

# Catholic TRANSCRIPT

MARCH 2018

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## Deaf ministry

brings the word of God to all ears

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Hartford Bishops' Foundation funds new initiatives

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### CAMPUS MINISTRY

A spiritual home away from home

## THINGS TO DO

■ A Laudato Si' retreat, **"Silence as Ecological Conversion,"** on **March 3** will feature a screening of "In Pursuit of Silence" and a discussion directed by Kevin Johnson, adjunct professor at Sacred Heart University in Fairfield. Attendees will explore the relationship between silence and care for creation, in which Pope Francis asks all people to recover an ancient and fundamental aspect of knowing and engaging the world. The workshop will run from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Archdiocesan Center at St. Thomas Seminary in Bloomfield. Registration at [www.catholicsocialjustice.org](http://www.catholicsocialjustice.org) under the "What's New?" section or 860.242.5573, ext. 2688. The registration fee is \$30 and covers a continental breakfast and lunch.

■ **"At the Foot of the Cross,"** a one-night Lenten mission, will be presented at 7 p.m. on **March 7** in the chapel at Mount Sacred Heart at 295 Benham St., Hamden. Meditations will be offered by Amy Ekeh, Sister Virginia Herbers of the Apostles of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Deacon Art Miller. Music will be provided by the St. Ann Choir of Milford under the direction of Peter DeMarco. The evening is designed as an opportunity to pray, reflect and sing at the foot of the cross. A free-will offering will benefit the ministries of the Apostles of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Information is available at [www.amyekeh.com/lent](http://www.amyekeh.com/lent). The mission is open to the public.

■ The Father Nadolny Good News Fund Inc. will sponsor four performances of Saint Luke Productions' **"Maximilian Saint of Auschwitz"** at 12:30 p.m. and 7 p.m. on **March 7** at St. Paul Catholic High School in Bristol, at 12:30 p.m. on **March 8** at Northwest Catholic High School in West Hartford and at 7 p.m. on **March 10** in the Torp Theater at Central Connecticut State University in New Britain. Performances are free.

■ Frassati New Haven will host a **Frassati Night** from 7 to 8:30 p.m. on **March 10** at St. Mary Church, 5 Hillhouse Ave., New Haven. Held on the second Sunday of each month, the evening includes adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, a short reflection and the opportunity for the sacrament of reconciliation and socialization. Frassati New Haven is a fellowship of Catholics (and interested non-Catholics) in their 20s and 30s who gather to worship, grow in their faith, serve those in need and build bonds of friendship. Information is available at [www.frassatinewhaven.org](http://www.frassatinewhaven.org).

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■ The winter series of **Holy Hours for Vocations** will continue with Father Michael Casey, vocation director, at 7 p.m. on **March 13** at Our Lady of the Angels Convent chapel, 1315 Enfield St., Enfield, and **April 16** at St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish, 1 E. Main St., Thomaston. After prayer for an increase in vocations to the priesthood, a "coffee-and" reception will provide a setting for socialization. Information is available at [www.hartfordpriest.com](http://www.hartfordpriest.com).

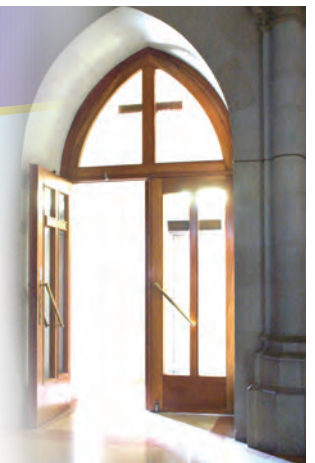
■ **Catholic Underground Connecticut** will meet from 7:30 to 10:30 p.m. on **March 17** at Holy Apostles College and Seminary, 33 Prospect Hill Rd., Cromwell. Information is available at [catholicbryan@yahoo.com](mailto:catholicbryan@yahoo.com). Catholic Underground is a group of young adults from all around Connecticut who gather once a month to pray and experience Catholic culture and fellowship. Information is available at [www.catholicundergroundct.com](http://www.catholicundergroundct.com).

■ What does getting a driver's license have to do with confirmation? What is the plan to get a car and ensure its safety and maintenance? This **interactive confirmation retreat** at Our Lady of Calvary Retreat Center in Farmington will explore those questions. The offering is \$35. Group rates are available. The program, which includes dinner, will be offered from 2 to 6 p.m. on both **March 18** and **April 8**. The presenter is Shawnee Baldwin, who was the coordinator of youth and young adult ministry at the Archdiocese of Hartford for 20 years. She has a master's degree in religious studies from Hartford Seminary.

➔ **FOR MORE THINGS TO DO**  
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COVER PHOTO BY  
AARON JOSEPH





# 'Now' is the acceptable time'

When I was a parish priest, I often heard confessions of the elementary and religious education students. The first confessions of second-graders, in particular, called to mind the words of Christ: "Unless you become like little children you cannot enter the kingdom of God." There is an openness and trust among the very young that enable them to truly "celebrate" the forgiveness that is Christ's gift in the confessional.

With fewer adults going to confession, it is often said that people are afraid to go to the sacrament of reconciliation, or that they simply don't believe that it is necessary. There is a lot of truth to that assessment, but I think there is also another reason.

As we grow older, we find ourselves confessing the same things, and we begin to think that somehow we have failed or that the sacrament of penance has failed. We begin to feel embarrassed at having to repeat the same things, or we think we have nothing to confess. So we stop going.

I think that there are two approaches that we should keep in mind to remedy this problem.

The first is the need to develop a more mature examination of conscience. If we are growing spiritually, we realize that our sins in grade school are augmented by

new temptations in high school and college. These, in turn, change as we grow older. Spiritual maturity is also marked by the realization that sin is not just a transgression against a moral law. Rather, sin means "missing the mark" by what I do or fail to do when it comes to the supreme law that we are to "love God above all things and our neighbor as ourselves."

I often quote the saying that "the only tragedy in life is not to become a saint." We cannot fulfill the purpose for which we were created unless we become saints (either here and/or in purgatory). Sainthood is to be found not in some unreal perfection, but in our constant struggle against sin, with the help of confession, until our dying day. Holiness is the standard by which our eternal destiny will be measured. It must also be the guiding standard of our examination of conscience.



**ARCHBISHOP  
LEONARD P.  
BLAIR**  
*is the 13th  
bishop of  
the Catholic  
Archdiocese of  
Hartford.*



A second way of approaching an aversion to confession is to reflect more deeply on what it means to be a sinner. The truth is that every single person remains a sinner to his or her dying day. That is why Christ alone is the Savior, and that is why we need him. Only he can save us. Furthermore the personality, temptations and sins of one person are not those of another. Whatever our particular infirmities, Christ says: "Healthy people do not need a doctor; sick people do. I have come, not to call the righteous, but sinners."

All the great saints have had a profound sense of their wretchedness and weakness, their inability to save themselves, and they all went to confession frequently.

This Lent, I hope many more people in our archdiocese will go to the sacrament of reconciliation and start to go regularly. Confessions are being heard in all of our parishes every Monday during this season. Don't be put off because it has been a very long time since your last confession and you have forgotten what to do or say. The priest is there to help you. What is important is that you come. We will take care of the rest.

Neglecting confession is to our spiritual impoverishment and peril, because it was divinely instituted by Christ for our healing, peace and, above all, growth in holiness. Lent is a perfect time to focus on this sacrament of conversion, penance, forgiveness and reconciliation.

In conclusion, I want to echo the words of St. Paul: "We are ambassadors for Christ, God as it were appealing through us. We implore you, in Christ's name: be reconciled to God! ... Now is the acceptable time. Now is the day of salvation!" (2 Cor 5:20; 6:2) I hope that you will make a special effort to go to confession this Lent, especially if you have not been for a long time. I know that you will be happy if you do. †



# 'Ahora es el tiempo aceptable'

Cuando era párroco, a menudo escuchaba confesiones de la escuela primaria y estudiantes de educación religiosa. Las primeras confesiones de los alumnos de segundo grado en particular me traían a la mente las palabras de Cristo: "A menos que ustedes se vuelvan y lleguen a ser como niños, de ninguna manera entrarán en el Reino de los Cielos". Hay una apertura y confianza entre los más pequeños que les permite verdaderamente "celebrar" el perdón que es el regalo de Cristo en el confesionario.

Con menos adultos confesándose, a menudo se dice que las personas tienen miedo de ir al sacramento de la reconciliación o que simplemente no creen que sea necesario. Hay mucha verdad en esa evaluación, pero creo que también hay otra razón.

A medida que crecemos, nos encontramos confesando las mismas cosas, y comenzamos a pensar que de alguna manera hemos fallado o que el sacramento de la penitencia ha fallado. Comenzamos a sentirnos avergonzados de tener que repetir las mismas cosas, o creemos que no tenemos nada que confesar. Entonces dejamos de hacerlo.

Creo que hay dos enfoques que debemos tener en cuenta para remediar este problema.

El primero es la necesidad de desarrollar un examen de conciencia más maduro. Si estamos creciendo espiritualmente, nos damos cuenta de que nuestros pecados en la escuela primaria se ven aumentados por nuevas tentaciones en la escuela secundaria y la universidad. Estos, a su vez, cambian a medida que envejecemos. La madurez espiritual también está marcada por la comprensión de que el pecado no es solo una transgresión contra una ley moral. Más bien, el pecado significa que "fallamos" por lo que hacemos o dejamos de hacer cuando se trata de la ley suprema que no dice que debemos "amar a Dios sobre todas las cosas y a nuestro prójimo como a nosotros mismos".

A menudo cito el dicho de que "la única tragedia en la vida es

no convertirse en un santo". No podemos cumplir el propósito para el que fuimos creados a menos que nos convirtamos en santos (ya sea aquí y/o en el purgatorio). La santidad no se encuentra en una perfección irreal, sino en nuestra lucha constante contra el pecado, con la ayuda de la confesión, hasta el día de nuestra muerte. La santidad es el estándar por el cual se medirá nuestro destino eterno. También debe ser el criterio rector de nuestro examen de conciencia.

