

VERMONT Catholic

SERVING ALL OF GOD'S PEOPLE | WINTER 2017



LOVE YOUR GOD
LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR

There is no other commandment greater than these.



SAVE THE DATE: MARCH FOR LIFE BUS TRIP
JANUARY 18-20, 2018

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WASHINGTON, D.C.



ADULT BUS FOR PRO-LIFE GROUPS, individual adults and families travelling together*

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ITINERARY:

DEPART: 55 Joy Drive at 6:45 p.m. **Thursday, January 18** (Additional pickup locations: Vergennes, Fair Haven)

ARRIVE IN WASHINGTON, D.C.: Participate in the Rally for Life (morning) and March for Life (1 p.m.) **January 19**

DEPART: Washington, D.C. 5 p.m. **January 19**

RETURN: Drop offs in Vermont begin approximately 5 a.m. **January 20**

COST: \$75 per person (does not include meals)

REGISTER: vermontcatholic.org/marchforlife



ROMAN CATHOLIC
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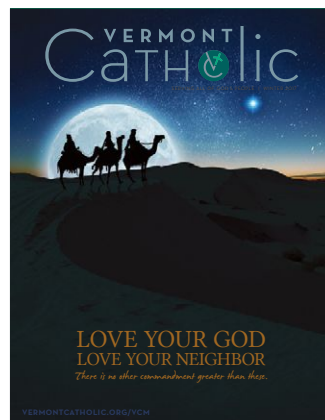
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On the Cover

The manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles is represented by the Magi who traveled to pay homage to the child Jesus. From crossing cultural boundaries to crossing the street, Vermont Catholics are reaching out to help their neighbors.
— iStock image



Happy Advent and Merry Christmas

One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked Him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?"

"The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: ... 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these." — Mk 12:28-31

The focus of this issue is love — love for God and love for our neighbor. God's Christmas gift to the world is His only Son, Jesus, given to all with the promise of everlasting life for those that believe. It is the greatest gift ever given!

In a world filled with darkness — mass shootings, rampant opioid addiction, racism, social injustice, civil discord, materialism — we, Catholics, are called to share this gift, Jesus, with our neighbor and to be the light that shines in the darkness.

This issue of *Vermont Catholic* tells the stories of how Vermont Catholics are bringing the message of hope, joy and salvation to so many struggling people in our community and beyond.

May this be a reminder of what Christmas is truly about and of how loving God and loving our neighbor can be transformative gifts.

Ellen Kane

**For more news and extras from the Diocese of Burlington visit
VERMONTCATHOLIC.ORG/VCM**



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2017 BISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL REPORT



WILL YOU HELP US MEET THE CHALLENGE?

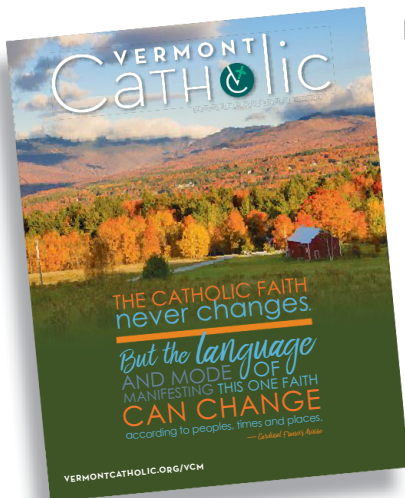
The Bishop's Annual Appeal is 96 percent to the pledge goal. We are blessed with a \$17,000 matching gift this year that will match dollar for dollar all gifts we receive by the end of December. Any gift, no matter the size, will get us closer to our goal and ensure we are able to continue to support the many vital ministries, schools and charitable programs that impact every parish in Vermont.

Please look for the pledge card inserted in this issue to mail a donation or give online at: bishopsappealvt.org.

COMING SOON! NEW WEBSITE

Coming this spring: The redesigned Roman Catholic Diocese of Burlington website at vermontcatholic.org! The new, easier-to-navigate site will provide Google map and search capabilities for all church, school, cemetery and Vermont Catholic Charities Inc. locations as well as Mass and confession times. There also will be up-to-date information about important news and events.

DO YOU WANT TO RECEIVE VERMONT CATHOLIC MAGAZINE?



For a donation of \$24 or more to the Bishop's Annual Appeal, you will receive the quarterly *Vermont Catholic* magazine mailed directly to your home for one year. You may also give the magazine as a gift by making a donation to the Bishop's Annual Appeal on behalf of someone.

