

# Catholic

## TRANSCRIPT

MAY 2017  
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### ARCHBISHOP'S DESK

A priest's call to celibacy

PG. 4

### EVANGELIZATION

A letter to fallen-away Catholics

PG. 11

### THEOLOGY 101

Is my mother resting in peace?

PG. 14

Unique talents  
and love for the Lord  
unite three men in their

*journey  
to the  
priesthood*

■ Catholic Underground will meet at 7:30 p.m. on **May 2** at Holy Apostles College and Seminary in Cromwell. It opens with evening prayer and eucharistic adoration, followed by a social evening or gathering with a program. It is for young adults who want to gather to pray and experience Catholic culture and fellowship.

## Q&A

■ Theology on Tap Torrington meets on the first Thursday of every month at the Backstage Café, 84 Main

St., Torrington. The May social gathering will begin at 7 p.m. on **May 4** and a speaker will start at 7:30. The presentation, including a Q&A period, will last for an hour and will leave time for additional conversation afterward. Theology on Tap is an opportunity for young Catholic adults, in their 20s and 30s, married or single, to meet in a comfortable setting to explore the

Catholic faith and discover how faith can make sense to their everyday lives. Information is available at **TheologyTapTorrington@gmail.com**.

■ The Hartford Area Lay Carmelite Community meets 6-9 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month at St. Luke Church in Hartford. The next meeting will be **May 10**. Information is available from Susan Okamoto at **860.231.8893**.

■ Sheri Dursin will offer a program called "Images of God" from 7 to 9 p.m. on **May 10** at Our Lady of Calvary Retreat Center in Farmington. It will give attendees an opportunity to reflect on their personal images of God and how those images were shaped by their lives. The offering for the program is \$25. The offering for the optional dinner at 6 p.m. is \$15. Contact the retreat center at **860.677.8519** or

email **olcretreat@sbcglobal.net** to register. Registration a week in advance is suggested.

■ Holy Family Retreat Center in West Hartford will celebrate a Mothers' Day Mass at 10 a.m. on **May 14** at the center. Brunch will follow. Menu offerings include beef tenderloin, fresh Atlantic halibut, lobster quiche and whole wheat French toast with orange zest. Children's menu includes pasta and meatballs and ice cream sundaes. The cost is \$45 for adults; \$12 for children 4 through 12; free for children under 4. Information is available at **860.760.9705** or **www.holyfamilyretreat.org**.

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## AN INVITATION FROM ARCHBISHOP BLAIR



On June 4<sup>th</sup> we will be celebrating one of the great solemnities of the Church year, **Pentecost Sunday**. On the first Pentecost, the Holy Spirit whom Jesus had promised descended with power, revealing his divine personhood, and gave the disciples the gifts necessary to carry out their mission from Jesus to "go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Mt. 28:19f). Pentecost is spoken of as the "birthday" of the Church.

In order for us to make this prayer together as one family of faith, I invite you to participate in a novena of prayer for a new Pentecost in the Church and in our archdiocese. The novena to the Holy Spirit is the prototype of all novenas because, in a sense, it was instituted by Christ himself when he sent his apostles back to Jerusalem after his Ascension to await in prayer the coming of the Holy Spirit.

**I ask that the novena be prayed publicly and privately, from May 26 through June 3. The novena is available in English and Spanish on the archdiocesan website [www.archdioceseofhartford.org](http://www.archdioceseofhartford.org) as well as the Catholic Transcript magazine website [www.catholictranscript.org](http://www.catholictranscript.org).**

*Together let us implore the gift of the Holy Spirit for our Church, our archdiocese, and ourselves, and may God bless you.*

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM ARCHBISHOP BLAIR'S PUBLIC CALENDAR

■ Archbishop Blair will administer the sacrament of confirmation on **May 8** at the Enfield Correctional Institution.

■ **Three men will join the priesthood** for the Archdiocese of Hartford when they are ordained at 11 a.m. on **May 20** at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Hartford. The candidates are Deacons Glen Dmytryszyn of Wethersfield, Eduar Gutierrez-Tovar of Tarqui-Huila, Colombia, and Eric Manuel Zuniga of New Britain. Archbishop Blair will be the ordaining prelate. The ceremony is open to the public.

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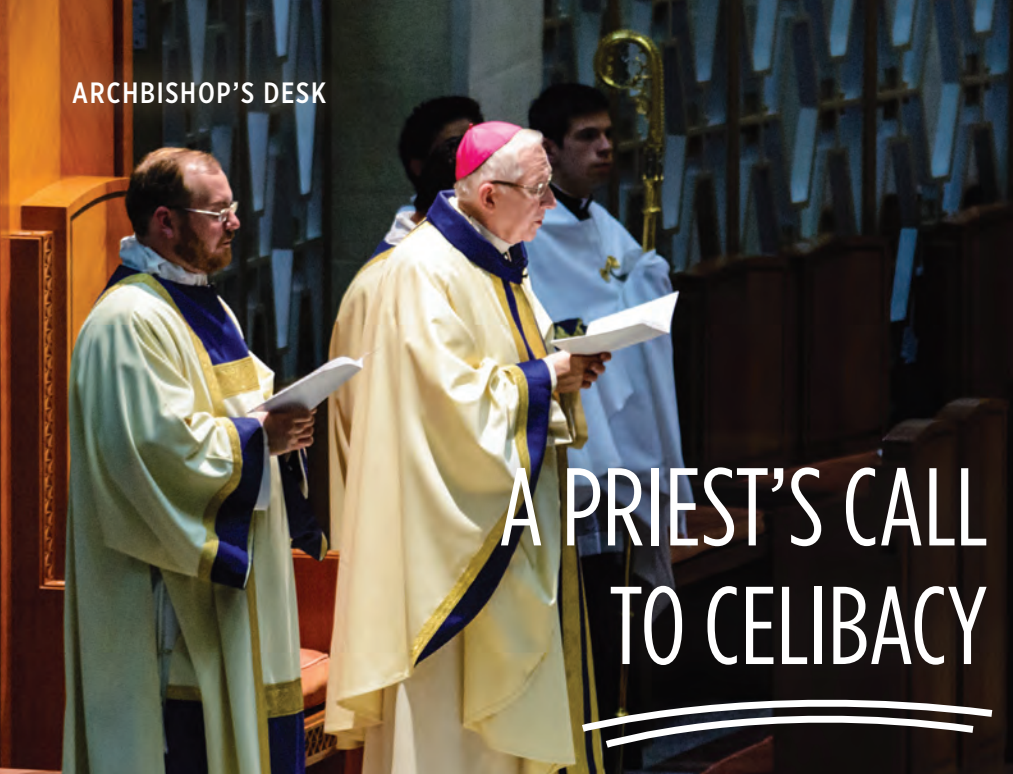
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COVER PHOTO  
BY BOB MULLEN





# A PRIEST'S CALL TO CELIBACY

PHOTO BY BOB MULLEN

**N**ot too long ago, media attention was focused on a comment by Pope Francis about studying the possibility of priestly ordination for select married men in remote places that are in dire need of a priest to celebrate the sacraments. “But,” he cautioned, “optional celibacy isn’t the solution.”

It is true that celibacy is not absolutely required for priestly ordination. The Latin Catholic Church already has some priests who were married before they were received into the Catholic Church and then ordained, as have the Eastern Catholic Churches. What is troubling is that so many Catholics have little or no appreciation of the scriptural origins and spiritual value of celibacy.

## Let's begin with some of the basics about celibacy from Scripture:

*Celibacy* can be defined as the renunciation of marriage for religious reasons (*virginity* and *voluntary continence* are other ways of referring to the same reality). The institution of celibacy as a Christian state in life is described in Matthew 19 following Jesus’ teaching against divorce: “His disciples said to him: ‘If that’s how things are between husband and wife, it’s better not to marry.’ But he replied: ‘Not everyone can accept what I have said, but only those to whom it is granted. For there are some who are eunuchs from their mother’s womb, and

some who were made so by other men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves so for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Let anyone accept this who can.” (vv. 10-12)

Judaism had little regard for the unmarried, and it would seem that the offensive term “eunuch” may have been used as a kind of insult against Jesus because he was not married. But how does Jesus turn around this offensive innuendo? He acknowledges that some may be unmarried because of some natural defect, the wickedness of others or the circumstances of life. But then he says something totally new. He introduces the possibility of being unmarried “for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Let anyone accept this who can.” Christ’s words will be understood by those given the grace to understand as part of a new order of things, the order of redemption.

Celibacy shows what the final condition of men and women will be in the kingdom. The celibacy of the few is a prophetic sign for the benefit of the many. It reminds them that although marriage is holy, beautiful and redeemed by Christ, it

is not everything. Marriage is a reality that is linked to this world and is, therefore, transitory. As Jesus says, “The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage, but those who are deemed worthy to attain to the coming age and to the resurrection of the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage.” (Lk 20:34ff) As one author puts it, celibacy “for the kingdom of heaven” is a reminder to married people of the primacy of the spirit and of God. It reminds them that God has made us for himself and, therefore, our hearts will always be “unsatisfied” until they rest in him.

