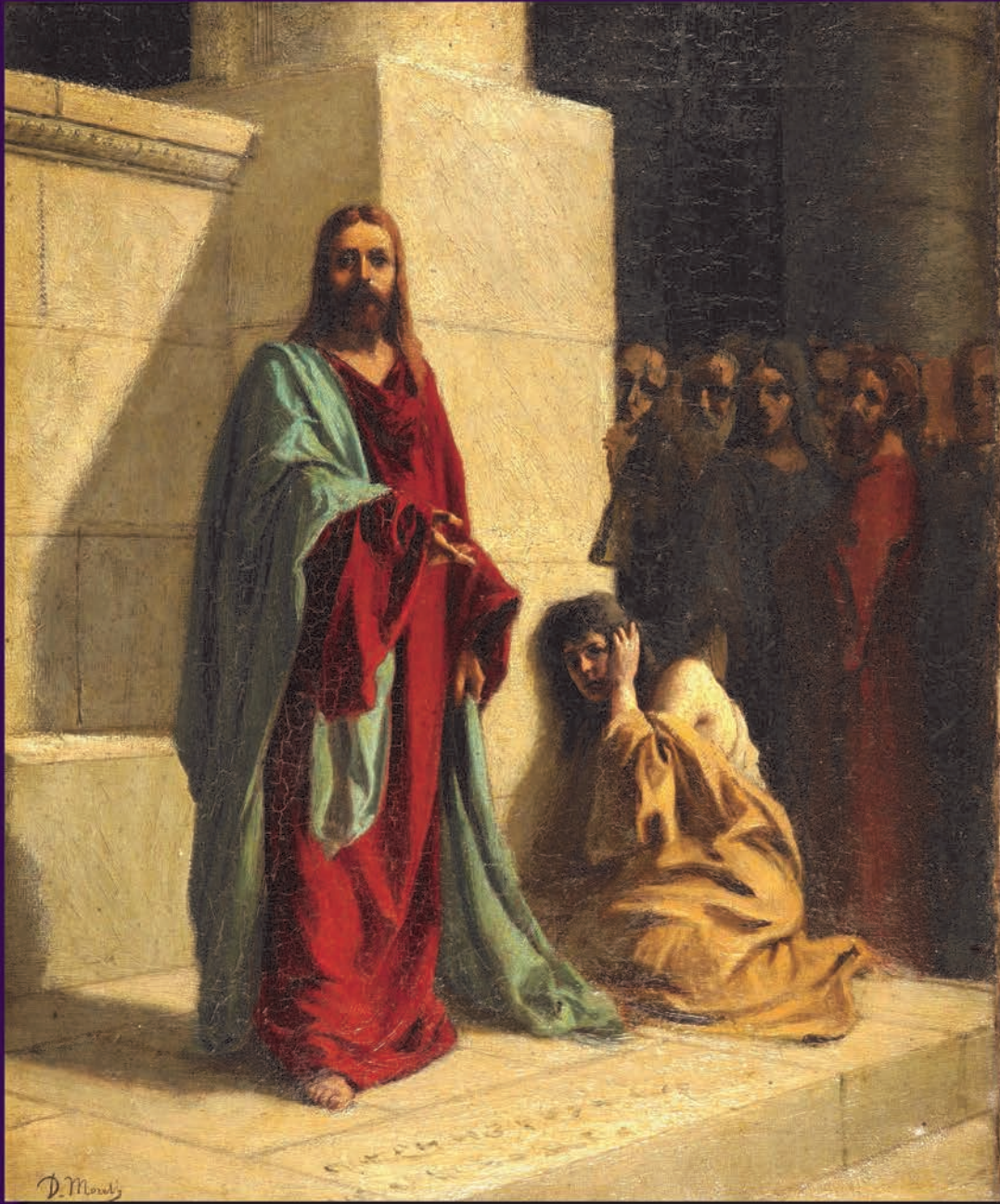


*“Neither do I condemn you.
Go, and from now on do not sin any more.”*



St. Patrick-St. Anthony Church • 285 Church Street • Hartford, Connecticut
April 6, 2025 • Fifth Sunday of Lent

**St. Patrick-St. Anthony Church and
The Franciscan Center for Urban Ministry**

285 Church Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06103
tel 860-756-4034 • info@spsact.org • www.spsact.org



*Open Hearts
Open Minds
Open Doors*

We are a welcoming and dynamic community of Christian disciples. Rooted in the Franciscan experience of the Roman Catholic tradition, we proactively endeavor to extend hospitality both at the Eucharistic Table and as we minister reciprocally and in solidarity among the alienated and the poor, nurturing the mind, body, and spirit in the Greater Hartford Community. All are welcome!