Una segunda forma de abordar la aversión a la confesión es reflexionar más profundamente sobre lo que significa ser un pecador. La verdad es que cada persona sigue siendo un pecador hasta el día de su muerte. Es por eso que solo Cristo es el Salvador, y es por eso que lo necesitamos. Solo él puede salvarnos. Además, la personalidad, las tentaciones y los pecados de una persona no son los de otra. Cualesquiera que sean nuestras enfermedades particulares, Cristo dice: "Las personas sanas no necesitan un médico; pero la gente enferma sí. He venido, no para llamar a los justos, sino a los pecadores".

Todos los grandes santos han tenido un profundo sentido de su miseria y debilidad, su incapacidad para salvarse a sí mismos, y todos se confesaban

frecuentemente.

En esta Cuaresma, espero que mucha más gente en nuestra arquidiócesis vaya al sacramento de la reconciliación y comience a asistir regularmente. Las confesiones se escuchan en todas nuestras parroquias todos los lunes durante esta temporada. No se desanime porque ha pasado mucho tiempo desde su última confesión y ha olvidado qué hacer o decir. El sacerdote está allí para ayudarle. Lo importante es que venga. Nosotros nos haremos cargo del resto.

Descuidar la confesión conlleva nuestro empobrecimiento y peligro espiritual, porque fue instituida divinamente por Cristo para nuestra curación, paz y, sobre todo, crecimiento en santidad. La Cuaresma es un momento perfecto para enfocarse en este sacramento de conversión, penitencia, perdón y reconciliación.

Para concluir, quiero hacer eco de las palabras de San Pablo: "Somos embajadores de Cristo, como si Dios rogará por medio de nosotros, en nombre de Cristo les rogamos: ¡Reconcíliense con Dios! ... "Ahora es 'el tiempo propicio'; este es "el día de salvación" (2 Cor 5:20; 6:2). Espero que hagan un esfuerzo especial para confesarse durante esta Cuaresma, especialmente si hace mucho tiempo que no lo hacen. Sé que será feliz si lo hace.



**EL ARZOBISPO  
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# Can we have Easter fun WITHOUT THE EASTER BUNNY?



I love the tradition of the Easter Bunny, but don't want to take away from the real meaning of Easter. How do I incorporate the fun without losing sight of the Resurrection?

**A.** When I was a child, my grandma taught me how to honor Mary by making flower bouquets to leave on the doorsteps of our neighbors on May Day. Years later I discovered that the tradition originated in pre-Christian Ireland. An ancient Gaelic tradition had been integrated with Christianity by focusing on Mary. Many cultural traditions have been associated with Catholicism.

## Eggs and the Easter Bunny

Catholicculture.org describes Easter symbols. Eggs symbolized spring in pre-Christian times, but they became symbols of the Resurrection. Eggs were forbidden during Lent for many centuries, and were associated with breaking the Lenten fast. Easter egg hunts were common; in France it was said that the eggs were dropped into yards by flying church bells. In Germany, the eggs were delivered by the Easter Bunny.

## Make Lent and Easter meaningful

Build family traditions during Lent. Read books about saints sharing the names of your children. Make a calendar listing the dates of each family member's baptism anniversary, and decide how to celebrate these special dates. Sort through toy boxes to find items that can be donated. Check out the family Lenten programs sponsored by your parish. Be flexible so that as your children grow older, age-appropriate changes can be made.



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## Emphasize the Easter triduum

Rather than focusing on the coming of the Easter Bunny, emphasize the triduum. Read Bible verses, and ask your children to draw pictures illustrating them. Decorate your home with these drawings rather than bunnies! Color eggs on Holy Saturday and explain why the egg is an Easter symbol. Your children can enjoy the momentary fun of the Easter Bunny in the context of a meaningful journey through Lent leading to the joy of the Resurrection. †

Shut off your phone and  
let God call your heart ❤️



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## Family debate at dinnertime

During our dinnertime discussions, things occasionally got out of hand when I was growing up. Being Italian, we were inclined to speak in loud voices, which my friends from more reserved families considered “yelling.”

One time, my mother was furious, angry, unhappy — pick one — because I didn’t want to go to Sunday Mass. I was a rebellious teenager like most young people during the ’60s who sat in judgment of the adult world.

“I’m not going to church! They’re all hypocrites,” I sneered. That word was one of my favorites, and it fell from my lips like the condemnation of an Old Testament prophet.

Then my mother, known for the world’s best veal parmigiana, went on the attack. “That’s why they go to Mass,” she bellowed. “Because they’re not perfect ... like you!”

The playoffs ended quickly. Mom 1, Me 0. But the veal parmigiana was terrific. None of my friends had a mother who was a world-class cook, a theologian and a Catholic apologist. I was blessed, but didn’t realize it until years later. Today, I proudly count myself as one of the hypocrites.

A lot of instruction is done, or should be done, around the dinner table. It gives parents an occasion to communicate, to teach, to advise, to correct and to show compassion, not to mention “debate” the hare-brained ideas that kids are exposed to in secular society. Those opportunities, however, can be thwarted by TV, cell phones and competing interests.

Pope Francis has been pretty insistent when he talks about the importance of dinnertime and the negative



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influence of technology. In his apostolic teaching *The Joy of Love*, he encouraged families to spend time chatting rather than staring at screens: “We know that sometimes they can keep people apart rather than together, as when at dinnertime everyone is surfing on a mobile phone, or when one spouse falls asleep waiting for the other who spends hours playing with an electronic device. ... A family that almost never eats together or never speaks at the table but looks at the television or the smartphone is hardly a family.”

I still remember the Christmas Eve our family went to a restaurant in Littleton, N.H. Outside snow was falling; inside, Nat King Cole was singing “O Holy Night.” The holiday spirit was everywhere — except at our table. As I

looked around, I realized all four daughters were texting, while my wife was checking her email.

In the tradition of my mother, I proceeded to give the “this has to stop” lecture, at which point everyone reluctantly put away their mobile phones and tried to get in the mood of the season by talking to one another without insult or sarcasm.

The University of Michigan conducted a study about the use of mobile devices at meals and concluded we can control the problem by developing a phone that shows the owner is eating, so the caller can desist. More technology to solve a problem caused by technology? The solution is much simpler — turn it off.

A survey by Pew Research Center found that 88 percent of respondents believe it’s “generally” not right to use a cell phone at dinner. A larger percentage, 96 percent, say they shouldn’t be used at religious services, which is a practice Pope Francis has vigorously criticized.

As much as I complain about cell phone use and how it disrupts interpersonal communication, the situation was just as bad when I was growing up. We had five TVs, one in every room.

Along with millions of other families, we had raucous debates about the war and politics, much like today. Nevertheless, I believe those exchanges were a vital family interaction, although sometimes angry and emotional. That’s how families communicate. We just have to remember to do it with love and patience, because we all don’t think alike.

Pope Francis recently told students in Rome, “When there’s no dialogue at home, when we’re at the table and instead of talking, everyone is on their phone, it’s the start of war because there’s no dialogue. ... Families should speak at the table. They should listen. But everyone does their own thing. One watches television, someone is on the computer and no one talks. We have to restore family interaction.” †



# EASTER PEOPLE

“Easter is the main event. If you don’t believe in the Resurrection, then you’re not a believer.”

A character in a novel says those words. And he’s right.

We are the people of the Resurrection. We are the people of the empty tomb.

In fact, Jesus wasn’t much into funerals, caskets and tombstones at all. Jesus did resurrections, not burials.

So much so, in fact, Easter defines who we are. We believe that Jesus actually, literally, physically rose from the dead. He transformed death into life. Better yet, we believe he will do that for us, too. And that conviction changes the way we live every day. We are Easter people.

Pope Francis said in a General Audience address in 2013,

*[T]he Resurrection ... offers us the greatest hope because it opens our lives and the life of the world to God’s eternal future, to complete happiness, to the certainty that evil, sin, and death can be conquered. This leads us to living our everyday lives more confidently, to facing each day courageously and with commitment.*

In other words, we are Easter people. We know that life conquers death. Grace conquers sin. Courage conquers cowardice. And faith conquers fear.

Do your beliefs in the Resurrection affect the way you live your life? Is there an area of your life that needs resurrection, or needs new life from Christ? A relationship that needs fear to be erased and boldness to be infused? An addiction that has destroyed a part of you or your life? Has greed or materialism snuck in and robbed you of joy? Do you know your neighbors or have you shut them out? Something else?

Spend five minutes each day for three days in prayer for that “fearful” area of your life. Enter the classroom of silence and listen for how God speaks to you and desires to turn what appears to be dead into the living. Invite God to fill you with the courage and commitment Pope Francis points us toward.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a Lutheran pastor, was among a group of Christians who stood up to Adolf Hitler in Nazi Germany. Bonhoeffer helped organize an underground



church that refused to obey the Fuhrer. He became well-known for his deep convictions and courage.

Eventually, Bonhoeffer’s leadership decisions attracted Hitler’s attention and landed Dietrich in prison. Finally, he arrived at the concentration camp in Flossenburg.

Even there, Bonhoeffer continued to inspire the men around him. He led prayer, he taught from Scripture and he stood tall against the moral evil of Hitler.

On a Sunday morning in April 1945, as worship was ending, Dietrich was praying when the guards walked in and shouted, “Bonhoeffer, come with us.” The gathered Christians gasped and got ashen faces. They were about to lose their leader. They knew Bonhoeffer was being led outside to be hanged. Death saturated the room.

But as he stood to follow the guards to his death, Dietrich Bonhoeffer spoke to his fellow prisoners and fearlessly said, “This is the end. ... But for me, it is the beginning of life.”

Easter is the main event.

We are the people of the empty tomb.

We are a people of hope. Death is not the end, but the beginning.