A second passage in the New Testament comes from St. Paul. In the First Letter to the Corinthians, he says that “the world as we know it is passing away. ... I want you to be free from anxiety.” Paul says that the unmarried person is concerned with the Lord’s affairs, and how to please the Lord, while the married person is concerned with worldly affairs — how to please his or her spouse — and so is divided. “I say this for your own benefit, not to put any restraint upon you, but to promote good order and unhindered devotion to the Lord.” (1 Cor 7:32-35)

St. Paul’s undivided “concern with the Lord’s affairs” again focuses attention on the kingdom to come, as well as a practical application. A book on priestly celibacy published several years ago includes essays by a non-Catholic minister and his wife. The married Protestant minister writes: “After over a decade in the ordained ministry, I have reached the unexpected conclusion that there is a compelling case to be made for the disciplined separation of the clerical and marital vocation. One can serve and honor God in both, of course; but human frailty intrudes. ... For at some point almost every married member of the clergy must make a decision: To which of my vows — the one to my office or the one to my spouse — do I owe the greater allegiance? ... Implicitly, the deal is struck: I will sacrifice one on the altar of the other.” (*Priestly Celibacy*, P. Stravinskis, ed. Newman House, 2001, p. 86f)

Much more could be said from Scripture, including Christ’s promise





to those who leave parents, spouse and property for his sake; the virginity of Mary and John the Baptist; and the treatment of marriage and virginity in the Book of Revelation. I daresay that in light of Scripture the question is not: Why does the life of the Catholic Church include celibacy? The question is: Why don't all Christian churches practice it and honor it in some way?

### Now I would like to say something about celibacy in the history of the Church:

What most people, including Catholics, have heard about celibacy comes from a secular portrayal of Catholic history, teaching and practice often based on ignorance or even an anti-Catholic bias. Priestly celibacy is almost always presented along the following lines: "Most of the apostles were married. Celibacy was optional for centuries. The Church imposed it on priests for its own reasons, such as the protection of property. It should be abandoned if there is a shortage of priests."

Listen to what one of America's greatest Catholic biblical scholars, the late Father Raymond Brown, has to say: "Often the false impression is given that priestly celibacy is a medieval imposition. It is true that a law applicable to the whole Western Church stems from the Middle Ages ... but in certain areas of the West the custom of celibacy for priests can be documented back to ca. 300. Even in areas where there was a married clergy, generally marriage had to be contracted before ordination; it was very widespread that an ordained priest could not marry. The first law imposing celibacy appeared in Spain in 306, and the movement was so strong that the Council of Nicea (325) debated the advisability of making celibacy compulsory for clergy." (*Priest and Bishop*, note, p. 26)

Father Brown explains; "[I]n the New Testament celibacy was not *demand*ed of all who followed Jesus or even of the

Twelve, but it was held up as an ideal to those who were able to bear it." (Mt 19:12; 1 Cor 7:7-9) Since this ideal was held up precisely for the sake of the kingdom of heaven, from a very early period the Church has not deemed it illogical to seek candidates willing to live by the ideal of celibacy among those who want to devote themselves in a special way to promoting the kingdom of heaven. By the law that allows only a celibate clergy, the Western Catholic Church has ensured a large-scale, public witness of the celibate life." (*ibid.*)

The bottom line is: celibacy, coming from Christ, was not only highly esteemed, but also practiced from the beginning. Recent scholarship has argued that priestly celibacy is apostolic in its origins, and not a later development. The earliest Christian tradition is not unanimous as to which apostles were married, but it does suggest that those apostles who were married lived in a condition of conjugal abstinence in keeping with Luke 18:28-30, where we read: "Peter said, 'Look, we have left our homes and followed you.'" And Jesus said to them, 'Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God who will not get back very much more in this age, and in the age to come eternal life.'"

Another accusation is that the Catholic Church has put too wide an interpretation on the words of Jesus about voluntary celibacy for the sake of the kingdom by imposing it on all its priests. I cannot improve on the succinct response of another priest, Father Raniero Cantalamessa. He writes: "It is true that Jesus did not impose the choice of celibacy, but neither does the Church impose it, much less does it forbid anyone to marry. To view the celibacy of Catholic priests in this light is a grave distortion. The Church has only laid this down as one of the requirements for those who wish to exercise the priestly ministry, which remains a free choice. The Church

copies Jesus' approach to the rich young man and says: If you want to work with me, accept a life of chastity and then come and serve me. 'If you want!' Since the priesthood is a call to serve the Church as fellow-workers of the bishop, it surely has the right to determine the requirements for such service." (*Virginity*, p. 13) We might say that, with the passing of time, the Gospel value of celibacy has been demanded more, not less, as part of the clergy's discipleship.

Within the living memory of many of us, clerical celibacy received its most definitive reaffirmation at the Second Vatican Council. The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church — *Lumen Gentium* — praises celibacy as "an incentive to charity" and "a particular source of spiritual fruitfulness in the world." (no. 42)

Building on this affirmation, the council's *Decree on the Life and Ministry of Priests* goes on to explain celibacy's "many-faceted suitability for the priesthood." After acknowledging all the scriptural roots of celibacy mentioned above, the council fathers teach that the current requirement of celibacy "in so far as it concerns those who are destined for the priesthood, this Holy Synod again approves and confirms. It fully trusts that this gift of the Spirit, so fitting for the priesthood of the New Testament, will be given in abundant measure by the Father, provided that those who participate in the priesthood of Christ through the sacrament of Orders, as well as the whole Church, humbly and fervently pray for it." (no. 16)

For half a century now, the Church has sought with remarkable dedication and generosity to implement the council's vision and to respond to its challenge to renew the Church so that she can more effectively fulfill her mission of evangelizing our age. The council spoke of a "full trust" that this gift of the Spirit "will be given in abundant measure by the Father." We need to have faith in what the council teaches about priestly celibacy, and to share its trust about how abundantly the Father will bestow this grace, provided we "humbly and fervently pray for it." †



# MARRIAGE *loss*

**T**hey had been married for 21 years and were the parents of four boys. Their marriage had had its ups and downs, but doesn't every marriage? From the outside looking in, the marriage looked pretty good.

Unbeknownst to friends and colleagues, the husband — I'll call him Bob — had become a heavy drinker in recent years. He traveled a lot for work, and the wife — I'll call her Sally — was not entirely sure of his faithfulness. Still, Bob was a good provider and she had been crazy about him since the day they'd met at a college mixer. His gentle way calmed her hyperactivity. Her extroversion drew him out of his shell.

Over the years, the marriage quietly unraveled until conflict erupted on a blustery night in October. Awkward and uneasy at the dinner table, Bob finally cleared his throat, announced that he was leaving Sally and headed upstairs to pack. An hour later, he was gone.

Sally was stunned. He wasn't serious, was he? Surely they could repair their problems. How could she manage? They had a mortgage and two kids in college.

A month later, Bob filed for divorce. Sally was a devout Catholic and wanted no part of divorce. She fought him about it and begged him to join her in marriage counseling, but Bob would not be dissuaded. A few months after he left, Bob moved in with his girlfriend. Bob and Sally's youngest son started to act out in school. Creditors began calling.

The early months of the separation were a nightmare, as Sally grappled with her new reality. In a million years, she'd never pictured herself as a divorcee. She'd envisioned being married to the same man for 60 years. Instead, she was a 47-year-old woman with no husband and virtually no work experience.

About six months into the separation, Sally enrolled in a program for displaced women who were returning to the workforce. Many of the women were dealing with the

same mix of anger, confusion and fear that blanketed Sally. Alongside these hurting women, Sally learned business skills and she began planning a future. After multiple internships, Sally settled into a job that she enjoyed. Her income was modest, but it covered the mortgage, if just barely.

Two years after the ordeal began, Sally officially became a divorced woman. She had a hard time saying the word.

Over the years, Sally had become friendly with numerous political and religious refugees. Most knew little about navigating American life. All were lonely and had minimal contact outside their immigrant communities. After the divorce, Sally poured herself into these people in need. She began lunchtime prayer with a Muslim woman. She

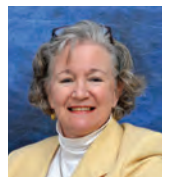
assisted a Russian Jew in obtaining a driver's license. She cared for the small daughter of a Syrian physician who was trying, unsuccessfully, to obtain a license to practice medicine in America. She housed a South American child and his mother who were in this country so he could undergo life-saving heart surgery.

Sunday dinner became Sally's favorite time of the week. A typical gathering around her dining room table included a quirky assortment of lonely people who reveled in home-cooked food, lively discussion and the offer of friendship.