Celebration of the Eucharist

Masks are optional at all Masses

Saturday Evening Mass of Anticipation

4:00 PM Public

Sunday Masses

8:00 AM Public

10:00 AM Public & Livestream

11:45 AM Public

5:00 PM Public

Weekday Masses

7:30 AM Public

12:05 PM Public & Livestream

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 11:15 to 11:45 AM

Saturday 3:15 to 3:45 PM

EASTER FLOWER MEMORIALS



We invite you to celebrate the joy in the Resurrection of Christ by remembering or honoring family members and friends with

an Easter flower donation. Deadline: Tuesday, April 15, 2025. Give online by going to <https://bit.ly/3TD18tM> or mail a check to the office.

Please indicate loved one's name(s) below, online in the notes or on a separate piece of paper with your check.

HOLY WEEK / EASTER SCHEDULE

Palm Sunday of the Passion (April 12/13)

Saturday Mass at 4:00 pm
Sunday Masses at 8:00 am, 10:00 am,
11:45 am and 5:00 pm

April 14, 15, 16

Masses at 7:30 am & 12:05 pm

Confessions (April 14 & 16)

11:15 to 11:45 am

Holy Thursday, April 17

Mass of the Lord's Supper, 7:00 pm

Good Friday, April 18

Liturgy of the Lord's Passion, 3:00 pm

Holy Saturday, April 19

Great Vigil of Easter, 8:00 pm

Easter Sunday, April 20

Masses at 8:00 am, 10:00 am, 11:45 am and 5:00 pm

Daily Mass Readings

- Monday, Apr 7:** Dn 13:41c-62; Jn 8:12-20
- Tuesday, Apr 8:** Nm 21:4-9; Jn 8:21-30
- Wednesday, Apr 9:** Dn 3:14-20, 91-92, 95; Jn 8:31-42
- Thursday, Apr 10:** Gen 17:3-9; Jn 8:51-59
- Friday, Apr 11:** Jer 20:10-13; Jn 10:31-42
- Sunday, Apr 13:** Is 50:4-7; Ps 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24; Phil 2:6-11 Lk 22:14-23:56 or Lk 23:1-49

Go to <http://www.usccb.org/> for readings online.

The Pastor's Corner

April 6, 2025

Dear Parishioners and Friends,

The Provincial Minister of Our Lady of Guadalupe Province, Fr. Larry Hayes, O.F.M., wrote a letter recently in response to the current federal administration's actions which have caused increasing anxiety and anger among many people, not just here in the United States, but across the globe. I would like to share his letter with you.


Fr. Tim Shreenan, O.F.M.
Pastor

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Peace and all good!

We are living in profoundly unsettled and unsettling times, both in our world and in our country. Many in the United States—and I am sure that this includes a good number of our friars—are aghast at the direction the administration in Washington is furiously pursuing at such a dizzying pace. I know that many are hungering for an alternative vision for our future that resonates with the Gospel and brings light and hope to our times.

Perhaps it was a coincidence, or perhaps it was something more, but on the night of the State of the Union address I found in my email inbox a letter that Pope Francis had released even while he was in Gemelli Hospital recovering from double pneumonia. Entitled "The End of the World? Crises, Responsibilities, Hopes," it is Pope Francis' plea to the Pontifical Academy of Life for a response to what he calls the "polycrisis" in which we are enveloped. In his words, "the dramatic nature of the historical juncture we are currently witnessing, in which wars, climate changes, energy problems, epidemics, the migratory phenomenon and technological innovation converge."

As I read Pope Francis' outline of steps needed to respond to our current "polycrisis," I was seized by the desire to hear Franciscan voices who might "reframe" our present context with a Franciscan interpretive lens and offer concrete suggestions as to how we might respond to the pressing issues of our day as Franciscans.

Thus was born this series of monthly reflections on Franciscan responses to the signs of our times: Franciscan analyses of some of the crises we are facing and suggestions for practical actions that will help us to remain aligned to the Gospel and to be witnesses of hope and prophets of an alternative future.



What are the needed steps that Pope Francis outlines in his letter?

