year, served as a pilot for helping the faithful fulfill their learning requirements.

Fifty-five mandated Readers and EMHCs gathered in the social hall of St. Jude Church September 24 for a session of fellowship, catechesis, and prayer focusing solely on their calling to these beautiful liturgical ministries.

Since the first wave of mandates for Readers and EMHCs issued in July 2019 are ready for renewal, leaders at St. Stephen and St. Jude wanted to answer the bishop’s call for formation while seeking opportunities to collaborate on new and ongoing projects. For most readers and EMHCs, renewal will take place via LEAD, the online learning platform created by The Institute for Catholic Formation.

Deacon John Tuccio of St. Jude and Deacon John DiTaranto of St. Stephen took the initiative, and offered to lead an in-person session that would offer the two communities a chance to learn and pray together, as well as satisfying the Bishop’s call for ongoing formation. The session’s intent was less informative and more formational. Rather than focusing on best practices, the deacons led a discussion on answering the call to ministry, encouraging those present to reflect on how their calling to these ministries has impacted their lives on a daily basis and how it brings them closer to an encounter with Christ.

Deacon DiTaranto opened the session reminding the participants that they are not active in their respective ministries because they just happen to be available, but because they are called to serve Christ and His Church in this manner. His focus was with the Readers and their opportunity during the liturgy to read the Word of God, to prepare not only how to pronounce certain words and names in the scripture, but to understand the message of those readings and to live what they proclaim. Similarly, Deacon Tuccio focused on the EMHCs, reminding them of the real presence of the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of our Lord in the Eucharist.

Even though the event was longer than the courses offered online, participants raved about the chance to finally come back together in person and share an opportunity to learn more with one another.

“It’s so nice to be out from in front of the computer,” said one participant, echoing the feeling of so many. The opportunity to see people, share experiences, and pray together more than made up for the fact that this formation was longer than the required online experience.

(If your parish would like to offer in-person formation before the mandated renewal date of November 29, 2022, or if your parish plans to host their own session, please let the Institute team know ahead of time so any in-person session can count as ongoing formation. Email institute@diobpt.org for more information.) ■



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Parish News

OLF celebrates 60 years

By **JOE PISANI**

BRIDGEPORT—Bishop Frank J. Caggiano joined several hundred parishioners from Our Lady of Fatima Church to celebrate its 60th anniversary on September 18 with a Mass and a joyous procession through the neighborhood.

The bishop concelebrated the outdoor Mass at 11 am Sunday with pastor Father Rogerio Perri, assisted by Deacon Gabriel Pereira.

During his homily, Bishop Caggiano praised the Portuguese parish for its achievements over the past 60 years since its founding and called on Our Lady of Fatima at a time in history when her message is more relevant than ever to the world.

He said the diocese is blessed to have such a vibrant, growing parish that is doing well because

of the strong faith of its members and their love of the Church. The bishop acknowledged the importance that Our Lady plays in their lives and that they, like he, honor and love her.

The anniversary Mass was followed by a procession in the neighborhood near Huntington Road. Parishioners marched and carried flags and banners representing parish ministries, including the youth group, the rosary group, Holy Hour for the Dying, and the Tea Party ministry.

Children and young people were dressed as the Blessed Mother, the three visionaries at Fatima, where Our Lady appeared in Portugal in 1917, St. Rita, St. Anthony of Padua and others.

The parishioners were joined by Bishop Caggiano, who later blessed the cake for the celebration. A band played Marian

hymns and people prayed the rosary during the procession, recalling Our Lady of Fatima's request during her apparitions to pray the rosary daily for peace in the world.

Maria Amelia Moura, who leads the twice monthly Holy Hour for the Dying, carried a banner with her sister Esther Oppedisano. She said she was married at Our Lady of Fatima and that her children along with her grandson were baptized there.

A statue of Our Lady of Fatima used in the celebration was donated to the church, along with a platform to carry her, which was decorated with flowers, she said.

The church traces its history back to 1948 when the Portuguese faithful sought a priest to administer sacraments and provide pastoral services. Shortly



afterward a priest from Fairfield Prep would assist so they could make their Easter duty, according to a history of the parish. At that time, some would go as far as Massachusetts or Rhode Island for Masses in Portuguese.

In June 1955, then Bishop Lawrence J. Shehan considered the community's request and asked the Vatican about the possibility of getting a Portuguese priest, since the diocese was still new and none had been ordained in the United States in recent years.

In April 13, 1956, Father Constantino Caldas arrived and met with the parishioners at the Cathedral of St. Augustine, and he shortly after began celebrating Mass in Portuguese. Parishioners first formed the Holy Name Society, followed by Our Lady of Fatima Society.

In October 1956, Bishop Shehan blessed a statue of Our Lady of Fatima that came from Portugal, and Mass attendance along with faith formation for young people steadily increased. ■

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Obituaries

Reverend Jose de Brito Alves

BRIDGEPORT—Reverend Jose de Brito Alves died on September 6, in Portugal. He was 78 years of age.

“Many in our Diocese will fondly remember Father Alves for his long-time ministry to the Portuguese community at Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Bridgeport,” said Bishop Frank J. Caggiano. “Please pray for the repose of the soul of Father Alves and the consolation of his family.”

Jose de Brito Alves was born on May 25, 1944 in Portugal, the son of Manuel Jose Alves and Isaura Mendes de Brito, in the parish of Mei, municipality of Arcos de Valdevez, Diocese of Viana do Castelo. From an early age he felt the call to the priestly life, attending the Braga Seminaries from 1955-1967.

On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Apparitions of Our Lady of Fátima, he was ordained a priest on August

15, 1967, in the Sanctuary of Fátima, by Cardinal D. Manuel Gonçalves Cerejeira.