Many years later, after an annulment had been granted, Sally married a wonderful Catholic widower, and they enjoyed nearly 10 years together before his death. Sally later observed that becoming divorced was far more painful than becoming widowed. In the aftermath of each, however, Sally soothed her pain by reaching out to others. †

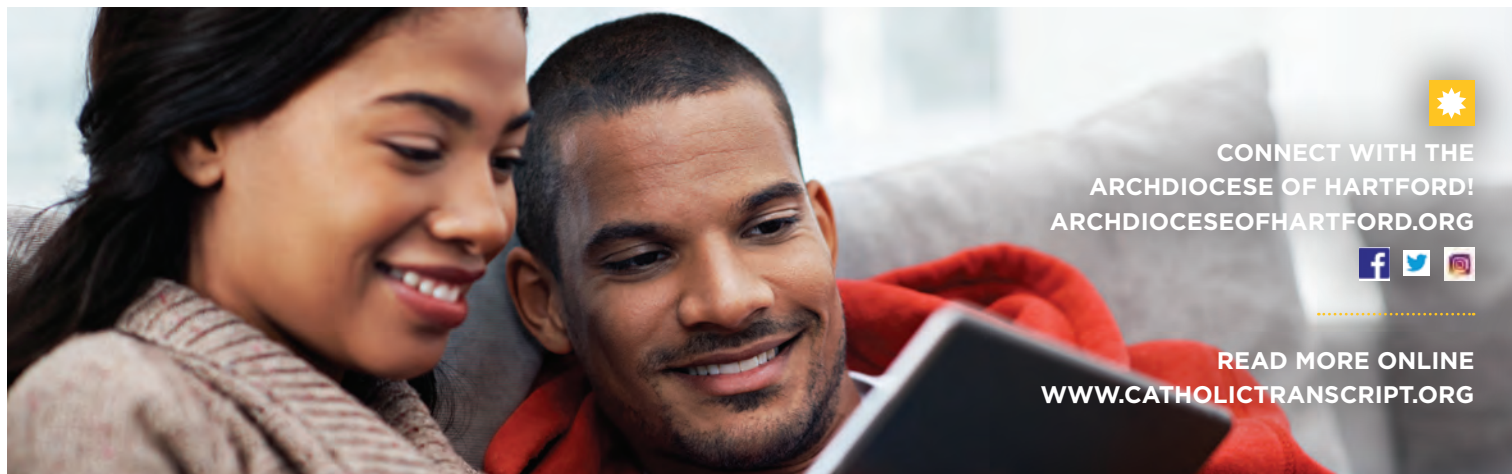


**M. REGINA CRAM** is a writer, speaker and author. She and her husband live in Glastonbury and have four children and seven grandchildren.



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# THE MOST IMPORTANT MOMENT *of all*



**ALLEN R. HUNT,**  
senior advisor for the  
Dynamic Catholic Institute



**D**o you remember your first Communion? I bet you remember where you were and the name of the parish. Did your mother get you a special outfit? Who else was there? Can you envision the look on the priest's face as he handed you the body of Christ for the first time? And maybe even a celebration meal or party afterward with family and friends? First Communion is a special moment.

In fact, it may just be the most important moment of all. Research from people as diverse as psychologist Jean Piaget to the evangelical polling firm Barna Group has shown that by the age of 13, your spiritual identity is largely set in place. What you believe about God when you are 13 is a remarkable predictor of what you will believe when you are 23, 43 and 63. In other words, research shows that if people do not embrace the Catholic faith before they reach their teenage years, the chance of their doing so at all becomes very slim.



This idea matters tremendously. First, it means that our parishes' focus on sharing the faith with children will be the most fruitful thing we can do. Love kids. Teach them the beauty of the Catholic faith. Introduce them to Jesus. Pour the foundation for life. That foundation can only be poured once. If we do not form children well before the age of 13, the chances of their being practicing Catholics as adults decrease dramatically.

And that means that first Communion may be one of the most important things any parish, school, volunteer, teacher, parent, grandparent or priest can be a part of. In preparing kids to receive the body and blood of Christ, we are not merely checking one box on a long list of stuff to do. We are ensuring that children have a life-giving encounter with the very heart of our faith, the Eucharist. And we are doing so at the time in that child's life, before the age of 13, when he or she is most likely to be open to experiencing the grace and love of God. These key moments will shape the rest of children's lives.

Do you remember your first Communion? Chances are, you do. How can you help children in your life have such a marvelous experience in first Communion that they still remember that moment at the age of 30, 60 and 90?

- **PRAY.** As they prepare. On the day itself. Afterward. Pray with gratitude for the gift of Jesus and the gift of his body and blood.
- **TALK.** Share memories of your own first Communion. Discuss why the Eucharist is important to you. Listen to children tell you what they are learning and expecting. The more you talk, the more it will mean — and the more they will remember.
- **ATTEND.** Smile. Celebrate the special moment with the child. Your being there and your joyful reaction will be etched in the child's memory for the rest of his or her life.
- **GIVE THE CHILD A SPECIAL GIFT.** Perhaps a photo in a frame of him or her receiving the first Eucharist. Or maybe a special Bible with the child's name on it that you sign on the inside to celebrate the day.
- **THEN GO TO MASS WITH THE CHILD** in the weeks and months afterward. Help the child to make the connection between the special moment of first Communion and what happens every time we share the Blessed Sacrament. Help build a Mass habit.

What a joy it is to be Catholic — to share in the beauty and genius that God has placed in his Church. And what a greater joy to share that beauty with a child who will benefit from the faith for decades to come. Change the life of one child and you begin to change the world. †

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# Quoting Scripture comes with benefits



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**H**ave you ever quoted the Gospel to someone outside the halls of your church? Have you ever wondered aloud in a conversation how Jesus would react to what you were talking about?

My husband often says we haven't really learned something unless we can repeat it to someone else. Have you felt that you had really learned a message from the Gospel enough to repeat it and use it effectively in conversation?

I have to admit that, many months ago, if I had asked myself those questions, the answer would have been a firm no. Despite the fact that many of my friends and family share my faith, we often aren't talking about what Jesus might think about our jobs, our relationships or our feelings on the current state of politics.

It's awkward to start suddenly talking about Jesus. It can make me self-conscious to suddenly bring up something I heard in the Gospel that week. And bringing such things up to people who aren't regular churchgoers? Forget about it.

Lately, though, I have been a little braver when it comes to trying, when applicable, to bring the Gospel into my conversations with others. My intent is not to shove Scripture or my faith into anyone's face, or appear more holy than I am. But doing it is also a way of reminding myself of Jesus' teachings in my everyday life, so that I might more fully live out the Gospel, not just preach it.

Take, for example, a recent conversation with my twin sister. She expressed her nervousness and worry over the future as her husband applies for medical school residencies. This residency could take them anywhere and she is worried about starting over somewhere new. As she shared her fears, I was reminded of Matthew's Gospel 6:24-34, where Jesus tells us to let go of our anxieties and trust that God will provide. Specifically in that conversation, I quoted, "Can any of you by worrying add a single moment to your life? ... Do not worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself." My sister is not particularly religious, so I knew it was a risk sharing those words with her, but, to my pleasure and surprise, she was open to it, and thanked me for sharing the passage.

Can you take time this month to find a passage, word or phrase from the Gospel that you can use to assuage fears of a friend or bring hope or solace to a family member? Speech doesn't always result in action, so this challenge is twofold. Can you then take bits of your own medicine and use those same words to help yourself?

Because I used the phrases from Matthew's Gospel to help calm down my sister and, on several other occasions, to help nervous or anxious friends, I have more readily thought of them when my own worries set in. Whether these concerns are as mundane as what to make for dinner or something much bigger, such as what will happen to our lives when my husband graduates from graduate school, I now more quickly think of those two lines from Matthew's Gospel. They bring me peace and comfort in those worrisome times, just as I hope they did for my sister and friends. Quoting phrases of the Gospel to others has helped me to remember them more when I need them myself, and I can more readily allow tomorrow to take care of itself. †



**ANNA JONES**

is a writer who lives in New Haven. She and her husband are members of the St. Thomas More Chapel and Center Community at Yale University.

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## A LETTER TO FALLEN-AWAY CATHOLICS

Dear friend: We miss you at church. Yes, we really do miss you.

Life is very hectic nowadays, and often the weekend schedule is so busy there isn't enough time to squeeze in Mass. Also, a very popular idea in our culture is that it's OK to be "spiritual," but not religious. If people just think about God once in a while and pray to him on their own, without going to church, that's perfectly fine.

Well, Jesus never said anything like that. In fact, he did say, "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you." (Jn 6:53)

What exactly does that mean? For 2,000 years, Christians have understood that Jesus' words mean we must partake of the Eucharist. By virtue of a supernatural miracle, the Eucharist truly is transformed into the body and blood, soul and divinity, of Jesus Christ. And the Eucharist is not something we can have while at home, or while walking through the woods, or while thinking about God and being "spiritual" on our own. No, unless a person is sick or homebound, or there are some other circumstances, the Eucharist is available only in a sacred space, specifically in a church and specifically during Mass.

Jesus founded the Catholic Church when he said, "You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Mt 16:18)

It's interesting that Jesus entrusted his perfect message with an imperfect organization. Apparently, he figured if the Church was perfect, people might be tempted to worship the Church rather than God. So, despite many instances, especially in recent years, when both Church leaders and laypeople have sinned and caused terrible scandals, the Catholic Church still is strong. Jesus is the head of the Church, and Jesus promised that not even the power of hell will destroy it.

Contrary to what is often said in our popular culture, the Church actually is a very humble organization. Catholics know that everyone sins and falls short of God's perfect glory, and so we realize we need to take part in the sacraments on a regular basis and receive God's forgiveness, mercy and grace.