First, examining with greater attention the way we understand our world and the cosmos, so as to transform consciences and social practices.

Second, profoundly revising the parameters we use to understand anthropology and culture.

Third, avoiding the adoption of utilitarian deregulation and global neoliberalism that can amount to social Darwinism—that the law of the strongest is the only law.

Fourth, considering more deeply the relationship and interdependence among all things, viewing human beings as embedded in and connected with the entire ecosystem of living things.

Fifth, understanding that fullness of life is intrinsically linked to a lived union with others—i.e., in order to become individuals we must be part of a larger "we."

Sixth, appreciating the need for international organizations that provide for the global common good, the elimination of hunger and poverty, and the defense of fundamental human rights.

Our series begins with the following reflection by Br. Richard Rohr, O.F.M. You can read his article, "GLOBAL is a good, new name for 'Catholic'" at this address: <https://tinyurl.com/OLG-Global-info-2025>.



With fraternal best wishes and prayerful hope for a transformative Lenten season,

Lawrence J. Hayes, O.F.M.
Provincial Minister

Adult Faith Formation

For full program descriptions and more information on other programs, please go to <https://tinyurl.com/SPSA-AFF>.

Group Spiritual Reflection:

Zoom Meetings: Every Tuesdays. Next meeting: April 8, 2025 from 12:30 to 1:30 PM. All are welcome! Please go to <https://tinyurl.com/SPSA-Tues-Spirit-Grp> to register and receive the Zoom Link.

In-person Meetings at the Franciscan Center: Every Wednesday. Next meeting: April 9, 2025, at 12:40 PM.

In Quiet Prayer:

Every Wednesday. Next meeting: April 9, 2025, from 7:30 to 8:00 AM. Please go to <https://tinyurl.com/SPSA-In-Quiet-Prayer> to register.

People of Hope: "The Flowing Grace of Now"

Every Wednesday from 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM on Zoom. Next meeting: April 9, 2025.

Attend when your schedule allows to receive the gifts of spiritual nourishment and growth. Join us: <https://tinyurl.com/SPS-ACT-POH-Fall24> to receive Zoom link. Free Will Offering

Divine Reading: Wednesday, April 16 at 7:00 pm at the Franciscan Center. Join us!

Our Own Nazareth Time

Mondays, April 7 & 21, May 5 & 19, June 2 from 12:45-1:45 PM.

The City is My Monastery, A Contemporary Rule of Life, by Richard Carter is an unusual book; more like a guide to life that might become your life-time companion for prayer, peace and well-being. It gives us a practical "rule of life". Please purchase a book if needed.

Please attend as your schedule allows! Follow along and then join us for an in-person experience of spiritual practices which will inspire far beyond the end of the Easter Season.

Please go to <https://tinyurl.com/SPSA-Naz-Time> to register.

Offertory 03/23/2025

Total Offertory: \$23,732.70

Weekly Online: \$9,780.73

Weekly Offering: \$13,951.97

Letters from Prison: Continuing the Conversation

Community in Action Partners is one of the nation's oldest criminal justice organizations and provides restorative justice services to young people and adults, so they can reenter the community and thrive. Prison Arts was established in 1978 and is the longest running program of its kind in the U.S. Prison Arts advocates for art, artists, and art-making in CT prisons. CPA Prison Arts artists are challenged to engage with their own creative journeys. The program has had a positive impact on the lives of both the incarcerated and the people they touch with their artwork: families, the general population, and targeted audiences. The goal is to encourage a greater understanding of the incarcerated to build more empathy and love in the world.

This Clare Gallery exhibit includes new letters from this year's call for entries — highlighting "Mystery, Mysticism, and Meaning" — along with curated letters from the two prior exhibits in 1995 and 2005.

The combination of letters will continue the conversation of self-examination and self-esteem, once again bringing the talent and creativity of the prison population to the community at large.

Virtual Panel discussion, Monday, April 28, 7:00 to 8:30 PM : Jeffrey Greene, CPA Prison Arts Program Manager, will share insight into his 34+ years working with Prison Arts in various capacities. Panelist and alumni artist, Danny Killion, will share his creative journey — from prison to owner and operator of Weather Wood, a Troy, NY furniture and art store that has specialized in reclaimed wood pieces since 2013. The discussion will be moderated by Nancy Wynn.

Please go to <https://tinyurl.com/SPSA-Clare-Ltrs-2025> or scan the QR Code.