We are Easter people. †

**“Life  
conquers  
death. Grace  
conquers  
sin. Courage  
conquers  
cowardice.  
And faith  
conquers  
fear.”**



**DR. ALLEN R. HUNT**  
is a senior advisor  
for Dynamic  
Catholic Institute.



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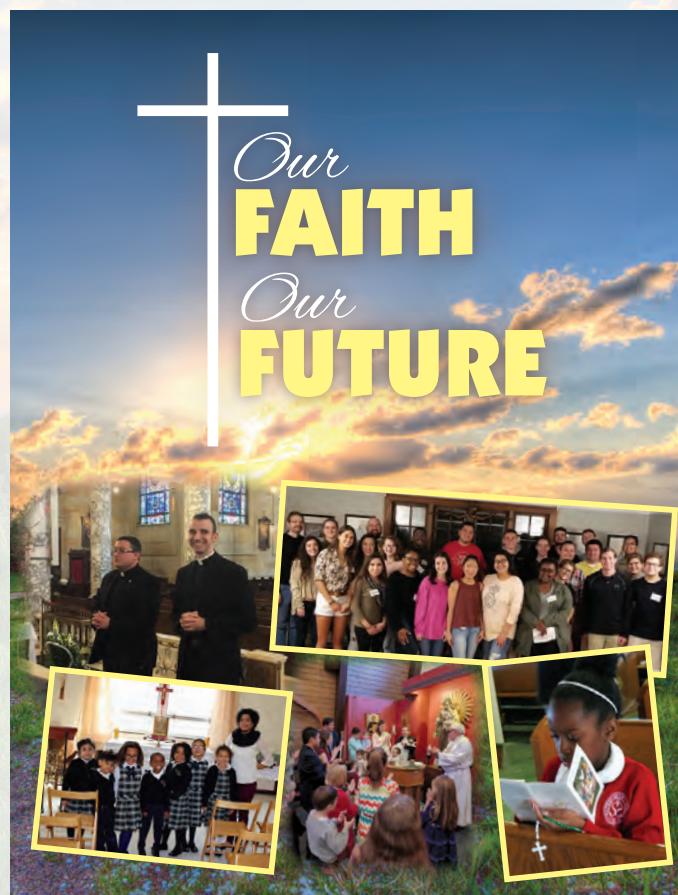


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# Learning the steps of the dance



I remember the first time I saw her. I was a 15-year-old high school sophomore. She was a junior, but I didn't know that at the time. We apparently had grown up on opposite sides of the same city. I was in the audience and she was on stage that early fall afternoon. I don't remember getting to the theater, why I was there or where I was going afterward. All I remember is being absolutely captivated by her.

The way she moved on stage was the embodiment of beauty and grace. Her turns and jumps, expressions and graceful gestures were all absolutely enchanting. She was not merely physically, mechanically performing the steps; she was letting the dance perform through her. The moves had been rehearsed so many times that she didn't have to think about them at all. Her performance came together seamlessly.

I knew nothing about dance when we met. I came to learn that it has a system of rules and procedures with funny sounding names (not so different from my field, the law, perhaps). More than 15 years and two kids later with the dancer I met in high school, I admittedly still don't know very much about dance. However, I've seen enough performances over the years to have a sense of what is beautiful and indicative of solid training and what is discordant or inharmonious.

These days, my wife teaches tiny dancers (aged 3-7 years) at

the University of Hartford HARTT Community Division. They are learning the foundational aspects of movement, progressing toward something more recognizable as dance and ballet. If the students progress through the pre-professional program, they undoubtedly will learn of the many positions, turns, jumps and other movements in the classical ballet repertoire to the most minute detail. They will have performed them so many times as to make the movements second nature. They will aspire to graduate with those movements and techniques committed to their muscle memory, to be recalled and performed seamlessly. They won't need to think about the rules; they will just dance and it will be beautiful.

I listened to a lecture recently that probably was recorded some years ago by a professor emeritus of liberal studies at the University of Notre Dame, Holy Cross Father Nicholas Ayo. His lecture was an in-depth

discussion of the pinnacle Catholic prayers. Father Ayo described the purpose of our lives as learning and practicing the steps of the dance that is being performed in heaven. This is a metaphor that resonates with me.

To be a practicing Catholic is to do (and refrain from doing) certain things. We go to Mass (hopefully, each week) and confession (less often than we should, no doubt), we perform corporal acts of mercy, we give charitably. I would argue that these are the outward manifestations of a kind of person that the practicing Catholic aspires to be: loving, in the broadest sense of the word. Therefore, the steps of our dance are designed to show our friends, family, community and the world that our lives are an expression of the love and beauty that is living and dying in the joy of Christ and the salvation possible only through him.

The steps in our dance represent the actions that influence a way of being and the way we approach the world around us. We aspire to perform our steps more fully, more innately, more effortlessly and essentially more beautifully. Our hope is that we have practiced our steps well enough in this life that we will be invited to the great dance and can perform in heaven with complete grace, relying on our muscle memory, and have it be beautiful. That is, in a sense, the purpose of our lives on earth; the purpose of "practicing" being Catholic.

We practice being Catholic in preparation for the dance in the next life. My wife the dance instructor, my kids, friends, co-workers and clients continue to help me practice my steps daily. I'm not very good, but there's still hope. I might find grace, yet. †



**CODY GUARNIERI** is a criminal defense lawyer with a Hartford law firm and is a member of St. Patrick-St. Anthony Parish in Hartford.

*"The steps of our dance are designed to show our friends, family, community and the world that our lives are an expression of the love and beauty that is living and dying in the joy of Christ and the salvation possible only through him."*



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Q

Dear Father Joe,  
Why should I go to the Holy Week services  
at my parish? They seem so long to me.

**A.** I'm glad you asked that question: I know that, at first glance, the Holy Week schedule at church can seem quite intimidating and, because we aren't sure what is happening there anyway, we may be tempted simply to skip it.

I hope that, as I share with you each step of Holy Week, you see that these services are nothing short of an invitation into the heart of our Christian faith.

There really is no way that we can go over all of the richness and depth of all the services for Holy Week, so I'll do my best here to give you a snapshot.

### Palm Sunday

■ On this day, the Church celebrates Christ's entrance into Jerusalem to accomplish his paschal mystery. Most parishes celebrate with a procession at their Masses, in which we commit ourselves to "walking with Christ" through his passion, death and Resurrection.

### Tuesday of Holy Week

■ Often, today is the day when a special Mass, called the Chrism Mass, is celebrated at the cathedral.

At the Chrism Mass, the bishop blesses



“We have hope and joy in our lives because of the wonder of Christ’s love conquering our sin and his life overcoming our death.”

the oils that every church in the diocese will use over the next year for the sacraments of baptism and confirmation, and for the anointing of the sick. Also at that Mass, all priests renew their vows.

### Holy Thursday

■ Today, we focus on the gift of the Eucharist. In local parish churches on Holy Thursday evening, we celebrate the Mass of the Lord’s Supper. Here, we remember the last meal Jesus celebrated with his disciples as he anticipated his passion and death. The Blessed Sacrament is removed from the main sanctuary and taken to a place of repose for adoration.

### Good Friday

■ On Good Friday, we focus on the suffering and death of Jesus. We recognize that our sins come with a terrible price and that Jesus paid that price willingly out of love for us.

As part of this focus, we observe Good Friday as a day of fasting and abstinence.

There is no Mass on Good Friday; we have a Service of the Passion of the Lord, often at 3 p.m., which is traditionally held to be the moment of Jesus’ last breath.

This service begins in silence, with the priest laying prostrate before the cross. It continues with readings from Scripture, a homily and prayers for God’s blessings and mercy. Next, we adore the cross with a sign of reverence: often a kiss or a touch. The key is for us to show our gratitude for the means that God used to save us.

Finally, we bring the Blessed Sacrament out from the place of repose and receive Communion. The service ends in silence.

### Easter Vigil

■ Continuing our walk with Christ, we will have spent Friday and Saturday “in the tomb” with Jesus. With our service on Holy Saturday, we move from the tomb to the glory of the Resurrection.

The service contains four parts: the service of light, Liturgy of the Word, Christian initiation and renewal and holy Eucharist.

The service of light begins outside, where we bless our Easter fire and paschal candle. The Mass begins inside in darkness to remind us of Jesus in the tomb.

The darkness in church continues as we move into the Liturgy of the Word, where we read multiple readings from the Old Testament that tell the story of salvation history through the ages. Then, the lights come on as we sing the *Gloria* together. The lights coming on and the *Gloria* being sung are the sign of our movement from the darkness of the tomb into the glory of the Resurrection. We haven’t sung or said the *Gloria* in more than six weeks, and we rejoice at this time. Often, you can bring bells to this service and ring them as we sing. We read from the New Testament and Gospel and have a homily.

We then bring into the Church those who have been preparing to do so for many months. We remember our own baptism, and thank God that we are a part of the long chain of salvation history through our membership in the Church, and we rejoice with those who are joining us in the family of faith.

### Easter morning

■ We rejoice with great joy at Jesus’ victory over sin and death. His victory is our victory. We have hope and joy in our lives because of the wonder of Christ’s love conquering our sin and his life overcoming our death.

He is risen! He is risen indeed! Enjoy another day in God’s presence. †

**FATHER JOE KRUPP**  
is a former comedy  
writer who is now a  
Catholic priest.  
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## What do you say when ...

Family members claim religion doesn't matter as long as you're a good person?

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**Q At a recent family gathering, several of my family members were saying that it doesn't matter what religion you are, as long as you are a good person. What can I say?**

### First things first

■ One of the first things you can do is to agree that being a good person is important. You can also acknowledge the goodness of your family members' underlying desire. That is, they are seeking some common, unifying value capable of overcoming the divisions and conflicts that are often attributed to differences in religious beliefs.

At the same time, you need to examine your own reaction to this statement. Is it true? Is the goodness of a person the point of all religions? Do religions merely represent different paths to the same goal and are they, therefore, all equally valid and true?

### Many paths, same God

■ The claim that all religions are equally valid and true since all represent different paths that lead to the same destination is well-intentioned. However, this position seeks to build unity among people and religions by, in essence, negating religion altogether. To hold that all religions are equally valid and true is to say that no religion is ultimately valid or true. Every religion makes absolute truth claims, many of which contradict the absolute truth claims of other faiths.