Visit bishopsappealvt.org
or call Nancy Lamothe at
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FROM OUR READERS

We would like to hear from you.

Send letters and comments to
editor@vermontcatholic.org

or by mail to:

The Diocese of Burlington

55 Joy Drive

South Burlington, VT 05403.

Editors reserve the right to exclude and edit letters for length or style. Letters must be signed and include the writer's full address and phone number.

See letters on the inside back cover.

The Year of the Family: ‘The Joy of Love’

“The welfare of the family is decisive for the future of the world and that of the Church.”
— Pope Francis, *Amoris Laetitia*

In 1994, Pope John Paul II, now St. John Paul, announced a Year of the Family with a particular call to contemplate the life of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

He said that the “Holy Family is the beginning of countless other holy families.”

Throughout his papacy, St. John Paul often spoke of the many attacks on the family institution itself — poverty, migration, cultural and societal changes, etc. — and how urgent it was to rediscover the value of the family and to help it in every way to be as God wanted it to be. He said, “The family is a human and divine reality that should be defended and promoted as a fundamental social good.”

This coming year, the Diocese of Burlington will celebrate our own Year of the Family with a particular focus on Pope Francis’ apostolic exhortation on the family, *Amoris Laetitia*, (“The Joy of Love”). The exhortation clearly shows how the teaching of St. John Paul has proven more than prophetic. All of the challenges to family life of which he spoke are still present to us today and in some instances, even worse now.

At the same time, we face new challenges such as the redefinition of marriage itself, the isolating and alienating

tendencies of digital culture and the opioid crisis in America.

In the “Joy of Love,” Pope Francis unambiguously confronts these challenges while offering a hopeful message that challenges us to be courageous believers who strive to live as holy families and encourage the healthy lives of families in our culture.

Like last year’s Year of Creation, this Year of the Family offers us a year to ponder the Church’s teaching on the family and embrace it ourselves.

“The most beautiful thing that God made, the Bible says, was the family. He created man and woman, and He gave them everything. He gave them the world! Grow, multiply, cultivate the Earth, make it produce, make it grow. He presented to a family all of the love that He made in this marvelous creation. ... All of the love that God has in Himself, all of the beauty that God has in Himself, all of the truth that God has in Himself, He gives to the family. And a family is truly a family when it is able to open its arms and receive all of this love.” — Pope Francis at the *World Day of Families in Philadelphia, 2015*



Yours in Christ,

Christopher J. Coyne

The Most Reverend Christopher J. Coyne
Bishop of Burlington

— iStock photo

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

1 Samuel 3: 3b-10, 19; Psalm 40; 1 Corinthians 6: 13c-15a, 17-20; John 1: 35-42

*“Speak Lord, for your servant is listening”
(1 Sam 3:10).*

On the day of my ordination to the priesthood, I stood before Bishop Kenneth Angell at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception and made a profound statement of faith. It was probably missed by many in the cathedral as it seemed to be more functionary than anything else. At the time, I missed the significance of this statement as well.

Toward the beginning of the Rite of Ordination, the deacon called my name and I replied, “Present.” Twenty-two years later, I now grasp the significance of that term. In stating I was “present,” I was referring to the fact that I was fully there, body, mind, heart and soul, to fulfill God’s plan for me. Up to that point, I had studied theology and served in a number of pastoral situations. But like anyone beginning a new phase of life, I had no idea what was to come.

On that day, I didn’t know what parishes or schools I would serve. I only knew I was “present” that day, that moment, and as ready as I would ever be. All I needed was an open heart and mind and God would do the rest.

On this day, the Church stands at the beginning of Winter Ordinary Time, which will last until Feb. 14, Ash Wednesday. In these few weeks between Christmas and Lent, let us reflect on the call of Samuel as recounted on this Second Sunday in Ordinary Time’s

first reading. God calls Samuel several times while he is sleeping. Finally, Eli realizes it is God’s voice. Then, Samuel replies, “Speak Lord, for your servant is listening” (1 Sam 3:10).

Samuel was “present” much like I was on the day of my ordination. On that day, Samuel didn’t know that he would have to challenge King Saul or that he would one day go to the house of Jesse and choose Jesse’s youngest son, David, to be the next King of Israel.

“Speak Lord, for your servant is listening” is a beautiful prayer for us to begin Ordinary Time. We make the same profession of faith in so many ways.