On August 29, 1967, he was appointed by the Archbishop of Braga as parish priest of Cossourado and Linhares, municipality, archpriestship of Paredes de Coura. After two years, he was released from the parish of Linhares to take over the community of Sapardos, municipality of Vila Nova de Cerveira in June of 1969.

Father Alves requested permission from his bishop to come to the Diocese of Bridgeport to serve the Portuguese community of the city of Bridgeport. Bishop Walter Curtis agreed to receive Father Alves and in May 1975, he was appointed as the Parochial Vicar of Our Lady of Fatima Church in Bridgeport. He served in that capacity until 1996, when he was appointed Administrator of the parish. Father held this appointment



REVEREND JOSE DE BRITO ALVES

until his retirement in 2019.

In his retirement Father Alves returned to the Diocese of Viana do Castelo, residing and collaborating pastorally in Arcos de Valdevez. On October 18, 2019, he was temporarily appointed parish priest of the parishes of Alvora and Portela, archpriestship of Arcos de Valdevez.

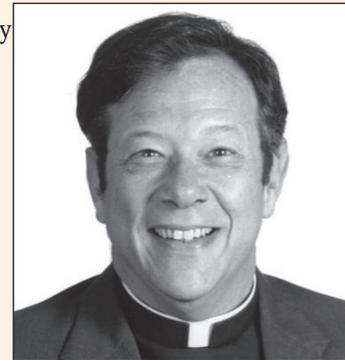
All services for Father Alves were conducted in Portugal. ■

Reverend Ronald Amiot, S.J., 73

Reverend Ronald Amiot, S.J. 73 died at St. Ignatius Loyola Jesuit Community, New York City, N.Y. on September 3, 2022. He was born and raised in Bridgeport and attended the former diocesan prep Seminary, Christ the King Preparatory School in Southport.

Father Amiot received a doctorate in Education (counseling) from the University of Iowa and much of his early priestly ministry focused on psychological counseling at Creighton University and Fairfield University among other places. He was appointed Rector at Campion Health and Wellness Center for Jesuits in Weston, Mass (1996-2005). In 2005 he served as president of Cheverus High School, Portland, Maine, was Assistant to the Vice President for Student Development at Loyola University Maryland (2007-09), and served as the Maryland Jesuit Province Assistant for Health Care Planning (2009-12). In 2017, Father returned to Loyola University Maryland as the Rector of the Jesuit Community. From 2017 until his passing, he was the Minister of the St. Ignatius Loyola Jesuit Community in Manhattan and did pastoral ministry in area churches.

The funeral Mass was held on September 12, at the Church of St. Ignatius Loyola in New York City. Private burial took place at the Jesuit Cemetery, Campion Center, Weston, Mass. Father was preceded in death by his parents, Robert and Josephine (DiCamillo) Amiot. He is survived by his sister Janet and brother Thomas, and his Jesuit brothers. ■



REVEREND RONALD AMIOT, S.J.

DECEASED CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE OF BRIDGEPORT OCTOBER 16—NOVEMBER 19

OCTOBER

16	Msgr. John V. Horgan Kung.....	2009
17	Msgr. Benedict Tighe	2004
18	Bishop Walter W. Curtis	1997
19	Rev. Cornelius J. Looney	1974
22	Msgr. David F. Bannon.....	1979
	Deacon Donald Fonseca	1989
27	Rev. Robert C. Franklin	1991
	Msgr. Thomas J. Whalen	2012
28	Deacon John Kucera.....	2007
29	Rev. Michael A. D’Elia.....	2000
30	Msgr. Leo M. Finn.....	1960
31	Rev. Francis D. McKenna.....	1989

NOVEMBER

3	Msgr. Joseph A. Heffernan.....	1989
	Deacon Thomas P. Freibott.....	2002
6	Rev. Bernard Dolan	2010
9	Rev. Stephen A. Grinvalsky.....	1972
10	Rev. Gerard C. Mason	1993
11	Msgr. Victor J. Torres-Frias.....	1995
13	Msgr. Alphonse J. V. Fiedorczyk.....	1987
15	Rev. M. Steven Barrett, S.S.	2000
	Rev. John P. Odie	1999
19	Rev. Rocco D. Nadile	1978

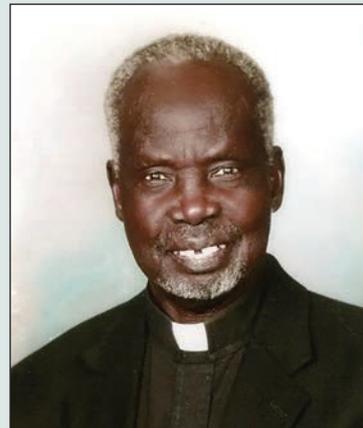
Reverend Philip Pitya, 80

NORTH CAROLINA—Reverend Philip Pitya, 80, of Sanford, N.C. and Juba, South Sudan, passed peacefully, Saturday, September 10, 2022.

Among his many assignments as a priest for 52 years, Father Philip served the people at St. Agnes in Greenwich and St. Gregory the Great in Danbury, both in Connecticut, where he was loved by many as he shared his love for the Lord.

He was born in the village of Kworigik, South Sudan, to the late Legge Loku and Mary Kaku. In addition to his parents, he was predeceased by his four brothers and a sister; and is survived by many loving cousins, nieces and nephews.

In 1966, he attended the Pontifical Urban University



FATHER PHILIP PITYA

in Rome whose mission is to train priest, religious brothers, sisters, and lay people for service as missionaries. After ordination by Pope Paul VI in 1970, he returned to his home in Juba to the St. Teresa’s Cathedral to serve as the parish priest. Nine years later, he traveled to the United States to study

at Fairfield University, and then he continued his education at Boston University in religious studies where he received a Doctorate.

