



FAIRFIELD COUNTY CATHOLIC

JUNE 2022 | VOLUME 39, NUMBER 6 | GRADUATION ISSUE

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6 *Two men ordained to the priesthood*



15-23 *Annual Vals & Sals Round-up*

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Around the Diocese

A Season of Growth

by Elizabeth Clyons

Gardening and growing

STAMFORD—Student growers from the Catholic Academy of Stamford are enjoying the fruits (and vegetables) of their labor in the garden! Sixth and seventh-graders picked some of their spin-



ach and lettuce to sample in nutritious smoothies that incorporated their greens. Fourth-graders pulled the radishes they grew and added a pop of color to a rainy day!

FAIRFIELD—On Sunday, May 15, Father John Murray, S.J. blessed the Resurrection Garden for the Merton Center following the 10 am Mass at St. Anthony of Padua Church. Many parishioners gathered at the garden to participate!



CAS student wins KofC Connecticut Catholic School 2022 Spelling Bee!

STAMFORD—Congratulations to Veronica Tawiah, a 5th-grade student at The Catholic Academy of Stamford for winning the Knights of Columbus Connecticut Catholic School 2022 Spelling Bee!

This is the second consecutive year that a Catholic Academy of Stamford student won the title of State Champ of the Knights of Columbus Connecticut Catholic School 2022 Spelling Bee.



Kolbe Conversations: 'Let's Talk Football'

BRIDGEPORT—Join Kolbe Cathedral for the third edition of its "Kolbe Conversations" celebrity breakfast series to benefit the high school on July 7 at the Patterson Club in Fairfield, Conn.

The featured guest will be Dan Orlovsky, ESPN Football Analyst who appears on NFL Live and a variety of other ESPN studio programs in addition to calling a weekly ESPN/ABC college football game during the fall.

A native of Shelton, Conn., Orlovsky was a star quarterback for the UCONN Huskies before being selected by the Detroit Lions in the 2005 NFL Draft. In addition to Detroit, he also played for the Houston Texans, Indianapolis Colts and Tampa Bay Buccaneers during his 12-year professional foot-



ball career. Orlovsky's father (also Dan) was Kolbe Class of '70 and a standout football player. Armen Keteyian, 11-time Emmy award winner, will moderate the conversation.

When: Thursday, July 7, 2022

Time: 7:30-9 am EDT

Where: The Patterson Club
1118 Cross Highway
Fairfield, CT 06824

Presenting Sponsor (1): \$5,000 SOLD

Table Sponsorships: \$2,500

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Individual Tickets: \$125 per person

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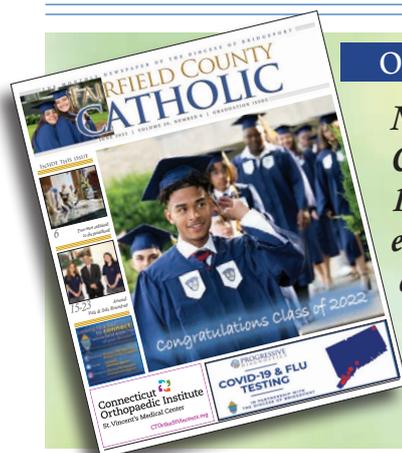
NOTRE DAME'S
Class of 2022 included
103 students who celebrat-
ed their commencement
at the joyful June 3
ceremony in Fairfield.

PHOTO BY AMY
MORTENSEN

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Diocesan News

Bishop announces administrative appointments

By **BRIAN D. WALLACE**

BRIDGEPORT—The Most Reverend Frank J. Caggiano has announced three key appointments to assist him in the administration and governance of the Diocese of Bridgeport. All three received appointment letters on June 1.

Reverend Robert M. Kinnally, pastor of St. Aloysius Parish in New Canaan, has been appointed vicar general; Deacon Patrick Toole of Westport has been named chancellor, and Deacon William Santulli of New Canaan has been named vice chancellor. All three appointments will be effective on July 1, 2022.

“After deep prayer and deliberation in accord with the Code of Canon Law, I have made these appointments. I am grateful to the men for their willingness to assume this new responsibility in service to me and the faithful

of the diocese. I ask for your prayers for them that they may be successful as we work together to renew the diocese,” Bishop Caggiano said.

Father Kinnally succeeds Msgr. Thomas Powers who accepted a post as rector of the Pontifical North American College in Rome in March. Deacon Patrick Toole replaces Father Kinnally, who has served as chancellor since 2014, and Deacon Santulli succeeds Father Juan Gabriel Acosta, who will be furthering his Canon Law studies in Rome.

Father Kinnally will continue to serve as pastor of St. Aloysius parish in New Canaan, and Deacon Patrick Toole will continue to serve as episcopal delegate for administration as well as deacon assigned to St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Trumbull. Deacon Santulli will continue to serve as deacon at St. Aloysius Parish.



REVEREND ROBERT M. KINNALLY

The vicar general is the highest official of a diocese after the bishop. He is legitimately deputed to share in diocesan administration and governance in the name of the bishop. The chancellor serves as advisor to the bishop in addition to overseeing the maintenance and order of the diocesan archives and the authentication of



DEACON PATRICK TOOLE

official diocesan acts. The newly created office of vice chancellor assists the chancellor and includes faculties to issue *nihil obstat* for the celebration of weddings outside the diocese, permission for mixed marriages, and other dispensations.

Reverend Robert M. Kinnally, who was appointed



DEACON WILLIAM SANTULLI

vicar general today, was named chancellor of the Diocese of Bridgeport by Bishop Frank J. Caggiano in June 2014, and pastor of St. Aloysius Parish in New Canaan in February 2017. He has continued to serve in both posts.

Born and raised in Yonkers, New York, he spent his

▶ CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

Papal Nuncio praises Redemptoris Mater Seminary

By **JOE PISANI**

DANBURY—Redemptoris Mater Diocesan Missionary Seminary honored Archbishop Christophe Pierre, the Apostolic Nuncio to the United States on Sunday, who praised them for forming men who will go out as missionary disciples in the name of Christ to a world in need of evangelization.

More than 400 people attended the 5th Annual Gala Dinner, which recognized Archbishop Pierre, along with James Larkin, retired vice chairman of American Express International.

“The Church needs missionary disciples,” Archbishop Pierre said. “Missionary activity is one of the greatest challenges facing us today. Those of you who support the Neocatechumenal Way are doing a vital mission for the future of the Church.”

The Redemptoris Mater Seminary is under the direction of rector Father Marco Pacciana, along with Father Giandomenico Flora, spiritual director. Redemptoris Mater (Mother of the Redeemer) seminaries are under the aus-



ARCHBISHOP CHRISTOPHE PIERRE AND FATHER MARCO PACCIANA

pices 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.

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 sem-

inary to prepare men for vocations in the archdiocese, Father Pacciana said.

Bishop Caggiano, in his opening prayer at the gala, which was held at The Amber Room Colonnade in Danbury, praised the seminarians, and said that one day “We hope to see them ordained to be your sacred priests.”

Father Pacciana expressed his gratitude and said, “I am very happy and grateful for all of you coming tonight for your support.” He said the seminary has had many milestones over the past year, including the ordination of

one of the original seminarians, Ricardo Batista Comim, to the transitional diaconate.

In his comments, Archbishop Pierre praised the seminary for its work forming men to be priests who are missionary disciples, who “shine like diamonds among the people of God.”

He said true missionary priests must have the ability to see where mercy is needed and bring a “healthy zeal” to their vocation so they can share the healing power of God’s mercy with others.

He said Redemptoris Mater produces men who give themselves to the Lord and their flock by bringing the joy of the Gospel to the world...and they must be willing to go out into the world.

“It is easier to stay home surrounded by those who love us, but this is not Jesus’ way—he does not use half measures,” the archbishop said. “He gives his disciples one word: Go.” It is “a powerful word that resonates in every cranny of missionary life.”

The men, he said, “must be in a permanent state of mission” and understand the territory of their mission—and their territory is the Diocese of Bridgeport and the

Archdiocese of Hartford. He said, “This territory has a rich Catholic history and tradition, and it is still a missionary territory for those who have fallen away and who are on the margins of society.”

In order to announce Christ, the men must be “free of worldly attachments, and at Redemptoris Mater, seminarians learn to renounce the things of the world and develop an understanding of the beauty of freedom that only following Christ can give.”

Father Pacciana gave him a silver plaque and thanked him for his message and support. He also thanked James Larkin, who could not attend the gala, for his commitment to the seminary and the Church.

“The Nuncio is very supportive of the work of the Neocatechumenal Way and the Redemptoris Mater Seminaries in the USA,” Father Pacciana said later. “This dinner conveyed an atmosphere of joy and communion. People came from the tristate area and also from Pennsylvania and Massachusetts to support the seminarians, but we were all together as one

▶ CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

Diaconate Ordinations

Five men to be ordained to permanent diaconate

By ELIZABETH CLYONS

BRIDGEPORT—Five men will be ordained as deacons by Bishop Frank J. Caggiano on Saturday, June 25, 11 am at St. Augustine Cathedral in Bridgeport.

The five men are Christopher Greer of Westport, George Kain of Ridgefield, James Meehan of Westport, Rock Desances of Bridgeport, and Vincent Pia of Brookfield.

The men became candidates for the diaconate on October 26, 2019, received the ministry of reader on October 17, 2020, and received the ministry of acolyte on December 11, 2021.

Christopher Greer of Westport received his bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Massachusetts Amherst. He has worked as a development consultant as well as a professional sports photographer. He is a member of St. Luke's in Westport along with his wife Kristine and their two

children, Kassidy and Kevin. He participates in the adult choir as a cantor/soloist, is a member of the men's group and an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion.

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

ministry. He is father of daughter Grace and grandfather of Mercy.

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

Rock Desances and his wife Mireille attend St. Margaret Shrine parish in Bridgeport along with their five children. Desances



serves as an usher, reader, altar server and extraordinary minister of Holy Communion. He is a member of the Knights of Columbus and has worked as a dietetic assistant, food manager and health care assistant.

Vincent Pia has worked as a writer, photographer, professional picture framer and art conservator. He is a member of St. Marguerite Bourgeouys

in Brookfield, with his wife Holly and children Caitlynn and Brandon. He is active in the parish, serving as a reader, an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion, altar server, parish Rosary leader, adult faith formation facilitator, a member of the Knights of Columbus (having previously served as both officer and director) and a former member of the choir. ■

Shrine wants to 'welcome everyone home'

By EMILY CLARK

BRIDGEPORT—Italian flags flew alongside American flags at the entrance to St. Margaret Shrine in Bridgeport's North End as the parish recently welcomed thousands to their annual Feast of St. Anthony. While this three-day event, now in its 44th year, serves as a fundraiser and community celebration, festival coordinators also see it as an opportunity "to encourage people to come back to the Lord."

The highlight of the weekend occurred Sunday morning as Bishop Frank J. Caggiano celebrated a special outdoor Mass in honor of St. Anthony, a day that coincided with both the feast of Corpus Christi and Father's Day. Despite the gusty winds, brilliant sunshine shone down on parishioners and guests who filled hundreds of folding chairs and gathered on the grounds of the Shrine. Bishop Caggiano opened his homily with a blessing on all fathers, remembering stories of his own father who, he said, always had to have bread on the



table. "I wondered why," the bishop added, "when there was always pasta too." Speaking in Italian, he recalled his father's answer, translated to "where there is bread, there is life."

"We must be mindful of our sisters and brothers throughout the world who do not have bread," he reminded those in attendance. "You and I are here to be nourished and to hear the Word that is the bread of life, to thank the Father, who is father of us all."

To commemorate the work of St. Anthony, whose preaching converted thousands in Northern

Italy and who consistently shared bread with those he met, the bishop blessed dozens of small loaves which were distributed after Mass. "You and I will take one home, break it and share it with everyone with whom you will eat. Give thanks to Him for this antipasto of Heaven," he said.

Following Mass, a procession in honor of St. Anthony made its way from the Shrine onto the neighborhood streets and back, at which time the festival of food, carnival rides, and music began. Lines formed outside the tents with volunteers selling porchetta

grinders, sausage and peppers, and pizza frita. Micalizzi's Italian Ice and Angela Mia Bakery offered more cultural favorites.

Longtime volunteer John Cervone called the festival a labor of love. "It's a lot of work, but we love doing this. Whatever is needed, we do it together," he said, a testament to the sense of community at St. Margaret.

"There is so much excitement in the air, so much love and devotion," said Lucia Palmieri, St. Margaret's cantor, music director, and grief minister who also coordinates the outdoor Masses. "This is our story, and this is our outreach."

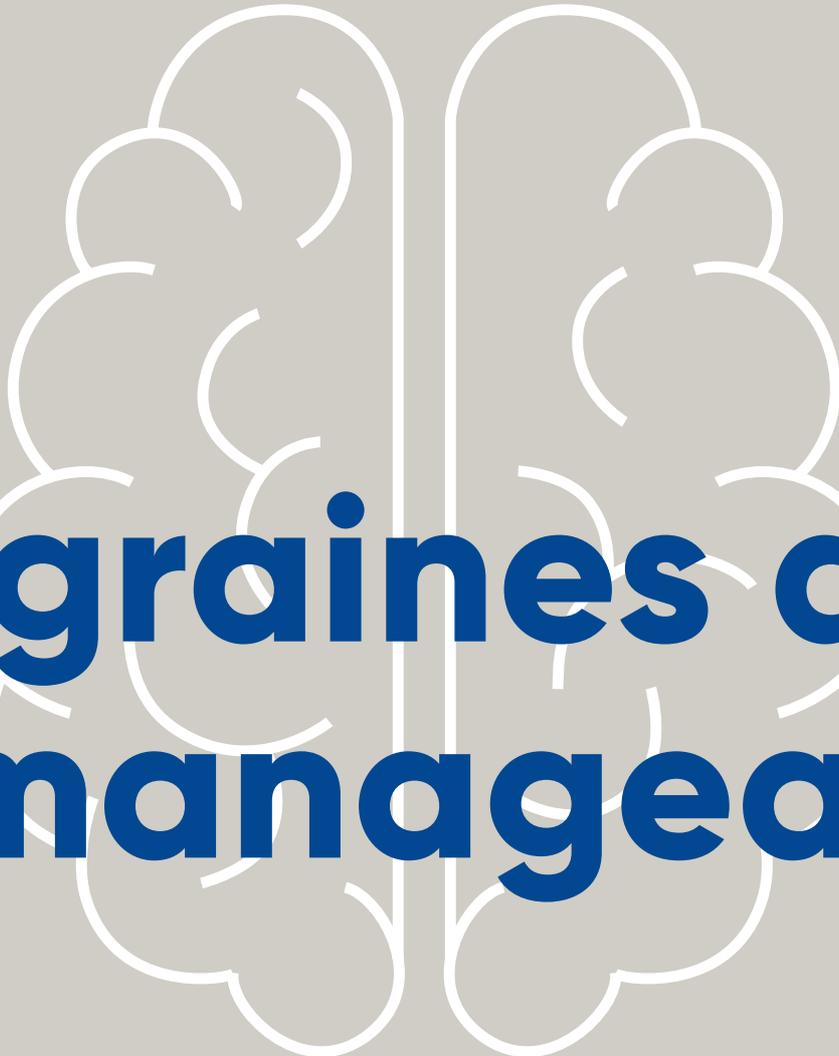
Palmieri said the festival and outdoor Mass attract thousands of people from both the Bridgeport area and from out of state, many of whom do not attend church regularly. "We minister to them. We must be present for them at this Mass," she said. "Maybe they will be called to attend again as they see us before Jesus. This is our gift to them."

That gift includes priests

who are present on the grounds throughout the weekend, music by the Italian choir, and even the opportunity for confessions during the carnival. "We're encouraging people to come back to the Lord," she added. "This is our job—to talk with them and expose them to our Italian and Catholic culture."

Built by men and women whose sons were serving in World War II, St. Margaret Shrine was dedicated in September of 1942 and is now the site of the last Italian festival in Bridgeport, according to Maurizio Viselli, the chair of the St. Anthony Mass. "This is an exciting opportunity for people to experience the Shrine," said Viselli, who grew up in the parish, "and St. Anthony naturally draws a crowd as he is a national saint."