At a baptism, parents are asked the following question: “It will be your duty to bring him/her up to keep God’s commandments as Christ taught us by loving God and our neighbor. Do you clearly understand what you are undertaking?” “Yes!” reply the parents. It is the same “present” of the newly ordained or the “Speak, Lord” of Samuel.

At a Catholic wedding the priest asks: “Are you prepared as you follow the path of marriage, to love and honor each other for as long as you both shall live?” The bride and groom each answer with an enthusiastic “I am!”

The parents of a newborn or a bride and groom don’t know what’s coming. But that day they are prepared to live out the promises they’re making.

With God’s grace and inspiration, it can happen. Each of us answers like Samuel. We do so in official sacramental moments but also in our day-to-day living. We make the words of Samuel part of our daily prayer. Speak, Lord, your servant is listening today, in this situation, among these people, now. We never know what any one day will bring, but as we begin our day we ask the Lord to speak to us, for we are listening.

Faith is not just about the milestone moments. It is also about what I do today, in the here and now. That’s why it’s a good idea to begin each day with Samuel’s eagerness to hear God. Like Samuel, let’s listen for God’s voice.



FOR PRIVATE REFLECTION...

1. Do you remember those key moments of your lives when you were ready to take on God’s will? Were you “present?”
2. Make an attempt to use Samuel’s statement in your daily prayer. Apply it to certain situations, by name and place, to ask for God’s help in your relationships.



Msgr. Bernard Bourgeois is the pastor of Christ the King and Immaculate Heart of Mary parishes in Rutland and St. Patrick Parish in Wallingford. He can be reached at revbwb@gmail.com.

Global MISSION, GLOBAL DISCIPLE



As a priest, Father David Cray for years did not live and minister in the New England culture into which he was born and in which he lived before entering the Society of St. Edmund during college.

He lived mostly in Canada, Europe and the southern United States until he came to Vermont to serve as pastor of St. Jude Church in Hinesburg and Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in Charlotte in 2003.

“The benefit of living in more than one culture is you realize there are very few absolutes apart from God,” he said.

Born into an Irish Catholic family in the Jamaica Plain section of Boston in 1945, he is the youngest of the three children of John F. Cray, a high school Latin teacher, and Alice M. Kernan Cray, who worked in the Boston Public Library.

He smiles when he says that he grew up in a “religious theme park,” because in his immediate neighborhood were the

Maryknoll Brothers novitiate, the Daughters of St. Paul motherhouse and novitiate, the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent orphanage and the Greek Orthodox Church seminary.

Because he lived a distance from his parish and parish school, he attended public school but got to know many of his religious neighbors, skating in the park with Maryknoll Brothers or building a tree house on their property, for example.

Sometimes he and his friends would be playing outside when one would suggest going into the Maryknoll chapel to pray the Stations of the Cross. “The religious aspect was part of our lives,” he said.

He graduated from Boston Latin School in 1963 and enrolled at St. Michael’s College in Colchester; his family had ties to Bellows Falls, and he liked the idea of studying in Vermont at a Catholic college where he attended daily Mass.

He intended to become an English teacher, but during

his sophomore year, his plans changed as he prepared for study in Europe during his junior year.

In the process of planning with the dean of students, Father Francis Gokey, the Edmundite priest asked him what he intended to do after college. When he replied, “teach,” Father Gokey asked him if he had ever thought of the similarity between teaching and preaching.

Young David Cray got the hint.

He told his friends what Father Gokey had said, and they agreed he’d make a good priest. “Father Gokey sparked and fostered my vocation,” he said.

David Cray entered the Edmundite novitiate and graduated from St. Michael’s in 1968 then studied theology at the University of St. Michael’s College in Toronto, earning a master of divinity degree in 1971.

Burlington Bishop John A. Marshall ordained him to the priesthood in 1972, and his first assignment was as parochial vicar of St. Edmund of Canterbury Parish in Whitton in southwest London, a parish staffed by the Society of St. Edmund.

Father Cray lived in Burlington where he served as director of scholastics for the society and later as secretary general, and he lived in Mystic, Conn., where he was the order’s director of novices.

He served parishes — some years two at once — in Quebec and was episcopal vicar for the English-speaking region in the Diocese of Saint-Jean–Longueuil where, for two years he was a pastor in Greenfield Park.

From Canada he was transferred to Selma, Ala., to serve as programs director of the Society of St. Edmund’s Southern Mission, and from there moved to New Orleans to be president of Bishop Perry Middle School.