During the last fifteen years Father Philip spent his summers in the States, arranging for Sudanese priests to visit parishes across the country on Mission Sundays to say Masses in the parishes and share the life and culture of the Sudanese.

The Funeral Mass was celebrated at St. Stephen’s Church in Sanford, N.C. on Saturday, September 24. For those may be interested in contributing to a memorial fund to honor Father Philip, a charitable fund has been initiated for the education of South Sudanese Youth called “Father Philip’s Education Fund.” ■

Estate Planning

National Estate Planning Awareness Week

Monday, October 17 through Sunday, October 23

In 2008, the United States House of Representatives designated the third week in October as National Estate Planning Awareness Week. The goal was to help the public understand what estate planning is and why it is such a vital component of personal, family, and financial wellness.

The Diocese of Bridgeport is using this year's designated week, Monday, October 17 through Sunday, October 23, as an opportunity to educate parishioners about not only estate planning, but how our Catholic faith calls us to plan and steward our God-given resources.

More than half of all Americans die without a will. When this happens, assets are distributed according to the state laws where the deceased lived at the time of their death.

To the right, you will find more information and the benefits of estate planning. ■



Interesting Facts About Estate Planning

- 2/3 of American adults don't have an up-to-date estate plan to protect themselves or their families in the event of sickness, accidents, or untimely death.
- The COVID-19 pandemic increased the number of people who have created a will or estate plan.
- Without a plan, the state (probate) is in control.
- The average cost (personal representative fees, attorney fees, accounting fees) to go through probate is 3-8% of your estate.
- The average time to go through probate is 6-24 months.
- Planning helps not only avoid probate, but family dissension over loved ones' intentions

Benefits of Estate Planning

- Peace of mind for you and your family
- Own your healthcare decisions and keep them in line with your Catholic values.
- Determine your funeral plans and final resting place, before others have the stress of having to do it for you.
- Decide how your hard-earned wealth will be distributed to your loved ones and organizations you care about—not the courts.
- You can support charitable causes that are dear to your heart, even if your other family members do not feel the same way.
- You can use your estate to glorify God and help sustain His church on earth (i.e., your Parish, a diocesan ministry, Catholic education, charity.) ■

Your Gift Your Legacy

National Estate Planning Awareness Week is also an opportunity to think about your family, loved ones and organizations that you care about the most.

According to Bishop Caggiano, it is a time of year to reflect on our blessings and think about how we can use them to glorify God.

"We as Catholics should use Estate Planning Awareness Week to reflect and discern how God is calling us to steward the treasure he has entrusted to us on earth, says Bishop Caggiano." Creating an estate plan is an act of both love and stewardship that can protect your family, plan for your assets, and establish a legacy that honors your Catholic faith."

Just as you can name family and loved ones in your estate plan, you can also name charitable organizations as beneficiaries through a "Planned Gift."

"For many people, a planned gift is the largest and most impactful gift they'll ever make because it has no impact on their current cashflow, says Bob O'Brien, director of planned giving for the diocese. "Planned gifts are made during one's lifetime, usually as a bequest in their will, and come to fruition upon their passing. It's really a unique way to provide for a cause that's dear to their heart."

To help members of the diocese complete this important life task, the Diocese of Bridgeport and its three foundations have partnered with FreeWill, an

online estate planning tool that can help parishioners create their will for free.

As part of an estate plan, FreeWill can also help parishioners create an Advance Healthcare Directive to specify one's healthcare wishes and a Financial Power of Attorney to designate a person they trust to make decisions about their property and finances—all at no cost.

The diocese still encourages parishioners to consider consulting an attorney or financial advisor with any questions about estate planning.

For a list of lawyers and financial advisors, please contact Bob O'Brien from the Diocesan Development Office at robrien@diobpt.org. ■

Free Estate Planning Resource

Don't let a lack of time or resources stop you from protecting your family's future.

Our Diocese has partnered with FreeWill to offer you the opportunity to create your legal will for free. Using FreeWill's easy-to-use online platform, you can write your will in 20 minutes or less, and ensure your Catholic legacy and wishes.



Get started today at FreeWill.com/BridgeportDiocese. ■

SISTERS OF LIFE FROM PAGE 19

all love and peace."

"Mary loves each of us as one of her daughters. Seek Mary for guidance it will bring you peace," said Sister Gianna Maria, who encouraged the women to ask the Lord, "How do you see me?" and "Ask yourself, how should I see myself?" and everything in your life should flow out of those two."

She also offered practical advice to the young women, "Don't get caught up in conversations with men to objectify yourself or others, even online and don't wear revealing clothes, dress with dignity," she

said. "Your outside appearance should reflect the inside, that we are loved by the Lord."

Father Gill said Eve used her beauty to seduce Adam and shared with the young women that they should use their beauty to love.

He challenged the group to do two things: "Bring God's beauty, tenderness and love into the world. Embrace your dignity and live it out."

Following lunch, the women heard from Elizabeth Grayson, a Certified FertilityCare™ Practitioner and Founder of Rays of Light Fertility Care

Services.

Grayson spoke about natural family planning and covered topics including the intricacies of a woman's cycle, the many health risks associated with artificial contraception, moral implications of IVF, and natural medical solutions to a woman's reproductive health that do not require taking artificial contraception.

"Her presentation was an incredible testament to how the Church has contributed to medical science and also how it empowers women to really understand how their bodies

work, and the beauty of God's design therein," said Amann.

A survey taken at the end of the day highlighted the interest women have in the information presented.