Artist's Reception will be held on Sunday, Sunday, May 4, 3-5 PM. The public is welcome to attend.

Open Hearts Ministry

Monthly Meeting: Join us Sunday, April 13, 2025 at 6:00 PM in the Franciscan Center for Urban Ministry. Go to <https://spsact.org/contact-form-for-open-hearts-ministry/> for more info.



Family & Friends Ministry

Next meeting: April meeting is TBD.

Go to <https://spsact.org/ministries/open-hearts-lgbtq-ministry/#family-friends> for more info.

**SPSA COMMUNITY DAY AT DUNKIN' PARK
SUNDAY, JUNE 15, 2025**

Your last opportunity for Tickets: April 5/6 after each Mass in the Franciscan Center Lobby

For the first time we will have the opportunity to hold the Big Flag during the pre-game ceremony!

Sign up to hold the flag when you purchase your tickets




Stations of the Cross

Our last session is April 11, 2025 at 12:35 PM.

Join us following the 12:05 Mass on Fridays during Lent in praying the Stations of the Cross.

Drumming Circle

Monday, March 3, 2025 at 6:30 PM in the Center. No experience or drum necessary. Please contact Elaine Wiatr at elaine.wiatr@yahoo.com for more information or if you need to borrow a drum.

Creation Care Corner

April 2025

Welcome to the Creation Care Corner!

Did You Know That frogs are important care of creation communicators? The Natural History Society of Maryland explains to us what frogs are trying to tell us. <https://www.marylandnature.org/what-are-the-frogs-trying-to-tell-us/>

We can also learn why some frogs are endangered. <https://kids.earth.org/climate-change/why-are-frogs-endangered/>

But the best part is listening to frogs! <https://musicofnature.com/calls-of-frogs-and-toads-of-the-northeast/>

Here is how we can invite frogs to our backyards this spring. <https://www.gardeningchannel.com/attract-frogs-toads-garden/>



Job Opening:

Director of Music Ministry, St. Patrick-St. Anthony Church
285 Church Street, Hartford, CT 06103 (spsact.org)



St. Patrick-St. Anthony Parish is a dynamic and growing community in the Archdiocese of Hartford, served by the Franciscan Friars (O.F.M.), and is known for its outstanding music program. Candidates must be able to incorporate a broad range of choral repertoire, directing three choirs, overseeing cantors, section leaders, an organ scholar, and the maintenance of the church's two pipe organs. This is a full-time position with health benefits and includes five weekend Masses, three choir rehearsals, and weekly staff meetings. Funerals and weddings provide additional compensation.


Desired background includes a Master's degree in music and/or equivalent experience, strong organ/piano skills, choral conducting expertise, and experience with Roman Catholic liturgy. The salary is negotiable - depending on skills and experience.

Application deadline: April 30, 2025; starting date is August 2025 or earlier.

For a full job description and application instructions, visit <https://bit.ly/spsa-dmm-job>.

Holy Week & Easter - A Time for Healing


Thursday, April 10 from 6:30 - 8:00 pm



Join us for an Evening of Reflection on the cusp of Holy Week as together we reflect on how Jesus is still very much with us.

Please scan the QR Code or go to <https://tinyurl.com/SPSA-HolyWk-Pgm-2025> to register.

Presenter: Amy Ekeh,
Suggested Offering: \$15.00



Prayer Shawl Ministry

It's called a prayer shawl because it came from the prayers of the shawl maker holding the person receiving the shawl in her or his prayers. .

The Next Prayer Shawl Meeting: April 14, 2024 at 7:00 PM on Zoom. For more information, contact Janet Bristow at janetbristow@sbcglobal.net

Palm Sunday Food Drive

Drop off is April 12/13, 2025 at the Franciscan Center. Help support and feed the families served by the House of Bread and Hands on Hartford. The food collected will be shared with families so they can have food in their cupboards during Holy Week and on Easter.

Some of the items needed: Peanut Butter, Rice, Jelly, Pasta, Pasta Sauce, Tuna, Canned Chicken, Cereal, Granola Bars, Ground Coffee, Sugar and 2 Canned Vegetables. Please go to <https://tinyurl.com/SPSA-PS-FD-2025> for a complete grocery list and other information about our Food Drive.