Now living in Charlotte, Father Cray said through his experiences outside Vermont he learned what it is like to be in a minority. In England he worked with a religious minority — Catholics — and in Quebec he worked with

an English-speaking minority in a French-speaking province in an English-speaking country. In Selma and in

New Orleans he worked with the African American population, a minority group in the United States. He lived in a black community and was in the white minority.

He became accustomed to living as part of a minority population, and he earned a master of theology degree from Xavier University of Louisiana in New Orleans with a concentration in Black Pastoral Theology.

“I have benefitted tremendously from living in cultures that are not the culture I was brought up in,” Father Cray said. “I lived in cultures that would be foreign to me if I had not lived there and been integrated into them.”

Commenting on the racial and religious tensions that grab headlines almost daily, Father Cray said such division creates an atmosphere that legitimizes racism and violence. “Hate breeds hate. Nasty breeds nasty,” he said.

“You can change the tone of the conversation in your circle of friends and family,” he suggested. “You don’t have to keep intensifying the atmosphere and feelings of alienation, of division, of hatred. If you do, it just gets worse.”

Emphasizing that all persons are children of God, Father Cray said, “God has given us all one single origin and calls us all to be one single human family.”

Living in different cultures has broadened his perspective and enriched his life. “Division and violence come out of not knowing. When you do not know, have no awareness of or acquaintance with people who are completely different from you, you fear them. When you get to know people and appreciate people, you come to love them, and you don’t fear them.”

A member of the Society of St. Edmund, which is celebrating its 175th anniversary, Father Cray said he has served in various places and cultures because of his vow of obedience. “It is important to discern God’s will and be obedient to it,” he said.



Edmundite Father David Cray — Cori Fugere Urban photo



“God has given us all one single origin and calls us all to be one single human family.”



CHRIST IS REVEALED

Vocational Discernment 101 PARTS 4, 5 & 6

This is a continuing list of nine steps in discerning a vocation provided by Father Jon Schnobrich, vocations director for the Diocese of Burlington.

Step 4: Patience

Rarely is one's vocation realized in a single moment of inspiration. Instead, it's revealed to us over time as we grow in our relationship with Jesus. This can feel frustrating at times; we may find ourselves anxious and looking into the future beyond what we know and understand. But God simply wants us to trust Him and to take the next step. St. Ignatius of Loyola did not set out on his life journey with the intention of founding the Society of Jesus. He did, however, nurture his relationship with Jesus, and he realized that acting on what he knew God wanted him to do at that point in time resulted in more peace than dwelling on what he thought God might want him to do in the future. God's will becomes known to us over time, and patience is accepting this truth.

Step 5: Peace

In the presence of Christ, there is peace. Our task is to realize this peace and to desire it. This was Christ's first wish for us after His resurrection when He said to the disciples,

"Peace be with you" (Jn 20:19). If peace, stillness, clarity and gratitude are the interior experiences and feelings one can use to describe a certain situation or decision one is faced with, that person can be confident that Christ is revealing Himself through those experiences and feelings.

Step 6: Fear is not of God

Just as there are experiences of God, there are also feelings like fear, pressure and confusion that are not of God.

These can arise during busy and stressful times when our wants can become confused with God's will. During the Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus faced the decision to escape His passion or to enter into it. He prayed, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me; still, not my will but yours be done" (Lk 22:42). In the world's most decisive moment, Jesus turned to prayer and discerned the Father's will. Through prayer, the sacraments and attentiveness to our interior experiences, we can determine which paths in life are of God and which paths are of the spirit against Christ.

For more information, go to the vocations website at vermontcatholic.org/vocations.

VTC • Father Jon Schnobrich



Father Jon Schnobrich

Building A CULTURE OF VOCATIONS

VOCATIONS CHALICE PROGRAM

The Vocations Office of the Diocese of Burlington is launching the Vocations Chalice Program for promoting and building a culture of vocations.

God creates each person with a vocation, a plan for how he or she will be called to love others. The chalice that is used for the

program is emblematic of the Mass and the Eucharist, where Jesus Christ becomes truly present upon the altar. Jesus calls us to our vocations, as He is both the origin and destiny of every vocation and every person.

If you are interested in hosting the Vocation Chalice Program in your parish, please consult your pastor, and upon his approval, contact Father Jon Schnobrich in the Vocations Office: 802-658-6110 ext. 1175 or vocations@vermontcatholic.org.