"Both talks and the homily covered a lot of what it means to be a woman today," 24-year-old Sophia commented in a survey following the event. "No one really talks about women's health in the church and it was incredibly helpful to hear from a knowledgeable source on topics of Natural Family Planning, fertility and church teachings." ■

ANNUAL BISHOP'S APPEAL FROM PAGE 4

If you have questions, please call 203.416.1470.) ■

Correction: Richard and Marianne Patterson generously donated to Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Danbury for the Annual Bishop's Appeal and were featured in the September issue of *Fairfield County Catholic*. In that story, we inadvertently misspelled their name, and we regret the error. The Pattersons have been active Catholics in Fairfield County for the past 14 years and only recently discovered the "little church on the hill," which they decided to call it home because of Pastor Father Norm Gilbert's welcoming nature. We're grateful to them and to all of our donors!

Parish News

Health Fair for Wilton parishioners

A first-ever outdoor Health Care Fair on September 14 offered parishioners of Our Lady of Fatima Church in Wilton the opportunity to meet professionals from the healing arts serving the local area.

Information about primary care, physical therapy, dermatology, COVID-19, flu testing and blood pressure screening, as

well as palliative care, dentistry, nursing care, rehabilitation and assisted living was made available to attendees.

Among the presenters was Kevin M. Black, of Bayer & Black attorneys, who stressed the importance of health proxies, estate planning and other legal procedures valuable to individuals and their families.

Black also pointed to the positive effects of a health fair for members of the community, endorsing the idea that it be offered annually.

Father Reginald D. Norman, the pastor, said he plans to hold the fair again in the hope of offering additional services for an expanded assemblage of attendees.

Among the agencies that

participated were Wilton Meadows Nursing and Rehabilitation Health Care Center, the Greens of Cannondale, Progressive Diagnostics, Dermmedical Dermatology, Orthopedic & Neurosurgery Specialists (ONS Wilton) and Waveny/Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County. Also partici-



pating were dental professionals James T. Aris and Walter Kostrzewski. ■

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CATECHETICAL SUMMIT FROM PAGE 3

Formation to create new and innovative approaches to teaching the catechism.

In the question and answer session that followed his talk, the Bishop returned to the role of parents and their resistance to getting more involved in the spiritual growth of their children.

"If the people entrusted to our care, young people and their parents, are not thirsting for a Savior, are not seeking the forgiveness of their sin, are not looking for eternal life in Jesus Christ, then we have missed the mark. The Kerygma is the proclamation of the death and resurrection of Christ as the conqueror of sin and death."

When asked about the role of social media, the bishop said that information technology is reshaping our young people, their view of the world of the world, how they get information, and how they build relationships.

"I believe technology is a tool for education, not formation. They are not the same thing. So technology has a role, but a limited role."

So where are we going from here? The bishop asked. He pointed out that parishes in Fairfield, Stratford, Bridgeport, Westport, and Norwalk, and the diocese have already begun exploring how they can reimagine ministry in middle school and high school by collaborating with one another, pooling resources, and inviting young people into opportunities to encounter the person of Jesus Christ.

"The mission is to create a new Catholic culture in the 21st century to allow direct and indirect formation. How do you do that? You begin by recognizing that you form the entire person and the essential elements of life, of the human life, of my life in yours, have to have opportunities in which they can encounter Christ."

He said the process to renew the

way we teach the faith may take ten years to come to fruition, "but I want to look back and say, this was the day we gave birth to the renewal. The true pastoral spiritual renewal of the Diocese of Bridgeport was this day here at Holy Spirit Parish. That's no small task, but if we can, even in our limited ways, we will, I believe, see a yield far greater in formation than what we are doing no

He also reminded those in attendance that formation is best achieved in community. "Catechists, my friends, are not just the women and men in the classroom, but a catechist is every parishioner in every parish, in some sense or another, is passing on the faith."

To listen to Bishop Caggiano's talk, and for more information on the faith formation opportunities in the diocese, visit: www.formationreimagined.org. ■

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Sports

Wayne Mones: Notre Dame's Mr. Soccer

By DON HARRISON

On the state level, Wayne Mones and the game of soccer are as synonymous as David Beckham and soccer are on the international plain. In 36 seasons as a head coach—encompassing two high schools and one university, and both boys and girls squads—Mones' teams have won more than 400 games, produced a lineup of All-State players as well as countless memories.

In his coaching debut at the former Central Catholic High School in Norwalk, Mones directed the boys team to 86 victories during his 10 seasons at the helm. Then he moved up to Western Connecticut State University in Danbury, where his men's teams compiled a 212-89-34 won-loss-tied record across 17 seasons.

When the girls team's coaching position opened up at Notre Dame High in Fairfield, Mones was earning his living as director of athletics at Norwalk High. He considered the possibilities. "I missed coaching in high school, and I live locally, so I made the move here," he explains. He also serves Notre Dame students as a guidance counselor.

As a boy and young man, Wayne Mones excelled as a player, too, first at Brien McMahon High in Norwalk under Ralph King, and then at the University of Connecticut, where the late, legendary Joe Morrone was building a soccer program of national stature.

"I had good training with both coaches. They had their hands full with me," remembers Mones, who



NOTRE DAME HIGH'S GIRLS SOCCER team celebrates the 200th victory of Wayne Mones' career as a high school coach following the Lancers' 4-0 South-West Conference win over Immaculate of Danbury on September 13.

recently celebrated a birthday and appears younger than his 70 years.

"In high school, I was an All-FCIAC goalie, but I led our team in penalty minutes. At UConn, I showed up in an afro, but he (Morrone) wanted me to be in a crewcut. 'You've got 15 minutes to get a haircut or you're out,' he told me. I got the haircut."