**DOUG CULP**

*is the CAO and secretary for pastoral life for the Diocese of Lexington, Ky. He holds an MA in theology from Catholic Theological Union in Chicago.*

## The truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth

■ Next, you might gently probe your family members' position to see if their assertion is capable of accomplishing its goal of transcending religion in order to attain unity. A great way to do this is to simply ask them questions. For example, a few fundamental questions would be: What does it mean to be a good person? Who determines the definition of a good person? What are the criteria for determining whether someone is good? Where do the criteria come from? Why are these the criteria and not some other criteria?

Questions like these reveal that we simply cannot assert the absolute truth of something without making a dogmatic claim at the same time. Absolute truth claims are by nature dogmatic.

So, when we say that being a good person supersedes religion, we are creating a new dogma that "good" behavior transcends all other religious truth. We are establishing our own truth as the criterion against which all other claims of truth must be measured. It's as if being a "good" person is now a religion in itself.

## The tension

■ We often try to escape the tensions of life, but life happens precisely in the tension. Rather than deal seriously with the competing truth claims of different religions through the hard, long work of dialogue, mutual respect and a commitment to seeking the truth together, we are sometimes tempted to search out shortcuts to avoid healthy, necessary conflict in the name of peace. Your family members' statement offers you the perfect opportunity to model what this means in practice.

Certainly, being a good person is an important step to establishing peace between people. The question remains, though: Is it enough? Does being a good person represent the fullness of the truth?

Our Catholic faith would answer with a clear "no." It is Christ's death and Resurrection that save, not our being good. Yes, we are to try to be good people (a tremendous challenge given that we live in a fallen world plagued by sin), but more so we are called to the life of Christian discipleship — a discipleship that finds its fullest expression at the intersection of the Tree of Life that is the wood of the cross. †

## For further reflection

Consider prayerfully reading the following Gospel passages:

■ As he was setting out on a journey, a man ran up, knelt down before him and asked him, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus answered him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: 'You shall not kill; you shall not commit adultery; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness; you shall not defraud; honor your father and your mother.'" He replied and said to him, "Teacher, all of these I have observed from my youth."

Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said to him, "You are lacking in one thing. Go, sell what you have, and give to [the] poor and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me." At that statement, his face fell, and he went away sad, for he had many possessions. Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!" (Mk 10:17-23)

### Reflection questions:

1. How might this passage speak to the assertion made by the family members?
2. What does it have to say about our ability to be good?
3. What does Jesus' conversation with the rich man mean for the claim that being a good person is all that matters?

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# *Deaf ministry*

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word of God  
to all ears









Julie Colbert uses American Sign Language to interpret the regular 10:30 a.m. Sunday Mass at St. Timothy Parish in West Hartford.

PHOTO BY AARON JOSEPH

**When Leslie Tassie went to St. Timothy Parish in West Hartford three years ago to attend the 10:30 a.m. Sunday Mass with an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter, it was the first time she had attended Mass in 20 years.**

**An ASL interpreter had left the church at which Tassie had worshipped, and since she couldn't follow the liturgy, there was no reason, in her mind, to go back.**

**STORY BY  
MARY  
CHALUPSKY**

For many deaf Catholics like Tassie, of Bristol, celebrating Mass in her language either with an ASL interpreter or deaf priest is essential.

So when she learned that the Archdiocese of Hartford was going to revitalize its Ministry for the Deaf after a decade of dormancy, she was elated.

"It's wonderful," says Tassie, who is president of the local chapter of the International Catholic Deaf Association that meets at St. Timothy.

For the past eight years, a community of 30 to 40 deaf Catholics has attended St. Timothy Parish for a 10:30 a.m. Sunday liturgy that has offered an ASL-interpreted Mass,

but they remained hopeful that they could be served by a deaf priest.

Last year, Archbishop Leonard P. Blair appointed Father Thomas Coughlin, the first deaf-born priest to be ordained in the United States, as chaplain of the archdiocese's Ministry for the Deaf. Father Coughlin works with Deacon Dennis Ferguson, the deacon at St. Timothy's, who, also last year, was named director of the Ministry for the Deaf.

Not only do they serve when available at the regular English-vocalized,

ASL-interpreted 10:30 a.m. Sunday Mass with Pastor Alvin J. LeBlanc, but since January, Father Coughlin has celebrated a new 12:15 p.m. ASL Mass on the first Sunday of the month. That liturgy is followed by Bible study and a potluck dinner for the deaf community that meets at the parish.

For Catholics like Tassie, attending Mass, with all its nuances, is virtually impossible without the use of a sign language interpreter or, better, a deaf priest who can celebrate the liturgy in one's own language.

Members of the deaf community are grateful for the revitalized ministry. They are quick to note that there is a significant difference

between attending a Mass with an interpreter compared with a priest who signs as he celebrates.

According to Deacon Ferguson, "Going to a Mass with a deaf interpreter, as







PHOTO BY MARY CHALUPSKY

Father Alvin LeBlanc, pastor of St. Timothy Parish in West Hartford, right, celebrates Sunday Mass with Deacon Dennis Ferguson, director of the Ministry for the Deaf.

“ *Having a priest who can celebrate the Mass in American Sign Language is a **TOTALLY DIFFERENT EXPERIENCE.*** ”

— DEACON DENNIS FERGUSON

wonderful as they are, is analogous to going to a French movie with subtitles,” with nuances lost in the translation. Having a priest who can celebrate the Mass in American Sign Language is a totally different experience, he says.

Doreen Simons of Farmington, mother of two, has attended Masses without ASL. “It’s awful,” she said through the parish interpreter, Julie Colbert. “I just dream and look around the whole time.

“I don’t get anything out of it ... I don’t know what’s going on,” said Simons, who is a professor of ASL studies at the University of Connecticut.

“It’s the same as if you went to an ASL Mass and didn’t know the language,” she explained. “You wouldn’t understand what they’re saying, either.”

Deacon Ferguson works from his nearby office at the American School for the Deaf in West Hartford, the first school for the deaf in the United States.

He says a group of deaf parishioners from St. Timothy Parish approached Archbishop Blair two years ago about renewing the ministry that took a hiatus 10 years ago upon the deaths of Msgr. Robert D. Bergin, chaplain, and Sister of Mercy Maura Joseph Rose, coordinator of what was then called the Catholic Deaf Apostolate.

Archbishop Blair, who was relatively new as the archdiocese’s shepherd at the time, was surprised that more pastoral outreach to deaf Catholics didn’t exist, the deacon says.

“We lost many of our deaf Catholics who drifted away,” some to other Christian communities with ASL services, Deacon Ferguson said. He noted that an ASL-interpreted Mass may attract 25 to 40 people, while signed Masses with a deaf priest draw as many as 90 participants.

At the direction of Archbishop Blair, Deacon Ferguson searched for a priest who knew sign language and had experience working with the deaf

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# 'It's wonderful ...'

— LESLIE TASSIE

community.

"It's a call to evangelize," explained Deacon Ferguson. He notes that at a gathering of Catholic leaders in Florida last July, the U.S. bishops called for the evangelization of all Catholics, including those with disabilities or other impediments to their faith. The National Catholic Office for the Deaf, for example, estimates that it serves 5.7 million people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

The search ended with Father Coughlin, an internationally known priest who was ordained 40 years ago and who has spent his vocation creating opportunities for the deaf community within the Catholic Church.

"He's just a gem," said Deacon Ferguson, who is a lawyer and a retired director of residential services for the state Department of Developmental Disabilities. "It was a God wink that we found him.

"The community is just so grateful to Archbishop Blair for recognizing

the problem and moving forward to do something about it," he said.

A warm, approachable priest who reads lips and recently received a cochlear implant to amplify his hearing, Father Coughlin was born into a family of deaf parents, grandparents and two hearing sisters in Malone, N.Y., near the Quebec border. He attended the Rochester School for the Deaf and obtained a high school diploma from the St. Mary School for the Deaf in Buffalo, N.Y. He holds degrees from Gallaudet University and The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

He was ordained to the Trinitarian Order by Cardinal Lawrence Shehan of Baltimore in 1977.

After crisscrossing the country and traveling internationally for four years as a home missionary priest for the International Catholic Deaf Association, he raised \$25,000 and bought a bankrupt hotel in Old Forge, N.Y., in 1981. There, he started



Camp Mark Seven, a Catholic deaf youth and adult program located on 15 acres that flourishes today. He was transferred six years later to the Diocese of Honolulu to serve the deaf.

Undaunted by the challenges and obstacles he met along the way, Father Coughlin now is the founder of the Dominican Missionaries for the Apostolates of the Deaf and Disabled, a community with 20 seminarians in the United States and other countries that, with a donation of \$50,000, took its first steps toward formation as a religious institute in 2004 under the auspices of Bishop Allen Vigneron of the Diocese of Oakland, Calif.

In his Connecticut post, Father Coughlin offers sacramental, pastoral and charitable ministry to the deaf community, including baptisms, weddings, funerals, confession, Bible studies, liturgies, visits to the sick, sacramental preparation, a food pantry and retreats for deaf Catholics. Videophones, computers and other electronic devices enable him to expand his reach.

"I do a lot of counseling with people who call me from all over the U.S.," said Father Coughlin. He plans to increase awareness of the state's deaf community by celebrating Mass throughout Connecticut.

Among parishes in the archdiocese that also have offered ASL-interpreted Masses are St. Brigid in West Hartford and St. Jerome in New Britain, which is beginning to work with a group of Hispanic deaf parishioners.

St. Mary Parish in New Britain



► Father Thomas Coughlin and a member of the congregation converse in American Sign Language after a Mass at St. Timothy Church.

PHOTO BY AARON JOSEPH





◀ From left, Father Thomas Coughlin meets with Doreen Simons, who teaches courses in American Sign Language and deaf studies at UConn; Deacon Dennis Ferguson; and Angel Rubiñan, a psychologist and counselor at the American School for the deaf, in Deacon Ferguson's office at the school.

PHOTO BY AARON JOSEPH

also offers an ASL-interpreted Mass for Hispanic parishioners. Angel Rubiñan, who was at a Mass at St. Timothy's with his parents, who moved from Puerto Rico four years ago, said that Wanda Ortiz serves as ASL interpreter for a small community there.