Mass Intentions for the Week

Saturday, April 5, 2025

4:00 PM Joe Melzen

Sunday, April 6, 2025

8:00 AM Jeannine & Albert Remillard

10:00 AM Teresa Giansanti

11:45 AM Donald Roberts

5:00 PM Claire Dias

Monday, April 7, 2025

7:30 AM Intentions for our parishioners

12:05 PM Carol Anne Goodale

Tuesday, April 8, 2025

7:30 AM Peg Bergan

12:05 PM Joseph Kelliher

Wednesday, April 9, 2025

7:30 AM Michael Morrissey

12:05 PM Giadone Family

Thursday, April 3, 2025

7:30 AM Jerelyn Fields

12:05 PM Baio & Spirito Families

Friday, April 10, 2025

7:30 AM Virgilio Antonio gutierrez

12:05 PM For the People of Lebanon & Palestine

Saturday, April 11, 2025

4:00 PM Dimitrio Andrade

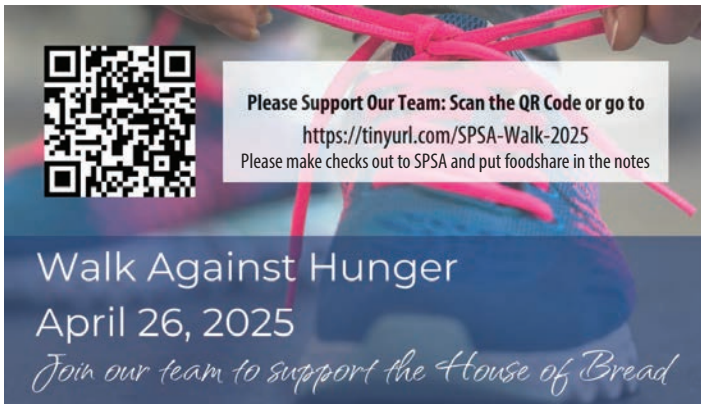
Sunday, April 12, 2025

8:00 AM Terry O'Leary

10:00 AM Jack Langton, 3rd Anniversary

11:45 AM Ann Marie Ellis

5:00 PM Manuel Almagro



2025 Archbishop's Annual Appeal

In just a few short weeks, our parish has raised \$37,456.00 for the 2025 Archbishop's Annual Appeal.

The Archbishop's Annual Appeal supports many important ministries and programs in the Archdiocese. Gifts are allocated towards religious education programs, youth ministries, local charities, the education of our seminarians, support for our retired clergy, our Catholic schools, and the many ministries provided daily by the Archdiocese. If you have not made a gift, please prayerfully consider making a pledge or one-time gift.

Join us, your parish community, and Trust in the Lord, by sharing your blessings with the less fortunate.

All funds contributed to the Archbishop's Annual Appeal are used exclusively for the purposes outlined in the Appeal literature, which can be found at <https://archdioceseofhartford.org/appeal/>. No Appeal funds are ever used for legal fees or settlements.

To donate please go to <https://appeal.archdioceseofhartford.org/donations/> or scan the QR Code.



Sanctuary Lamp

Week of April 6, 2025

Prayers of Health for

William Romano, by Paula Romano



Please Pray for the Sick

Paula Molitar, Joseph Shertick, Greg Reed, Kathryn Eagers, Tommie Henry, Syl Ciraulo, Mary Ertel, Mary Joyce Castafero, Bobby Lombardo, Rosemarie Perkoski, Patricia Dressler, Susan Degennaro, and Deborah Godin.

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd



is a faith formation program where children experience God in a tangible way - through working with their hands using materials made just for them, they are able to nurture their relationship with God from the youngest age of 3. They are given freedom of movement throughout the "atrium" (our prepared environment created just for children), and they are invited to choose to work with materials they have been presented.

Children receive presentations from adults who have been prepared through a Formation Course, which teaches theology, child development, and the pedagogical knowledge to work with children effectively.

CGS Formation Training is known to be a transformational experience on many levels for those who have participated in a course. The setting is retreat-like, and participants have remarked that the course nourished their faith, improved their parenting, and changed their lives in countless ways. Working in the atrium is NOT required!

We are offering a **CGS Level 1 Formation Course June 2-5**, and one **Saturday, November 15** with the second half of the course one Saturday in the winter and one week (TBD) in the summer of 2026. We invite you to consider giving yourself this week to nurture your faith.

Please contact Sarah Christopher (schristopher@spsact.org) or Deb Pelletier (dpelletier@spsact.org) to hear about parishioner pricing.