Whether they were drawn in by the outdoor Mass, the authentic Italian food, or the carnival rides and music, Palmieri hopes that this festival brings people back. "We are 10,000 strong!" she said. "And we want to welcome you home." ■



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Ordination to the Priesthood

‘Conformed to the image of Christ’

By BRIAN D. WALLACE

BRIDGEPORT—During the month of June, Bishop Frank J. Caggiano ordained two men to the priesthood at St. Augustine Cathedral, Father Colin Lomnitzer and Father Anh Vu. The ordinations were a moment of great joy, pride and reverence as the two young men begin their ministries as priests. The bishop announced that Father Lomnitzer will serve as St. Mary Parish in Ridgefield and Father Vu has been assigned to St. Leo Parish in Stamford. Both men have unique life stories and a fervent desire to bring the love of Christ to the people of the diocese.



FATHER COLIN LOMNITZER

Father Colin Lomnitzer

“Surrender all you have to Christ. He will confirm you so you will be an instrument of his presence,” Bishop Frank J. Caggiano said before ordaining Father Colin Lomnitzer to the priesthood on Saturday, June 4, at St. Augustine Cathedral in Bridgeport.

Hundreds of family, friends and clergy filled the Cathedral for the joyful ordination of Father Lomnitzer, who was raised in Trumbull and, along with his family, is a long time member of St. Catherine of Siena Parish.

“Everything in your life has brought you to this moment,” said Bishop Caggiano, who noted the ordination was taking place “on the threshold of the Solemnity of Pentecost,” the birth of the Church and moment of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles.

“What will happen to you in a few moments you will invite Holy Spirit to come upon you so you might become a vessel of light and fragrance of Christ in the world, and whoever sees you will see Christ first,” he said, seated in front of the altar.

The bishop said he thought of Father Lomnitzer as a “traveler,” because his life has been a journey toward Christ and toward the priesthood, which began when his family was received into full communion with the Catholic Church in 2005.

“You are a man of faith, you are a man of God, and you are among the ranks of his priests,” he said, as Father Lomnitzer stood before him.

Father Lomnitzer’s brother, Tyler, delivered the first and second Readings, including this verse from 2 Corinthians 5:17, “So whoever is in Christ is a new creation: the old things have passed away; behold, new things have come.”

Father Lomnitzer has been in formation since 2016. He attended Catholic University of America and graduated with a bachelor’s degree in philosophy from Sacred Heart University in 2018. He earned a bachelor’s degree in sacred theology, a master’s degree in theology and a master’s of divinity from St. Joseph Seminary in Yonkers, N.Y.

The bishop told him that while no one is worthy of the gift of priesthood, a priest can find strength and joy by striving for a life of integrity, prayer and holiness, and filling himself with the radiance of Christ.

“Never preach what you do not believe and always preach the fullness of Christ,” said the bishop, who noted that the newly ordained must also be prepared to deal with what St. Paul described as “the wolves among us.”

“And those wolves have names,” he said. “They are ignorance, apathy, indifference and mediocrity.”

The bishop said that by conforming his life to Christ and giving witness, Father Lomnitzer can “keep the wolves at bay and bring the light of Christ to a waiting world.... Only the light of Christ will dispel the darkness.”

He said that at the moment of

ordination a priest “becomes a vessel of the healing of Christ that comes through the sacraments” that can liberates the world with true freedom found in the power of Christ.

During the ceremony, Father Lomnitzer was vested as a priest by Rev. Joseph A. Marcello, pastor of St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Trumbull and director of seminarian formation for the Diocese of Bridgeport. Father Lomnitzer celebrated his first Mass at St. Catherine of Siena in Trumbull.

Father Anh Vu

In a moment of joy, pride and reverence, Anh Vu was ordained to the priesthood on Saturday morning, June 11, at St. Augustine Cathedral.

The ordination marked an 11-year journey of formation and study for Anh Vu, a native of Dong Nai Vietnam, who worked as a mechanical engineer before coming to the United States in 2011.

“This morning we gather to ask the Holy Spirit to come upon you and form your mind, heart and will into the image of Jesus Christ,” said Bishop Caggiano, who was seated before the altar for the ordination rite.

“Thank you for persevering, for your patience and fidelity, for your generosity and your joyful heart,” said the bishop to Anh Vu, who is one of eight children.

Describing Father Vu’s life as an adventure and a journey, the bishop said God has given him the “grace and blessings” to be ready for ordination and his



FATHER ANH VU

priesthood.

“Now you come relying on the grace of the Holy Spirit to present yourself,” he said before Father Vu took the Promise of the Elect. “May that same spirit come upon you and conform you—mind, heart and will into the image of Jesus.”

In his homily the bishop said, “Never forget your dignity as a priest and what you are called to do.” He urged Father Vu to always remain humble and to give his life in service to others.

The bishop said that a priest should “exercise leadership as a servant. Authority is given not to lord over anyone, but that you might offer your life so those entrusted to your care can have greater life in Christ.”

He said that Father Vu must be ready to “preach and teach the truth fearlessly and effectively,” so that his modern day brothers and sisters who have fallen away from the Church of have no faith, can hear it and he can accompany them in their struggles.

“Here on this day you are being invited to be the unworthy instrument to break the chains of sins and offer freedom to those in bondage; to accompany those who are ill and sick with the healing only God can give. And most especially, to come to the altar of Christ to be his instrument so that mere bread and wine become the food of everlasting life.”

The bishop told Father Vu that the life of the late Cardinal Francis Xavier Nguyen Van Thuan, offers a glimpse into the mystery of priesthood. Cardinal

Thuan was imprisoned by the communists for 13 years, nine of those in solitary confinement, after the fall of Saigon.

Confined to harsh imprisonment, the Cardinal could only use the palm of his hands as an altar while he quietly said Mass in his cell every day at the hour Christ died, the bishop said. “In the palm of his hand, he recognized who he was, who his Lord was, and what his life was destined to be,” the bishop said before he consecrated Father Vu’s hands. “Remember how gracious is our God to allow you and me and our brother priests to use our hands as the altar of everlasting life.”

Throughout his suffering, Cardinal Thuan was a beacon of hope. “As shepherd of his people, he found whatever way possible to give them hope, when hope was lacking,” the bishop said.

Deacon Anh Vu was vested by Father Robert Kinnally, newly named vicar general of the diocese and pastor of St. Aloysius Parish. The first reading was read in English by Deacon Anh Vu’s niece, Michelle Vu, and the second in Vietnamese by Deacon Anh Vu’s friend Thai Hoa Le. Mr. Ngon Vu and Mrs. Xuyen Nguyen carried the gifts.

The beautiful liturgical music for both ordinations was provided under the direction of Dr. William H. Atwood, organist and diocesan director of music ministry. He was assisted by the diocesan Schola and Mr. Douglas Tran, director of the Vietnamese Choir of The Cathedral Parish. ■

2022 Bishop's Appeal

Giving now can help the Appeal reach goal

By **BRIAN D. WALLACE**

BRIDGEPORT—The 2022 Bishop's Appeal, A Bridge Home has raised over \$7.1 million and is at 88 percent of its \$8.1 million goal to support vital new initiatives while continuing to feed the hungry, reach out to the most vulnerable, foster vocations and so much more to promote the life of faith in our diocese.

Over 12,700 parishioners have made a gift, and in a recent video Bishop Frank J. Caggiano thanked all those who have given and asked those who have not yet participated in the campaign to consider making a gift.

"If you haven't yet given, please join others who have already been so generous. It is important that we all participate. Christ urges us to come together as one family to help each other

and those in need. Your gifts will give the Church the resources it needs to lead its healing mission and be a shining light of faith and service in Fairfield County," he said.

The bishop said he is grateful that so many individuals and families have stepped up and given sacrificially to help others.

Pam Rittman, director of the Bishop's Appeal, said that as the diocese nears its goal, it's important to remember Bishop Caggiano's words about "building a bridge home for those who haven't found their way back to the Church or who have not yet found the Lord." She said through our friendship to our sisters and brothers in Christ and those we meet and interact with each day; we are helping to build more vital parish communities.

"The bishop instructs us that the mission of the Church

is to build vital and engaging communities of faith that draw others by their personal witness, compassion and charity. He has challenged us as one family in faith to build bridges to those who have questions, who may feel unwanted or left behind, and who are suffering and in need of our help," she said.

Joe Gallagher, chief development officer of the diocese, said that making a gift by June 30 will send a strong message of support for the renewal efforts outlined by Bishop Caggiano and will help the diocese make its goal.

"The response to this year's appeal has been very encouraging. I am grateful to all of the donors and to our leadership team. Kelly Anne and Dan Murphy, our chair couple, and Paula Summa and Jim O'Neill, our co-chair couple, who have worked tirelessly to build support for the Church's

mission of charity and evangelization," he said.

Gallagher said a gift to the Bishop's Appeal is an "investment in hope, renewal and evangelization" because it has an impact on so many lives in the diocese:

- 1.3 million meals served to the working poor, homeless and food insecure served by Catholic Charities houses of hospitality.
- 10,000 counseling sessions provided to help individuals and families cope during a time of crisis and uncertainty.
- \$2.5 million in tuition assistance for families seeking a Catholic elementary school education for their children.
- Faith formation programs that encourage and inspire youth and young adult leadership and bring others back to the faith.
- Funding for promising initiatives include diocesan

Ambassadors, The Bridge, a mentoring program for young adults, and the Sacred Heart Guild, which will celebrate and inspire through the truth and beauty of Catholic tradition as discovered in sacred arts, music and culture.

- Support for our seminarians and senior priests who continue to joyfully minister in our parishes.

Rittman said she expects parishioner donations to continue and is grateful for their generosity every year. They understand that supporting our diocese as well as their parish is part of their personal commitment to the Church in providing for its spiritual and material needs every year.

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

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Senior Priests

Queen of Clergy honors

By JOE PISANI

STAMFORD—Priests at the Catherine Dennis Keefe Queen of Clergy Residence have a secret to longevity: Keep working.

Of the 23 priests at the independent-living residence, more than half still go out on weekends to serve parishes in the Diocese of Bridgeport. The word “retired” isn’t in their vocabulary.

“A priest doesn’t retire,” said Msgr. William Scheyd, who heads the advisory committee for the facility in Stamford. “The official title for them is ‘senior priest.’”

The residence recently honored five priests who were celebrating significant anniversaries of their ordinations. They were Msgr. Joseph Pekar 65 years a priest, Father Martin S. Igoe with 60 years, Msgr. J. Peter Cullen with 55 years, Father Robert J. Crofut with 50 years and Msgr. Thomas W. Powers with 25 years.

Monsignor Scheyd, who celebrated 57 years on February 10, said the group only observes certain milestones each year and that all of the honorees except one still minister in parishes as they are needed. The youngest of the

group, Msgr. Powers, who was vicar general of the diocese, was recently appointed the 24th rector of the Pontifical North American College in Rome.

He was invited because of his friendship with the group, which held their celebration on the date of his ordination, May 24.

“It was a wonderful time and gave us an opportunity to get together,” said Msgr. Scheyd.

In the mid-1990s, he headed the building committee for Queen of Clergy when he was vicar general of the diocese. Queen of Clergy has 33 suites, 23 of which are occupied. There are about 80 priests in the Diocese of Bridgeport over 75. Some of them continue to live in parishes while others live on their own.

“Priests come and go here,” he said. “Everybody is welcome, and we have community night on Tuesday when the guys get together and share company so we can see one another. We enjoy one another’s company.”

Monsignor Scheyd, who celebrates two to three Masses on the weekends, often helps out at St. Matthew Church in Norwalk and St. Aloysius Parish in New Canaan, where he was pastor for 14 years.

The oldest priest from the diocese was Father Philip Brady, who died June 21 at 103 years old and was active until the end, celebrating Mass. A resident of Brookdale Orchard Glen senior community in Orchard Park, NY, he would have marked his 79th year as a priest on December 18.

“Most of us are in our 80s,” Monsignor Scheyd said. “You don’t think about age when you’re that age. When we were younger, we thought of them as dinosaurs. But we laugh about it now. Many of us don’t go out. One challenge is your legs. But we help one another, and if somebody needs a ride, they get a ride, especially if they have to go to the doctor.”

He encourages parishioners and family members to visit the retired priests, particularly those who can’t get around.

“We try to have a familial community situation here,” he said. “Unfortunately, many of us



MSGR. JOSEPH PEKAR—65 years in the priesthood, and Father James Breen, age 96, the oldest living priest in the Diocese of Bridgeport.

are the last members in our family. Some guys wake up and find they’re on their own.”

“We also take in priests who are ill,” Monsignor said. “We don’t have nursing care, but they bring that with them on Medicare. We have meals prepared for us and celebrate Mass every day at 11:30. Several priests have even done rehab here, and they enjoyed it.”

They also have access to the chapel, community room, library, exercise room and dining area.

The Queen of Clergy Residence was built to offer independent living for retired priests, through the generosity of parishioners, he said. It was constructed

with the understanding that the facility would have to expand as a larger number of clergy reached retirement age. It is supported by the Annual Catholic Appeal and also received a \$50,000 grant from the St. John Vianney Fund of Foundations in Faith.

Monsignor said, “The home is a blessing to the rest of the diocese. It is a nice community, a place where priests can live in the latter years of their life and continue to help parishes.”

And the word “retirement” is definitely not in his vocabulary.

As he says: “In the morning, I put my feet on the floor and say, ‘Thank you, God, for another day.’” ■

REDEMPTRIS MATER FROM PAGE 3

family, the family of the children of God, to celebrate and to support these men.”

He said that most of the people at the gala rediscovered their baptism through the itinerary of Christian initiation that is the Neocatecumenal Way.

“Many of these were brothers and sisters from the communities where these seminarians too are rediscovering their baptism, and it is from this itinerary that their vocations come, and through this itinerary they are nourished and strengthened,” he said.

Father thanked Archbishop Pierre for attending and “showing with his presence the love and support of the Holy Father for the work of the Neocatecumenal Way and the Redemptoris Mater Seminaries.”

He said the archbishop presided over a vocational meeting in Gettysburg last July attended by more than 10,000 brothers and sisters from the Neocatecumenal Way, and “he saw firsthand the work of the Lord in their life, when young men, young women and

entire families answered the call to become priests, nuns or to leave as a family for the mission to evangelize everywhere in the world.”

Father Pacciana also thanked Bishop Caggiano.

“He has honored us with his presence and is the man without whom none of this would have been possible in our diocese,” Father said. “Because of his great prophetic vision, we saw the opening of this seminary, which is an answer to the crisis of vocations and the larger crisis of faith our Church is going through.”

He thanked Archbishop Blair, “who had the same vision when a few years ago decided to open a section of our seminary for the formation of vocations for the Archdiocese of Hartford.” He thanked Bishop Juan M. Betancourt of the Archdiocese for his support and “the great work he is doing in fostering vocations in the Archdiocese of Hartford,” and Bishop James Massa, “who has always accompanied and supported us, both as auxiliary bishop of Brooklyn and as rector of St. Joseph’s Seminary in Yonkers, where these men study theology.”

He praised everyone involved

in making this year’s gala a success and say next year’s dinner will be held on June 4.

In his final comments, Bishop Caggiano thanked Archbishop Pierre for his great witness to the United States, and he praised the seminarians: “These men, each in their own unique way, are very much committed. They are surrendering themselves to the hands of the Lord and will one day be our shepherds and missionary disciples. The Church will be in very good hands with these young men. I know them and I live with them.”

In offering the final blessing, Archbishop Blair said, “Lord, we are privileged to be together and celebrate as one on this feast of Corpus Christi, the great Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ.” He said the Blessed Virgin, who is the Mother of the Eucharist, is the patron of the Redemptoris Mater Seminaries (Mother of the Redeemer) and that the seminarians have all the help they need through the prayers of the Mother of God. ■



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Diocesan News

ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTMENTS FROM PAGE 3

summers in Brookfield where he attended St. Joseph Parish. He graduated Iona Preparatory High School in New Rochelle and earned degrees in English from Manhattan College and New York University, and a degree in Sacred Theology from the Catholic University of America.

Father Kinnally was ordained by Bishop William E. Lori in 2005, after a distinguished educational career in which he was dean of admissions and financial aid at Stanford University. During his educational career, he also taught special education at Iona College and was an admissions professional at Pace University, Purchase College, the University of Bridgeport and Sarah Lawrence College, where he was also dean of admissions.

In the past, Father Kinnally served as diocesan director of vocations and rector of St. John Fisher Seminary. He also served as a member of the Board of Trustees of Sacred Heart University and as parochial vicar of St. Pius X parish in Fairfield.