Many people claim that Mass is very boring, the same ol' thing every week. Well, contrary to how our popular culture views virtually every human activity, the Catholic Mass was never designed to be a wildly entertaining experience. It was designed to be sacred worship.

To be fair, quite often the homily at Mass can be very inspiring, and quite often the choir and musicians are fabulously talented. But even if Mass seems a little boring, that's fine, because it is still the only way to receive the body and blood of Our Lord. Mass is the unique vehicle God created to allow struggling sinners (that would be us) to come into full contact with the Savior of the world. If we could only see how much the angels and saints in heaven rejoice during every single Mass — even Masses that seem boring to us — it would take our breath away.

In a spirit of humility and fellowship, we sincerely ask you to consider joining us once again. Come back to Jesus' Church. Come back to the faith your parents and grandparents taught you. Come back to the holy sacrifice of the Mass and receive the flesh and blood of Our Savior in the Eucharist and be part of our parish community once again.

We miss you at church. Yes, we really do miss you. †



**BILL DUNN**

*is a recovering atheist who resides in Torrington. He loves Jesus, his wife and kids and the Red Sox (usually in that order). He can be reached at MerryCatholic@gmail.com.*

THE HARTFORD BISHOPS' FOUNDATION, INC.

# On Board!

HBF



**Kerry Alys Robinson**

**Welcoming Kerry Alys Robinson to  
The Hartford Bishops' Foundation Board**

Archbishop Leonard P. Blair is pleased to announce the appointment of Kerry Alys Robinson, Director, The Hartford Bishops' Foundation, Inc.

Ms. Robinson is the founding Executive Director of the National Leadership Roundtable on Church Management, a member of the Raskob Foundation for Catholic Activities, and a board member of Foundations and Donors Interested in Catholic Activities. As director of development for Saint Thomas More Catholic Chapel and Center at Yale University she led a \$75 million campaign to expand and endow the Chapel's intellectual and spiritual ministry and to construct a Catholic student center on Yale's campus.

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# WHY IS THERE SO MUCH VIOLENCE IN THE WORLD?

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Q

**Dear Father Joe:**

I am deeply troubled by all the violence around us. Why is this happening?

A I write this article with a heavy heart.

We live in violent times. Some will say that things have always been this violent, and that may or may not be true. What is objectively true is that we've never been able to observe and process the present violence in the way we can now. Social media have, for better or worse, revealed our interconnectedness in a way that has never been possible before.

If you are like me, each event of great violence prompts feelings of sadness, fear and powerlessness.

**Sadness**, because people were killed.

**Fear**, because we seemed to be heading to a dark place as a country.

**Powerlessness**, because no matter how much we want this all to stop, nothing seems to help.

In this moment, I invite us all to remember that within our hearts is God's very Spirit: that Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead.

Our problem is not a lack of power, it's that we use our power badly.

After each act of violence, I see people storm social media in order to comfort themselves.

We see these horrid events as evidence that we are right and others are wrong. We hear of a tragedy, we learn of great injustice or horrors, and we immediately respond by wrapping ourselves in the warm blanket of our opinions. We pile on social media and fill public places with our opinions and politics. We seemingly can't wait to tell everyone how these horrible events and those like them are the fault of this person, that person, those people or their politics.

We respond with our voices, and those voices become shrill. We respond with our opinions, and those opinions become doctrine that we wield to crush

those who disagree with us.

And this is why it is getting worse. We have made this about what those people need to do.

But those people are not the problem that you are to address. Others exist for you to serve, not fix. To solve the problems of violence in our country, we need to address the core of the issue. And, to paraphrase G.K. Chesterton, I am the core of the issue. I am the problem.

I am the problem because I give way too much credence to ideological comfort and I give way too much room to sin in my heart.

I am comfortable with what I think. I like my politics. I've spent years dividing the world into good guys and bad guys. I have my team. How about you? When bad things happen, I know whose fault it is. This way, I am never challenged. I never have to reevaluate what I think or believe.

Sin? I tragically am much too comfortable with it in my heart. I've made friends with some of my sin. I've not been vigilant to what



**FATHER JOE KRUPP**

is a former comedy writer who is now a Catholic priest.  
@Joeinblack



I let live and breathe in this beautiful heart that God gave me.

If enough of us embrace these ideas, and clearly we have, society becomes a loud, rage-filled and divided reality.

But today, I invite you to join me in saying, "Enough is enough."

Today, I invite you to join me as I declare war on sin — not the sin in society or the Church or in this group or that group. No, I declare war on the only sin that I truly have control over: the sin in me.

Today, I invite you to join me in saying, "I was made to be a saint" — and to quit pretending that being one is impossible.

And we must pray. I've seen something in the last year that looks like this: A tragedy happens and someone posts that they are going to pray. Inevitably, someone responds by telling the person some form of, "Prayer is nice, but we have to act."

The complete and utter lack of self-awareness implicit in a statement like that is simultaneously horrifying and comical. Of course we have to act. Our problem isn't that we lack the conviction to act, the problem is we don't pray first, we simply look for the quickest and most convenient solution.

Has anyone ever looked at us as a group and thought, "Gosh, those

people just pray too much"? Our problem tends to be precipitous and knee-jerk reactions that don't solve the problem. I suggest to you that prayer is the answer to that.

We will find that this internal war and this dedication to prayer begin to alter the way we act and live. We will push ourselves to be more loving, more helpful, more understanding and more forgiving.

You and I are to be holy. We are to purge our hearts and minds of the vile spirit of divisiveness and anger. We are to purge from our hearts and minds the hunger to appear to be right. We need to become obsessed, not with being right, but with being made right by God.

By becoming obsessed with holiness, we make God's law a visible thing. God's command to love becomes something others can touch when they touch us. God's directive to love with all we have answers the prayers of the multitude who cry out and ask God to "do something."

And so we will be saints. We will forgive. We will love. We will reconcile. We will challenge our thoughts and preconceptions. We will fight the darkness in our own hearts with the very power that raised Jesus from the dead.

We will be saints. ✚

THE HARTFORD BISHOPS' FOUNDATION, INC.

On Board!

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## Mary-Ellen Sposato Rogers

### Welcoming Mary-Ellen Sposato Rogers to The Hartford Bishops' Foundation Board

Archbishop Leonard P. Blair is pleased to announce the appointment of Mary-Ellen Sposato Rogers, Director, The Hartford Bishops' Foundation, Inc.

Ms. Rogers is Principal and Co-Founder of Excel-lere—Human Capital Management Services. Ms. Rogers was the founder and former CEO of Work/Life Innovations. She served as Vice President of Product Development and Practice Leader after the company was acquired in 2007. Ms. Rogers serves on the Board of Trustees of the Foundation for Advancement of Catholic Schools, the Board of Trustees of Providence College and the Executive Board of Women Executives in Healthcare.

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Vocation Office of the Archdiocese of Hartford





**FATHER MATTHEW GWOREK**  
is parochial vicar at  
St. Mary Church in Branford.

# Is my mother resting in peace?

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CCUSA PHOTO BY LAUREN CHELEC

**Q**

My mother passed away earlier this year. Since her passing, I haven't returned to church. My mother was baptized Catholic and made her first Communion, but wasn't a practicing Catholic after that. I'm confused as to where her soul is now. Can she be at peace?

**A**

This situation is difficult. Unfortunately, it's also a situation that is increasingly common in our Church. As more people choose to stop coming to Mass, we're left questioning what will happen to them in life and in death.

I'll begin by saying that, in most cases, we can't be completely certain about those who have died. This might seem discouraging, but the truth is that it's not our job to know or to make that decision. It's God's. So God is the only one who knows until we join him ourselves.

I think, though, that this truth actually makes our lack of certainty a cause not for

discouragement, but for hope — and that is because our God is a God of hope, a God of love, a God of mercy and a God of acceptance. That means that we can hope that God wants his children, even those who have fallen away, in heaven with him.

That is, in fact, what we Catholics believe. Yes, we certainly teach that being part of the Church, receiving the sacraments and going to Mass are the normal ways in which we point ourselves toward God and heaven. And yes, we definitely regard our tradition and teachings as a strong foundation on which people can live out God's commandments and spread the Gospel. We also believe,



however, that knowing how imperfect we people are, God reaches out to people both inside and outside of the Church.

When people fall away from the Church, we do our best to hold onto hope that they'll eventually return to the Church, or that God will make himself known to them in some other way.

God loves the faith that we have, even when it's partial and even though it's not perfect. God never stops loving us and never turns his back on anyone. We know, therefore, that whenever we're able to turn back toward him, he will be there, waiting, for each of us.

Remember, as Jesus hung on the cross and proclaimed, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34), and, "Today you will be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43), he chose to fill his final moments providing mercy and a path to eternal happiness to those who had been far less than perfect in their lives. If Jesus offered that mercy and hope to imperfect men and women on that day, we believe that the same mercy and hope will be offered to us.

Our Church has hope for mothers who have stopped practicing their faith, for children who haven't been



**FATHER GWOREK IS THE CREATOR OF CATHOLIC CHAT WITH FATHER MATT,** a YouTube video series in which he answers questions about the Church, God and why any of this should even matter to us at all.

to Mass in years, and for every person God has created. We have hope that — somehow, some way — our God who loves us all more than we could ever imagine will break through and turn hearts back to him. We hope that all those who have died might find their way back, in life or in death, and join in the salvation and resurrection our Lord offers.