"Deaf people feel more connected when they are with each other," said Father Coughlin. He estimates that there are about 5,000 deaf Catholics in the greater Hartford area. "And most of them don't go to church because there are no priests who can sign."

"We hope to change that," he said.

The Ministry for the Deaf also tries "to use audiovisual equipment to fill what is lacking in any regular Sunday liturgy services," said Father Coughlin, since the majority of deaf Catholics can't hear music or spoken words.

He added that he hopes the ministry will include teaching religious education to deaf students at the American School for the Deaf, especially in preparation for first holy Communion and confirmation.

Deaf parishioners agree that having a signing priest in the new archdiocesan ministry is a special gift.

"Don't misunderstand that we don't appreciate having an ASL interpreter," said Simons. "But now with Father Tom, we can see him and understand what he's saying ... put it into pictures and also learn from each other."

"I realized by attending his classes that we missed a lot about the Mass and the Catholic Church all these years," she continued. "He explained things about the sacraments that I never knew." †



“With Father Tom, we can see him and understand what he's saying ... put it into pictures and also **LEARN FROM EACH OTHER.**”

— DOREEN SIMONS



PHOTO BY MARY CHALUPSKY

◀ A potluck dinner and Bible study class follows the new Sunday Mass celebrated by Father Coughlin at St. Timothy.



## Hartford Bishops' Foundation funds new initiatives in CATHOLIC EDUCATION AND FAITH FORMATION



STORY BY SHELLEY WOLF

Although the funds raised by the Hartford Bishops' Foundation are intended chiefly for grants over the long term, the archdiocesan Office of Education, Evangelization and Catechesis is wasting no time in making a grant request from the proceeds of last year's very successful annual gala.

Last November, the fundraiser drew more than \$1.7 million to support Catholic education and faith formation for people of all ages in the archdiocese.

"I'm grateful for their vision to transform the archdiocese in the wake of pastoral planning," said Sister Mary Grace Walsh, provost of the Office of Education, Evangelization and Catechesis (OEEC). "We need to have programs and initiatives that are going to help reawaken and enliven the faith of the people."

The money raised last year by the Hartford Bishops' Foundation is *not* going into everyday operating costs, she explained, but is being used "to build up leaders and teachers and to build new programs" for the purpose of Catholic education and faith formation in parishes and schools.

Conversely, daily operating expenses for OEEC are funded through the *cathedraticum* (a portion of parish income) and the Archbishop's Annual Appeal.



Faith formation, Sister Mary Grace explained, is a broad concept that includes both education in the faith and growth in people's relationship with Jesus Christ. "It includes learning how to pray and going beyond the textbook to something more dynamic," she said. "The purpose is to transform individuals."

The funds raised by the Hartford Bishops' Foundation for this purpose are being made available to the OEEC in the form of grants.

"For the various initiatives we're going to do over the next few years, I can make an application to the Hartford Bishops' Foundation to use that money," the provost explained. "Our office can apply for grants for programs that we're developing to help the parishes and schools of the archdiocese."





## OEEC is formulating new programs in four general areas:

### ■ Professional development opportunities for those who serve in church ministry.

To foster a more vibrant parish or campus life and to lead to improved student performance in the schools, OEEC is making professional development opportunities available to many: pastoral associates, lay parish leaders, campus ministers and archdiocesan school administrators and teachers.

“This applies to anyone who serves in a local parish or Catholic school,” Sister Mary Grace said. “We want to offer excellent formation for those who serve the Church as volunteers or in paid ministry positions. We realize that to attract excellent speakers, there is a cost involved.”

Foundation funds are being used to support the office’s new ELM initiative, which kicked off in February. “We’ve identified a great need in our parishes to help them have a dynamic faith formation program,” Sister Mary Grace explained.

ELM stands for “Evangelizing catechesis, Lifelong formation and Missionary discipleship.” ELM has two branches. The first is the Parish Accompaniment Project, an 18-month-long process designed to help parishes develop a plan to engage all ages and generations in lifelong faith formation. The second is Leadership Formation, an 18-month-long training and certification program for parish lay ministers that develops individuals and, ultimately, strengthens the parishes.

“These are two examples of

programs we wanted to bring forth,” said Sister Mary Grace, who is a member of the Apostles of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

### ■ Spiritual formation for parish leaders and delegates in advance of the Archdiocese of Hartford Synod.

On Pentecost 2017, Archbishop Leonard P. Blair announced his intent to convoke a synod, a gathering of representatives of the clergy, religious and lay faithful, to discuss and recommend priorities and practical steps to promote the life and mission of the local Church. The synod process will involve intensive preparation, consultation and study, as well as the selection and training of delegates, prior to its conclusion at Pentecost in June 2020.

According to Sister Mary Grace, funds from the Hartford Bishops’ Foundation will assist OEEC in providing expert speakers, mentors and materials for this important work.

### ■ Grants for innovation and learning.

Schools and parishes may apply to OEEC for grants to fund creative, innovative and transformational projects. The grants will be distributed by a committee based on specific criteria. Funds for such programs would flow through the OEEC, and then out to the schools and parishes, the provost explained.

For example, a parish might choose to apply to OEEC for financial assistance to start an early childhood

faith formation program in response to the ELM initiative. OEEC has identified Catechesis of the Good Shepherd as a unique curriculum for this purpose.

“We will apply to the Hartford Bishops’ Foundation for a grant for this,” Sister Mary Grace said. “This is a very creative and innovative program for teaching little ones. We’re trying to help families to bridge the gap from baptism to when their children start faith formation as 5-year-olds.”

### ■ Honor awards for Catholic school educators.

Extraordinary educators in parish elementary schools and archdiocesan secondary schools will be singled out through the Seat of Honor Awards during the 2017-2020 academic years.

“The idea is to honor those who have given their lives to Catholic schools,” Sister Mary Grace said.

Recipients will be selected by an unbiased committee based on nomination and specific criteria. Honorees will receive archdiocesan recognition and a monetary reward. According to Sister Mary Grace, the first award winners are expected to be announced by the end of the current school year.

The provost could not be more enthusiastic about the possibilities ahead. “We’re very grateful to the foundation for realizing this is about educating people in the faith and about transforming lives one person at a time,” Sister Mary Grace said. “We’re already off to a good start.” †





# A spiritual home away from home

PHOTO BY SHEILEN WOLF

◀ Catholic Campus Minister Sandi Smith says goodbye to Dan Burke, a civil engineering student, at the Archdiocese of Hartford's new Catholic Campus Ministry Center at the University of Hartford in West Hartford.

An hour later, the group functions came to an end. There was another flurry of activity, as some students left and others arrived.

Then the bustling house quieted down and more than 30 students gathered for a reverent celebration of the Sunday Mass. Father Patrick Kane, the Archdiocese of Hartford's Catholic chaplain for the University of Hartford, officiated.

After the Mass, Smith announced upcoming group activities, including a coat drive. She also invited everyone to return on

Tuesday for the 12:15 p.m. Mass and a turkey soup lunch.

These activities and many others are now possible at the Archdiocese of Hartford's new Catholic Campus Ministry Center, which opened last October to serve students at the University of Hartford.

In May 2017, the archdiocese purchased the former home at 207 Bloomfield Ave. in West Hartford after the University of Hartford put the property up for sale.

Leaders in the Archdiocese of Hartford had already determined they wanted to grow campus ministries in the archdiocese, and this particular home was located directly across the street from the main entrance to the University of Hartford.

"The opportunity was presented to us and the archbishop thought it was good timing, so we took advantage of the opportunity," said Sister Mary Grace Walsh, provost of the archdiocese's Office of Education, Evangelization and Catechesis.

The new center is supported by the Archbishop's Annual Appeal, she said, which is also a major supporter of campus ministries at various colleges and universities in the archdiocese.

"We realize it's very important for the Church to accompany young people during the college years. We're sort of the transition from home through college or university to living on their own," Sister Mary Grace explained.

The new center is a place where students can get a respite during the day and also develop spiritually.

"It's nice for students to have an oasis to come to, but it's also filled with faith," Sister Mary Grace said. "It provides a place for prayer, for service and for conversation.

"And it's a good place for accompaniment in the faith," she said. "Truly, that's what the campus ministers are doing." They're connecting students with their faith,

On a chilly fall Sunday evening, the well-lit sign saying "Catholic Campus Ministry Center" — and the lights of the charming brick house behind it — beckoned in the darkness to students from the University of Hartford in West Hartford.

Inside, students were greeted by the delicious smells of a roast turkey dinner wafting from the tiny kitchen. Sandi Smith, the Catholic campus minister, invited newcomers to grab a plate and help themselves.

Students sat at two long tables in the dining room, where they ate and chatted. Once the meal was over, a few said goodbye, but most stayed on.

The creative ones remained in the dining room to paint ornaments for a tree they planned to donate to the Wadsworth Atheneum Festival of Trees. The Newman Choristers headed to the white-paneled living room turned worship space, where they began practicing for the 7:15 p.m. Mass. At the same time, a group of young men headed upstairs to the Newman Lounge, where they held their first young-adult Knights of Columbus council meeting.



◀ Archbishop Leonard P. Blair addresses students and guests at the blessing of the Catholic Campus Ministry Center at the University of Hartford on Oct. 18, 2017.

PHOTO BY MARIA ZONE



she explained, and are helping them to grow in their relationship with Jesus.

After the purchase, the first priority was to prepare the home with students' health and safety in mind, Sister Mary Grace said. Last summer, Paul Connery, archdiocese director of property and assets, and Stephen Fiasconaro, facility director, took the lead in adding a handicapped-accessible ramp, alarm system, outdoor lighting and air conditioning on the first floor. A sidewalk was added along the road, and the facility was inspected by the archdiocese's Office of Safe Environment.

Archbishop Leonard P. Blair blessed the center on Oct. 18. It officially opened three days later, just in time for parents' weekend at the university.

The center hosted 75 parents at an open house. Some were so appreciative of the new center, Smith said, that they mailed in small checks and gift cards to help support the venture. One mother from New Mexico even shipped a vase to be used for flowers at Mass.