A professional organist, pianist and vocalist, he served as music director and organist at parishes in Connecticut and New York prior to his ordination.

Deacon Patrick Toole of Westport, a retired IBM executive, was named episcopal delegate for administration (chief operating officer) of the Diocese of Bridgeport in January 2018.

He was ordained to the permanent diaconate in June 2011 and was assigned to St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Fairfield until going to St. Catherine's in 2015, where he continues to serve. He also serves as master of ceremonies for Bishop Caggiano and secretary to the diocesan curia.

Deacon Toole holds a master's degree in business administration from Queens University of Charlotte, N.C. He has a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from the University of Notre Dame and serves on the university's College of Engineering advisory council. His extensive commitments include service as chairman of the board for the Center for Ignatian Spirituality of Fairfield University, and member of the board of directors of St. Joseph High School in Trumbull. Deacon Toole and his wife, Lyndy, who serves as a

music minister at St. Luke Parish in Westport, are the parents of five grown children.

Deacon William A. Santulli of New Canaan was ordained to the permanent diaconate of the Diocese of

Bridgeport by Bishop William E. Lori on Saturday, June 11, 2011, at St. Theresa Church in Trumbull. Since that time, he has served as deacon at St. Aloysius, his home parish. He serves as a deacon advocate to the tribunal and secretary to the diaconate council, and has worked with

Deacon Patrick Toole on the parish reconfiguration process.

A native of Brooklyn, N.Y., Deacon Santulli attended St. Thomas the Apostle in West Hempstead, N.Y., and Brooklyn Prep. He earned a bachelor's degree in economics from the College of the Holy Cross in

Worcester, Mass. and a master's degree in finance from Columbia University. Deacon Santulli retired as chief financial officer of Salov North America Corporation which is the maker of Filippo Berio olive oil. He and his wife, Joanne, are the parents of two grown children. ■

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.

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



Parish News

‘A family that prays together, stays together’

By KATHY-ANN GOBIN

DANBURY—A pilgrimage to the Museum of Family Prayer highlighted Father Patrick Peyton’s mission to encourage the world to pray the Rosary with his memorable mantra that, “A family that prays together, stays together.”

About 20 people boarded a bus from St. Gregory the Great Parish to visit the museum in Easton, Massachusetts, which opened its doors in the summer of 2019. The museum is a new addition to the Holy Cross Family Ministries that was founded by Father Peyton decades ago.

“I thought this would be a really interesting trip to learn about Father Peyton,” said Rosemary Bouffard, who initiated organizing the excursion before the coronavirus pandemic delayed her plans.

The museum fosters family prayer and spirituality, journeying with families and offering them a place to encounter God, especially through the Rosary.

The visit to the museum began with Mass in the Our Lady of the Rosary Chapel said by Father Pinto Paul who had just returned from Hollywood with fellow priests following the celebration of the 75th anniversary of Family Theater Productions, a production company started by Father Peyton following the success of his radio broadcasts.

“It is hard to imagine how a simple priest could walk into Hollywood, the capitol of cultural influence, equipped only with a positive vision for families,”



TWENTY PARISHIONERS from St. Gregory the Great Parish in Danbury recently visited the Museum of Family Prayer in Easton, Massachusetts.

Father Paul said. “It is harder to imagine how he could influence the A-list stars of Hollywood to promote family spirituality.”

But the immigrant priest from Ireland did just that. He successfully reached out to Hollywood stars such as Bing Cosby, Frank Sinatra and Lucille Ball, who appeared on his radio broadcasts. The success of those broadcasts ultimately led to the founding of his production company which produced 900 radio and TV programs and had more than ten thousand broadcasts.

Father Peyton used the burgeoning technology of radio and television to evangelize and reach families across the globe. He also hosted Rosary Rallies where millions of people would gather to hear his message.

Upon touring the museum and seeing a video of a Rosary Rally held in the Philippines, one of the tour patrons realized she witnessed history as one of many Catholic school children volunteering at the event.

“He passed by me and he was waving,” said Ana Zdonczyk, to her own astonishment at the recollection of the memory. “I have goosebumps!” she added as she shared her memory of that day with those around her. Those rallies and his mission to bring people together in prayer through the Rosary was rooted in his miraculous recovery from tuberculosis.

As a seminarian, Father

Peyton fell ill with tuberculosis and although doctors offered no hope for recovery he prayed the Rosary, just like his father had taught him as a child, by gathering the family and leading them in prayer every evening. Following his recovery, he vowed to spend the rest of his life in gratitude to Mary by bringing millions of families around the world to pray the Rosary.

Father David Marcham is working with others to help establish Father Peyton as a saint. “He has been a role model for me in his faith,” Father Marcham said, adding that people often write to the center saying their prayers have been answered. Those letters are being used to support the effort for his sainthood. Currently Father Peyton has been given the title of venerable, having been determined by the Catholic Church to have lived a life of “heroic virtue.” “If it’s God’s will, it will be approved,” Father Marcham said. “He’s a very wor-

thy saint for families.”

The trip to the museum also included a stop at the grave of Father Peyton at Holy Cross Cemetery located on the grounds of the nearby campus of Stonehill College. His gravestone is adorned with many colorful rosaries left by visitors paying their respects.

Rosanne Benvenga and her friend Mary LeBlanc were pleased to be a part of the trip. “It not only taught you a lot about Father Peyton but the rosary as well,” Benvenga said. “It was a beautiful and touching experience,” LeBlanc said. “It makes you feel very spiritual.”

Father Wilfred Raymond, president of Holy Cross Family Ministries said the organization is continuing Father Peyton’s work all around the world. “Family prayer is a very important thing,” Father Raymond said. “We are here to remind people of his very special message, ‘A family that prays together stays together.’” ■

A procession to honor Mary

By BARBARA SQUIRES

RIDGEFIELD—On the beautiful evening of the Feast of the Visitation and the last day of the month of May devoted to our Blessed Mother, parishioners from St. Elizabeth Seton in Ridgefield held their first annual procession to the devotion of Mary.

Gathering inside the church, parishioners were given a candle and booklet designed with prayers and hymns specific to the event.

The statue to lead the procession was blessed by Father Alphonse who also offered an introductory reflection on our devotion to Mary. The statue was generously loaned by a parishioner.

Candles on either side of Mary were used by parishioners to light their individual candles. Once all the candles were lit, Father Alphonse led the parishioners outside to the entrance of the church to commence with the procession.



THE CANDLELIGHT PROCESSION continued around the church while parishioners recited the Holy Rosary and sang praises to Our Blessed Mother who was carefully held in place atop a beautiful blue Jeep.

Another parishioner, in her new blue SUV, waited for Mary to be lifted through the sunroof facing the parade of followers. Parishioners recited the Holy Rosary and sang hymns of praise to the Blessed Mother.

The culmination of this event in honor of Mary was in the form of a brief speech by Mary Young, a parishioner and mother of nine. Mary told of many trials and tribulations in her personal life and

family where prayers for Mary’s intercession were answered. Her inspirational and honest accounts of how and why her devotion to Our Blessed Mother is woven into the fabric of her life and the lives of her family were appreciated and well received.

After the ceremony concluded, everyone gathered in McKeon Hall for an ice cream treat provided by the Prime Timers of the parish. ■

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Catholic Charities

Merton Center recognizes dignity of its guests

By EMILY CLARK

FAIRFIELD—The Thomas Merton Center Celebrity Breakfast returned after a two-year hiatus to raise thousands of dollars to assist Bridgeport's most vulnerable population. Over 250 people recently gathered at the Guest House on Sacred Heart University's West Campus in Fairfield, hearing stories of extraordinary volunteerism and testimonies from those who have benefitted from the Merton Center's services. Keynote speaker and fitness expert Billy Blanks, Jr. shared his own account of overcoming struggles and homelessness.

To open the program, host Terry O'Connor, chair of the Board of Directors at Kolbe Cathedral High School, introduced Bill Colson, director of the Thomas Merton Center. "Bill understands the community that we serve and what it means to give a smile and a welcoming

hand," O'Connor said about the Bridgeport native. "He knows that charity is a hand up—not a handout." Colson, who has led the Merton Center since 2020, credits it with bringing people together to make change in what he calls a "very special" environment, serving breakfast and lunch each weekday and providing groceries for families through the Eat Smart Food Pantry.

Many of those making that change were recognized with commendations during the breakfast. The Thomas Merton Center Service Award was given to Sam and Maeve, children who collected toiletries and socks and distributed them at the center during the pandemic. Mary, a 103-year-old who regularly bakes bread for the Merton Center, and Christina, a volunteer of 34 years, received applause for their continuous service. For on-going dedication to the needs of the community, Safety Marking,

Inc. was presented with the 2022 Kevin Mulcahy Award.

Following a full breakfast of omelets, fruit, coffee, and muffins, John Gutman, the executive director of New Covenant Center in Stamford, introduced keynote speaker Billy Blanks, Jr. Though now known for his fitness program "Dance It Out" and his success on "Shark Tank," Blanks faced struggles throughout his early years and career, including homelessness for himself and his son when he could not pay his bills. While teaching a fitness class, he heard from participants that his program was changing their lives, prompting them to lose weight, feel good, refrain from self-harm, and regain their dignity, a vital aspect to success. He said this allowed him to open up to people as well, which prompted a change for himself. "What I love about the Thomas Merton Center is the dignity you give to people," Blanks told the



BILLY BLANKS, JR. GAVE the keynote address at the recent Celebrity Breakfast held by the Thomas Merton Center.

audience, prompting Gutman to add, "Your story is a tremendous inspiration to all."

Though the Merton Center is currently located in Bridgeport's "Hollow" neighborhood, plans are underway for a new Thomas Merton Family Center on State Street, tentatively scheduled to open in spring 2023. According to Michael Donoghue, executive director of Catholic Charities of Fairfield County, while continuing to serve meals and run the food pantry, it will also provide medical care and counseling, financial advice, ESL classes, and job training, among other services. Funds raised from this celebrity breakfast will assist in this expansion.

"The Merton Center does not exist without all you do so we can treat our most vulnerable neighbors with the dignity they deserve," Donoghue told the donors. "Your support allows Catholic Charities to provide more services and help to move people to a life of self-sufficiency."

Since 1974, the Thomas Merton Center has been one of the largest shelters in Connecticut, serving over 450,000 meals annually to neighbors in Bridgeport. According to its mission statement, the center is committed to providing a loving, safe and hopeful community atmosphere that responds to the needs of its guests and residents and respects the dignity of each person. ■

Miracles celebrated at Magnificat Breakfast

By KATHY-ANN GOBIN

DANBURY—Spiritual inspiration wrapped in laughter was the gift Sister Frances Smalkowski shared with those gathered at the Magnificat breakfast in Danbury.

Sister Frances, director of pastoral care at St. John Paul II Center in Danbury, was the featured speaker and she shared her faith-filled journey that has spanned more than six decades as a Sister of the Holy Family of Nazareth.

"I should not be here," Sister Frances quickly quipped following her introduction, with a hint of her mischievous smile, a nod to her New York sense of humor that would prompt laughter and thought-provoking inspirational moments throughout the morning. Sister Frances explained that there were at least four major events in her life that shaped who she is today.

Sister Frances said she

recovered from an illness after graduating nursing school and while traveling in Utica, N.Y. Early one morning, the car she was riding in hit an ice slick and ended up off the road, somehow avoiding being hit by a truck that was travelling behind them. "I believe in miracles," she said. "I believe in dreams."

"I believe that whatever the truth is, if it doesn't surface in your lifetime or my lifetime, it surfaces," she said. And her truth, although her mother tried to dissuade her from it, was to become a nun. "I just knew it was right. You just have to be who you are. I had to learn my own lessons," she said, adding it took 25 years for her mother to accept her choice.

On Sister Frances' 25th anniversary as a nun, she said her mother, still somewhat reluctant to accept her daughter's life journey, wrote on a scrap piece of paper, "I'm very happy for you." But on her 50th anniversary, her mother celebrated with her.

"The greatest joy I have was



SISTER FRANCES SMALKOWSKI, director of pastoral care at St. John Paul II Center in Danbury, was the featured speaker at the recent Magnificat Breakfast in Danbury.

having my mom at my 50th anniversary. The biggest gift I got was that my mom had come around," she said. "That's what you want for the people you love. You want them to be the best they can be." "Religious life has really been a joy for me," she said. "I love my community life. It has changed over time. I appreciate it now."

Sister Frances said she is enriched by people she encounters every day, especially those at the Pope John Paul II Center.

She said her life's work including caring for others as a nurse, a Certified Psychiatric Clinical Nurse specialist and a Certified Chaplain doesn't come without its own challenges. She said religious life doesn't preclude her from experiencing the full range of emotions in relationships including falling in love. "I get too close to people but I'm not afraid. I'm happy for being able to stay on the path," she said, quickly adding, "That's a miracle!"

At the conclusion of the breakfast, the ladies prayed over Sister Frances and presented her with a hand-knit prayer shawl. A miniature hand-knit prayer shawl and prayer literature was available for each attendee.

The Triumphant Heart of Mary Immaculate chapter of the international Magnificat group was founded over twenty years ago with a goal of bringing Catholic women together, guided by the Holy Spirit through a shared love of faith, prayer, service and support.

Sister Frances' words resonated with those in attendance. "It was encouraging to learn about some of the challenges in her life that I didn't expect hear," said Adrienne Coppola, a parishioner of St. Francis Xavier parish in New Milford. Coppola said it was her first time attending the Magnificat Breakfast and she looks forward to attending more in the future. "It was a beautiful way to spend the morning," she said. ■

EDITORIAL

Celebrating Catholic Education

This issue of *Fairfield County Catholic* offers a glimpse into the vitality of our schools and the outstanding students who were named class valedictorians and salutatorians. We are pleased to spotlight their achievement.

At the recent Foundations in Education Gala, Dr. Steven Cheeseman, superintendent of Diocesan Schools and one of the evening's awardees, reported there is much good news in our Catholic schools. "I wonder who actually thought that I could be standing here tonight able to boast of increased enrollments in most of our schools, stronger financial vitality in our system, and improved academics and Catholicity," he told the gathering.

Dr. Cheeseman was quick to add that maintaining a system of 7,000 students, 800 teachers and 25 schools throughout Fairfield County has its challenges, and would not be possible without the generosity of donors, who make the dream of Catholic education possible for students and families. In this past year, Foundations in Education awarded nearly \$2.5 million in Bishop's Scholarship Fund tuition assistance to nearly 1,200 students. Additionally, the Leaders of Tomorrow program awarded \$337,000 to 66 elementary school students.

Our thanks go out to parents for their sacrifice and commitment, to teachers and administrators, and to all who contribute to these faith-based learning communities that form, inform and transform the lives of our young people.

Church Fathers

In his weekly Veritas Radio (1350 AM) podcast, Bishop Frank J. Caggiano recently discussed the lives of three Church Fathers whose work is very relevant to our society today—St. Cyril of Alexandria, St. Athanasius and St. Irenaeus.

The bishop said that in order to understand the Church Fathers, we need to understand the context of the world in which they lived—and that context is very similar to what we are experiencing in the contemporary church. The Early Church was not without its conflicts and theological disagreements, and it offers us perspective and strength as we face our own challenges.

"What seems to be disagreement, seems to be upheaval, seems to be bishops not on the same page, has been a perennial part of the life of the Church from the time of the Apostles. Like them, we live in a world that has different approaches theologically. So, this is not new. My point is, don't be discouraged. Don't be disillusioned because the Holy Spirit is in charge. The gates of hell shall not prevail against the Church. We will always come back to consensus around the truth."

At the end of the podcast, Veritas host Steve Lee couldn't resist asking the bishop for some Father's Day advice. The bishop said the Church Fathers were great teachers about God's love, and that all fathers have that same opportunity: "St. Paul says, don't nag your children, right? You can't always discipline them, but I guess this would be my insight from my celibate state of life. There is no more sacred and privileged opportunity to help children realize that God loves them than through their parents. So, to be a good father is to make God's love real for a son or daughter. Never have them ever question their worth or their worthiness, even when they botch things up big time."

(To listen to the entire conversation or view past programs, visit: www.veritascatholic.com/podcast.)