Mones played two varsity seasons at UConn under Morrone, earning All-Yankee Conference recognition as a tenacious defender. He remained in Storrs to earn both his bachelor's and master's degrees in guidance.

Mones' nine-season coaching resume at Notre Dame is highlighted by back-to-back CIAC state titles (2015, 2016) as well as his 2019 and last fall's squads advancing to the state semi-finals. His current Lancers, sparked by

All-State goalie Vernonia Rrapi, All-South-West conference corner-back Sara Lardi and the scoring of forward Gemma Grech, have won six of their first seven matches thus far. All three girls are juniors.

Rrapi, whose father played soccer in Albania prior to immigrating to America, allowed just seven goals all of last season; the 2021 Lancers finished 15-2-3. This fall, she has permitted just three goals and notched five shutouts thus far, including the 4-0 victory over Immaculate that brought Mones his 200th win at the high school level.

"He always pushes me to my limits," Rrapi says of Mones. "If I make a mistake, he'll help me to grow from that (situation)."

Grech, who generated a team-high nine goals in those opening matches this fall, considers Mones the "best coach I've ever had. He realizes that even when you're not playing your best, he knows you can do better."

Lardi says she elected to attend Notre Dame because she "knew this would be the highest level at which to play."

Notre Dame's new athletic director, John Johnson, who also serves as the Lancers' head football coach, is impressed by Mones the coach and Mones the man.

"His win total is a testament to his long-term devotion to his players and the game of soccer," says Johnson. "Even more impressive is the (number of) high-character student-athletes he's produced in his program here."

Soccer has been a Mones family affair for years. Both daughter Megan and son Matthew garnered All-State recognition at St. Joseph High, while the youngest of Wayne and Lynn's three children, Marc, played the game at Norwalk High. Megan and Matt became Division-I players at the collegiate level, too, and Matt has remained in the sport as associate head coach of Brown University's

women's soccer team.

Soccer is Wayne Mones' summer game as well. He and his counterpart at St. Joseph High, Jack Nogueira, are co-owners of a Trumbull-based soccer program for young women, Yankee United Futbol Club. Through this endeavor, both coaches have recruited some of the finest players they've mentored during the summer. ■

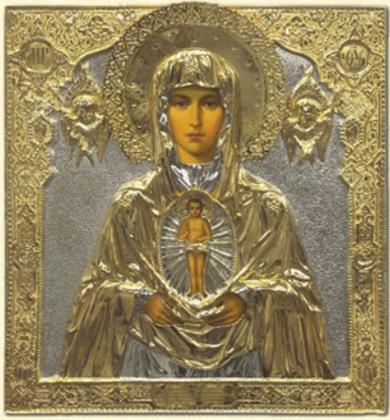
Miraculous "Mary, Helper of Mothers" Icon

A miraculous icon will be placed at St. John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church 100 St Johns Drive in Trumbull, Connecticut 06611 on November 13-27

It is especially beloved by women who struggle with infertility or difficult pregnancies.

Anyone is welcome to venerate the icon on the following dates: Sundays, November 13, 20, & 27 at the Divine Liturgy at 9:30 am, special services on Tuesdays, November 15 and 22 at 6 pm.

Please visit the parish website for more details on the services www.stjohnstrumbull.org or call the parish office at 203.377.5967



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Column: Thomas Hicks



Friendship

POTPOURRI

BY THOMAS H. HICKS

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

“There is nothing so precious as a faithful friend, and no scales can measure his worth”

(Sirach 6:8)

Author John Cuddeback, in his book *True Friendship: Where Virtue Become Happiness*, Ignatius Press, San Francisco, 2021) tells how the ancient Greeks, such as Aristotle and Plato, wrote a good deal about friendship. Aristotle taught that there were three kinds of friendship. He called the first “pleasant friendship,” where friendship is basically about having a good time together, socializing together. This friendship is particularly found in young people. The second kind of friendship is “useful friendship,” in which each person receives some benefit from the other. The third kind of friendship Aristotle calls “virtuous friendship” in which the other person is loved because of who he is himself. “Virtuous” friendship can grow out of the first two kinds.

But in the “pleasant” and “useful” friendships, persons are not loved because of who they are in themselves.

Aristotle was convinced that human happiness, requires human friendship. Aristotle thought that a happy man must have developed a true friendship. He described virtuous friendship as “the crowning gift of happiness.”

Aristotle held that “virtuous” or “true” (Cuddeback) friendships were rare. The ancient Greeks in general thought that true friends were few. This was so because virtuous persons are rare. Another reason is that true friendships take time and sustained effort to form. To grow in friendship, we need to give time to it. True friendship unfolds gradually. It requires seeing the other person in various circumstances of life. and seeing how the person responds to various situations. The friendship does not simply happen. It takes a long time for two people to truly get to know

each other. We can really go deeper with only a few people. It should be noted that for Aristotle true friendship exists among people who are truly good people.

The following are recognized as characteristics of true friendship: there has to be some equality, some sameness. According to Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas, any friendship consists in some kind of equality. And the more we are like another, the more we can really understand and enter into the other’s life. Aristotle points out that where there is great difference, it is difficult to be friends; the more difficult it will be to enter into each other’s life and understand each other.

Values match up, friends have the same likes and dislikes. True friends like to do the same kind of things. They share a vision of what life is all about. True friends experience each other as being part of themselves in some profound way. They are what C.S. Lewis calls “kindred souls.” A true friend wants what is best for the other person. True friends rejoice over the blessings for the other. One’s friend is more excited about one’s success than his friend is. As John Cuddeback put it, during the most difficult times a true friend will be Simon of Cyrene for the other. Someday when we come to stand before the judgment throne of God, our true friend will argue on our

behalf. Good friends engage in good conversations. They can also enjoy sitting in silence with each other. They pray for and with each other. They may discuss theology. There is loyalty and trustworthiness. One’s true friend is one’s confidant, one’s conscience, one’s cheerleader. A true friend is your companions de voyage. True friendship involves a love that is self-giving and self-sacrificing.