"Everyone wants it to succeed," Smith said.

Since the opening, the center has seen an uptick in the number of students at Mass. Attendance at the Sunday evening Mass has averaged about 30 students, an increase of 10 students from the previous school year, Smith observed. By late November, attendance surpassed 30, and a few people had to sit in a hallway.

Father Kane, who was assigned as chaplain in August, said, "There definitely has been growth. We were filled to capacity tonight. It's a nice problem to have. There's more activity, and the students are starting to get excited."

Father Kane believes in the value of campus ministry centers. As a music major at Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) in New Britain, he felt something was missing from his life. He joined the activities at CCSU's Newman House, where he eventually found his priestly vocation.

He said he thinks the new Catholic Campus Ministry Center at the University of Hartford is a great place for students "to pray, to study and to talk if they need to." In addition to celebrating Mass at the center every Sunday and Tuesday, Father Kane hopes to join the students for meals and to make himself available for confessions, as his schedule permits.

"I see them as my flock," he said, "and will care for each of them as best I can."

Father Kane is also the parochial vicar at St. Teresa of Calcutta in Manchester.

The new facility itself offers many other benefits, namely greater permanence, visibility and convenience.

Before it opened, Masses were held in various rooms on campus and the Catholic campus minister's office was hidden in the basement of the



▲ Aaliyah Booker, a music major and member of the Newman Club, practices on the digital piano in the worship space.

Gengras Student Union.

"Unless you were specifically coming to see me, you'd never pass by it," Smith observed.

Housed in a Tudor home built in 1919, the new Catholic Campus Ministry Center offers a worship space, chaplain's office, campus minister's office and kitchen all in one building, plus a dining room, lounge, small library and an outdoor patio, where students can relax. The entryway and hallways afford space for posting event notices and signup sheets, as well as a place to display Catholic books and brochures.

The students said they appreciate the permanence of the center and the homey new venue.

Jillian Pelletier of Bristol, a junior at the University of Hartford and secretary of the Newman Club, said she has been attending Mass on campus since she was a freshman, but has always longed for a permanent place for prayer and worship.

"That was the one thing I wished they had here and now it feels like we do," Pelletier said. "It's permanent and it's always here. We don't have to set it up and break it down."

Pelletier, a physical therapy major, said joining the Newman Club and attending Mass twice a week have both helped to deepen her faith. "I actually go to church more than I ever did at home," she admitted.

Javier Melecio, a junior and a mechanical engineering student from Middletown, has been part of the Newman Club for two years.

"This house is a great upgrade," he said. "It's a much bigger space and more welcoming. It's a great space for anyone to find themselves in a place of faith."

Melecio was born in Puerto Rico and attended Xavier High School in Middletown, but said he did not begin practicing the faith until about five years ago. With Smith's help, he made his first Communion while at the University of Hartford and is now studying with her weekly to prepare for his confirmation in the spring. "Sandi is always here to talk to about Catholicism," he said, "and she makes great food."

The Catholic Campus Ministry Center is officially open from noon to 9 p.m. on Sunday, and from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday. On Sunday, parking is available directly across the street in university Lot A.

The center is also open for specific events, such as Monday evening for a small faith group meeting, Tuesday evening for Choristers practice and on some weekends for occasional retreats and socials.

Smith said she tells students that the center is open anytime her white Volvo station wagon is parked in the driveway. †





# Catholic Charities Developmental Disabilities Program

## *breathes life*

### into former archdiocesan school building



**T**he former St. Mary School in Newington is being put to good use again now that it is serving as the new Catholic Charities Family Center at Annunciation Parish.

The family center houses Catholic Charities' new Learning and Life Skills Program, which is intended to help people with developmental disabilities acquire daily living, social and employment skills.

"This is a perfect location for us — for our clients with disabilities," said Douglas DeCerbo, director of residential services for Catholic Charities Developmental Disabilities Program. His office oversees housing for clients in group homes and apartments, and also manages the new Learning and Life Skills Program.

"Our wheelchair vans can drive right up to the overhang, so

inclement weather doesn't bother clients," DeCerbo said. "Everything is on the first floor. There's a lot of space, and there's handicapped-accessible bathrooms. So it really was an ideal space for us."

Some of the center's clients with developmental disabilities also have physical disabilities, DeCerbo said.

St. Mary School, which served grades K-8, closed in August 2016

because of declining enrollment. On Nov. 1, 2017, Catholic Charities Developmental Disabilities Program moved its administrative offices from the Archdiocesan Center at St. Thomas Seminary in Bloomfield to the former school at 652 Willard Ave. in Newington.

Now that DeCerbo and three other staffers have settled in, they're planning to grow the new Learning and Life Skills Program.

"We're looking to expand the services for the disabled population," he explained. "There aren't as many services as there can be and should be," especially for those "who age out of high school."

The former school offers a larger space with offices, classrooms, a kitchen, a gymnasium and a stage.



**STORY AND  
PHOTOGRAPHY  
BY SHELLEY  
WOLF**





◀ The former St. Mary School in Newington now houses a Catholic Charities program for people with disabilities.

▼ Douglas DeCerbo, director of residential services for Catholic Charities Developmental Disabilities Program, and Vicki Iaccarino, administrative coordinator of residential services, welcome clients to the new Learning and Life Skills Program located in the former St. Mary School in Newington.

“For the staff, we can adapt to any office space, but the opportunity it gives our clients — that’s innovative. It just brings a whole different level of energy to everybody,” DeCerbo said.

The Developmental Disabilities Program currently offers housing in group homes and one-person apartments in Hartford County for 34 clients, ranging in age from 24 to 87, DeCerbo said. Traditionally, it also has provided case management, created individual goal-oriented plans to help its clients develop daily living skills and offered additional workshops in the homes.

The new facility enables the agency to move some of its daytime services, such as art or music therapy, from the group homes to the family center

as part of its new Learning and Life Skills Program. With room to grow, the family center will also allow for more social interaction among clients and volunteers, and offer new job training activities.

DeCerbo said his agency plans to develop clients’ employability through cottage industries that will train them in such areas as the graphic arts, culinary skills or horticulture. Clients could then produce goods for sale to the public. DeCerbo’s office would set up a business model, develop a work program and subsidize the workers’ pay, he explained.

“A lot of our clients work well with computers,” he added. “We have one person who is now infatuated with calendars. I would hope we could get some into photography. There’s a lot that can be done with a little bit of an idea [now that we have] the facilities.”

DeCerbo previously worked in Deep River at the Academy of Mount St. John, which offers similar vocational programs.

DeCerbo said he also hopes to develop a custodial team to work at the facility and at other Catholic Charities buildings. “The desire is to create meaningful work,” he said. “We want to create our own jobs.”

Daniel Labrecque, a 39-year-old client who lives in his own apartment, already works as a custodian at the new center. He’s done plenty of cleaning and furniture

moving, DeCerbo said.

Labrecque takes the bus to work each day and is so conscientious that he arrived early on the day of a recent snowstorm, DeCerbo said, while agency administrators who drove their own cars struggled to get in on time.

Since the closure of St. Mary School more than a year ago, the building was used on occasion by the Town of Newington, the Rotary Club and a weekend renter who chose to move to another facility. A number of local churches and nonprofits also expressed interest in renting the property.

“We just sat on it,” said Father Shawn T. Daly, administrator of Annunciation Parish. Annunciation Parish includes St. Mary Church and Church of the Holy Spirit, both in Newington.

Eventually, Catholic Charities called and said they were interested. “I talked to my trustees and I talked to a few parishioners,” Father Daly said. “They thought, ‘This is really an outreach of what we’re all about as a parish — continuing in sharing the faith, evangelizing and doing the works that Christ taught us to do.’”

The parish decided to lease the first floor of the former school to Catholic Charities, Monday through Friday. The new usage required a zoning change, and parishioners spoke in support of the proposed use at a town zoning board meeting.

DeCerbo and his team currently occupy a portion of the first floor of the building. “As we expand our programming, we’ll expand into the space,” he said. “The goal is to grow it and hopefully take the entire space at some point.”

Father Daly said he and his parishioners are all for it.

“We want them to be very successful,” Father Daly said, “because the more space they use, the more people they’re going to be servicing.” †







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

**Very Reverend Steven C. Boguslawski, OP:** appointed director of seminarians, Archdiocese of Hartford, effective Jan. 9, 2018, for a five-year term, in addition to his duties as vicar general and moderator of the curia for the Archdiocese of Hartford.

**Reverend Michael T. Casey:** appointed director of vocations, Archdiocese of Hartford, effective Jan. 9, 2018, for a five-year term, in addition to duties as parochial vicar of the Cathedral of St. Joseph, Hartford.

**Reverend Jeffrey A. Gubbiotti:** from director of vocations, Archdiocese of Hartford, appointed to pastor of Holy Rosary Parish, Ansonia, effective Jan. 9, 2018, for a six-year term.

**Reverend Stephen A. Krugel:** from pastor, Holy Rosary Parish, Ansonia, appointed to senior priest\* status, effective Jan. 9, 2018.

**Reverend Gye Chun Lee:** appointed chaplain to the Korean Catholic Community, Archdiocese of Hartford, effective Dec. 8, 2017, for a five-year term.

**Reverend John E. Pahl:** from senior parochial vicar, St. James Parish, Manchester, appointed to senior priest\* status, effective Feb. 28, 2018.

**Reverend Jeffrey V. Romans:** appointed secretary of the archdiocesan synod for 2020, effective Jan. 9, 2018, in addition to duties as pastor of St. Bridget of Sweden Parish, Cheshire.

**Reverend Gary F. Simeone:** appointed priest-chairman of the Archbishop's Annual Appeal, effective Jan. 9, 2018, in addition to duties as pastor of St. Gregory the Great Parish, Bristol.

**Reverend Dennis J. Vincenzo:** from pastor of St. Michael Parish, New Haven, appointed to medical leave of absence, effective Jan. 15, 2018.

**Reverend Robert Villa:** from administrator of St. Raymond of Peñafort Parish, Enfield, appointed to pastor of newly

erected St. Martha Parish, Enfield, effective Dec. 3, 2017, for a six-year term.