Living in Hope

At a time when we continue to live with the uncertainty of COVID-19 and unsettling news of war and acts of violence, these few lines by Thomas Merton remind us about the basis of hope, which is found not in our plans but rooted in our faith. In his book, *No Man is an Island*, published in 1955, Thomas Merton wrote, "We are not perfectly free until we live in pure hope. For when our hope is pure, it no longer trusts exclusively in human and visible means nor rests in any visible end. He who hopes in God trusts God whom he never sees to bring him to the possession of thing that are beyond imagination.... Hope deprives us of everything that is not God, in order that all things may serve their true purpose as means to bring us to God."

EDITOR'S CHOICE

Arrivederci! Msgr. Powers

BRIDGEPORT—Catholic Center employees gathered on Wednesday, June 15 to bid farewell to Msgr. Thomas Powers, who left the diocese on June 21, for his new post as rector of North American College in Rome. For the past seven years Msgr. Powers has served the diocese as vicar general and moderator of the curia. He has also served as pastor of St. John Parish in Darien since September 2020.

"Tom, you know the affection and respect everyone has for you," said Bishop Frank J. Caggiano at the start of the informal reception. "You kept us working together as a family because of your quiet way, openness and priestly humility. You have touched the lives of all of us in so many ways. We are proud that you are going to Rome, but please remember, you will always have a home here in this diocese."

Msgr. Powers thanked the bishop for being a mentor and spiritual father over the past seven years and said that Catholic Center staff were like family to him. He said his decision to go to Rome was not an easy one, but he followed the bishop's example of serving the universal Church in whatever capacity it asks.

"Please pray for me. This is not goodbye but Arrivederci! I will come back to this diocese, and I will also bring you to Rome with me on a daily basis in my prayers," said Msgr. Powers said. He then cut the first slice of his Arrivederci cake and chatted with employees who came forward to wish him well. ■

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Editorial



Real life behind social media moments

A YOUNG WOMAN'S VOICE

BY ELIZABETH CLYONS

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

Sitting around the table for a recent Father's Day meal, my family started discussing people we knew who were going away on extravagant summer vacations. I'll admit, most of us began to express our jealousy and desire to hop on a plane to an exciting destination. It was then that my mom piped in. She reminded us that we were all out for a meal together as a family, which was more than enough to be grateful for.

As we enter the summer

months, our social media feeds will likely be full of pictures of people enjoying themselves on vacation. It will be hard not to fall into the trap of envy and jealousy, letting it consume us as we scroll.

But in doing this, we would be missing out on all the small moments that create our beautiful, extraordinary, messy lives. Moments of inspiration and creativity, laughter, joy, nostalgia, and everything in between.

Theodore Roosevelt said, "Comparison is the thief of

joy." That statement is increasingly true in a world where we can share our good fortune at a moment's notice. But it is important to remember that we only see each other's good moments—curated, filtered and vetted before posting.

Life is a kaleidoscope of moments, each accompanied by a unique set of emotions. Our human connection allows us to be with each other in moments of joy, as well as moments of struggle—and this is where a hidden beauty lies.

Can we learn to embrace all of these moments? Both the joyful and the difficult. It may seem like others have it better, but we all have ups and downs. Our humanity makes that something we can always be sure of.

In the same way, can we learn to find genuine joy in others' good fortune even in the face of our own hardships?

We mustn't judge others or begrudge them their happiness.

James 4:11 says, "Do not speak evil of one another, brothers. Whoever speaks evil of a brother or judges his brother speaks evil of the law and judges the law. If you judge the law, you are not a

fall victim to the judgment of others. "How can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove that splinter from your eye,' while the wooden beam is in your eye? You hypocrite,

"Life is a kaleidoscope of moments, each accompanied by a unique set of emotions. Our human connection allows us to be with each other in moments of joy, as well as moments of struggle—and this is where a hidden beauty lies."

doer of the law but a judge."

It is easy to judge others by what we see online. We feel a separation from them on the other side of a screen. But we never know what someone is like until we talk to them face-to-face. We could all use a little more love, understanding and acceptance in our lives.

In our humanity, we often

remove the wooden beam from your eye first; then you will see clearly to remove the splinter from your brother's eye" (Matthew 7:4-5).

If we look around at what we have and find the joy and wonder there, we won't have any room left for judgment or comparison of others, for our hearts will be full. ■



How does Jesus see us?

SWIMMING UPSTREAM

BY JOE PISANI

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

Let me tell you an Easter story. I know it's a little late and that I should be setting my watch for Ordinary Time...but something happened on Easter that I've been thinking about for weeks.

Let me start by saying strange things happen when you ask for the grace to see people the way Jesus does. It can change your view of the world. It can change your view of the way you've been living your faith. And it can lead you to the unsettling conclusion that you have a lot of work to do, no matter how old you are or how set in your ways you are.

A preliminary explanation

might be helpful: Since I've never done very well in crowds, I usually try to avoid events—and Masses—where everyone is crammed together, especially at Christmas and Easter. I can still remember when my friends tried to drag me out of my dormitory room and drive to Woodstock with them. I resisted, and it was the right decision for a lot of reasons, one of which was the mob of 500,000 young people. As soon as I saw that crowd, I would have started walking back to New York City alone.

Because of this inability to deal with crowds, I went to the 7:30 Mass on Easter, which I quickly learned wasn't early

enough to avoid the packed pews. But it's a good thing that people are returning to church.

Predictably, there were a lot of people I'd never seen before, and I started grumbling, "I don't want to be squished between strangers and singing, 'Jesus Christ is risen today!'" Even worse, many of them weren't wearing masks, and I still had residual anxiety about COVID-19. (I forgot my mask so that compounded the problem.)

During the Liturgy of the Word, I began falling into my usual hypocritical state of mind because the Church was filled with many people who didn't know when to sit or stand or kneel. With these self-righteous thoughts festering in my brain—I think Satan had a lot to do with it—I got up to receive Communion and found myself standing in line behind a teenager in sweatpants, a T-shirt and styl-

ish psychedelic sneakers.

Just as I was about to take his inventory, I did a dangerous thing, which I don't advise you to do unless you're prepared for the

"When I get self-righteous, I often forget that He wants to draw all people to Himself, even the ones who annoy us..."

consequences. I said a prayer to Jesus that always makes me feel ashamed. The prayer consists of eight highly volatile spiritual words: "Jesus, let me

see them as you do."

I only had to say it once. In no time at all, he answered me. (The answer came a lot faster than when I ask him, "Jesus, do you think I could win Power Ball?")

My annoyance, my negativity, my criticism vanished. I realized Jesus wasn't sad, and he wasn't critical, angry or resentful that this young man was there. He was absolutely ecstatic. I felt sudden joy, walking behind this teenager in his athletic pants and colorful Nikes with his weird haircut.

I'm convinced Jesus was glad to see him at Mass, and even

gladder that he received his Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity in the Blessed Sacrament.

When I get self-righteous, I often forget that He wants to draw all people to Himself, even the ones who annoy us, who despise us and who anger us. It's not my place to decide who is worthy because Jesus died for them all, and that makes them worthy.

For many years I complained about people who only come to Mass on Easter and Christmas, forgetting conveniently the years I went to Mass only on Easter and Christmas. Plus, there was that time at midnight Mass on Christmas that I should never have gone to because I had been partying too much that night and well...you get the idea.

To my thinking, Jesus was telling me, "Quit your belly-aching. Do you hear me complaining because this kid is at Easter Mass? I'm really happy!"

The prayer "Jesus, let me see them as you do" always works, usually to my embarrassment. Try it. But be prepared for the results. ■

St. Vincent's Special Needs Services

Bell-bottoms and sequins at the prom

By EMILY CLARK

BRIDGEPORT—Each spring, so many teenagers look forward to their high school prom with anticipation and excitement, helping to plan it, choosing an outfit, and then dancing with friends and classmates. The students of St. Vincent's Special Needs Services are no different. With a 1970s disco theme as their backdrop, they held their annual prom at the school in Trumbull on Friday, May 27 after two years of a heavily-restricted event due to COVID-19.

As the sounds of the Bee Gees and KC & the Sunshine Band filled the room, the students, many wearing sequined shirts, colorful beads, and bell-bottoms, moved to the music and posed at the photo booths as their aides, some in roller skates, guided them on the dance floor. Disco balls, streamers, glow

sticks, and strobe lights created the perfect atmosphere for these prom-goers, all with multiple developmental disabilities and complex medical needs.

"There is so much excitement!" said Geri Durnin, principal of St. Vincent's Special Needs Services. "The kids couldn't wait to see everyone—and they love to be in photos. This day is so special for all of them. It's really a 'Celebration!'"

Part of what makes it so special is the role the students played in planning this prom. According to Durnin, they chose the theme, made a playlist of songs such as "Boogie Oogie Oogie" and "That's the Way," and helped their teachers create the décor by painting, gluing, and designing some of the artwork. Each classroom picked one year of the decade and made bulletin boards highlighting '70s icons like "The



Partridge Family" and John Travolta, all of which hung on the walls for viewing during the prom. In doing so, students learned not only 1970s pop culture but also about life in that era and the cost of items then and now.

"We incorporate the kids' abilities in the preparation, and work education into it all," said

Colleen Gorman, a special education teacher and behavioral management specialist. "They get involved with the planning from the ground up."

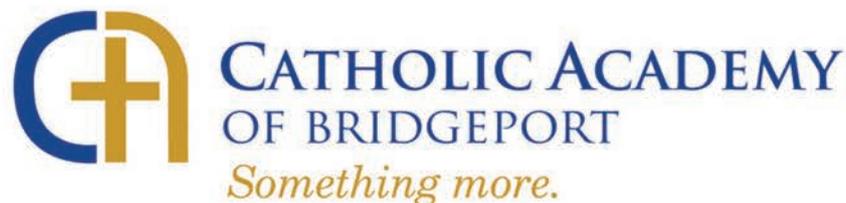
"With everything we do, we try to give our students as many typical opportunities as anyone else, and we just want them to have a good time," said Durnin,

who also commended her staff for the work they do. "I'm so appreciative of them for making it so special for the kids. They are absolutely wonderful."

Thirty-eight students ages 15 and up attended either the morning or afternoon prom with the graduates being crowned kings and queens. Gorman said those with visual impairments enjoyed seeing the bright lights and colors, and those in wheelchairs were "sitting up tall, taking it all in."

"The kids love the hustle and bustle of the day," she said. "The environment is very stimulating for them."

No one needed any excuse to "c'mon, get happy" at this prom—special in so many ways. When asked what her favorite part of the day was, one girl smiled brightly and answered, "The dancing!"



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Thank you to Barbara and Brad Evans for underwriting the event, Judy & Jim Bailey and Sheila Clancy for underwriting the gifts, and Marylou Queally Salvati for underwriting refreshments and décor.

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Hats off to the Class of 2022!

By ELIZABETH CLYONS

In this section, *Fairfield County Catholic* recognizes and congratulates the top scholars of diocesan private and Catholic high schools and congratulates all students on their success in graduating. Congratulations on your great achievement and God bless you as you continue on your journey!

St. Joseph High School TRUMBULL—St.

Joseph High School is proud to announce that Sofia Papanikolaou and Amy Ogle are this year's valedictorian and salutatorian, respectively.

Sofia Papanikolaou resides in Shelton, Conn. Within the St. Joe's community, she is vice president of the National Honor Society and has managed the 2021-2022 Freshmen Mentoring Program. Sofia has served as president of the Writing Center, president of the Film and

Literature Club, secretary of the Future Healthcare Professionals Club, and member of Student

ent of the Nutmeg Scholarship (full cost-of-attendance scholarship) to study Physiology and



SAINT JOSEPH HIGH SCHOOL, TRUMBULL – Sofia Papanikolaou, valedictorian; Amy Ogle, salutatorian, with Mr. David J. Klein, president

Ambassadors and the Amaranth Literary and Arts Journal. Sofia is also a Harvard Book Award and Bausch + Lomb Honorary Science Award recipient and a member of the Math, English and Spanish Honor Societies. Outside of St. Joe's, Sofia is a competitive dancer and assistant dance teacher at Thrive: The Essence of Dance in Monroe, Conn. In the fall, Sofia plans to attend the University of Connecticut as an Honors Scholar and recipi-

ent of the Nutmeg Scholarship (full cost-of-attendance scholarship) to study Physiology and

Neurobiology on the pre-medical track. SJ's salutatorian, Amy Ogle, resides in Oxford, Conn. She is the literary editor of both the School's Yearbook and the Amaranth Literary and Arts Journal. Amy is also involved in the Drama Club, Student Ambassadors, Music Ministry and the Writing Center. Outside of St. Joe's, Amy teaches religious education to first and second graders at St. Thomas the

Apostle Parish. She is a recipient of the Cornell Book Award and winner of "Best Literature" for two years in Amaranth's annual contest. She is a member of the National Honor Society, as well as the English, Spanish and Music Honor Societies. In the fall, Amy will attend the University of Richmond as a presidential scholar to study English and Creative Writing.

"We are so proud of these two very accomplished students who embody all that is St. Joe's," said



NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL, FAIRFIELD – Shauna Contreras, co-valedictorian; Sophia Porzio, co-valedictorian

Principal Nancy DiBuono. "Sofia is a great leader and is a perfect example of strength and character in our school community. Amy

is an incredibly talented student with strong artistic skills and work ethic. Both of these students set high standards for themselves and are inspirations both in and out of the classroom."

St. Joseph High School celebrated their commencement on Saturday, June 4, graduating 186 students.

Notre Dame High School

FAIRFIELD—Shauna Contreras from Bridgeport has earned the distinction of co-vale-



dictorian at Notre Dame High School in Fairfield. Shauna has exemplified Notre Dame's

▶ CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

Vals and Sals

VALS AND SALS FROM PAGE 15

mission of character, faith and intellect. She completed over 200 hours of service, was an active member of Campus Ministry, a member of the Student Leadership Institute, served as treasurer of the Spanish National Honor Society, president of the National Honor Society, and was captain of the varsity Bowling team. Shauna has had lead roles in the fall drama productions and the spring musicals. She has earned two Halo Awards for her performances. Shauna was selected to be a member of Notre Dame's Strategic Planning Committee where she represented her peers. Shauna is the recipient of the President's Award for Excellence, the CAS Arts Award, Notre Dame Drama Award and the Jim Stewart Scholarship. Shaunah will be attending Princeton University.

Sophia Porzio from Easton has earned the distinction of

co-valedictorian at Notre Dame. Sophia has been an active member of the Notre Dame community and an example of someone who lives the school's mission every day. Sophia has been an active member of many clubs on campus. Specifically, she has dedicated her time to those organizations that give back to the community such as Campus Ministry, Key Club and Horizons Club. Sophia has accumulated over 100 hours of service to her community. She was awarded the distinction of the President's Award for Academic Excellence, the Notre Dame Latin award, and inducted into the Spanish Honor Society. She also received the Spanish Honor Society Scholarship and the McKeon Family Scholarship. Sophia is fluent in Italian and spends time with her family learning Italian culture and traditional Italian cooking. Sophia will be attending



KOLBE CATHEDRAL HIGH SCHOOL, BRIDGEPORT – Tayvian Laing, valedictorian; Danielle Bernard, salutatorian

UConn this fall and studying Business Administration.

Dr. Christopher Cipriano, principal, shared, "Shauna and Sophia exemplify what it means to be a Notre Dame student. Both ladies have served as a role model for others in both their character and faith and have lived our mis-



sion since freshman year. They are well prepared for their future, and I am excited to see their accomplishments and successes in college and beyond."

Notre Dame High School celebrated its commencement on Friday, June 3, graduating 103 students.

Kolbe Cathedral High School

BRIDGEPORT—Kolbe Cathedral High School is proud to announce Tayvian Laing as its valedictorian and Danielle Bernard as its salutatorian for the 2021-22 school year.

Tayvian Laing has earned the highest academic standing in his graduating class. Tayvian came to Kolbe Cathedral High School from St. Mark School in Stratford. During his time at Kolbe Cathedral High School, Tayvian was a member of the National Honor Society. He also served as student council president and a co-leader of his graduating class. One of the most impressive initiatives Tayvian participated in was a new club called BEACON, which stands for Bringing Equality and Communal Opportunities Now. Tayvian and a group of his classmates started BEACON as a way to address social justice and inequity. The group tackled difficult issues such as food insecurity and gun violence and gave voice to concerns in the school by finding positive and productive ways to bring about change. His academic accomplishments, as well as his leadership, have earned him many accolades such as the Harvard Book Award, the Kolbe Cathedral Student of the Year Award and the Maximilian Kolbe Award. Tayvian Laing

is a bright young man with a courageous heart. He is a true gentleman and seeks to advocate for those who are not able to advocate for themselves. He is a young man of great character. We are so proud to share that Tayvian Laing will be continuing his education at Harvard University in the fall.