I pray that these words might bring you some peace about your mother. I pray, as well, that you might find the courage to return to church even in this moment of struggle. The love, support and community of the body of Christ in our churches can be such a critical source of strength in our times of need. Finally, I pray that all those in similar situations might have the faith to stay hopeful even in such difficult moments of their lives. ✝

#### ○ HAVE A QUESTION FOR FATHER MATT?

Email your question to [catholicchat@yahoo.com](mailto:catholicchat@yahoo.com)

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*Come Away and Rest Awhile...*



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**HBF**



**John M. Chapman**

### Welcoming John M. Chapman to The Hartford Bishops' Foundation Board

Archbishop Leonard P. Blair is pleased to announce the appointment of John M. Chapman, Director, The Hartford Bishops' Foundation, Inc.

Mr. Chapman is Principal at Arcade Partners, LLC. He is a Founder and Director of Kapstone Paper and Packaging Corp. He was previously a Managing Director of Washington & Congress Managers, LLC, successor to Triumph Capital Group. Prior to Triumph, he was employed by Drexel Burnham Lambert. John is a graduate of Bates College and received an MBA from the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth College. He is a parishioner at St. Peter Claver Church in West Hartford.

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COVER STORY

Unique talents and  
love for the Lord  
unite three men in their

journey  
to the  
priesthood

STORY BY JACK SHEEDY





Seminarians for the Archdiocese of Hartford pose during a visit last June to the National Shrine of the Divine Mercy in Stockbridge, Mass., with Father Jeffrey Gubbiotti, director of vocations, in green chasuble. Next to him, in a dalmatic and diagonal stole, is Deacon Eric Zuniga. Behind Deacon Zuniga are Deacons Eduar Guti rrez-Tovar, at left, and Glen Dmytryszyn.

The Archdiocese of Hartford will be richer by three priests when Archbishop Leonard P. Blair ordains Deacons Glen Dmytryszyn of Wethersfield, Eduar Guti rrez-Tovar of Tarqui-Huila, Colombia and Eric Manuel Zuniga of New Britain to the priesthood at the Cathedral of St. Joseph on May 20.

All three men were ordained as transitional deacons a year ago and have served at various parishes in the archdiocese. They finished their priestly studies at their respective seminaries in time for their ordination to the priesthood.

“They all bring very different talents to the table and they all have a great personal love for the Lord,” said Father Jeffrey A. Gubbiotti, director of the Vocation Office for the Archdiocese of Hartford.

### Deacon Glen Dmytryszyn



Deacon Dmytryszyn felt the call to the priesthood about 12 years ago while watching Pope St. John Paul II’s funeral on television.

“It was at that point that I realized two things,” he said, “one, the universality of the Church and, two, this very important man and how the whole world paused.” Even though he was raised Catholic, he felt a new conversion, he said. “I was seeing how I could use my life in cooperation with this good thing that’s already happening, which is the Church.”

This was in 2005, while he was in high school in North Carolina. “I met with the pastor and said, ‘I think I have a vocation to the priesthood,’ and then it just kind of took off from there. I applied to the archdiocese and here I am now in my eighth year,” he said.

Deacon Dmytryszyn was born in New Britain in 1991. He was



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Father Jeffrey Gubbiotti  
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For information, go to:  
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baptized at St. Bridget Church in West Hartford and settled in Wethersfield. He has traveled with his family to several parts of the country. He is a 2013 graduate of Albertus Magnus College in New Haven and is completing studies at St. John's Seminary in Boston.

He is active on social media and considers it a valuable evangelizing tool. "I think right now in the Church, in the age we're living in as priests, or even as Catholics, we can really employ the tools that social media give us to reach out to a lot of people," he said. It offers a way to spread the Gospel "in a way that it meets people where they are at, but also continues to say the same truth, the same saving truth of Jesus Christ, of God's mercy, that he is love. And in doing that, we are exercising our ability to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ, which is the news of mercy and redemption."

One of his favorite Gospel stories is the wedding feast at Cana. "That shows us the powerful intercession of Mary, and it shows us how we can always go to Mary and she always leads us correctly to her son Jesus," he said.

He said he is looking forward "with great joy" to serving the Church of Hartford.

Father Gubbiotti described Deacon Dmytryszyn as a very good preacher and person who loves to teach the faith. "He's had a whole host of different assignments in the time he has been with us. I think he'll be a great priest," Father Gubbiotti said.



DEACON GLEN  
DMYTRYSZYN

IS ACTIVE ON  
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IT A VALUABLE  
EVANGELIZING  
TOOL

*"... We are exercising our ability to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ, which is the news of mercy and redemption."*



PHOTO BY AARON JOSEPH

Deacon Glen Dmytryszyn holds a newly baptized baby in December 2016 at St. Matthew Church in Forestville.



## Deacon Eduar Gutiérrez-Tovar



Deacon Gutiérrez-Tovar, 28, said he never really struggled with a vocation. At about age 15, in 2004, he knew he wanted to become a priest.

"I just wanted to help in the church in my home parish and I asked the pastor if he would allow me to help him celebrate," he said.

When he was 11 or 12 years old, he was inspired to be an altar server because his friends in his parish, San Antonio de Padua in Tarqui-Huila, Colombia, were doing it. He served in small villages within the town, and his pastor, Father Miguel Angel Luna Trujillo, asked him, "What are you going to be when you grow up?"

It got him thinking, and he attended conferences. By age 15, he made the decision to enter a major seminary.

He entered Maria Inmaculada de Garzon Seminary in Colombia in 2006. In 2012, he emigrated to the United States and began studies within the Archdiocese of Hartford, taking a full year of ESL classes before attending Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg, Md.

"For sure I'm going to use social media and the myParish app," he said when asked about his evangelizing style.

But he also believes he can reach people on a more personal level. "I just try to be familiar with everybody, try to be very close," he said. "I'm sure that everybody knows who Jesus was, for sure, but the important thing is that what we have to do as a priest is to say, 'You know about him. Well, let me tell you more.'"

He is a fan of soccer, Colombian singer Silvestre Dangond and pepperoni pizza. More importantly, he loves St. Joseph and the writings of Pope Benedict XVI.

"Pray for us," he implored. "Pray for more vocations in the Archdiocese of Hartford, because for sure we need more seminarians, we need more priests, we need more nuns. Those who are in the pews need to pray for us."

Father Gubbiotti said of him, "Deacon Eduar is originally from Colombia and he's learned English very well and is prepared to engage in ministry here in the archdiocese. He has a very energetic desire to share the love of Christ with the Church."



**DEACON EDUAR  
GUTIÉRREZ-  
TOVAR  
BELIEVES HE  
CAN REACH  
PEOPLE ON  
A MORE  
PERSONAL  
LEVEL**

*"Pray for us. ...  
Those who are in  
the pews need  
to pray for us."*



Deacon Eduar Gutiérrez-Tovar poses with the Vianney Cup last September after a Mount St. Mary's Seminary victory in an all-seminary soccer tournament.

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# On Board!

HBF



## James W. Fanelli

### Welcoming James W. Fanelli to The Hartford Bishops' Foundation Board

Archbishop Leonard P. Blair is pleased to announce the appointment of James W. Fanelli, Director, The Hartford Bishops' Foundation, Inc.

Mr. Fanelli is Managing Director of U.S. Trust, Bank of America Private Wealth Management. He has been with Bank of America and its predecessor institutions for over 30 years. He is actively engaged in various local Connecticut markets, business councils and non-profit organizations. Mr. Fanelli is a trustee and head of the finance committee of his parish, Church of St. Ann in Avon, CT.

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Deacon Eric Zuniga reads from behind the altar in Immaculate Conception Chapel on the campus of Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg, Md., last year.

## Deacon Eric Zuniga



Deacon Zuniga, 33, was born in New Jersey, a son of Mexican immigrants. The family moved to New Britain in 1980, and Eric and his brother Omar went to Sacred Heart School.

"I think I always had the calling [to the priesthood], but I was in denial," he said. "I always said, 'No, I want to get married and have a family. I wouldn't be a good priest.'"

After receiving his first Communion, he was allowed to be an altar server, an experience he enjoyed. "We would do our half hour of prayer in front of the Blessed Sacrament, and that was something I really loved," he said.

He graduated from Sacred Heart in 1989 and joined the National Guard. He served for six years while attending Central Connecticut State University, earning a business degree in 1998. He worked in the corporate world for a few years, but felt something was missing in his life.

He had heard about the apparitions in Medjugorje, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and he asked his brother to go on a pilgrimage with him. Omar hesitated, but finally agreed after Eric prayed to the Blessed Mother. They made the trip in the summer of 2001.



**DEACON  
ERIC ZUNIGA  
BELIEVES YOU  
SHOULD LIVE  
OUT YOUR  
FAITH EVERY  
DAY OF THE  
WEEK**

"There was so much peace. I never felt so much peace," he said. "We went to Mass every day. There were so many priests saying Mass in so many languages." He said it reawakened his desire for a spiritual life.

Still, he wasn't ready — not until tragedy struck.