**Reverend John G. Weaver:** from senior parochial vicar of St. Raymond of Peñafort Parish, Enfield, appointed to administrator of St. Raymond of Peñafort Parish, Enfield, effective Dec. 3, 2017.

**Reverend Shawn Aaron, LC:** granted priestly faculties\*\*, effective Nov. 30, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend Kevin Baldwin, LC:** renewal of priestly faculties\*\*, effective Nov. 30, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend John Bender, LC:** renewal of priestly faculties\*\*, effective Nov. 30, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend Joseph Brickner, LC:** renewal of priestly faculties\*\*, effective Nov. 30, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend Jon Budke, LC:** renewal of priestly faculties\*\*, effective Nov. 30, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend Robert Blyman:** granted priestly faculties\*\*, effective Dec. 12, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend Mark J. Bonsignore:** renewal of priestly faculties\*\*, effective Dec. 12, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend John Connor, LC:** renewal of priestly faculties\*\*, effective Nov. 30, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend Raymund Cosgrave, LC:** renewal of priestly faculties\*\*, effective Nov. 30, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend John Curran, LC:** renewal of priestly faculties\*\*, effective Nov. 30, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend David Daly, LC:** renewal of priestly faculties\*\*, effective Nov. 30, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend Simon Devereux, LC:** renewal of priestly faculties\*\*, effective Nov. 30, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend Joseph Gillespie, LC:** renewal of priestly faculties\*\*, effective Nov. 30, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend Donald A. Guglielmi:** renewal of priestly faculties\*\*, effective Dec. 15, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend Edward Hopkins, LC:** renewal of priestly faculties\*\*, effective Nov. 30, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend Andreas Kramarz, LC:** renewal of priestly faculties\*\*, effective Nov. 30, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend Andrew LaBudde, LC:** renewal of priestly faculties\*\*, effective Nov. 30, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend Michael Manz:** renewal of priestly faculties\*\*, effective Dec. 1, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend Edward McIlmail, LC:** renewal of priestly faculties\*\*, effective Nov. 30, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend Kevin Meehan, LC:** renewal of priestly faculties\*\*, effective Nov. 30, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend Elias N. Menuba:** renewal of priestly faculties\*\*, effective Dec. 15, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Monsignor James A. Mongelluzzo:** renewal of priestly faculties\*\*, effective Dec. 12, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend Eric Nielsen, LC:** renewal of priestly faculties\*\*, effective Nov. 30, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend Christopher O'Connor, LC:** renewal of priestly faculties\*\*, effective Nov. 30, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend Donal O'Keeffe, LC:** renewal of priestly faculties\*\*, effective Nov. 30, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend Joseph M. O'Neil, MS:** renewal of priestly faculties\*\*, effective Dec. 1, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend Tarsicio Samaniego, LC:** renewal of priestly faculties\*\*, effective Nov. 30, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend Walter Schu, LC:** renewal of priestly faculties\*\*, effective Nov. 30, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend Charles Sikorsky, LC:** granted priestly faculties\*\*, effective Nov. 30, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend D. Scott Surrency, OFM, Cap.:** granted priestly faculties\*\*, effective Nov. 21, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend John Sweeney, LC:** renewal of priestly faculties\*\*, effective Nov. 30, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend Kermit Syren, LC:** renewal of priestly faculties\*\*, effective Nov. 30, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend Thanh Van Nguyen:** renewal of priestly faculties\*\*, effective Dec. 12, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Reverend Paul Waddell:** renewal of priestly faculties\*\*, effective Dec. 15, 2017, until Dec. 31, 2018.

**Deacon Kenneth E. Ewaskie:** Leave of Absence, effective Jan. 1, 2018.

**Deacon Timothy E. Healy:** appointed chaplain of St. Francis Hospital, effective Jan. 2, 2018, in addition to duties at St. Ann Parish, Avon.

**Deacon Ernest H. Pagliaro:** reappointed to Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, Waterbury, effective Dec. 15, 2017, for a five-year term.

— REVEREND RYAN M. LERNER, CHANCELLOR, JAN. 12, 2018

\* 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.  
\*\* Clergy who are not incardinated in the Archdiocese of Hartford must request permission from the archbishop to minister here; that is, they request faculties.



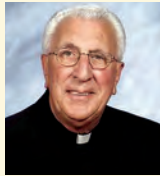
**■ DEACON AND MEDICAL DOCTOR THOMAS JOSEPH CONKLIN** died on Nov. 28, 2017.

He was born in Madison, Wis., on April 27, 1940. He graduated from Louisiana State University. He went on to LSU Medical School and completed his training in psychiatry at the Institute of Living in Hartford.

He then served as a psychiatrist at the Institute of Living, rising to the role of medical director. He later served for 13 years as the medical director and assistant superintendent of health services at the Hampden County Correctional Center in Massachusetts.

He was ordained a permanent deacon of the Archdiocese of Hartford in 1988. He served more than 20 years at St. James Church in Manchester and later at St. Margaret Mary Church in South Windsor.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Dec. 2 at St. Margaret Mary Church.



**■ FATHER CARMINE B. RANERI**, age 90, passed away on Dec. 12, 2017.

He was born on Feb. 1, 1927, in Waterbury, a son of the late Anthony and Concetta C. (Chillemi) Raneri. He studied

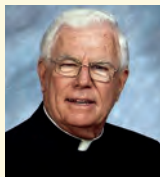
for the priesthood at St. Thomas Seminary in Bloomfield and Christ the King Seminary at St. Bonaventure University in New York. He was ordained in 1955 in the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Hartford by Archbishop Henry O'Brien.

Father Raneri served at St. Anthony Parish in Bristol; St. Rose Parish in New Haven; St. Francis Parish in New Britain; Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Meriden; St. Jerome Parish in New Britain; Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Waterbury, where he was the pastor for 12 years; and Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Waterbury, where he was the pastor for 10 years.

Father Raneri retired in 2002 and was in residence at St. Gregory the Great Parish in Bristol for eight years. He also resided at Blessed Sacrament Parish in Waterbury for six years. He had lived at St. Gregory's since 2016.

For a number of years, Father Raneri was Connecticut state chaplain for the Daughters of Isabella. He was also a chaplain for the Knights of Columbus in New Britain and for the Connecticut State Police.

The funeral Mass was celebrated on Dec. 16 at St. Gregory Parish in Bristol.



**■ FATHER ROBERT J. LORD**, 83, of Milford and Singer Island, Fla., died on Dec. 30, 2017, at Masonicare Hospice in Wallingford.

He was born on March 9, 1934, in Waterbury. He attended St. Thomas Seminary in Bloomfield. He earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy from St. Bonaventure University in 1956 and a master's degree in divinity from Christ the King Seminary at St. Bonaventure in 1960.

He was ordained to the priesthood by

Archbishop Henry J. O'Brien at St. Lawrence O'Toole Church in Hartford on May 26, 1960. He served as an assistant at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Harwinton, then at St. Augustine Church in North Branford. He assisted at St. Vincent de Paul Church in East Haven for five years, then at St. Paul Church in Kensington.

In December 1973, Father Lord was appointed co-pastor and administrator of St. Rita Church in Hamden, where he ministered eight years. During that time, he earned a doctor of ministry degree from the Jesuit School of Theology in Berkeley, Calif.

Father Lord also served as a temporary assistant pastor at St. Gabriel Church in Milford and St. Francis Church in Torrington. In September 1982, he was appointed Catholic campus minister at Central Connecticut State University, where he served for 12 years.

He was appointed parochial vicar at Our Lady of the Assumption Church in Woodbridge in July of 1996. He retired in May of 2004 and resided at his home in Milford.

In his later years, Father Lord was active on numerous boards, including the American Red Cross, Easter Seal Goodwill Industries Rehabilitation Center, United Way, Notre Dame High School in West Haven, Friedsam Memorial Library and the Seagrave Tower Condo Association. He also served as chair of the National Catholic Campus Ministry Association.

Father Lord was awarded the Grand Cross of Merit in 2009 from the Sovereign Military Order of the Knights of Malta.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Jan. 6 at Our Lady of the Assumption Church in Woodbridge.



**■ FATHER WILLIAM L. BURNS**, 83, of Manchester, died Jan. 1, 2018, at Manchester Memorial Hospital.

Born in Hartford, he was the son of the late James R. and Mary (Lewis) Burns. He was a U.S. Army veteran and was a pharmacist for 26 years.

He was ordained to the priesthood by Archbishop John F. Whealon on Feb. 9, 1985. He served at SS. Peter and Paul Church in Waterbury, St. Thomas Church in Thomaston, St. Gabriel Church in Windsor and St. Francis of Assisi Church in Naugatuck. He resided at St. Lawrence O'Toole in Hartford and St. James Church in Manchester, where he had been the senior priest in residence from November 2009 until his death.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Jan. 4 at St. James Church in Manchester.

**■ DEACON ARTHUR J. DICKMAN**, 79, of Somers passed away on Jan. 5, 2018, surrounded by his loving family.

He was born on May 16, 1938, in Staten Island, N.Y. He earned a bachelor's degree in 1959 in philosophy from St. Peter's College in Jersey City, N.J., and served in the U.S. Army Reserve, 76th Division, retiring as a lieutenant colonel.

He worked for many years as a human resource executive at the United Technologies Corp. and later retired from Horton International.

He was ordained as a permanent deacon for the Archdiocese of Hartford and served at Holy Family Church in Enfield and Assumption Church in Manchester. He and his late wife Anne were founding members of Holy Family Parish, where he was active in several ministries. He also was a member of the Knights of Columbus and served on the Board of Directors of Western New England College.

Auxiliary Bishop emeritus Peter A. Rosazza celebrated a Mass of Christian Burial on Jan. 10 at Holy Family Church.

**■ SISTER JEAN MCCUSKER (SISTER MARY JOHN BOSCO)**, 87, a member of the Sisters of St. Joseph, West Hartford, passed away at Monsignor Bojnowski Manor in New Britain on Jan. 7, 2018.