Danielle Bernard has earned the second highest academic standing in her graduating class. Danielle Bernard came to Kolbe Cathedral High School from St. Andrews Academy. Danielle has sought out ways to make a positive impact on the community. Growing up in the church, Danielle has been very active in her faith as a member of the youth group. Danielle also participated in food and clothing drives and was a member of the Junior City Council, where she advocated for mental health and overall personal wellness. At Kolbe, Danielle was active in class council, where she helped organize community building and fundraising events. Danielle also co-founded BEACON. Danielle's academic achievements and compassionate leadership earned her various awards such as the Cornell Book Award, the Philip Broadhurst Award and the Bridgeport Rotary Scholarship. Danielle Bernard is a bright and dedicated student with a compassionate and generous heart. It is with great pride that we share that Danielle will be continuing her education at the University of Connecticut in the fall.

Both Tayvian and Danielle have been valued members of our community and we wish them all the best as they continue their education and pursue their dreams.

Kolbe Cathedral celebrated its commencement on Thursday, June 2.

Immaculate High School

DANBURY—Immaculate High School is proud to announce that Julong Williams of Redding is the Class of 2022's valedictorian and Matthew Reeves of New Milford is the salutatorian.

Valedictorian Julong Williams will attend the University of Virginia where she will study English. An AP scholar, Julong is a four-year Distinguished Honors student, a recipient of the

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CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR CLASS OF 2022 GRADUATES

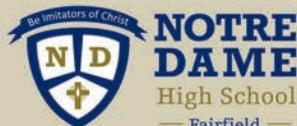
Proud recipients of over \$20 million in college scholarships and grants!



Over the past five years, Notre Dame graduates have been admitted to leading colleges and universities across the country, including:

Auburn University	Georgetown University	Purdue University	Texas A&M University
Bentley University	Howard University	Quinnipiac University	Trinity College
Berklee College of Music	Iona College	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	Tufts University
Brown University	Loyola University Maryland	Rhode Island School of Design	University of Massachusetts, Amherst
Bryant University	Marquette University	Sacred Heart University	University of Connecticut
Clemson University	Massachusetts College of Art & Design	Saint Anselm College	University of Hartford
Connecticut College	New York University	Saint Joseph's University	Vassar College
Drexel University	Northeastern University	Salve Regina University	Villanova University
Embry-Riddle	Pace University	Seton Hall University	Virginia State University
Aeronautical University	Penn State	Southern Connecticut State University	Virginia Tech
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Vals and Sals

VALS AND SALS FROM PAGE 16

2021 Cornell Book Club award for academic excellence, recipient of the four-year Presidential Merit Award Scholarship, a member of the National Honor



IMMACULATE HIGH SCHOOL, DANBURY – Julong Williams, valedictorian; Matthew Reeves, salutatorian

Society, English National Honor Society and Math National Honor Society. A prolific writer and artist, Julong has written original young adult fiction and poetry and received the school's Excellence in Art award. Her high school athletic career includes four years as a cross country, indoor track and outdoor track runner.

Salutatorian Matthew Reeves will attend Lehigh University where he will study Chemistry. An AP scholar, Matthew is a four-year Distinguished Honors student, the recipient of the Isabelle Farrington Academic Scholarship, recipient of the SW Conference Academic Team, a member of the Math Club, Math and Science National Honor Societies, a cross country 5K distance runner and indoor/outdoor track runner and served as team captain for both teams in his senior year. A parishioner of St. John's Episcopal Church in New Milford, Matthew was a dedicated volunteer with more than 100 hours at the Rudy L. Ruggles Biomedical Research Institute.

Immaculate High School 2022 commencement ceremony was held on Saturday, June 4. One hundred and seventeen students made up the Class of 2022.

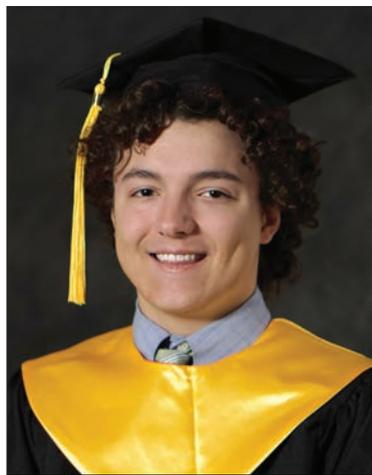
Cardinal Kung

STAMFORD—Cardinal Kung Academy is proud to announce that August Berchermann is the Class of 2022 valedictorian.

August Berchermann resides in New Canaan, Conn., where he and his family are active parishioners of St. Aloysius Parish. August is a member of



the National Honor Society, and he received Books Awards from Villanova University and Columbia University. In 2020 he was given the Cardinal Kung Defender of the Faith Award by the Kung family. He has excelled in the study of Latin, earning a gold medal on the National Latin Exam and scoring well on the AP Latin test. Outside of the classroom, August was a captain of the soccer team and received the Sportsmanship Award for



CARDINAL KUNG ACADEMY, STAMFORD—August Berchermann, valedictorian

tennis. August is also an accomplished musician, studying voice, piano and organ. He has sung with the Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis Children's Choir, the Choir for Youth of the Diocese of Bridgeport, the St. Aloysius adult choir and is a founding member of the CKA men's

schola. August also plays organ for school Masses. He currently serves as the only high school member of the board for the Fairfield West chapter of the American Guild of Organists. As a self-taught computer programmer and software developer, August is passionate about software that promotes online collaborative music performance and composition. He will attend the University of Notre Dame to study computer science and organ.

"We could not hope for a better valedictorian to represent our first class of students who have undertaken the full four-year classical curriculum at Cardinal Kung Academy!" says Dr. Alexander Miller, principal of CKA. "August's accomplishments show the breadth of the liberal arts education, which is always opening onto new areas of learning, and he has been generous in sharing his gifts and talents with the school, his parish and

the world."

Commencement exercises will be held on Saturday, June 18. The 2022 senior class is nine students.

In addition to four diocesan high schools, scholars from the Diocese of Bridgeport are prominent in the area private Catholic high schools. We are pleased to recognize their achievements.

Fairfield Prep

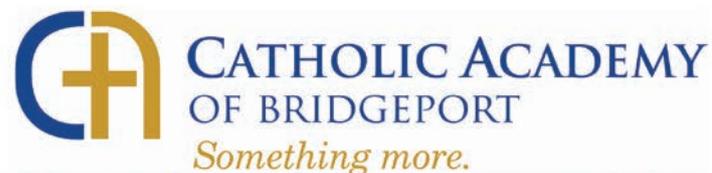
FAIRFIELD—Fairfield Prep is proud to recognize two outstanding scholars for their academic accomplishments and personal excellence, achieving in the top one percent of the Class of 2022. Matthew Marsden

and Hugh Hutchinson have distinguished themselves by their fulfillment of Fairfield Prep's Jesuit goals for "Graduates at Graduation": open to growth, intellectually competent, religious, loving and committed to doing justice.

Matt Marsden has been an extraordinary student and a distinguished school and community leader during his four years at Fairfield Prep. He has received summa cum laude honors for all four years while taking the strongest course of study offered including six AP courses in senior year. Many recognitions highlight Matt's scholarship including Commendation by the National Merit Scholarship program, National Honor Society, SCC Scholar Leader and the Harvard Book Award.

In Prep's Campus Ministry program, Matt served first as a leader, and then co-director of the annual Freshman Retreat, with

► CONTINUED ON PAGE 18



OUR 82 GRADUATES IN THE CLASS OF 2022 WERE ACCEPTED TO THE FOLLOWING SCHOOLS:

Bridgeport International Academy
Bridgeport Military Academy
Bullard-Havens Technical High School
Bunnell High School
Central High School
Emmett O'Brien Technical High School
Fairchild Wheeler High School
Fairfield College Preparatory School
Greens Farms Academy

Hopkins School
ICL Academy
Kolbe Cathedral High School
Lauralton Hall
Notre Dame High School
Platt Technical High School
Shelton High School
St. Joseph High School
Stratford High School

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Vals and Sals

VALS AND SALS FROM PAGE 17

300 participants and leaders. He also served as co-chairman of the Environmental Club and provided peer tutoring through the NHS and the Spanish Honor Society. Matt served as tour guide and assisted at school

events like the Open House, and was a frequent featured speaker. Outside Prep, Matt volunteered with Fairfield Connections at the YMCA and the Great Futures Mentoring program at McKinley School, sponsored by Wakeman



FAIRFIELD COLLEGE PREPARATORY SCHOOL, FAIRFIELD – Matthew Hansen and Hugh Hutchinson

Boys & Girls Club. Matt played on the Varsity Tennis Team and was twice elected captain. At graduation, Matt received the prestigious Jesuit Schools Network Award as a young man who has distinguished himself as well rounded and committed to doing justice in generous service to God. Matt lives in Fairfield and is a member of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish. He will attend the University of Virginia in the fall.

Hugh Hutchinson has been a summa cum laude honor student, taking the hardest course of studies available. He is a member of the National Honor Society and serves as a peer tutor. One of Hugh's most admirable traits is his commitment to his academic studies, his swimming career, and his beliefs and ideas. He is a recipient of the Yale Book Award and the prestigious St. Edmund Campion, S.J., Award at graduation, which recognizes academic excellence

in support of faith, goodness and justice. He also received the Fairfield Rotary Club scholarship for his dedication to the Rotary Motto, "Service Above Self."

At Prep, Hugh has participated in groups that allow him to grow, particularly in the areas of social justice and progressive movements (Ethics Bowl, Mental Health Awareness, Environmental Club and the German Exchange program). Hugh has generously donated his time with organizations such as the Special Olympics and the Kennedy Center where he helps individuals with special needs. Hugh has been a four-year member of the Varsity Swimming Team where he served as captain, helped lead the team to the 2022 SCC Championship, and earned All-State in 2021 and All-SCC in 2022. He received the Connecticut CAS-CIAC Scholar Athlete award as the Fairfield Prep senior recipient. Hugh lives

in Fairfield and is a member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church. He will attend Middlebury College in the fall.

The Fairfield Prep 80th Commencement Exercises were held on Sunday, June 5, at 9 am outdoors on campus. The community celebrated the graduation of 172 young men, who wore traditional white tuxedo jackets, which is a longtime tradition among the many Jesuit high schools around the country.

Sacred Heart, Greenwich

GREENWICH—Sacred Heart, Greenwich is proud to announce Megan M. Maloney and Angèlique Wheeler as valedictorian and co-salutatorian, respectively.

Megan M. Mahoney, from Larchmont, N.Y., participated in soccer and captained the rowing team. In addition, Megan co-founded the Women in Finance Club and served

► CONTINUED ON PAGE 19



Congratulations to the Class of 2022!

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Class of 2022 College Matriculations

Boston College	Iona College	University of Mississippi
Brown University	Lafayette College	University of Notre Dame (4)
Bucknell University (4)	Miami University, Oxford (2)	University of Richmond (3)
Chapman University	Middlebury College	University of
Claremont McKenna College	New York University (2)	Southern California
Colby College	Northeastern University (5)	University of Virginia (3)
College of the Holy Cross (6)	Providence College	Vassar College
Cornell University	Rochester Institute	Villanova University (5)
Davidson College	of Technology	Virginia Polytechnic Institute
Denison University	Santa Clara University	and State University
Duke University	Southern Methodist University	Washington and Lee University
Elon University	St. Lawrence University	William & Mary
Emerson College (2)	Syracuse University	Williams College
Florida State University	Texas Christian University (3)	Yale University (2)
George Washington University	University of California, Davis	
Georgetown University	University of California,	
Hobart and William	San Diego	
Smith Colleges	University of Chicago (2)	

Vals and Sals

==== VALS AND SALS FROM PAGE 18 =====



SACRED HEART, GREENWICH – Megan M. Maloney, valedictorian; Angèlique Wheeler, co-salutatorian

as a campus minister. Megan plans to attend the University of Chicago in the fall. Megan chose the University of Chicago because of the school's emphasis on intersectional education, which reminds her of Sacred Heart Greenwich's integrated approach. Megan is drawn to the university's holistic position on education, and she plans to explore her wide array of academic and extracurricular interests.

Angèlique Wheeler, from

all four years, sang soprano in Madrigals, and captained mock trial team in her senior year after competing on the team starting in her sophomore year. Angèlique plans to attend Yale University in the fall. Angèlique chose Yale for a number of reasons. First, she likes how many opportunities she'd have at Yale with regard to academics and extracurriculars. Art is particularly important to Angèlique, specifically the performing arts, and Yale has a vibrant arts com-



LAURALTON HALL, MILFORD – Brooke Jones, valedictorian; Caroline "Cee" Begg, salutatorian

Chappaqua, N.Y., was a founding member of the robotics team in her freshman year and captained the team for the past two years. She co-founded the Science Olympiad team in her sophomore year and performed in each of the musicals for three years (starting sophomore year). Angèlique also wrote and edited for Perspectives (the literary magazine) starting in her freshman year, serving as co-editor-in-chief this year, played violin and flute in the orchestra

munity. Angèlique also really loves how much Yale focuses on building community amongst its students, faculty, and the New Haven residents, and Angèlique believes it will be a great place to live and learn for the next four years.

"We have been blessed by the gifts, achievements, friendships, and service of the Class of 2022," said Margaret Frazier, head of school. "This class made a point of sharing leadership roles, being present to the young-

er students as positive role models and taking their commitment to the environment to a new level. They have challenged our school community to be more inclusive, aware, and joyful. We are proud of their imprint on us and their impressive college plans. We know they will set the world on fire!"

Sacred Heart Greenwich boasts a graduating class of 75 students this year.

Lauralton Hall

MILFORD—The Academy of Our Lady of Mercy, Lauralton Hall celebrated the graduation of the Class of 2022 on Saturday, June 4, conferring diplomas to 94 young women.

Valedictorian Brooke Jones, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Stephen Jones of Easton, has been a top high honors student throughout high school and was among five Lauralton seniors named Summa Scholars by the Office of Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Hartford. With unparalleled dedication to her peers, Brooke served as

Class President for three years, Co-President of Mock Trial, and vice-president of Youth in Law as part of the Youth & Government club. She earned the Harvard Book Award and the Laura E. LaFlamme '88 Book Scholarship.

Described by her teachers as "both erudite and engaging, a young lady of humble grace and deep intellectual ability." She "shines with a soft light, and glows—incandescently—from within." Brooke has plans to study government and law while attending Harvard University this fall.

Salutatorian Caroline "Cee" Begg, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Michael Begg of Trumbull, has served as co-president of the Wright Sisters Engineering Team, an officer for both the National Honor Society and Latin club, and a Lauralton student ambassador. Cee also served as captain of the Varsity Swim & Dive team. She was named a Summa Scholar by the Office of Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Hartford;

she earned the Worcester Polytechnic Institute STEM Leadership Book Award and the Society of Women Engineers Certificate of Achievement.

A faculty member describes Cee with the words of Muriel Strode, "I will not follow where the path may lead, but I will go where there is no path, and I will leave a trail."

Cee exudes energy and will facilitate change in the world. She loves to learn. Cee plans to major in Economics and Computer Science Engineering in the Jerome Fisher Program in Management and Technology at the University of Pennsylvania.

For more than 20 years, Lauralton has bestowed its highest honor, the Catherine McAuley Award, to the senior who best demonstrates Mercy values throughout her four years at Lauralton. This year, that honor was awarded to Kaylor Garamella, selected for her kind and caring treatment of others, strong academic purpose and infectiously positive attitude. ■

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE GREENWICH CATHOLIC SCHOOL CLASS OF 2022



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GREENWICH COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL • GREENWICH HIGH SCHOOL
THE URSULINE SCHOOL • SCHOOL OF THE HOLY CHILD
FORDHAM PREP • FAIRFIELD PREP • MARIA REGINA HIGH SCHOOL
WESTHILL HIGH SCHOOL • STAMFORD HIGH SCHOOL
GOLF COAST HIGH SCHOOL • BARRON COLLIER HIGH SCHOOL
ALLEN D. NEASE HIGH SCHOOL



School News

St. Mark School ends the year with a splash

STRATFORD—“There is one thing about being the target in a dunking booth—the water is cold!” confirmed St. Mark School Principal Melissa Warner, as she was repeatedly dropped into frigid water.