Please go to <https://spsact.org/catechesis-of-the-good-shepherd-formation/> to learn more about CGS Formation Courses.

To register for the Level 1 CGS Formation Course 2025, please go to <https://spsact.org/cgs-level-1-formation-2025/>



Join



<https://tinyurl.com/SPSA-Join>

Volunteer



<https://tinyurl.com/SPSA-Volunteer>

Donate



<https://tinyurl.com/SPSA-Giving>

We are here to serve you...

We are here to serve you. The programs and ministries listed below are just a sampling of our many offerings. Please go to www.spsact.org or call the Parish Office at 860-756-4034 for more information.

Baptism: Baptism of infants and young children may be celebrated during Sunday Mass and Group Baptisms on the 1st Saturday of each month outside of the season of Lent.

Patricia Curtis, Pastoral Associate; 860-756-4034, EXT. 113.

Matrimony: The Sacrament of Marriage at St. Patrick-St. Anthony Church are celebrated Friday and Saturdays. The Bride or Groom should contact *Carolyn Abramo, Wedding Manager; 860-756-4034, EXT. 111* or <https://spsact.org/wedding-request-form/> to begin preparation for Marriage, normally one year in advance and before any other arrangements are made for a reception.

Pastoral Care Outreach Ministry: We offer holistic care in collaboration with the parish staff (friars, ministry coordinators, and parish nurses). Members of this team are responsible for visiting parishioners at home or in long term and short term care facilities. *Fr. John Leonard, O.F.M.; 860-756-4034, EXT. 129.*

Prayer Network: The St. Patrick-St. Anthony Prayer Network consists of approximately fifty parishioners who commit themselves to praying daily for those in need. <https://spsact.org/prayer-network-prayer-request/> or Parish Office; 860-756-4034.

Open Hearts LGBTQ+ Ministry: This ministry consists of two Groups: **Open Hearts** holds monthly fellowship meetings, and **Friends and Family (LGBTQ+) Support Ministry**, which supports members and allies of the LGBTQ+ community.

For information on Open Hearts:

<https://spsact.org/contact-open-hearts-ministry/>

For information on Friends and Family contact:

<https://spsact.org/contact-form-for-friends-family-ministry/>

Volunteering and Outreach Ministry Information:

St. Patrick-St. Anthony invites individuals to give freely of their time and expertise in order to make a difference. Our volunteers participate in liturgical ministries as well as other forms of service to the church, the Franciscan Center for Urban Ministry and the community at large. *Allison Holst-Grubbe, Director of Community Engagement; aholstgrubbe@spsact.org; 860-756-4034, EXT. 110.*



LEVO PRESENTS

FIESTA FOR A CAUSE

MAY 2ND, 2025 | 5:30 - 8:00

Warehouse 635

635 New Park Ave, West Hartford, CT 06110

GENERAL ADMISSION: \$45

TACO BAR, SIDES AND DRINKS!
FUN RAFFLES AND A SILENT AUCTION

CELEBRATE CINCO DE MAYO, SUPPORT LEVO'S MISSION!

FOR SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES CONTACT:
SALES@LEVOINTERNATIONAL.ORG



PASTORAL STAFF

Fr. Timothy J. Shreenan, O.F.M., Pastor, tshreenan@gmail.com

Fr. William Beaudin, O.F.M., Parochial Vicar & Guardian,
wbeaudin@gmail.com

Patricia Curtis, Pastoral Associate, pcurtis@spsact.org

Kristina DiDomenzio, Business Manager, kdidomenzio@spsact.org

Allison Holst-Grubbe, Director of Community Engagement,
aholstgrubbe@spsact.org

Fr. Michael Johnson, O.F.M., Parochial Vicar & Director of Franciscan
Center for Urban Ministry, mikeinbolivia@gmail.com

Fr. John Leonard, O.F.M., Parochial Vicar, jleonard@spsact.org

Fr. A. Francis Soucy, O.F.M., Parochial Vicar & Senior Associate Friar,
afsofm@gmail.com

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Carolyn Abramo, Parish & Center Administrative Assistant
cabramo@spsact.org