Kyler Shumway (The Friendship Formula) offers some what she calls “Friendship fortifiers.” Some of them would be:

Gratitude, words of thanks; even saying thank you as part of your goodbye.

Notice the small things a friend does for you.

Say “I’m proud of you” for something the friend may have accomplished.

Empathize with the friend’s situation.

Find good opportunities for self-disclosure.

Shumway claims that one of the ways to deepen a friendship is to make a journey together,

There is a depth and beauty to true friendship that you don’t find anywhere else. True friendship recognizes true goodness in the other person. It is rooted in true knowledge of another person. And one needs a true friend to help one see one’s self. “Ubi amor, ibi oculus” - “where there is love, there is the power to see.”

There are limitations on one’s ability to share one’s life with

other people. We can really go deeper with only a few people. Hence, as Aristotle thought, true friendships are rare.

There are relationships that go by the name “friendship” but are not truly true friendships.

We form “acquaintances” or “attachments.” We are friendly, we chat and have laughs and enjoy one another’s company. We trade favors. However, we are not truly close, are not invested in each other’s lives.

There are many people who say they have never experienced a significant, enduring friendship. Researchers speak of an epidemic of loneliness in our society.

In the end, it is probably true to say that we do not make a true friendship happen – it is an unmerited gift that we receive. These relationships are not by pure chance. It is not an accident that two people come together. True friends are a gift. They are not manufactured. One true friend in life is an amazingly huge gift. In the end, as John Cuddeback claims, true friendship is a gift from God. There is more going on than meets the eye. A secret Master of Ceremonies is at work.

“A faithful friend is a sturdy shelter; he that has found one has found a treasure” (Sirach 6:8)

(Dr. Hicks runs two Bible Studies on the second week of the month: one on Tuesday mornings, the other on Thursday evenings. Anyone interested send your email to bergCarole@yahoo.com or MariJopanettieri@charter.net, or thicks@snet.net) ■



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Saint Catherine Center

‘Joy & Gratitude’ abound at Annual Dinner

FAIRFIELD—From cowboy hats to custom-made boots, there was a Western flair at Saint Catherine Center for Special Needs’ annual “Joy & Gratitude” Dinner on Sunday, October 2. More than 250 guests came out to support the Center and enjoy each other’s company at the McClinch Family Center at St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Trumbull.

Following the Western theme, tables were decorated with simple arrangements of sunflowers from Gilbertie’s Herb Garden and Springdale Florist and blue bandanas for napkins. An active Dinner Committee secured a variety of items for the Live and Silent Auctions, donated by vendors from all over Fairfield County. “The whole event was a wonderful group effort on behalf of a great cause,” said Margaret Smith of Darien, who, with her husband Dan, chaired the event. “I’m so glad that Dan and I were part of it.”

Several participants from the Center’s Adult Program attended, as well as three students from the Academy who attended for the first time. Anna Stowe said she liked getting dressed up, and was pleased to see her pastor,



HELEN BURLAND, Executive Director (center) congratulates Anne McCrory, and Dr. Charles “Jerry” Hemenway at the dinner.

Father Krzysztof Kuczynski of St. Lawrence Parish in Shelton, at the event. Philip Palilla of Newtown and Vincent DiProperzio of Rye, N.Y., both enjoyed socializing with their teachers and meeting other guests. Philip summarized: “Having fun is always good.”

Father Robert Kinnally, vicar general and pastor of St. Aloysius Parish in New Canaan, offered the invocation. In remarks following dinner, Executive Director Helen Burland compared Saint Catherine Center to a three-legged stool, supported by a dedicated staff, families and participants, and friends and

supporters of the Center. “If any one of the legs is shorter or longer, the stool will not stand,” she said, offering thanks to all the guests and sponsors, the Dinner Committee, and Father Joseph Marcello and St. Catherine of Siena Parish for providing the venue.

Two individuals from Fairfield

were honored at the event: Anne McCrory, chief legal and real estate officer for the diocese, and Charles “Jerry” Hemenway, pediatrician and Center Board member. In presenting him with the Volunteer Service Award, Burland thanked Hemenway for offering his “considerable pediatric knowledge and community associations” to the Center for more than 20 years, and for being a “steadfast and ardent advocate for children with special needs.”

McCrory received the Leadership Award for her role as a key resource and advisor to the Center. Burland thanked her for her “quiet, steady support” and guidance in the incorporation of the Center, ensuring that its growth was accompanied by proper governance and organization. “We are so grateful for her professionalism, compassion, and unwavering support.” Both McCrory and

Hemenway are parishioners at St. Anthony of Padua Church.

Board members Michael LaBella and Tony Minopoli took on the role of auctioneers for the Live Auction and the Call for Charity, when the generosity of the crowd was shown as they raised their programs to support the Center’s programs.

Bishop Frank Caggiano could not attend the event, but sent his greetings. “Every day, St. Catherine Center gives witness to the dignity of all God’s children. These young people...have gifts to give us and our community that perhaps you and I don’t have: an innocence of heart, a generosity of spirit, and a deep sense of gratitude for the little things that are done for them.”

“Tonight is a reminder of all that is good around us,” said Burland. “Thank you for bringing your joy to share.”