"My brother was diagnosed with terminal cancer in 2005. We took care of my brother during the year that he was sick, and he passed away in March 2006," he wrote in a biographical essay. During those painful days, many priests helped Eric and his family to deal with Omar's sickness and death. They helped Eric to see "what is important in life: a life of serving others and God by embracing the cross and living with a sense of purpose," he wrote.

He entered Mount St. Mary's Seminary in 2011.

Deacon Zuniga said the Church needs more people in religious life. "Faith is not just a Sunday deal," he said. "It's part of the everyday activities at school or work. There's always a way of having Jesus present."

Father Gubbiotti said of him, "Deacon Eric Zuniga is a very kind man, someone who has a great love for the Lord, love for people, and he'll be a great priest." †

*"Faith is not just a Sunday deal. ...  
It's part of the everyday activities at school or  
work. There's always a way of having Jesus present."*



# ABRAHAM'S TENT: Feeding the hungry and housing the homeless

STORY AND PHOTOS BY MARY CHALUPSKY

**J**ohn and Tammie Wilkinson lead busy lives as parents, professionals and parishioners of St. Mary Parish in Branford. But once a year, they carve out time in their schedules to coordinate a week-long emergency housing program called Abraham's Tent at their parish.

They are joined by an amazing cadre of 250 other parish volunteers who provide hospitality in a variety of ways to 12 homeless men selected by Columbus House, the shelter and housing organization in New Haven. The 12 are housed for a week at a time through the winter months at different New Haven-area faith communities.

"We get an awful lot out of it," said Tammie, who by day is a software analyst. "It's the joy of seeing the joy on our guests' faces ... that they have a few hours of comfort, a few hours of not being afraid on the streets, of honoring their human dignity and of letting them

know that they're in a safe place with people who care."

Added John, who works in medical supply sales, "They're very untrusting people; so we try to give them a sense of knowing that there's good people out there who are willing to help and who care about them."

For the men who come as guests, the feelings are reciprocated.

"It's beautiful," said Jorge, about his experience being housed in different faith communities.

Patrick, another guest, spoke along the same lines. "It's terrific. We get to go to different churches and meet different



Members of the Social Action Youth Group at St. Mary Parish in Branford serve up a hot supper that they prepared for clients visiting from Columbus House, a shelter and housing organization in New Haven, through the Abraham's Tent program.

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### Gregory S. Oneglia

#### Welcoming Gregory S. Oneglia to The Hartford Bishops' Foundation Board

Archbishop Leonard P. Blair is pleased to announce the appointment of Gregory S. Oneglia, Director, The Hartford Bishops' Foundation, Inc.

Mr. Oneglia is Vice Chairman of O&G Industries. He is a Director, and Vice Chairman & Treasurer of Malta House of Care — Waterbury, Inc. and a charter member of the Connecticut Chapter of Legatus. He is also a Director for the Torrington Water Company. Mr. Oneglia received a bachelors degree in economics from Union College and a doctorate from the University of Connecticut School of Law. He is a parishioner of St. Anthony of Padua church in Litchfield.

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From left, John Wilkinson, who with his wife Tammie coordinates St. Mary Parish's annual participation in the Abraham's Tent initiative, serves homeless guests with Father Matthew Gworek, parochial vicar; James Hayes, overnight volunteer; Tammie Wilkinson; and Alison Cunningham, CEO of Columbus House. At far right is Joanne Roscio, a member of the parish council.

**"WE'RE ALL JUST ONE FAMILY, AND BEING WITH THEM MAKES ME THINK, 'THERE BUT FOR THE GRACE OF GOD GO I.' THESE ARE GOOD PEOPLE WHO JUST HAVE BEEN HIT WITH SOME HARD MOMENTS."**

— CATHY STEVENS



people. And they cook us dinner plus breakfast — which, I was told, is the most important meal of the day."

During the week, the parish provides an area for beds and bedding (loaned from Columbus House), dinner, breakfast the next morning and a bagged lunch for the men to take back to Columbus House, where they shower and get ready for their day. The men, in turn, use their day to work or apply for jobs and housing, meet with case managers and/or enroll in employment and career-skills programs.

St. Mary's has hosted Abraham's Tent since it began seven years ago during the busy overflow season. Last winter, St. Mary's was one of 16 faith congregations, including St. George in Guilford, St. Stephen in Hamden and St. Theresa in Branford, that volunteered to take turns hosting for a week between Christmas and April.

The program is named for the Hebrew patriarch Abraham, who, in Genesis, ran out of his tent to greet and offer

hospitality to three strangers.

At St. Mary's, hospitality has entered a new level of creativity. This year, there was a Mexican night hosted by the Ladies Guild, a meal hosted by the Legion of Mary, an ice cream social with the youth group, a potluck night hosted by a family and a fish fry by the Knights of Columbus.

There also was a movie night with popcorn, movie candy and the film "Sully"; a spa night offering pedicures, back and neck massages and haircuts; and gifts of toiletry bags, a \$10 Dunkin Donuts gift card and gift certificates to wash clothes at local laundries.

"I love it; they're a great bunch of guys," said Cathy Stevens, parishioner and vice president of nursing at MidState Medical Center in Meriden. "We're all just one family, and being with them makes me think, 'There but for the grace of God go I.' These are good people who just have been hit with some hard moments."

In fact, St. Mary parishioners have been so moved by the Abraham's Tent experience and the general issue of homelessness that they created an outreach committee that pushed the number of parish groups to a whopping 50 ministries.

In addition to participating in Abraham's Tent, parishioners now cook and serve a monthly meal at Columbus House, participate in a "Midnight Sandwich Run" program that drops off sandwiches and warm clothing to homeless people in New Haven and partner with Amistad Catholic Worker House. Even more, they have spun off a separate nonprofit organization that runs a transitional housing facility called Farrell House in the center of Branford.

"It's the people," said Joan Pirtel, who previously coordinated Abraham's Tent with Alice Hines. "It just grabs you ... the need to help other people and reach out."

Alison Cunningham, chief executive officer at Columbus House, said that her organization serves 2,500 people a year in three shelters.

"Connecticut is the envy of many states because they see how well-coordinated our services are," she said, explaining



that the state spends about \$73 million a year for shelter and housing for the homeless. "We've done a good thing by ending homelessness for veterans and chronic homelessness" with long-term housing, she said.

The next focus will be on homeless young people, Cunningham said, "because there are a lot of kids who are discharged by families, run away or are abandoned and spend their days 'couch surfing' between families and friends." Homeless seniors who have run out of money, resources and family support are another concern.

According to Cunningham, the leading cause of homelessness is economic — people who make the minimum wage have a hard time with the cost of living. She estimated that about 35 percent of homeless people live with a mental illness, while 65 percent have had or still have an addiction.

"But what we do to provide supportive services reduces costs in other areas [such as emergency expenses, arrests and imprisonment] by up to 75 percent," she noted.

Abraham's Tent evolved in 2009 when Columbus House lost funding for an overflow shelter, "so we reached out to clergy and came up with the idea," she said.

"When you have to say, 'I don't have any room for them tonight,' then those 12 beds are important. It expands our capacity in a very meaningful way. The men feel really cared for, and it works

for those who don't want to be in a big shelter" with 50 people and noise.

"We look for the right fit," she added, such as ruling out those with a violent or criminal background. Organizers also tried to shelter women under the program one year, but it didn't work as well as it did with single adult men.

"The generosity of the faith communities is overwhelming and the care they provide is a beautiful thing," Cunningham said. "It helps the guys with their self-esteem and hope for what they want to accomplish."

"The real passion" for the work she does, she says, "comes from the people we serve. They are wonderful people. They are the folks who have been pushed to the side by our society. They are outcasts. We've done a disservice by labeling them homeless. They are our brothers and sisters, and they certainly deserve a place to live."

Father Matthew Gworek, parochial vicar at St. Mary's, said of his parish, "It's great for us to have this outreach for our parish to be involved with Columbus House and the issue of homelessness. Probably the most powerful outcome is just the opportunity to get together and see how similar we all are ... how much we have in common. It makes us more inclined to help each other."

Jim Hayes, who was in charge of the overnight duties, chimed in. "I plan to keep doing this; it's just wonderful. They don't ask for anything, yet they're grateful for everything." ✚

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# On Board!

# HBF



Thomas A. Weidman

## Welcoming Thomas A. Weidman to The Hartford Bishops' Foundation Board

Archbishop Leonard P. Blair is pleased to announce the appointment of Thomas A. Weidman, Director, The Hartford Bishops' Foundation, Inc.

Mr. Weidman is President of Weidman Financial Services, LLC in West Hartford, CT. Prior to Weidman Financial Services, he was Chief Group Actuary of Alea Group Holdings (Bermuda) Ltd. Mr. Weidman is a Director of Our Companions Domestic Animal Sanctuary. He is an active parishioner at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Hartford, CT and has served as a Parish Ambassador. He is a member of the Cathedral Council 11405 Knights of Columbus.

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# Archdiocese is a surprise exhibitor at the Connecticut Flower & Garden Show

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SHELLEY WOLF

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It was *all* cause for a double-take at the flower show.