Sarah Christopher, Parish Communications Director,
schristopher@spsact.org

Stacie Mawson, Saturday Receptionist

Barbara Sullivan, Saturday Receptionist

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION STAFF

Deborah Pelletier, Religious Ed Team Coordinator,
dpelletier@spsact.org

Sarah Christopher, Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

Mary Gray, Family Program

Lauren Kasperowski, Traditional Program

Abigail Sheehan, Focus 4:12 Youth Ministry, 7th, 8th & 9th Grades

Faith VosWinkel, Focus 4:12 Youth Ministry, 10th Grade

MAINTENANCE STAFF

Gilberto Lisboa, Church Custodian



Corpus Christi School of Wethersfield, a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence, will host a Spring Open House on Tuesday, April 8 from 6:00 to 7:30 PM. Are you wondering if your child is on track academically? You are not alone. Perhaps you'd like to consider some other educational options. Join us for our open house at Corpus Christi School, 581 Silas Deane Highway in Wethersfield for our Spring Open House on Tuesday, April 8, 2024 from 6:00 to 7:30pm.

Corpus Christi School students benefit from smaller class sizes and personalized instruction. A structured curriculum combined with a nurturing environment result in student success - imagine how your child could soar!! Tours will be available; teachers, students, and parents will be on hand to answer questions. Tuition assistance is available. The school encompasses PreK - 8th grade.

To register, please visit our website <https://corpuschristischoolct.org/> or call 860-529-5487.



For 45 years, House of Bread has been a place of refuge for Hartford's most vulnerable — providing food, shelter, and education to those in need. Founded by two devoted Sisters, our mission has never been more urgent as rising costs and increasing need strain our resources.

We invite you to stand with us in faith and service at our celebratory event on May 1 at the Hartford Golf Club. Your support will help sustain this vital work.

Join us and make an impact: <https://www.hobread.org/>. Click: 45th Anniversary Purple Link at the Top of the webpage.

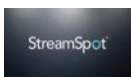
Watch 10:00 AM Mass Online:



<https://www.facebook.com/St-Patrick-St-Anthony-Church-109359789104825/>



<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8Vhk8-hhlyAJenBxueHySQ>



<https://venue.streamspot.com/cdc76f52>



Archdiocese of Hartford
Office of Safe Environment
467 Bloomfield Ave.
Bloomfield, CT 06002



HOW TO REPORT AN INCIDENT OF SEXUAL ABUSE TO THE ARCHDIOCESE OF HARTFORD

If you have knowledge or suspect that a minor or vulnerable adult (an adult with an intellectual disability) has been sexually abused, in any manner, by personnel of the Archdiocese of Hartford, you are urged to report this information to:

Faith Vos Winkel, MSW
Victim Assistance Coordinator
860-541-6475
faith.voswinkel@aohct.org

In addition, you will be asked to follow up in writing with a detailed description of the facts involved in the incident. Specifics of this written report can be found in the [Policies and Procedures of the Archdiocese of Hartford Relating to Allegations of Sexual Misconduct Involving Minors and Vulnerable Adults](#). This document is also available online at www.archdioceseofhartford.org. The Archdiocese of Hartford will report any and all incidents to the proper civil authorities.

Mandated reporters in the State of Connecticut are required by law to report any incident of sexual abuse involving a minor or vulnerable adult. We encourage any Non-Mandated persons to report such incidents to the proper authorities as well. We support your right to do so.

Incidents involving sexual abuse of minors (persons under the age of 18) should be reported to:
State Department of Children and Families Care-line
1-800-842-2288

Incidents involving sexual abuse of vulnerable adults aged 18 – 59 should be reported to the:
Connecticut Department of Developmental Services – AID Division
for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities
1-844-878-8923

Incidents involving sexual abuse of vulnerable adults aged 60 and over should be reported to:
Department of Social Services for the Elderly
1-888-385-4225

Once a written report of an incident of sexual abuse of a minor or vulnerable adult has been received, an investigation will be undertaken by, or on behalf of, the Archdiocese of Hartford.



Branches on the Vine

APRIL 5 - 11, 2025



PHOTO BY KAREN A. AVITABILE
Father George Couturier sets up his laptop to record a daily evening prayer on Facebook.

EVENING ONLINE PRAYERS BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER

- Story by Karen A. Avitabile

Several parishioners of St. Josephine Bakhita Parish in Rocky Hill are participating in meaningful online evening prayer broadcasts through Facebook to stay connected to God and their parish.

"Facebook makes it easy to do," says Father George Couturier, pastor of St. Josephine Bakhita, who leads the evening prayer streams during the week on Facebook. "I just set up my laptop (in the rectory) and aim it at my face."

