

CLARE

GALLERY

at the Franciscan Center for Urban Ministry

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Silent Witness: Works by Nancy Wynn Opens at Clare Gallery

Hartford — The Clare Gallery is pleased to present *Silent Witness: Works by Nancy Wynn*. This exhibition features twelve large scale photographs. The works are artifacts of community events that took place in the sacred space of St. Patrick - St. Anthony Church. The subjects of Wynn's work are bits and pieces of floral matter—the silent witnesses—which lend their stories to the conversation of each event's memory. This process utilized time, but more importantly, asks viewers to question interpretations of events and their memories.

The exhibition is free and open to the public and extends from November 1–December 31, 2016. An artist talk will be held on **Sunday, December 4th, 1:00–3:00 p.m.** during which Wynn will discuss her project's process and John Bizis, floral designer, will discuss how and why he chooses certain floral materials for celebrations, or for liturgical meaning.

Wynn wished to document the community of St. Patrick - St. Anthony Church for one year (their 50th Anniversary year). After spending time in the sacred space of the church, Wynn chose to use the floral arrangements as her “witnesses” to the varied events that took place in the space. Floral arrangements are routinely placed in the altar space, and they all have meaning (i.e. a funeral, a wedding, All Saint's Day, Christmas, etc). As each arrangement's utility was completed (this could last as long as a week), Wynn would pick a few flowers to bring back to her studio, where she reinterpreted the arrangement—re-documenting the event and thus creating a memory. As she worked, Wynn states, “I let the flowers and the process speak to me, telling me their stories.”

Wynn applies the flowers that grace the Church's space as descriptive elements of the community. Additionally, text is added to the compositions listing the church's name, location, date, as well as the arrangement's use. Both the image and text “describe” the community events, just as a documentary photograph would, adding to the conversation of their memory.

John Bizis, the floral designer for St. Patrick - St. Anthony Church for twelve years, regularly studies the liturgy to help guide him with his floral creations. Bizis states, “An example would be using Bird of Paradise with its colors of red, orange and yellow for Pentecost.” Bizis believes using floral arrangements in a sacred space heightens the meaning of the liturgy—adding another way (visual, colorful and creative) for people to enter into the text.

The Clare Gallery primarily features exhibitions that emphasize world religions or interfaith themes, as well as social justice themes, on either a global or local level. The Gallery is housed in the Franciscan Center for Urban Ministry at 285 Church Street, Hartford, CT. The Center is part of St. Patrick – St. Anthony Church, a vibrant and active downtown faith community.

The Clare Gallery's hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m., Mondays through Thursdays; 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Fridays; 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturdays; and 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on Sundays. The Gallery and all related events are open to the public. Free parking is available directly across from the church in the Saints Lot. The facility is handicapped accessible. More information may be found at spsact.org/clare2.