Are you being called? It’s not too late!
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“So, we are ambassadors for Christ, as if God were appealing through us.”
 2 CORINTHIANS 5:20



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Nuestra Voz

Rosario en latín y español a las siete de la noche

POR MARICARMEN GODOY

NORWALK—La Confraternidad del Santo Rosario se reunió el pasado viernes en horas de la noche en el templo de la iglesia Saint Mary (Santa María), para en honor a la virgen María, rezar el Rosario en varios idiomas, entre ellos, español, reconociendo la diversidad de etnias y lenguajes que hay en la iglesia en el vecindario central (downtown) de Norwalk.

El 7 de octubre, que fue el Primer Viernes los feligreses pudieron rezar frente a Jesús expuesto en el Santísimo Sacramento. Y lo curioso de este momento espiritual, la mayor parte de devotos, estaban vestidos como si fueran a una fiesta.

El Rosario se rezó en los cinco idiomas que representan la comunidad de la iglesia Santa María. El padre John Ringley, párroco de la iglesia, inició con el primer Misterio Doloroso en latín seguido por los otros cuatro misterios en inglés, español, tamil (India) y francés por la gran cantidad de haitianos que acuden a la parroquia.

Carlos Mario Osorio Zapata,

fue uno de los devotos que rezó el Rosario, él pertenecía a la iglesia de South Norwalk conocida como Saint Joseph desde hace 25 años desde que se mudó de su natal Colombia a esta ciudad, sin embargo, al trasladarse al centro decidió pertenecer a Saint Mary y con devoción acude a todos los eventos religiosos, incluyendo el Rosario en varios idiomas que lo viene haciendo desde hace un año que se fundó la iniciativa, aunque admite que su conexión con la Virgen y Dios es en español, pero que los otros idiomas, en especial el latín, le dan paz y un estado de contemplación.

El Padre John Ringley, nativo de Arkansas, párroco de la Santa María desde hace cuatro años, admite que el Rosario es importante no solo por la devoción mariana que promueve la iglesia como resultado del compendio del Evangelio donde muchas partes de las escrituras están recreando la vida de Jesús y también de María.

Por eso es que defiende los idiomas de la iglesia como parte de una escuela de oración que se mantiene vigente en la parroquia Santa María desde el 2007

cuando el Padre Mark, un joven sacerdote que vivió en República Dominicana, decidió con el apoyo de la Diócesis de Bridgeport, instalar la misa en Latin seguido del Rosario, como parte de los pedidos de ese entonces, el Papa Benedicto.

“El Concilio Vaticano II no sólo instauró que la iglesia cante y ore y predique en su lengua vernácula, sino, también, que siga insistiendo en el idioma universal de la iglesia que siempre ha sido el latín”, dijo el Padre Ringley. Por eso es por lo que en Saint Mary esta tradición sigue vigente aun cuando no hay sacerdotes suficientes que hablen varios idiomas, incluyendo el latín o español.

Pero, para entender la necesidad de orar desde una perspectiva de conexión espiritual con Dios, el Padre John afirma que hay tres tipos de oración: Oración vocal, oración contemplativa y oración meditativa. La de meditación es cuando se piensa en los misterios de Jesús y su madre, la virgen María, y la oración contemplativa, la que la mayor parte de feligreses y devotos quieren alcanzar con estos ejercicios espirituales. Es



cómo cuando un jardinero prepara la tierra, planta, pone agua y espera que florezca. “Es una plática que no podemos conversar sin escuchar”, dijo.

Rezar en honor a la virgen del Rosario, es una fiesta que se instauró el 7 de octubre de 1561 en respuesta entre los cristianos y los turcos cuando el Papa pidió a todos los grupos de oración y rosarios en Roma que recen durante la batalla del Manto, donde el ejército turco aun de ser mas grande perdió la batalla contra los cristianos, conforme con los escritos del Papa Juan Pío V.

Que, llevada a la modernidad del siglo XXI, según el párroco de Saint Mary, es una manera interesante de poder escuchar y es bastante popular unirse en oración; a pesar de las diferentes costumbres e idiomas por la diversidad propia de los pueblos que tienen tradición de incluir inmigrantes. Por eso es que orar en latín no es retroceder en el tiempo sino el intento de preservar el idioma con el que la iglesia siem-

pre se ha comunicado con Dios.

Curiosamente, según el Padre Ringley, en la iglesia de Saint Mary la población juvenil es la que mas acude a la misa en latín, porque es una manera de ayudar a fomentar la espiritualidad y a construir el núcleo familiar. En la misa dominical en latín de las diez de la mañana hay entre 250 a 270 personas, en la misa de las ocho de la mañana en inglés hay entre 60 a 70 personas y en la misa en español entre 250. En una parroquia de unos 500 feligreses. Obviamente, a la misa en latín acuden hispanos, haitianos, hindúes y anglosajones; los grupos étnicos que conforman la parroquia.

Fenómeno que Rosa Carolina Balderrama, nativa de Bolivia, de 21 años lo corrobora. Ella creció en Norwalk. Estudió la primaria y secundaria y por ende perteneció a la parroquia de Saint Mary. Hizo su Primera Comunión y Confirmación en esta iglesia en el tiempo del padre Mark, y aunque ahora estudia la universidad en Boston, cada vez que visita Norwalk, viene a la misa dominical de las diez.

“¡Me encanta la misa en latín!, no necesito comprender el idioma, entiendo el ritual, pero estar en esta misa me produce una conexión especial con Dios. ¡Me encantan los cantos gregorianos!, es como si estuviera en una película viviendo en el tiempo de Jesús y es como si lo acompañara en su época. Siempre se habla de preservar la tradición y ésta es una de las más importantes porque te conecta con Dios”, dijo.