The day was all in fun as the principal made herself the target at this year’s Annual Field Day and the first Dunk Tank Challenge. The FUNraiser event, sponsored by the Home School Association, focused on bringing joy and laughter to the St. Mark School Community.

Decked out in a wetsuit, floaty, snorkel and swim goggles, Warner entered the tank to the tune of “Baby Shark” as students cheered with excitement. “It’s so fun and the look on the students’ faces makes it so worth it!” shares Warner. “They deserve to have fun like this!”

Warner hit the tank first but other staff members soon followed her lead. Mr. Fallon and Mr. Kennedy (middle school teachers), Ms. Justo (second grade teacher), Mrs. Nettleton (director of Religious Education) and Miss Claire (Pre-K) also



dared the chilly waters.

In addition to buying \$2 chances to “Dunk the Principal,” students had the opportunity to buy \$1 chances to “Pie a Teacher.” Mrs. Larracuent (Pre-K), Miss Miller (third grade teacher), Mrs. DiMaio (fifth grade teacher) and Miss Sarah (art teacher and after school program director) were all part of the “Pie a Teacher” fun! In all, ten faculty and staff members volunteered to get pied or dunked.

“Our school theme this year is ‘teamwork’, and I was so glad to see so many of my colleagues join in on the fun,” commented Warner.

As it turned out, some students

had particularly bad luck hitting the dunk tank’s small-sized target. Fortunately, parent volunteers happily pressed the target to the crowd’s persuasive cheers.

“I love this community and the Dunk Tank Challenge/Pie a Teacher Event was a great way to bring everyone together and make memories,” commented Home School Association Vice President Lisa Christoffersen. “There is nothing better than hearing children laugh and squeal!”

“We’re trying to end the school year on a high note,” said Principal Melissa Warner, “to celebrate like the school family that we are.” Warner admits there is not much she would not do for her school community.

St. Mark School is a 2009 Nationally Recognized Blue Ribbon School of Academic Excellence and a New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) accredited school, serving students in Pre-K through grade 8.

(To learn more, visit www.stmarkschool.org or email contactus@stmarkschool.org.)

CAB Golf Classic breaks record

BRIDGEPORT—The Catholic Academy of Bridgeport (CAB) recently hosted its 10th Annual Golf Classic at the Country Club of Fairfield and set an organizational record in raising \$1.37 million.

The day began with 24 foursomes enjoying a barbeque lunch followed by 18 holes of golf on the pristine links-style course. Later, 180 golfers and guests gathered for a cocktail reception in



BRAD EVENS AND SHEILA CLANCY

CCF’s newly renovated clubhouse to celebrate 10 years of outings, and to honor Sheila Clancy and June and Jack Heffernan.

Clancy, a CAB board member since 2014 and a parishioner of St. Thomas in Fairfield, has been an integral part of the Academy’s development and marketing efforts throughout the



SISTER MAGNETTI WITH JUNE AND JACK HEFFERNAN

years. She also is secretary of the board and a faithful member of event planning committees. The Heffernans, stalwart supporters of Catholic education and parishioners of Church of the Resurrection in Rye, N.Y., are longtime friends of the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport, and Mr. Heffernan sat on CAB’s board until 2021, chairing its Facilities Committee.

During cocktails, CAB Board Chair John Kreitler welcomed guests and expressed gratitude for the many sponsors of the outing. Next, Luis Mendizabal, a 2018 grad of CAB’s St. Augustine campus, gave a heartfelt testimony about his time at the school.

“My Catholic Academy of Bridgeport education gave me the ability to understand the world around me better. I always felt challenged by its rigorous curriculum, especially by top-notch English and Math departments. I felt very prepared when I went on to high school at Fairfield Prep; I already knew what was happening in my math classes because I had learned the same thing the year before at CAB.”

Mendizabal said that he believed “every student in Bridgeport deserves such a great education, one that nurtures their intellect and morality.” But, he noted, “there is a big predicament that impedes many kids like me from reaping the benefits of a Catholic education, and it is something they don’t have control over: financial ability. Without the means, I would never have been able to go to CAB.”

► CONTINUED ON PAGE 28



Congratulations to the Class of 2022!

Valerie Alvarez - A.I.T.E

Jaylin M. Basquiat - Westhill

William Cabrera Sepulveda - Westhill

Esteban Castro - Florida Southwestern Collegiate

Fernando Chávez Roig - Westhill

Alexander Dawson - Notre Dame

Joseph DeMarco - Westhill

Brian Donovan - Fairfield Prep

Nathalia Echeverria - Greenwich High

Mia Fortt-Robinson - Holy Child

James Kolman - A.I.T.E

Isabella Koutouvides - Lauralton Hall

Sariah Lima - Notre Dame

Amerie Muhammad - Notre Dame

Excelsis Munianga - Notre Dame

Annika Natarajan - Lauralton Hall

Tahlia Ninan - Westhill

Brian Saint Louis - King

Schools News

‘Champions of Catholic Education’

By ELIZABETH CLYONS

BRIDGEPORT—“This is one of my favorite events,” said Dr. Steve Cheeseman at the recent Breakfast of Champions.

Hundreds of invited guests—including pastors, administrators and parents—gathered for this annual event, held in Queen of Saints Hall at the Catholic Center in Bridgeport to honor the awardees who received the St. Thomas Aquinas award.

“Today, we recognize these young people who represent

the very best of our Catholic schools. Given that we have over 7,000 kids in our school system, I hope you realize what an honor it is that YOU have been chosen to be here,” Dr. Cheeseman addressed the award winners.

After breakfast, students came forward to receive a medal from Mrs. Stacie Steuber, deputy superintendent, and a certificate from Dr. Cheeseman. Dr. Cheeseman explained that the St. Thomas Aquinas Award is given to those students who

demonstrate academic excellence and a commitment to living as role models of faith.

“St. Thomas is widely considered to have been the most influential thinker of the medieval period,” Dr. Cheeseman said. “His writings teach us that all knowledge is of God and that by studying all that surrounds us we can come to a better understanding of God’s Truth. But St. Thomas was more than just a scholar, his legacy challenges us to use

➤ CONTINUED ON PAGE 23



A SAMPLING OF THE CLASS OF 2022 College Acceptances

Fairfield College Preparatory School
FAIRFIELDPREP.ORG

Catholic Scouting

Boys and girls receive Catholic Scouting awards

By ELIZABETH CLYONS

NEW CANAAN—Scouts from throughout the diocese were honored for their achievements at the 2022 Catholic Scouting Awards Ceremony on Friday, June 3, at St. Aloysius Parish in New Canaan.

Father Robert Kinnally, scouting chaplain, blessed the medals and Stephen Prostor, chair of the diocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting, conducted the award ceremony.

Scouts throughout the diocese are eligible to earn Catholic Religious Emblem Awards. In order to earn an emblem award, scouts must work with their family or council through a workbook. This workbook is targeted for their age group and often parallels what scouts are learning in their faith formation or religious education classes.

Angelisa Toro of Our Lady of the Assumption Parish earned the Family of God award through Girl Scouts of America. This National program's purpose is to help the child explore a wide range of activities & discover the presence of God in her life as a member of their family and parish. Parents and adults serve as advisors to the child and help her grow in religious awareness by talking about the experiences that make up the program.

Three young ladies from St. Matthew Parish in Norwalk earned Mary, The First Disciple Award. The purpose of this national award program is to provide the recipient with a unique opportunity to develop new insights into herself, friends, family, and the world around her. Two young ladies from St. Matthew's also earned



The Spirit Alive award, the program for which assists Catholic high school-aged girls in discovering how the Holy Spirit moves in their lives, calling them to greater participation in the Church's ministry.

Audrey Aulet from St. Jude Parish in Monroe, Luigi Carratelli from St. Catherine of Siena in Riverside and Julia Sims from St. Joseph in Shelton earned the Light of Christ award, which is given to scouts who, with their

parents' participation, strive to develop a personal friendship with Jesus.

Five scouts received the Parvuli Dei award, for those who have completed second

► CONTINUED ON PAGE 23



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American University	Emmanuel College	Pace University	University of Dallas
Arcadia University	Endicott College	Pennsylvania State University	University of Delaware
Arizona State University	Fairfield University	Pepperdine University	University of Florida
Avon Old Farms	Fashion Institute of Technology	Presbyterian University	University of Hartford
Baylor University	Florida Atlantic University	Providence College	University of Hawaii
Belmont University	Fordham University	Purdue University	University of Illinois
Bentley University	Franciscan University of Steubenville	Quinnipiac University	University of Massachusetts
Boston College	Franklin & Marshall College	Regis College	The University of Mississippi
Boston University	Furman University	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	University of New Hampshire
Bridgewater State University	Georgetown University	Rivier University	University of Miami
Bristol Technical Education Center	Georgia State University	Rochester Institute of Technology	University of New Haven
Bryant University	Gordon College	Roger Williams University	University of Richmond
California Polytechnic State University	Hamilton College	Sacred Heart University	University of Rhode Island
Campbell University	Hawaii Pacific University	Saint Joseph's University	University of San Diego
Catholic University of America	Housatonic Community College	Salem State University	University of Scranton
Central Connecticut State University	James Madison University	Salve Regina University	University of South Carolina
Clemson University	Kansas State University	Sarah Lawrence College	University of Tennessee
Clark University	Indiana University Bloomington	Simmons University	University of Toronto
Colby College	Ithaca College	Southern Connecticut State University	Villanova University
Colorado State University	Marist College	Springfield College	Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
CUNY Hunter College	Marquette University	St. John's University	West Virginia University
Dartmouth College	Marymount Manhattan College	Syracuse University	Western Connecticut State University
Deerfield Academy	Merrimack College	Temple University	Western New England University
Duquesne University	Michigan State University	Texas Tech University	Wilkes University
Eastern Connecticut State University	Middlebury College	University of Colorado	Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Elon University	Monmouth University	University of Bridgeport	Xavier University
	New York University	University of California	
	Northeastern University	University of Connecticut	
	The Ohio State University		

School News

BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS FROM PAGE 21

our knowledge to improve our world, and he implores us to make good choices and to act with virtue.”

“The word ‘champion’ is both a noun and a verb,” explained Dr. Cheeseman. “As a noun, it refers to someone who worked hard and came out on top. You have done that by navigating

the obstacle course we call school and coming out on top as demonstrated by your excellent academic achievement. As a verb, it means to stand up for

something, to lead others in a worthy cause. By being a leader in our schools, by modeling goodness, you are indeed a champion,” said Dr. Cheeseman

to the awardees.

He assured the awardees gathered that they are a shining example of all that is good in the Diocese of Bridgeport Catholic Schools and that he has no doubt they will represent the diocese

well as they go on to high school or to college as champions of Catholic education.

(To learn more about Diocese of Bridgeport Catholic Schools visit www.dioceseofbridgeportcatholic-schools.com)

CATHOLIC SCOUTING FROM PAGE 22

grade and strive to discover the presence of God in their daily lives by meeting requirements determined by their parish priest, counselor and family.

Six scouts received the Ad Altare Dei award, the purpose of which is to foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each young person by encouraging him to actively live out his Catholic Christian faith.

Four individuals received the Pope Pius XII medal, designed to help Catholic Scouts understand God’s call in their lives.

Three scouts earned the Pillars of Faith award, which is given to a Boy or Girl Scout who has earned all four Catholic Scouting emblems, demonstrating tremendous commitment to the Catholic faith.

Several adults were recognized for their achievements.

Father Peter Cipriani of Our Lady of the Assumption Church in Fairfield, Father Gregg Mecca of St. Peter’s in Danbury and Joseph Sindelar of St. Aloysius Parish received the Bronze Pelican award, a diocesan recognition for adults who have made a significant and outstanding contribution to the spiritual development of Catholic youth in the Boy Scouts of America.

The St. George award, a diocesan recognition given to adults who have made a significant and outstanding contribution to the spiritual development of youth in the Boy Scouts, was given to David Nobile of Fairfield.

Cub Scout Pack 45 and Scouts BSA Troop 45 from St. Aloysius were awarded the 2021 Pope Paul VI National Catholic Unit Excellence Award. The Diocese of Bridgeport itself was also recognized with the 2021 Quality Diocesan Committee Award.

I CONGRATULATIONS Immaculate High School CLASS OF 2022



The Class of 2022 has been accepted into an unprecedented 243 colleges and universities, and will be attending:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Albertus Magnus College | Marywood University | University of California, Santa Barbara |
| Barton College | Northeastern University | University College Dublin |
| Boston College | Oklahoma City University | University of Connecticut |
| Boston University | Pace University, New York City Campus | University of Delaware |
| Bryant University | Pennsylvania State University | University of Florida |
| Bucknell University | Pepperdine University | University of Maine |
| Catholic University Of America | Plymouth State University | University of Michigan Ann Arbor |
| Connecticut College | Providence College | University of Miami |
| Eastern Connecticut State University | Purdue University | University of New Haven |
| Emmanuel College | Queen’s University | University of North Carolina Charlotte |
| Fairfield University | Quinnipiac University | University of North Carolina Chapel Hill |
| Florida Atlantic University | Roger Williams University | University of Notre Dame |
| Georgetown University | Sacred Heart University | University of Rhode Island |
| Georgia Institute of Technology | Saint Michael’s College | University of Scranton |
| Husson University | Southern Connecticut State University | University of South Carolina-Columbia |
| Indiana University: Bloomington | St. John’s University-New York | University of Vermont |
| Lehigh University | St. Lawrence University | University of Virginia |
| Lesley University | Stetson University | Virginia Polytechnic Institute |
| Loyola University Chicago | Stonehill College | Wake Forest University |
| Loyola University Maryland | Syracuse University | West Point |
| Manhattan College | Texas A&M University-College Station | Western Connecticut State University |
| Marist College | The George Washington University | William & Mary |
| Marymount Manhattan College | Trinity College | Yale University |

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Sacred Heart Guild

The Art of Celebration: Georgetown Oratory event features TikTok celebrity, Barbara Costello

By LAURA PHELPS

GEORGETOWN—Nearly 70 people came out for a Brunch with Babs, a unique celebration of food, faith, family and tradition. Barbara Costello, known as “Babs” to her 2 million TikTok viewers, is the internet’s favorite home cook and grandmother. She spreads joy and shares wisdom, one quick recipe at a time.

The event, held at the Georgetown Oratory in Redding, Conn., was a fundraiser for the newly formed Guild of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. With the support of Bishop Frank J. Caggiano, evangelization through the artistic beauty in the Catholic tradition is at the heart of the Guild’s mission. The Guild seeks

to inspire the faithful of all ages through sacred liturgy and Christ-centered programs. Brunch with Babs was a perfect kick-off, drawing in the young and old alike through the art of celebration.

“If anyone asked me two years ago to come and have brunch with Babs, I would’ve said, ‘Who’s she? I don’t know Babs!’” A humble opening line from the guest of honor, Barbara Costello, who, at 73 years young, made it clear from the start that her quick rise to internet fame is all God’s doing. Reminding everyone of the key to a successful life, “God first, family second.”

Everyone nodded in agreement at her claim that food evokes memories and nothing brings people together like sharing a good

meal. With strong faith, love of family history, and the desire to form deep and meaningful connections, Costello had guests laughing and crying as they reflected on their recipes and traditions handed down to them by loved ones.

Through touching stories of the hope her videos have offered to those living in the grip of despair and isolation, Costello addressed the power of social media, encouraging the crowd to use it for good. With something as simple and necessary as food, Costello has become a beacon of light through her obedience to God’s call and sharing with the world what matters most: the family.

Over baked mac and cheese, strawberry salad and ice cream blueberry muffins, guests of the



BRUNCH WITH BABS—The Guild of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus recently hosted a fundraiser featuring TikTok star, Barbara Costello.

Oratory were reminded of the memories tied to our tried and true recipes and the importance of family and tradition. With over 700 published videos to date and a New York Times best-selling cookbook under her belt (or should we say apron?) Costello’s message at the Georgetown Oratory was loud and clear; “We are supposed to enjoy life!”

Enjoying life is precisely what the guests at the Oratory did. From the pink and white gingham tablecloths decorated with fresh flower centerpieces to the sparkling drinks in champagne glasses, beauty was everywhere, breaking down barriers and drawing the community together.

Oratory Rector, Father Michael Clark, took to the mic, thanking Barbara for sharing her gifts, exclaiming, “If you like Babs, then you should come to The Guild! This is what it’s all about. Getting together and having fun!”