There were flowers, of course, but attendees' interest was piqued by the 7-foot replica of the Cathedral of St. Joseph, the mannequins in formal attire standing under the arbor and the sign saying "Archdiocese of Hartford Landscape #4."

Plus, there were brochures inviting non-Catholics to a Catholic Mass.

The exhibit by the Archdiocese of Hartford was a surprising and welcome entry into the landscape design competition at the annual Connecticut Flower & Garden Show, held this year on Feb. 23-26 at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford.

Each year, more than 40,000 gardeners attend the four-day event to get their first taste of spring. In addition to an acre of amazing garden landscapes, the show includes a juried flower show, vendors and educational seminars.

This year, many flower show attendees were introduced to the Cathedral of St. Joseph — and to the Archdiocese of Hartford — for the first time.

Conversely, practicing Catholics in attendance were visibly delighted to see the archdiocese present at the show.

"It was very busy and a success," said Mike McGarry, Grand Knight of the cathedral's Knights of Columbus council. He helped to staff the exhibit, which was co-sponsored by the cathedral's Knights and Hartford Blooms Garden Tours. "We gave out huge stacks of brochures about the Catholic Mass and many people inquired about the idea of getting married at the cathedral."

McGarry is also the person who dreamed up the idea of taking the archdiocese to the flower show.

Brochures  
inviting  
non-  
Catholics  
to a  
Catholic  
Mass were  
handed out



Each year,  
more than  
40,000  
gardeners  
attend the  
four-day  
event

### From invitation to inspiration

Kristie Gonzalves, president of North East Expos, which produces the show, explained how it happened.

"I reached out to Mike, looking for folks to contribute a landscape from Hartford," she said.

Gonzalves said she knew that McGarry was an avid gardener who had many connections with the city's community gardens. He also founded Hartford Blooms, an organization that offers neighborhood and garden tours. Additionally, McGarry and the cathedral Knights sold pansies, mums and poinsettias to cathedral parishioners "to enliven the parish," and they planted annuals each year in front of the rectory.

"It's all kind of linked — the neighborhood, the garden tours and the flowers at the cathedral," McGarry said of his many gardening-related projects. "We're making people's lives better through flowers."

As for his concept of an exhibit at this year's show, Gonzalves said, "He really took the ball and ran with it."

"For some reason the Holy Spirit struck," McGarry said, recalling how the idea came to him.

### 'Come to the cathedral'

"Since there'll be extensive work at the cathedral, I thought we should tell people about that," McGarry explained.

He was referring to development of the Cathedral of St. Joseph campus as part of a multi-year project by the archdiocese. The project will include public gardens, a front plaza, a community meeting hall and an illuminated steeple and cross. The Hartford Bishops' Foundation is currently fundraising for the endeavor.

McGarry also saw the show as an opportunity to let people of all faiths know that they are welcome to visit.

"Father [James] Shanley is very open about people coming to the cathedral, no matter their race or religion," McGarry said of the cathedral's rector. "Just come to the cathedral. It's open and it's a beautiful place."

Finally, McGarry wanted to let practicing Catholics know that the cathedral is available for weddings.

"Anybody in the archdiocese can have a wedding there. It's a great place for weddings," he said, and will be even better when the public gardens are added.

"The way you do this is you try to do a favor for someone every day with no hint of payback. ... Someday it comes back to you. That's how I go through life."

— Mike McGarry



Mike McGarry explains how the former Hartford Landfill has been landscaped and turned into a solar energy project. The cathedral's exhibit at the show was his brainchild.







### It takes a city

During the four-day show, McGarry, 72, ran back and forth, staffing both the archdiocese's landscape exhibit and the Hartford Blooms booth.

Other volunteers also helped him work the show floor. One of them, Dr. Ed Johnson, a former administrator of St. Francis Hospital in Hartford, has known McGarry for 30 years. "He's got the biggest heart in Hartford," Johnson said.

According to McGarry, the exhibit at the CT Flower & Garden Show was the product of a small budget and numerous volunteers, including members of the Knights and Hartford Blooms, friends and neighbors and Hartford-area artists.

"The way you do this is you try to do a favor for someone every day with no hint of payback," McGarry said. "Someday it comes back to you. That's how I go through life."

One unexpected benefit of his life philosophy materialized in May 2015 when McGarry was hit by a car while riding his bike home from working in the Niles Street Community Garden. The accident put him in intensive care, prompting friends to host a fundraiser at a local pub to help defray medical expenses. Today, he is fully recovered and back at work as co-publisher of Hartford Publications.

A master at social networking the old-fashioned way, McGarry's parish and personal contacts came through once again for the show:

- The Knights fashioned a cathedral replica out of durable PVC. Then it was painted by artist Tao LaBossiere, well-known in Hartford for his tromp l'oeil paintings and murals. "He put all his jobs aside for us," McGarry said.
- A fourth-degree Knight donated the arbor, which was later soldered, sandblasted and repainted by the staff at the University of Hartford's Hartt School of Music theater shop.
- Fresh Start Pallet Products, a social enterprise of Grace Lutheran Church in Hartford that employs economically disadvantaged area residents, loaned two whimsically painted benches made from recycled pallets.
- Morneault's Stackpole Moore Tryon, a fine clothier in downtown Hartford, provided mannequins in midnight blue formal wear.

McGarry plans to transport the cathedral replica to future events to keep publicizing the cathedral improvement plans



### Impromptu landscape designer

Julie Mullen, 58, a fine artist who works with a number of mediums, created the landscape design.

A parishioner of the cathedral, she etched the metal sunburst on the cathedral's Holy Door of Mercy and crafted its floral decorations for Advent, Christmas and Easter.

Regarding her contribution to the flower show, Mullen said, "Mike had the idea, but he needed someone to work it into the flower show and I was happy to do it for the cathedral. If it will help get people curious about going to Mass or coming back, then it's worth every minute."

Mullen said she and McGarry worked quickly.

Two days before the show, they went to the convention center to size up the area allotted for display. The next day, they purchased most plants on-site, selecting birch trees, azaleas, rhododendrons, ferns, roses, primroses, Jewish ivy and Lenten roses. For the arbor, they chose hanging eucalyptus and pussy willows.

"I was just trying to get color and texture," Mullen said.

Her favorite was the spring-green Lenten rose. "I wanted that specifically because we were going into Lent," she explained. "It's also one of the first flowers that comes out" in spring.

With those items, Mullen devised a landscape design plan on the spot. "You say a prayer before you start," she said, "and jump in."

"I'm happy Julie took it over, believe me," McGarry said, with gratitude and relief.

According to McGarry, exhibiting at the show will have ongoing benefits. He plans to transport the cathedral replica to future events to keep publicizing the cathedral improvement plans.

Another happy outcome, he said, was a donation by the Connecticut Rose Society. After disassembling their own "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" exhibit, the group donated its rose bushes to the Cathedral of St. Joseph for planting in the public gardens this spring. †

### Photo captions for page 26:

1. Plantings around the cathedral replica include birch trees, rhododendrons, roses and primroses.
2. Pages from *The Hartford Courant*, dated June 24, 1962, show the Cathedral of St. Joseph dedication.
3. Julie Mullen, impromptu designer for the show, is shown here creating the cathedral's Holy Door of Mercy.
4. Mannequins in formal wear under an arbor give a glimpse of what a wedding might be like in the cathedral's gardens.



Symbol of marriage is depicted in a stained glass window at St. Michael Church in Waterbury.

*And the two shall*  
**BECOME**  
**— ONE —**



It should come as no surprise to anyone at this point in the evolution of pastoral planning that change is imminent and necessary.

Although change is disconcerting for many, it is imperative that we recognize the state of the Church in the Archdiocese of Hartford and throughout the world, as well, and how vitally important it is to not turn a deaf ear to the challenge Pope Francis articulated in his apostolic exhortation *The Joy of the Gospel* (*Evangelii Gaudium*):

**“The parish is the presence of the Church in a given territory, an environment for hearing God’s word, for growth in the Christian life, for dialogue, proclamation, charitable outreach, worship and celebration. (27) In all its activities the parish encourages and trains its members to be evangelizers. (28) It is a community of communities, a sanctuary where the thirsty come to drink in the midst of their journey, and a center of constant missionary outreach. We must admit, though, that the call to review and renew our parishes has not yet sufficed to bring them nearer to people, to make them environments of living communion and participation, and to make them completely mission-oriented ... Each particular (diocese), as a portion of the Catholic Church under the leadership of its bishop, is likewise called to missionary conversion (30) [and] to undertake a resolute process of discernment, purification and reform. (33)**

One aspect of reform with which we must contend in pastoral planning is the merger process, and a common misconception we often hear has to do with the dynamics of merging. It usually sounds something like, “I heard that Holy Name Parish will be joining us,” or, “Although we know it won’t be easy, we will welcome them with open arms.” The misconception suggested in these statements is the we/they or us/them dichotomy. A merger is not about one lesser, poorer or smaller parish being adopted by a better, richer or larger parish. A merger is more like a wedding. Recall what Jesus taught us about marriage and divorce:

“For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother [and be joined to his wife], and the two shall become one flesh. So they are no longer two but one flesh.” (Mark 10: 7-8)

Based on this metaphor, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* goes on to say:

“... the unity of Christ and the Church, head and members of one body, ... implies the distinction of the two within a personal relationship. This aspect is often expressed by the image of bridegroom

and bride [whereby], the whole Church [and] each of the faithful, members of his Body, [are] ‘betrothed’ to Christ the Lord so as to become but one spirit with him.” (Canon 796)

A merger, then, is marriage, of sorts, the formation of a new civil and canonical entity. As in a marriage, neither spouse is more important than the other; rather, it’s about recognizing and leveraging the synergies that have manifested for the benefit of the relationship. And just as a married person remains a distinct individual with a unique history, gifts and talents, merging parishes do the same without sacrificing their uniqueness. The two communities, like wives and husbands, learn from one another and together pool their resources to bring new life and new energy to their relationship, growing into their newfound Christ-centered oneness.