The priest's broadcasts can be viewed at 5 p.m., Mondays through Fridays, by following facebook.com/saintjosephinebakhita.

Some people join Father Couturier when the broadcasts first air on Facebook; others watch it later in the evening. The broadcasts also include the actual text of the priest's spoken words.

Father Couturier launched the prayer service on Facebook in March 2020 after public Masses were suspended during the coronavirus pandemic.

"The pandemic hit," he says. "It was the perfect time to do it. We were planning to do something before the pandemic."

After in-person Masses resumed in June 2020

Father Couturier's online prayer broadcasts had a captive audience.

The parishioners, who make up St. Elizabeth Seton and St. James churches, asked the priest to continue the broadcasts.

"We received positive response," Father Couturier says, adding the prayers have been uplifting for many of the viewers. "Some are shut-ins and some just want to hear a calm voice. It's just an opportunity to pray together."

The online evening prayer broadcasts reach about 200 people consistently, says Lisa Orchen, parish communications coordinator. For many people, she adds, the broadcasts have become an essential part of their own "spiritual routine."

"Couples share that they participate in evening prayer together with Father George leading them every evening," Orchen says. "Similar to daily Mass, evening prayer participants post words of deep appreciation for Father George's nightly ritual consistency and for offering this daily prayer practice for all to follow and join with."

Father Couturier says he prefers to broadcast his daily prayer messages on Facebook in the evening after people have settled in at home from a long day.

"They seem to touch the heart," he says of the broadcasts. "People need to unload, rest and go to sleep. People prefer to go to bed with those prayers in mind."

Currently, Father Couturier's broadcasts include Lenten messages using "Give Us This Day," a prayer resource that aids in fostering a deeper connection with God. Viewing spikes for the broadcasts usually occur during Lenten and Advent seasons when more people are tuning in.

In addition to the online evening prayer broadcasts, livestreams of Masses take place each Sunday morning from one of the Rocky Hill churches.

"We have strong consistency with our real-time livestream participants," Orchen says. "The majority of these participants are folks who are deeply connected to our parish but are home or assisted living/nursing homebound due to health and age. We also have folks who are longtime parishioners who now live geographically distant for all or part of the year, and stay connected to the parish through the livestream."



Upcoming Events



04/13-16 MONDAY - WEDNESDAY
**BUSY PERSON DIRECTED RETREAT:
 HOLY WEEK, WITH BRENDA MCLAUGHLIN**
*in person or online, Holy Family Retreat
 Center, 303 Tunix Rd, West Hartford*

Take an opportunity to deepen your prayer amid the busyness of everyday life. This program begins with a group session on Palm Sunday, followed by individual one-hour spiritual direction sessions on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of Holy Week. \$150. 860-760-9705.



04/25 FRIDAY 7PM
**ST. ANTHONY SOCIETY'S 46TH ANNUAL
 NIGHT OF PRIZES**
*St. Anthony Parish Center, 70 Washington Ave,
 New Haven*

Doors open at 6:15 pm. Food and beverage available for purchase or you can bring your own. Admission ticket is \$10.00 which includes coffee, Italian pastry and chance for door prizes. Raffle tickets for sale for fantastic prizes and there will also be a 50/50 raffle. For information or tickets please call Anna Simeone 203-710-5004. No admission tickets will be sold after Tuesday, April 22, 2025.



05/5 - 7 WEEKDAYS 7PM
**ARRAY OF HOPE: BEHOLD, A
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 A LIVE 3 NIGHT ENCOUNTER**
*St. Francis of Assisi, 318 Church St,
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The nights include talks, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, the Sacrament of Reconciliation and music provided by AOH Music.

Monday May 5th, 7:00pm
 Tuesday May 6th, 7:00pm
 Wednesday May 7th, 7:00pm
 Mass 7:45pm

www.arrayofhope.org



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04/4-6 WEEKEND
TARZAN THE MUSICAL
*St. Paul Catholic High School Auditorium,
 1001 Stafford Ave, Bristol*

Join us for Tarzan: The Musical at St. Paul Catholic High School! Experience the thrilling adventure of Tarzan as he discovers his true identity and navigates the jungle's challenges. With stunning choreography, live music, and an amazing cast, this show is a must-see for the whole family.

Friday April 4th, 7:00PM
 Saturday April 5th, 7:00PM
 Sunday April 6th, 2:00PM
 To purchase tickets, visit: www.spchs.com

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