She was born in Hartford on Dec. 22, 1930. Sister Jean received a bachelor's degree in education from Diocesan Sisters College and a master's degree in theology from Boston College. She taught in the archdiocesan elementary schools and at the former South Catholic High School in Hartford. She also served in the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C., before becoming a missionary in Stockholm and Norkopping, Sweden, in the late 1970s.

Upon her return to the United States, Sister Jean was an assistant house manager at L'Arche Community in Florida. When she returned to Connecticut, she was the provincial house manager, business office accountant and provincial archivist for the Sisters of St. Joseph of Chambéry.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Jan. 10 at Sisters of St. Joseph Sedgwick Cedars Residence chapel in West Hartford.

**■ SISTER MARY DENNIS (MADELEINE ESTELLE) GRIFFIN**, a member of the Sisters of St. Joseph, West Hartford, age 96, died on Jan. 8, 2018, at St. Mary Home in West Hartford.

She was born in Waterbury on Nov. 17, 1922. Sister Mary Dennis earned a bachelor's degree in education from Diocesan Sisters College in West Hartford and a master's degree in school administration from Fairfield University, and studied at the Pontifical Institute of Regina Mundi in Rome. She spent many years as an elementary school teacher in the Archdiocese of Hartford and Diocese of Bridgeport. She was principal at St. Peter School in New Haven and St. Patrick School in Bridgeport.

Upon her retirement to the provincial house in West Hartford, Sister Mary Dennis volunteered with the sisters in need of health care. She moved to St. Mary Home in 2012.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Jan. 10 in the chapel at the Sisters of St. Joseph Sedgwick Cedars Residence in West Hartford.



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■ **MSGR. DAVID QUENTIN LIPTAK**, 89, a columnist and editor for more than 60 years for *The Catholic Transcript*, former newspaper for the Archdiocese of Hartford, died Jan. 1, 2018.

Hartford Archbishop Leonard P. Blair was the principal celebrant at the funeral Mass Jan. 5 at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Hartford.

Msgr. Liptak began his newspaper career soon after his ordination in 1953 and worked as a columnist, journalist and editor of the newspaper, concentrating on theology. He retired as the publication's executive editor in January 2016 after serving under five archbishops.

When he retired from his newspaper work, he was praised by Archbishop Blair for his "great intellect, wide interests and a deep love of the Church."

The archbishop also said: "*The Catholic Transcript* stands out particularly for its editorial page, thanks to Msgr. Liptak," and noted that in the "rapidly changing world of communications and print media, the talents of a writer and thinker like Msgr. Liptak are as important as ever."

Msgr. Liptak was born Jan. 17, 1928, in Bridgeport. He graduated from St. Thomas Seminary in Bloomfield and received degrees in philosophy and theology from St. Bernard's Seminary in Rochester, N.Y. He was ordained to the priesthood May 14, 1953, at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Hartford.

Archbishop Henry J. O'Brien, then Hartford's archbishop, appointed the young priest to the post of associate editor of the newspaper 13 months later. The priest began writing his "What's Your Question?" column, which first appeared July 1, 1954, and continued to be published until November 2015.

From 1981 to 2003, Msgr. Liptak continued as consulting editor at the *Transcript*, contributing theology-based columns while increasing his involvement with academia at Holy Apostles Seminary in Cromwell. In 2003, Hartford Archbishop Daniel A. Cronin appointed Msgr.

Liptak executive editor of the *Transcript*.

In the position, his editorials and the *Transcript* received top awards from the Connecticut Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists, New England Newspaper and Press Association and Catholic Press Association.

The archdiocese changed the newspaper into a magazine format in January 2017.

While working at the newspaper, the priest also initially served in parish ministry and continued his education, earning a doctorate in ministry from Drew University in Madison, N.J., in 1978. He worked for more than 20 years at Holy Apostles College and Seminary in Cromwell as instructor, professor, director of priestly formation and chair of the Theology Department. He continued his work there until 2014.

In 1988, he co-edited the seminary's three volumes of the John Paul II Lecture Series in Bioethics. He was one of three co-founders of the Pope St. John Paul II Bioethics Center at Holy Apostles College and Seminary, which honored him in 2016 with its Lifetime Achievement Award for his years of devoted service there. The center's Bioethics Resource Library was dedicated to Msgr. Liptak in January 2010.

Through the years, Msgr. Liptak authored or co-authored more than a dozen books about saints, moral theology, bioethical issues and sacramental theology. He also published numerous essays, homilies, book reviews and encyclopedia articles and conducted seminars, lectures and retreats nationwide.

In 1993, he was appointed pastor at St. Catherine Church in Broad Brook. He was appointed *censor librorum* for the Archdiocese of Hartford in 1995 and held that position of reviewing texts and granting them Church Approval until his death.

Msgr. Liptak is survived by his sister, Mercy Sister Dolores Liptak of West Hartford, a brother-in-law and several nieces and nephews.

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## Catechists and others learn how to avoid boring kids at liturgies

■ Children will be interested and involved at Mass and other liturgies if they first have a chance to learn about the use of vestments, what the items on the altar are and the purpose of such gestures as bowing and genuflecting.

"Every Mass is a liturgy learning laboratory" for children, said Lisa Orchen, director of catechetical initiatives for the Archdiocese of Hartford, during a workshop on Jan. 10 at Holy Family Passionist Retreat Center in West Hartford. Orchen teamed up with Liza Peters, director of youth and young adult ministry at Holy Family, and Passionist Father

David Cinquegrani, retreat director there, for the workshop.

The 90-minute session for catechists, teachers and pastors who struggle to find ways of involving children in the Mass was packed with information, tips, resources and expertise.

It boils down to participation; getting children and teens invested, formed and engaged in the process of planning a parish or school liturgy; preparing for the readings; and choosing the music.

"Catechesis aims to integrate children into the mystery of Christ [mystagogy]" said Orchen.



## Waterbury schools to merge and form Catholic STREAM academy

■ Two Catholic schools in Waterbury will merge to form a new academy next fall with a mouthful of a name: Catholic STREAM Academy of Waterbury: A Heritage School of St. Mary and Blessed Sacrament Schools. It will open in September 2018.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel and SS. Peter and Paul Schools in Waterbury will remain open for the rest of the academic year.

The new academy will be housed in the Blessed Sacrament School Building. St. Mary School, which has been around since 1888, will close its buildings and campus when this school year ends.

The academy will employ the science, technology, religion, engineering, arts and math (STREAM) curriculum endorsed by the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA). This approach to education is designed to enhance teaching of subject areas such as mathematics and science by incorporating technology and engineering into the traditional curriculum and creating an interdisciplinary experience for students.

All teachers hired at the new school will be trained in the STREAM methodology. As a Catholic school, its staff will teach the faith and help students grow in their relationship with God.

“This is an exciting new chapter for Catholic education in Waterbury and one that will solidify its future,” said Provost for Education Sister Mary Grace Walsh, an Apostle of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. “The STREAM curriculum is designed to inspire students and prepare them for high school, college and life.”

Archdiocesan officials have determined that the St. Mary School property is in dire need of extensive repairs and renovations that are cost prohibitive for the parish to subsidize.

The Blessed Sacrament School building where the academy will be located is in excellent condition, featuring a newer cafeteria, hot lunch program, gym and well-maintained playground/playscape. The building is also large enough to accommodate current enrollment at both schools and has room for potential expansion.

St. Mary and Blessed Sacrament students will be encouraged to attend the academy. Spaces for additional students may become available for interested families.

“We do this by including students in every aspect of planning”... which leads to “a full and active participation in the Mass.”

According to the presenters, key elements include planning the liturgy, proclaiming the word of God, preparing the Prayer of the Faithful, selecting music, practicing roles, preparing the church environment and engaging youth leadership.

“Planning is everything,” said Orchen, including reviving the liturgy planning process, putting the liturgy schedule on the parish calendar, creating checklists and determining “shared parameters” in the parish.

► Liza Peters, director of youth and young adult ministry at Holy Family Passionist Retreat Center in West Hartford, tells about 50 catechists and educators of children how to avoid dealing with bored kids and teens like the one pictured behind her at a workshop on Jan. 10 at the retreat center.



## Pope Francis accepts resignation of Bishop Christie A. Macaluso

■ Pope Francis has accepted the resignation of Auxiliary Bishop Christie A. Macaluso from the Archdiocese of Hartford.

The announcement was publicized in Washington, D.C., on Dec. 15 by Archbishop Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States.

In a statement announcing the pope’s acceptance, the Archdiocese of Hartford extended its best wishes, prayers and deep gratitude to Bishop Macaluso as he makes the transition to auxiliary bishop emeritus of the Archdiocese of Hartford.

The bishop continues to reside at the archdiocesan pastoral center at St. Thomas Seminary in Bloomfield. He will remain active in episcopal ministry to the extent that his health and circumstances permit.

Bishop Macaluso was born in Hartford on June 12, 1945. He earned a bachelor’s degree in philosophy and a master’s degree in sacred theology from St. Mary’s Seminary in Baltimore.

Ordained a priest of the Archdiocese of Hartford on May 22, 1971, Bishop Macaluso has served the archdiocese in both parochial and administrative settings.

In 1995, he was named a prelate of honor, with the title of monsignor, by Pope St. John Paul II, and was also named episcopal vicar for Hartford.

Following his ordination as a bishop on June 10, 1997, Bishop Macaluso most notably has held the posts of vicar general, financial officer, moderator of the curia and president/rector of St. Thomas Seminary. Bishop Macaluso has shared his wisdom as both chair and member of several committees and boards through the years. He has presided at numerous celebrations across the archdiocese, including the sacrament of confirmation and ordinations to the diaconate.

With the announcement of Bishop Macaluso’s resignation, Archbishop Leonard P. Blair issued the following statement: “From my first days as archbishop of Hartford, Bishop Macaluso has been of invaluable assistance thanks to his knowledge and experience of this local Church over many years. In the name of all the clergy, religious and laity of the archdiocese, I wish him all the best and God’s blessing in days to come.”



PHOTO BY MARIAN CHALUSKY



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<sup>1</sup> Becker's Hospital Review