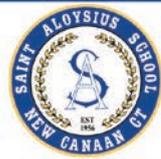
Having fun is no small task, considering the past couple of years. This is why events like Brunch with Babs are crucial to our emotional, social and spiritual well-being, and why the Guild is quickly becoming a place of revival to the life of the community, church and world. People thrive in relationships, and beauty truly does save the world. God, who is the supreme Beauty, woos us by way of beauty. Through Christ-centered events that celebrate the arts, the Guild is already opening hearts and minds, drawing people of all generations closer to God. A beautiful sight to

behold, indeed.

Guests were able to purchase Costello’s cookbook *Celebrate with Babs*, with all proceeds benefiting the Georgetown Oratory. With its colorful pages and loving dedication to the Blessed Mother, some even took home multiple copies to pass on to daughters, sisters and friends. The joy in the room was audible as Babs signed books, taking the time to visit personally, making everyone feel seen, heard and loved (an experience you can count on after every Sunday noon Mass at the Oratory, thanks to an incredible hospitality team). Guests left restored and inspired, eager to return to their own families and kitchens. One woman shared her thoughts: “Never say never! God can truly work through all of us, no matter our age, no matter our season!” And this is the beautiful truth. Everyone has a gift and vocation worthy of celebrating. As far as Costello is concerned, “My vocation is to do my little thing; to spread the good part, the family part, the wonderful food part, the fun!”

We are all called to do our little thing, to celebrate the beauty of our God-given gifts, all for the praise and worship of Almighty God. This is what the Guild is all about, and Brunch with Babs was just the beginning of many Oratory celebrations.

(For more information on Mass times, future events, and how you can get involved, contact information@sacredheartguild.org and follow The Guild on Instagram at [@sacredheartguild](https://www.instagram.com/sacredheartguild).)



Saint Aloysius Catholic School Congratulations Class of 2022!



We are so proud of our graduates and wish them the best of luck!

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Brian McMahon High School

Academy of Our Lady of Mercy, Luralton Hall

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Priest Profile

Father Lucas celebrates 50 years as a Missionary Priest

By EMILY CLARK

BRIDGEPORT—"To make God better known, loved and served" is a philosophy attributed to Blessed Basil Moreau, founder of the Congregation of Holy Cross, and one to which Father George Lucas, C.S.C. has subscribed for decades. And now, as he celebrates his 50th year of ordination, Father George, as this Bridgeport native is commonly known, says that being part of this missionary order has given him hope "wherever [he] has been asked to serve."

On May 27, Father George and 19 other Holy Cross priests were honored as Jubilarians at a Mass in Notre Dame, Indiana, the headquarters of the United States Province of Priests and Brothers. Though he has spent the majority of his life as a Holy Cross missionary in some of the world's most impoverished places, his faith journey began in the

Diocese of Bridgeport, specifically at Notre Dame High School in Fairfield and in his home parish of St. Theresa in Trumbull where he was ordained on June 17, 1972.

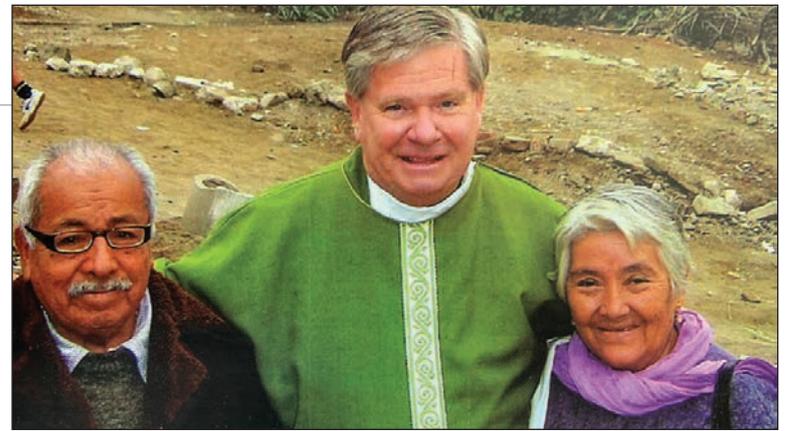
Father George's cousin Anne Fiyalka of Easton recalled being present at his ordination 50 years ago. "I remember being so proud," said Fiyalka, now age 101. "I thought, 'I personally know someone who is a priest!' I am so proud of everything he does."

As a teen, after being intrigued by the stories of the Holy Cross missionaries at Notre Dame High School, Father George knew he wanted to enter the priesthood. Serving the poor even while in high school, he worked in urban Providence, Rhode Island and rural eastern Kentucky. Upon graduation from Stonehill College, he studied theology at the Catholic University of America and the University of Notre Dame. As a deacon,

he was assigned to a parish in Uganda, East Africa in 1969. Three years later, Father George came home to Trumbull to become the first priest ordained at St. Theresa's though he returned to Africa following his ordination and continued to work in Kenya, Tanzania, and primarily Uganda for the next forty years.

According to Fiyalka, while he was in Uganda, Father George's missionary work included instituting classes for religious education, acting as the vocation director of the Holy Cross fathers, and learning Swahili to better communicate with those he served. "He started many projects there and loved to see them to completion," she said. "I often think of all the places he has been and the people he has helped."

After decades in Africa, Father George, now 78, was transferred to Peru about 10 years ago where he currently serves as pastor at



FATHER GEORGE LUCAS, C.S.C. recently celebrated his 50th anniversary as a priest.

several parishes in the mountains outside Lima, continuing the missionary work he so loves and even planting a garden with abundant produce to help feed the people in his community. Fiyalka said he celebrates Mass at a number of chapels, many of which were built by the residents themselves. "They are like shacks with no roofs," she added, "but Mass is no different there. It's always the same. He can say Mass anywhere, even at my kitchen table!" And he has.

Whenever Father George returns to the United States, usually once a year, he visits Fiyalka in Easton and says Mass for her and her neighbors. "Sometimes, I'm the only one here and other

times, it's 10 to 12 people," she said, adding that they keep in touch regularly through letters, cards, and phone calls.

In reflecting on this Jubilee event, her cousin's 50 years as a priest, and the impact he has had on so many, Fiyalka was filled with admiration and respect for Father George's service to the people of Uganda and Peru, Providence and Kentucky. "He has really brought Christ into their lives as a Holy Cross missionary," she said. "I mentioned something to him recently about 'when you retire,' and he said, 'A mission priest never retires!' and that's true. Once a priest, always a priest. They live the mission of Christ all their lives." ■



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Obituary

Father Philip Brady, 103

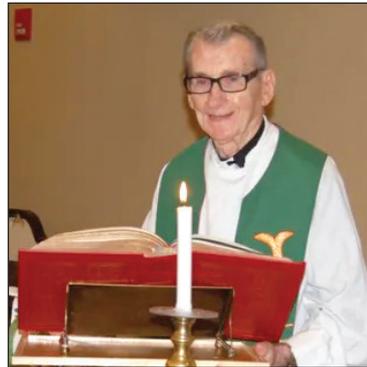
BRIDGEPORT—Father Philip Brady, a priest of the Diocese of Bridgeport, passed away yesterday in New York at the age of 103.

Father Brady, a native of Buffalo, was ordained on December 18, 1943, and was a priest for 79 years.

In recent years, Father Brady resided in Orchard Glen Residence in Orchard Park, N.Y.,

a senior community outside Buffalo, where he continued to say Mass daily in a chapel the facility named for him.

Father Brady is remembered by many in the Diocese of Bridgeport for his 27-year service as pastor of St. Margaret Mary Parish in Shelton. He retired in 1995, and inspired others by saying Mass every day, meeting with



FATHER PHILIP BRADY

visitors and praying his breviary. Looking back on his life, he said, “I’ve been very happy in my 77 years as a priest. I never considered being anything else.”

The middle child of five, with two older brothers and two younger sisters, Father Brady entered St. Mark’s Elementary School in Buffalo in 1924.

“I can still remember Father Shea coming into our third-grade classroom,” he said. “He asked, ‘How many boys want to become a priest?’ I raised my hand immediately and from then on, that was my vocation. No other profession attracted me. I was determined to become a priest.”

After eighth grade, Father was accepted at the Little Seminary of St. Joseph and the Little Flower, but his family had to move to New York City because his father needed to find work during the Depression.

They lived in The Bronx, and he attended Cathedral College, a preparatory seminary across the street from St. Patrick’s Cathedral. However, the family returned to Buffalo a year later, and he

➤ CONTINUED ON PAGE 31

Father Nello A. Barachini, 94

BRIDGEPORT—Father Nello A. Barachini passed away on Friday afternoon, May 20, 2022. He was 94 years of age.

“Please pray for the repose of the soul of Father Barachini and for the consolation of his family,” said Bishop Frank J. Caggiano. Father Barachini was known to many in the Bridgeport area as former chaplain of Bridgeport Hospital.

Nello Barachini was born in Albany, N.Y., on February 18, 1928, son of Louis and Maria Barachini. He was baptized at St. Anthony Church in Albany



FATHER NELLO A. BARACHINI

➤ CONTINUED ON PAGE 31

DECEASED CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE OF BRIDGEPORT JUNE 26—JULY 30

JUNE	27	Rev. J. Barry Furey.....	2012
	28	Rev. John J. Draper.....	1966
	30	Rev. Arthur E. Norton.....	2004
		Msgr. Thomas P. Mooney.....	1956
		Msgr. John E. Tomis.....	1986
JULY	1	Rev. Anthony J. Intagliata.....	1990
	2	Rev. Alfred J. Carmody.....	1958
	5	Msgr. John J. Hayes.....	1964
	6	Msgr. Philip N. Salmone.....	1967
	8	Rev. James J. Kane.....	1956
	9	Rev. Sean F. Flynn.....	1978
	10	Rev. Edward F. Doyle.....	1981
		Deacon Stephen Sebestyen.....	2011
	12	Rev. Edwin Coyne.....	2013
	13	Msgr. James P. Devine.....	1972
		Rev. A. Fred Constantino.....	1980
	17	Msgr. Walter R. Conroy.....	1997
		Fr. Robert Terentieff.....	2011
	19	Msgr. Bartholomew J. Laurello.....	2004
	20	Rev. John M. Conlisk.....	1990
		Rev. Kevin P. Fitzpatrick.....	2008
		Rev. Chester Kicia, O.F.M.....	2003
		Msgr. John J. Wigh.....	1995
	21	Rev. David H. Krahel.....	2008
	22	Msgr. Nicholas P. Coleman, P.A.....	1963
24	Fr. Paul Lalic.....	2011	
25	Rev. Hubert P. Carrig.....	1978	
26	Msgr. Francis M. Wladasz.....	1959	
28	Rev. William G. Mahoney.....	1973	
29	Deacon Ian Black.....	2006	

FUNERAL GUIDE

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➤ CONTINUED ON PAGE 31

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Sports

Kevin's Afterglow: Help for youth's mental health

By **DON HARRISON**

FAIRFIELD—Kevin Kuczo's time on earth was limited to 17 years and a matter of days, but to his parents, his younger brother William and a multitude of others who knew and loved him, he lives in their hearts.

Jim and Kristen Kuczo were understandably devastated by their son's suicide in February 2021, a victim of depression exacerbated by the isolation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Following days and nights of grieving, the Kuczos announced the formation of Kevin's Afterglow, a 501c3 non-profit dedicated to increasing awareness and identifying and helping at-risk youth dealing with mental illness.

"I want our town to be known as a kindness community. I want our town to take the lead in helping our children with mental health issues," Jim Kuczo declares. "What happened to Kevin was a tragedy. No parent should ever have to go through this. The only bigger tragedy would be if this happened again."

Kevin James Kuczo was a junior at Fairfield Warde High School, a young man who excelled—he carried a load of four advanced placement classes—was a member of the school's football and lacrosse squads, and a supportive friend to teammates and classmates. "His smile lit up

a room," said many of the attendees at his wake.

In the winter of 2020, the arrival of the pandemic cast its dreaded shadow. Fairfield schools canceled their classes and went to remote and hybrid learning. That spring's lacrosse season was canceled, and the CIAC dithered in its handling of the 2020 football season before finally deciding to abandon play and resort to 7-on-7 passing leagues.

Kevin, who played cornerback and was a member of the Mustangs' specialty teams, elected to forego the 7-on-7 substitute. His grades began to dip precipitously. His father says you wouldn't have known the mental health struggles Kevin endured.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), suicide was the second leading cause of death for people ages 10-34 in 2018—the most recent year for which data is available. Even prior to the pandemic, the rate of suicide for those ages 10-to-24 increased nearly 60 percent between 2007 and 2018.

At their son's funeral conducted at St. Pius X Church, what would become a movement was inspired by one of the eulogists—the Rev. Dr. Alida Ward, co-pastor of Greenfield Hill Congregational Church and a board member of the Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport. She used the word "afterglow"



KEVIN KUCZO 2004-21

to characterize Kevin's positive demeanor and lasting legacy.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a toll on our young people, with increasing rates of anxiety and depression," Jim and Kristen say, "and it is our commitment to help other parents, teachers and students know they're not alone through outreach and teaching empathy."

In the months that followed, the Kuczos have continued to present Kevin's Afterglow's message of outreach and empathy

students and a father committed suicide, and a third teen died from an allergic reaction.

In mid-June, Kevin's Afterglow held its inaugural golf tournament at the H. Smith Richardson Golf Course in Fairfield. The funds raised will help support programs that raise awareness about the mental health crisis confronting today's young people.

At the elementary school level, the Kuczos are encouraging the installation of Buddy Benches on school grounds to reinforce, on a daily basis, the importance of compassion and awareness of other people's feelings.

Benches purchased by private donors are already scheduled for placement later this summer at Our Lady of the Assumption School in Fairfield and at Saint Mary School in Milford. "We'd like to see them in all of Fairfield's elementary schools," Jim says.

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline consists of more than 160 crisis centers that provide free and confidential emotional support 24/7 via a toll-free hotline: 1.800.273.8255. James Kuczo may be reached at 203.374.2935. ■



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Column: Thomas Hicks



The power of death and life

POTPOURRI

By THOMAS H. HICKS

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

I thought of the days of long ago
And remembered
the years long past.
(Psalm 77)

The Scriptures frequently summon us to remember the past (Psalm 143:5), and I do look back on my life more—to the days when life was young. There's a keen sorrow for things irrevocably lost, for so many lost and lovely things—all the summers that have come and gone. There's a great deal of happiness behind me, and there are the tears and fears and struggles of those dear, dead days. There are so many people dead, my parents gone, my grandparents, a favorite aunt for whom I could do no wrong, good friends taken away, so many separations from those who loved and shaped me. I saw them all as boundless.

There are the standing distresses of my life, wounds that I have both suffered and inflicted. They reverberate throughout my life. I think we are all assaulted by memories of past wounds and failures, all the little deaths inflicted on us. I think we're all scared by sad and hurtful events of the past, things we would prevent having happened if we could.

There are the wounds I have suffered, and there are the wounds I have inflicted. Philosopher Martin Heidegger stated that if one looks honestly at one's past, there is a response of guilt.

There are things I regret and would love to undo, but they are irretrievable and irreparable. Faces come back from the past. There are tears I would like to dry and departed people from whom I would like to ask forgiveness.

There are all the things I had not done and should have done or had not said and should have said. There are the unsaid apologies, the unstated affections. There's

remorse about lost chances, favors I didn't do, injustices I didn't repair, promises I didn't keep, opportunities for charity I put off. I'm particularly sorry for all the loves in my life at which I have blundered and for the opportunities of love that I have wasted. They are instances, if I could, I would retrieve, undo, wipe out.

But the outstanding distress of my life, what endures and keeps coming back to haunt me, are words I said. Some of the worst pains I suffered came from cruel words spoken to me, words that did harm to me, injured me, sometimes deeply and permanently. I think some of the worst pains we all suffer come from cruel words, and the damage can be permanent.

There comes over me a sad, sorry feeling about things I've said. They keep coming back to shame and hurt me. Some irrevocable pain was released into life. There's a Spanish proverb: "Three things do not come back: the spent arrow, the spoken word, the lost opportunity."

There is great power in words. The Book of Proverbs states that "death and life are in the power of the tongue" (18:21). Here are some other quotes:

"The tongue is made to be used in love" (Catherine of Siena).

"Speech is to be full of mercy" (Letter of James 3:17).

"Where words are many, sin is not wanting" (Proverbs 10:19).