This is a prime example of how relevant the Gospels are to our pastoral planning efforts, regardless of their having been written more than 2,000 years ago and in geographic and cultural contexts so very different from ours. The relevance and the impact of Jesus’ words, however,


depend on the faith with which they are received and assimilated into our daily lives. Everything we’ve done and continue to do in pastoral planning is tested against Gospel teaching. It is a practical way of assessing whether or not the relationship between the bridegroom Jesus and his bride, the Church, is what the Lord intends, so that it will be a fruitful marriage, rooted in God’s will, not ours.

True worship is not based on a particular location. In reference to pastoral planning, it is less about a building and more about the spirit of the person who worships.

It is incumbent upon us to ask the Lord for the grace of true worship. If we do, we will recognize that the changes we are called upon to embrace are only those that will foster a spirit of harmony, a spirit of Christ-centered oneness. The fruits of our labor may not be evident right away, but if we prune the vine, and fertilize the soil in which the seeds of faith have been planted, with the Lord’s help, an abundant harvest is sure to come. †

— BY DEACON ERNEST SCRIVANI, T.O.C.,  
director of the Office of Pastoral Planning

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MAY 2017

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**CATHOLIC TRANSCRIPT** (USPS 0094-540, ISSN 1081-4353) is published monthly, except for February and August, by The Catholic Transcript, Inc., 467 Bloomfield Ave., Bloomfield, CT 06002-2999. Periodicals postage paid at Hartford, CT and at additional mailing offices.

**POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to  
The Catholic Transcript, Inc.  
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**CHANGE OF ADDRESS:**  
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## IN YOUR COMMUNITY

### TWO MEN TO BE ORDAINED TO THE TRANSITIONAL DIACONATE

■ On May 13, two of the Archdiocese of Hartford's seminarians will take the last step toward the priesthood as they become transitional deacons at an ordination liturgy to be celebrated at the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Waterbury.

Unlike permanent deacons, whose ordination to the diaconate does not lead to the priesthood, men ordained as transitional deacons thereafter become priests upon the completion of seminary obligations.

The two men are David Madjewski, 24, of New Britain, and Joshua Wilbur, 36, of Goshen. Both are currently at St. John's Seminary in Brighton, Mass., completing their academic and theological preparation for priestly service.

Once he is a priest, David Madjewski looks forward to bringing the love of God to the people of the archdiocese, he said. The product of a broken home, he said he was reared by loving grandparents who helped him "find my vocation from a place of darkness."

He said he hopes to share his charism

for compassion by "ministering to the suffering souls in the city, the people who are truly suffering, the people who feel left out."

Wilbur, a convert to Catholicism through the Cathedral Parish's Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults program and a former Catholic school music teacher, was confirmed at the Easter Vigil in 2006. He said a college Bible class, followed by several years of personal reflection, conversations with friends and religious with whom he interacted and an increasing awareness of the call of the Holy Spirit, resulted in his sending an email to Father Michael Dolan, then vocations director for the archdiocese. The two met the next day at St. Thomas Seminary in Bloomfield.

Wilbur said, "I recognize the need for priests who are compassionate and can connect well with their communities. I hope to share my genuine love of Christ with the people of the archdiocese."

— STORY BY KAREN O. BRAY



DAVID MADJEWSKI



JOSHUA WILBUR


### WORKSHOPS WILL FOCUS ON CREATING TRADITIONAL ICONS

■ Two workshops in June will give attendees an opportunity to study the authentic historical technique for making traditional Orthodox icons. The workshops, called "Six Days of Creation Icon Painting" and "Icon Carving," will be offered simultaneously June 11 to June 17 at the Archdiocesan Center at St. Thomas Seminary in Bloomfield.

Instructors Marek Czarnecki and Anna Pokrovsky-Gouriev teach icon painting in egg tempera. Jonathan Pageau teaches icon carving in wood and stone. Theirs are said to be the most comprehensive workshops on iconography available in the United States. Class sizes are limited.



Czarnecki will give a lecture, titled "Iconography, Holy History and Holy Tradition," at 7 p.m. on June 11 at the Archdiocesan Center. It is free and open to the public. Czarnecki is a Connecticut iconographer and liturgical artist whose studio, Seraphic Restorations, is in Meriden. He studied with Anna's mother, the Russian Orthodox iconographer Ksenia Pokrovsky, and has been creating icons for 25 years.

 Information, course curriculum and registration materials are available at [www.hexaameron.org](http://www.hexaameron.org) or by contacting Czarnecki at [marekstudio4b@hotmail.com](mailto:marekstudio4b@hotmail.com) or 203.238.7553.



## ALBERTUS MAGNUS COLLEGE APPOINTS FIRST NEW PRESIDENT IN 35 YEARS



■ Albertus Magnus College in New Haven has named Marc M. Camille as the college's first new president in 35 years, effective June 30, making him the 14th president of the college. Camille currently serves as vice president for enrollment management and communications at Loyola University Maryland in Baltimore.

"I am drawn to Albertus Magnus College's distinctive Catholic, Dominican mission and its student-centered focus," said president-elect Camille in a news release. "The college's history of offering innovative liberal arts and professionally focused undergraduate and graduate programs ... aligns with my personal and professional passions and experiences."

The college made the announcement at a press conference and reception in March that was attended by students, faculty, members of the board of trustees and sisters from the Dominican Sisters of the Springs, the order that sponsors Albertus Magnus College.

"I believe that there is such a strong history of leadership and innovation here that we can build upon to align with marketing opportunities," Camille told the Catholic Transcript. "A liberal arts education has never been more relevant ... for students to be adept and nimble in their choice of careers."

Dominican Sister Anne Kilbride has served as interim president since the June 2016 retirement of Julia M. McNamara after 34 years of service. Dr. McNamara, who attended the announcement ceremonies, is the college's longest-serving president.

Camille, 49, brings 28 years of experience serving at private and Catholic institutions to his new position.

His doctoral dissertation was on the relationship between institutional religious affiliation and the achievements of college students in metrics associated with a quality educational experience, such as deep learning and student engagement.

— STORY BY MARY CHALUPSKY



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## ANNUAL SOCIAL JUSTICE CONFERENCE SCHEDULED

■ The Archdiocese of Hartford's Office for Catholic Social Justice Ministry will host its eighth Bishop Peter Rosazza Social Justice Conference, titled "Rooted in Faith: One Family Under God," from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on June 10 at the Archdiocesan Center at St. Thomas Seminary in Bloomfield (check-in begins at 8).

The conference will feature two keynote talks, one by Ruth Rosenbaum, the founder and director of the Center for Reflection, Education and Action in Hartford, and the other by Father Joseph Donnelly, pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Southbury.

Twelve workshops will be offered. The day also will include prayer, music and exhibits.



**FOR INFORMATION**  
Call 860.242.5573, ext. 2688  
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## APPOINTMENTS:

The Most Rev. Leonard P. Blair, STD has made the following appointments:

■ **Rev. Lawrence R. Bock:** appointed administrator of Holy Spirit Parish in Newington and Sacred Heart Parish in East Berlin for an additional year, effective Feb. 18, 2017.

■ **Rev. Thomas J. Kelly:** appointed chaplain of the Apostles of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Hamden, effective Jan. 2, 2017.

■ **Rev. Michael G. Whyte:** appointed director of Continuing Formation of Priests, in addition to duties as pastor of St. Catherine of Siena Parish in West Simsbury, effective Jan. 10, 2017.

■ **Rev. Kingsley C. Ihejirika:** appointed parochial vicar of Most Holy Trinity Parish in Wallingford, effective Jan. 25, 2017.

■ **Deacon Roger Albert:** senior status\*, effective Feb. 18, 2017.

■ **Deacon Leo R. LaRocque:** assigned to Assumption Parish in Manchester, effective Feb. 14, 2017.

■ **Deacon William H. Bartlett:** assigned to Blessed Sacrament and Our Lady of Peace Parishes in East Hartford, effective Feb. 14, 2017.

■ **Deacon Roy C. Dungan:** senior status\*, effective Jan. 4, 2017.

■ **Deacon Edward J. Mancini:** senior status\*, effective Dec. 28, 2016.

*\*Because deacons and priests have received the sacrament of holy orders and therefore never retire in the canonical sense, the term "senior" priest or deacon describes their status.*

— REVEREND RYAN M. LERNER, CHANCELLOR,  
MARCH 8, 2017



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