“Ahora que estamos viviendo una sociedad rápida y donde las tradiciones se quieren destruir como los monumentos; las canciones y los rezos en latín están más vigentes que nunca en Norwalk”, dijo el Padre John, a la que todos sus feligreses se adherieron; para finalmente, cantar el Salve Regina, un canto gregoriano en latín en honor a la Virgen del Rosario.

Si usted quiere escuchar y rezar en latín o español, puede asistir a la misa dominical de las 10 am y de 12 pm. Saint Mary está ubicada en 669 West Avenue. Teléfono 203.866.5546.

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Vocations

Sixth priests' convocation concludes

HUNTINGTON, N.Y.—The Sixth Convocation of Priests of the Diocese of Bridgeport drew to a close Wednesday, October 12.

The convocation, which is held every three years, took place at the Seminary of the Immaculate Conception on Long Island. It was designed to support each priest spiritually and emotionally and to promote understanding and collaboration.

The convocation included a banquet celebrating new ordinations, ordination anniversaries and retiring priests. Priests also heard several talks from Dr. Scott Hahn, a noted author and theologian who serves as the Chair of Biblical Theology and the New Evangelization at the Franciscan University of Steubenville.

The convocation was made possible through the work of Father Frank Hoffmann, Vicar for Clergy; Father Corey Piccinino, pastor of St. Mary Parish in Bethel; Father Robert Kinnally, Vicar General; Father Peter Lenox, Episcopal Vicar for Liturgy and Worship; Monsignor William Scheyd, Episcopal Vicar for Senior Priests; Father Rolando Arias, parochial vicar at St. Mary Parish in Ridgefield; and Father Augustine Nguyen, Episcopal Vicar for Vietnamese Catholics.



Redemptoris Mater seminary hosts open house

STAMFORD—Several hundred people from throughout Fairfield County turned out for an open house Sunday and toured the newly renovated Redemptoris Mater Diocesan Missionary Seminary of Bridgeport, which is home to 15 seminarians.

"It was a wonderful day, and we had the weather helping us; we were praying it wouldn't rain," said Father Marco Pacciana, rector of the seminary. "We wanted to let people know that we are here and show them the results of our work after two years of renovations."

They left their previous home at Sacred Heart Church in Stamford in May 2020 and moved into what was then St. John Fisher Seminary on 894 Newfield Avenue. The renovations were done by the seminarians, friends of the seminary who belong to the Neocatechumenal Way, along with their head of maintenance, Father said.

Tours of the facility were conducted from noon until 6 pm, and the event concluded with a barbecue in the courtyard.

Father said renovations included a new floor, new ceiling and air conditioning for the dining room. Larger windows were installed and the building was entirely repainted. The conference room got new furniture, carpeting and lighting. Marble was laid in the corridors on the ground floor

near the chapel along with the main internal staircase.

"Everyone was pretty impressed with what they saw," Father said. "The main response I received from people was, 'I didn't know you guys were here,' which is why we did the open house. They didn't realize we had



seminarians living here."

Father said that the seminarians also gave tours explaining to people about the history of the seminary since its establishment in 2015, the history and fruits of the Neocatechumenal Way in the world and in United States, the renewal of the Second Vatican Council and its impact on the liturgy and in the life of the Church and how the Neocatechumenal Way brings this renewal to the parishes. He said it is "the fundamental role of the new aesthetic for the renewal of the Church and this has been implemented in the Redemptoris Mater seminaries all

over the world."

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

form men as missionary diocesan priests to serve the local church or in any part of the world the bishop chooses.

Along with Father Pacciana, 12 seminarians are in residence and three are on mission. Those in Stamford attend Sacred Heart University for philosophy courses and St. Joseph Seminary and College in Yonkers for theology. Of the total 15, 11 will be assigned to the Diocese of Bridgeport and four to the Archdiocese of Hartford, he said.

"We're all very happy to be here," he said. "We have many projects coming up and want to

have an open house every year.

The turnout was good and people, including several representatives of the Knights of Columbus, came from all over the diocese and were surprised with what we've done."

The seminary in Stamford was established in 2015 on the Feast of Immaculate Conception

through the efforts of Bishop Frank J. Caggiano. Several years ago, Archbishop Leonard P. Blair of the Archdiocese of Hartford asked for a section of the seminary to prepare men for vocations in the Archdiocese, Father Pacciana said.

He said the seminarians are very enthusiastic about their new house.

Of the men in formation, he said: "They are not angels, but they said yes to the call of God in their lives and were pulled away from their families, their friends and their countries to come here to become missionary priests."

Seminarians for Bridgeport

in the house include Ricardo Batista Comim, (Deacon) from Brazil IV theology; David Klein, Trumbull, Conn. III Theology; Sebastián Sanmiguel López from Colombia second theology; Christian Siciliani from Italy first theology. Juan Cruz, Escobar, Borda from Colombia fourth year of college; Jason Resende from Brockton Mass. second year of college; Santiago Javier Matamoros from Philadelphia Penn. first year of college; Jorge Manuel Solano from New London, Conn. first year of college; Diego Esteban Fernandez from Chicago, Ill. will start college in January.

For the Archdiocese of Hartford, they are Joseph, Doumbouya from Guinea Conakry, West Africa/N.J., second year of college, Jose, Miguel Escobar Navas from Venezuela/Miami, first year of college; Jacob Onell Noguera from Miami will start college in January.

In Itinerancy/missionary training, for Bridgeport are Matheus de Araujo from Brazil finished, second in theology, Juan Enrique Cruz from Dallas, Texas has one year of college left.

For Hartford, they are Francisco de Jesús Villegas, who finished second year of college.

(For further information about Redemptoris Mater Diocesan Missionary Seminary of Bridgeport, visit www.rmbridgeport.org.)



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