"Never miss a good chance to shut up" (Will Rogers)—a tribute that was paid to a great linguist stated that "he could be silent in seven different languages."

"A good word surpasses the best gift" (Rule of St. Benedict).

"A compliment can warm three winter months" (Spanish Proverb).

Words have been called "the physicians of a spirit."

"I tell you that everyone will

have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. By your words you will be acquitted and by your words you will be condemned" (Matthew 12:36).

"It is not what enters one's mouth that defiles a person, but what comes out of the mouth that defiles one" (Mt. 15:10-11).

"Say only the good things people need to hear, things that will help them.... Get rid of all harsh words, slander, and malice of every kind. In place of these, be kind to one another, compassionate, and mutually forgiving" (Ephesians 4:29-31).

Finally, when I look back on my life, there have been things I did with wisdom and love. And despite the distresses, life overall was "very good," just as Genesis promised. Indeed, life was often a joyous thing. I can say that "the favors of the Lord I will recall, for He has been good to me" (Isaiah 63:7). With Job I can say "Oh, that I were in the months of old." There was much to celebrate in life, much to be thankful for. It was good to be alive, to be on this earth; there's the wonder of having existed. ■

==== CAB
FROM PAGE 20

A financial assistance recipient while at CAB, Mendizabal said he also worked every day after school to earn money for his education, something he continues to this day. "I've always known it's important for me to contribute financially so my younger sister, Leticia, and I can attend private school and get a good education. Most mornings when I pack my school bag, I also pack things to work at my father's landscaping company after school. I usually don't get home from helping him until 6 pm, when we have a quick dinner and then I'm off to help my mom with her housekeeping job until 9 pm. This is in addition to homework, volunteering and playing varsity soccer."

Mendizabal, who was accepted to almost every college he applied to, will attend Fairfield University in the fall. "Not only do I think it is a great school but

➤ CONTINUED ON PAGE 29

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MaryTV

Bringing Our Lady's Medjugorje message to the world

By **JOE PISANI**

Almost 50 million people of all faiths and nationalities—believers, skeptics and the curious—have visited Medjugorje since 1981, when the Blessed Mother first reportedly appeared to six children on a mission of peace with a message for the world.

"I have come to tell the world that God exists," she said. "He is the fullness of life, and to enjoy this John Paul II believed the media could be used for good, and that's what we wanted to do," Denis said. "This was a great opportunity to spread the Gospel to the world. What I witnessed was so powerful that Satan had nothing to compete with it—young and old people, praying and loving God."

The staff of MaryTV also includes Franjo and Rosie Zubac, a family in Medjugorje who offer live weekly updates at the TV studio, which is close to the Church of St. James the Apostle in the center of the village.

The programming schedule, which is available at MaryTV.tv, includes daily broadcasts of the English Mass, daily Rosary, an Hour of Mercy, weekly episodes of "A Moment with Mary," "Fruit of Medjugorje," and "Tea With Rosie," along with other devotions and coverage of the messages from Our Lady.

"At 10 am, seven days a week, Cathy and I pray the Rosary live

with people on six continents," Denis said. "We stream the daily English Mass, and live-stream every day the International Mass from St. James Church. We also have live adoration of the Blessed Sacrament; the parish praying the Rosary daily, and coverage when the parish prays on the mountains."

Our Lady's message is a simple one, Cathy says. She leads us to her son and the path to peace. The Blessed Mother gives us "five stones" that can be used to defeat Satan, just as God gave David five stones to defeat Goliath, she said. These are daily prayer, especially of the Rosary, fasting on Wednesday and Friday, attending Mass to receive the Eucharist, reading the Bible every day and going to confession every month.

These spiritual weapons can defeat Satan whose goal is to destroy life, love, faith and the family.

The seers say they still continue to receive private apparitions. Some of them share their messages with the public, monthly and annually.

In their years committed to this Marian apostolate, Denis and Cathy have witnessed many conversions, which are the fruits of the apparitions. Even though the Church has not definitively ruled on the apparitions, Denis and Cathy have almost 500 testimonies on the MaryTV website "of what Our Lady has done in



MARYTV FOUNDERS DENIS AND CATHY NOLAN

individual's lives to bring them back to God"—people healed of addictions, families restored, people rescued from New Age temptations and brought back to faith, amazing physical and spiritual healings, and young people who have been given religious vocations.

"There are so many ways Our Lady has touched lives," Cathy says. "These healings are all through her intercession. No one knows what people are bringing to Medjugorje, but when they get on the apparition mountain and in church, amazing things happen."

As the Blessed Mother reportedly said: "Dear children, I am calling you for years through these messages that I am giving you.... For years, I am calling you and exhorting you to a deep spiritual life.... Read the messages I am giving you every day and transform them into life." ■

CAB FROM PAGE 28

being in Connecticut will also allow me to be closer to home and continue to work with my parents to help pay for my education and my sister's."

Mendizabal hopes to major in Mechanical Engineering at FU and one day work in the automobile or space industries building efficient vehicles. "Because of people like you, I know my dreams can come true."

After many pictures and much applause, Board Co-Vice Chair Brad Evans presented Clancy with an award for being "a shining example of philanthropy in action" and someone who "never hesitates to give of her time and talents." Then, Sr. Joan Magnetti, rscj, director of major gifts, presented the Heffernans with an award for "living the gospel of Jesus" and being "anchors of hope, faith and trust for all of God's children." During their acceptance remarks, the Heffernans announced they would be establishing a "Joan Magnetti Scholarship Fund, with an initial donation of \$1 million," noting that "giving to the Catholic Academy of Bridgeport is a great investment." Magnetti was visibly surprised and humbled, and all in attendance were roused to their feet.

(For more information or to become a Rising Stars sponsor, please contact Susan Cecere at: 203.362.2990.) ■

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— Saint John Paul II

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Nuestra Voz

El 'Pan de San Antonio' una promesa cumplida año con año

POR MARICARMEN GODOY

BRIDGEPORT—El padre Rolando Torres, nativo de Puerto Rico y párroco de la iglesia Saint Mary (Santa María), le prometió a San Antonio de Padua antes de ordenarse sacerdote, que si le daban una fecha exacta de su ordenación sacerdotal entregaría su tradicional "Pan de San Antonio" durante toda su vida cada 13 de junio". Promesa que lo ha cumplido desde hace 15 años en cada parroquia a donde ha sido enviado a trabajar.

En la misa de las 6:30 pm de este lunes 13 de junio del 2022, celebrada en la parroquia de Saint Mary en Bridgeport, el Padre Rolando no sólo habló de su promesa a San Antonio y de la vida del Santo nativo de Portugal que se llamaba originalmente Fernando, sino de la forma en cómo los santos interceden ante

Dios para obtener alguna gracia especial o un favor terrenal desde el cielo.

"Los santos son como los "panas" (amigos) que le ayudan a uno a llegar mas rápido ante nuestro Padre Dios", dijo el P. Rolando, y recordó a sus fieles que en la vida civil todos tienen una "pala" o "palanca" o intersección para llegar a obtener algún beneficio o alguna gracia. Y puso en evidencia la forma en cómo nos valemos de algún amigo o conocido de la autoridad para pedir un requerimiento o para realizar alguna transacción en la vida cotidiana.

"Entiendo que los hermanos separados dicen que no necesitamos de ninguna intersección de ningún "pana" (amigo), ¡muy bien por ellos!, porque lo hacen en forma directa con Dios, pero para nosotros los católicos los santos son los que están más cerca del

Padre y por ende nos ayudan en forma directa, también".

Y enseguida, señaló que todos, en cualquier momento de nuestras vidas, nos hemos valido de alguien para lograr algo y esa opción mientras sea legítima está bien.

Marlene Soriano, vive en Ansonia, es nativa de El Salvador, llegó a los Estados Unidos desde hace 20 años y desde su país natal fue devota de San Antonio debido a que sus padres don Oscar y Nidia de Candrai, que viven en San Jacinto, un vecindario de San Salvador, le inculcaron esta devoción.

Casualmente, sus padres que se encuentran este momento de paseo en Ansonia, vinieron con Marlene a la misa de acción de gracias en honor a San Antonio, y recordaron que desde que el padre Rolando estaba en la parroquia de Shelton CT, ellos lo han venido acompañando año con año a la entrega del "Pan de San Antonio", en cualquier parroquia del Condado de Fairfield que él ha vivido.

"Ya sabía que el Padre



LA IGLESIA DE SANTA MARIA en Bridgeport abrió sus puertas el 13 de junio y recibió no solo a sus fieles sino a feligreses de otras parroquias, quienes vinieron a acompañar al P. Rolando Torres a la fiesta en honor a San Antonio de Padua, el santo que veía multiplicar los panes para entregar a los pobres.

Rolando iba a ofrecer la misa de San Antonio, sólo busqué en su Face Book la hora y aquí estamos todos en familia", dijo Marlene, quien también recordó que el sacerdote diocesano le obsequió, cuando él vivía en Shelton, una imagen en bulto de San Antonio de Padua; mientras que doña Nidia, su madre, dijo que su progenitora le inculcó la devoción al Santo y que ella la traspasó a sus hijos.

"Mi madre siempre decía: ¡San Antonio, bendito!, cuándo necesitaba resolver una situación inesperada o cuando estaba emocionada. ¿San Antonio, es San Antonio?", dijo Nidia.

Juana Bischoa, de México, de 38 años, llegó con su hija Valeria de 19 años y su nieto Santiago, a la Misa. El P. Rolando le entregó en las manos del pequeño Santiago su ración de pan; pero

esta familia vino a la misa para comprobar por si mismos la promesa del sacerdote hecha a San Antonio, de celebrar la fiesta con una misa y la entrega del pan. Y escucharon cómo el religioso contó que durante los primeros cinco años de trabajar en Greenwich celebró la fiesta a San Antonio y cómo en un año de vivir en Stamford se olvidó y después comprobó que ese año fue muy duro para él.

Al finalizar la ceremonia religiosa, el Padre Rolando agradeció a los fieles, que llenaron la iglesia, su presencia. Les invitó a tomar café y les dijo que el pan que se llevaban a sus casas era "pan portugués" en honor al lugar natal de San Antonio. El santo que vivió en la época de San Francisco de San Asís y que le pedía a Dios que multiplique el pan para entregar a los pobres. ■

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Vocations

Laborers in the vineyard of the Lord

By **FATHER CHRIS FORD**

“The harvest is abundant, but the laborers are few. So, ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest.” (Mark 9:37-38).

When it comes to praying for vocations, this is perhaps one of the most referenced lines from sacred scripture. We repeat it often and include it in a variety of materials meant to promote vocations to the priesthood and religious life. Indeed, it is a sacred duty of each and every Catholic to heed this invitation to fervently pray that

God continue to raise up good and holy men to serve at His altar.

Yet, the fullest meaning of these words only comes into relief when we put them into context and recall what prompted Jesus to utter this invitation in the first place. As we read in the verse right before it: “At the sight of the crowds, His heart was moved with pity for them for they were troubled and abandoned, like sheep without a shepherd” (Mark 9:36).

Jesus says these words in response to the movement of His own heart with compassion for

His people! Jesus has an immense desire to be present to His people. That is what His whole life and mission from the Father are all about. The desire for more laborers in the vineyard of the Lord is born of Jesus’ desire to heal, to comfort and to forgive—in a word: to save.

To see a priest is to see the fact that this very love and desire of God for His people endures even to this day. That He continues to fulfill His promise that He will be with us always, even to the end of the age. As the visible sign of God’s presence among His people, priests must never be afraid to actually find themselves among His people, to roll up their sleeves and, as God Himself descended into the depths of the earth, to enter in a profound, mysterious way into the sufferings of His people. As Pope Francis once put it, to smell like the sheep.

Cultivating a priestly vocation,

therefore, is first and foremost a matter of cultivating, not just theological or philosophical knowledge, but a heart moved by the same love and desires that Jesus has for His people. It is a matter of acknowledging the reality that the hearts, souls and minds of His people are hurting and crying out for the presence of the Divine Physician, who not only heals them but restores them to an even greater dignity in the light of the Resurrection.

The life of the priest, therefore, is one of uniting his heart to the heart of the Good Shepherd: to feel as He feels, to see as He sees and to love as He loves. Even our most contemplative moments are at the service of a deeper understanding and union with the love of God, so that we might go forth again and reflect that to those entrusted to our care and thus



FATHER CHRIS FORD

walk with them on the path to life eternal. Or, in the words of St. John Henry Newman: “I sought to hear the voice of God and climbed the topmost steeple, but God declared: ‘Go down again—I dwell among the people’.”

To ask, then, for the Lord to send out laborers for His harvest, is really to ask that God continually reveal His merciful love in the world in the most concrete of ways: in His Church and in the Sacraments—ultimately, in the very life and ministry of the priest. ■

==== FATHER BRADY OBIT FROM PAGE 26 =====

resumed his studies at the Little Seminary. He later entered the Columban Fathers order because he wanted to be a missionary priest and take the Gospel message to foreign countries. On December 18, 1943, he was ordained with 13 other men at St. Joseph Cathedral in Buffalo.

He wanted to go to China, but at that time of war, China was expelling missionaries, and he was assigned to St. Joachim Church in Buffalo, until he became vocations director at a seminary the Columban Fathers opened in Milton, Massachusetts. For 17 years, he toured the country, looking for young men who had a calling to the priesthood. When his younger sister, who was a nurse in Buffalo, needed care, he volunteered because he was teaching nearby at the Columban Fathers’ Silver Creek Seminary.

“I was the only one available who could help her,” he recalled.

The Most Rev. Lawrence Shehan, first Bishop of Bridgeport, welcomed Father Brady to the Diocese in 1960, to St. Mary’s in Greenwich, where he taught religion at the parish high school. He was later transferred to St. Paul’s in Glenville. In 1968 during the fourth week of Lent, he was named pastor at St. Margaret Mary’s in Shelton.

(Fairfield County Catholic has learned of his passing as we go to press. Further details will be available online at www.bridgeportdiocese.com as they become available.) ■

==== FATHER BARACHINI OBIT FROM PAGE 26 =====

and confirmed at St. Joseph Church, also in Albany.

He attended St. Joseph Academy School and Bethlehem Central High School. Father Barachini served in the United States Navy and as 2nd Officer in the US Merchant Marines for over 25 years prior to entering the Vincentian Order. He studied theology at St. Joseph Seminary in Callicoon, N.Y., Holy Apostles Seminary in Cromwell, Conn. and the Angelicum in Rome. Father Barachini was ordained to the priesthood on October 11, 1986, by Most Reverend John F. Hackett at St. Michael Church in Derby.

Following his ordination, his first assignment was as a Vincentian priest was at St. Stanislaus Church in New Haven, Conn. from 1986-1989. Next, he was transferred to St. Michael Church in Derby, serving until 1991. At that time,

he formally requested incardination in the Diocese of Bridgeport as well as release from his vows as a Vincentian. In 1992, he was appointed the chaplain at Bridgeport Hospital, residing at St. Ambrose Church. Father served at Bridgeport Hospital for 14 years. After three years of service, Father’s request for incardination was granted in November of 1994. Father Barachini served at St. Jerome Parish in Norwalk in his first assignment in the diocese. He also resided at St. Margaret Mary in Shelton and St. Mark in Stratford. He retired from full-time ministry in 2003 but continued to assist at Bridgeport Hospital and St. Mark until his health made it impossible.

Given his seafaring background, Father Barachini served as chaplain to the Port of the City of Bridgeport for a number of years, beginning in 1992. ■



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“We are not called to serve merely in order to receive a reward, but rather to imitate God, who made Himself a servant for our love. Nor are we called to serve only now and again, but to live in serving. Service is thus a way of life; indeed it recapitulates the entire Christian way of life: serving God in adoration and prayer; being open and available; loving our neighbor with practical deeds; passionately working for the common good.”

— Pope Francis, Homily at Church of the Immaculate Conception, Bazu, Azerbaijan, Oct. 2, 2016



Another **First**

for Connecticut Orthopaedic Institute

Last year, Connecticut Orthopaedic Institute at MidState Medical Center became the **first in the nation** to achieve Advanced Certification in Spine Surgery from the Joint Commission, a national accrediting agency. Now, Connecticut Orthopaedic Institute at St. Vincent's Medical Center has earned the same designation, **making it the first in Fairfield County with this designation**. We are proud to provide the most advanced care available to people with spine issues, along with an unequalled patient experience.



For more info, visit CTOrthoInstitute.org

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