— Monica Koskiniemi photo

FORMING RESOLUTIONS for the new *liturgical* year

As we begin Advent, the Church ushers in a new liturgical year. We begin again the annual observances with which we are familiar. Advent, a time of hopeful waiting, gives way to the joyous celebrations of Christmas. Soon enough we find ourselves in the Lenten Season, with its disciplines of fasting, prayer and almsgiving. In the midst of spring, we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus at Easter, extending our feasting 50 days until Pentecost where we especially celebrate the Holy Spirit in our Church and in our lives. The long span of Ordinary Time follows; it is this time that points us to the life of Jesus Christ in all its aspects — not just His birth, not just His Passion, not just His Resurrection — but all of His life. And the cycle of the year comes — once again — to winter, and we find ourselves entering another Advent. Another Christmas. Another Lent. Another Easter. The cycle continues.

The new year encourages us to look back on the year just passed and ahead on the year to come. We recall the past year — the joys and sorrows that we faced, the rights and wrongs that we may have done. Many of us resolve to do something different in the coming year. A little more exercise. A better diet. Being nicer to siblings or children or parents. Maybe we resolve to go to church more, learn more about the faith or go back to confession. One of the most important reflections we can make is on how God was present in our lives in the past year and how might we respond to God's presence in the year to come.

This process of looking back and looking forward is essential to our personal growth and our growth as a Church. Without this reflection, the cycle of the liturgical year remains simply that — a cycle. If you “draw” the liturgical year on a piece of paper, you get a circle. But this process of looking back and looking forward — of reflecting on the

past and making resolutions for our future — transforms that circle. The circle becomes a spiral.

A spiral is cyclical, but it doesn't end up in the same spot. We celebrate Advents and Christmases, Lents and Easters year after year, but we are not the same people. Our past has shaped us, and our future might give us reason to hope. I am not the same person I was five years ago, 10 years ago. My experiences have shaped me. Herein lies the beauty of observing the liturgical year. Passages from Scripture are repeated every three years both at Christmas and at Easter. The themes and disciplines of Advent and Lent do not change. But you and I change. And perhaps we will experience those same stories and experience those same disciplines in a different way, simply because we are different.

The upcoming diocesan synod is an extraordinary time for our Catholic Church in Vermont to reflect on its past and look forward to its future. In order for the synod to be fruitful, however, we need to take seriously the call to reflect on past, present and future. We can't leave all this work simply for other people to do, just as we can't delegate our own personal reflections over our lives in the new year (and God forbid we have someone else make New Years resolutions for us!). As a Church, we reflect together with the help of the Holy Spirit. That reflection may lead to difficult conclusions and challenging resolutions ahead — just as our personal reflections might lead to challenging resolutions in our lives. Without these reflections as a Church, however, we can only hope to remain stuck in the same circle.

In this new liturgical year — and beyond — my prayer is that all of us are resolved to be involved in the life of our Church. It's the time to reflect. As Church, where have we been? Where should we be going? And how shall we get there?

VTC • Josh Perry



One of the most important reflections we can make is on how God was present in our lives in the past year and how might we respond to God's presence in the year to come.



MOVIE REVIEWS

1. Animated characters appear in the movie "The Star." — CNS/Sony Pictures
2. Jacob Tremblay and Julia Roberts star in a scene from the movie "Wonder." — CNS photo/Lionsgate Films
3. Mel Gibson, Mark Wahlberg, Owen Wilder Vaccaro and Will Ferrell star in a scene from the movie "Daddy's Home 2." — CNS photo/Paramount



1

The Star

(Sony)

This is a delightful animated version of the Christmas story told from the perspective of some of the animals present at the manger. Chief among them is a gentle donkey (voice of Steven Yeun) from Nazareth who yearns to exchange his life of drudgery working in a grain mill for the fame and prestige to be gained by joining the storied royal caravan. But his quest takes a detour after his leg, wounded in his successful escape from confinement, is tended by the Virgin Mary (voiced by Gina Rodriguez). Despite the mild disapproval of St. Joseph (voice of Zachary Levi), Mary adopts her patient as a pet, and he becomes dedicated to protecting the parents-to-be, as they journey to Bethlehem, from the murderous scheming of King Herod (voiced by Christopher Plummer). Aiding him is his best friend, a lively dove (voice of Keegan-Michael Key), as well as an affectionate sheep (voice of Aidy Bryant). Director Timothy Reckart skillfully balances religious themes such as the importance of prayer and the value of forgiveness with a more secular message about pursuing your dream and throws in a healthy dose of straightforward entertainment. This is a treat for all but the tiniest. There are scenes of peril and a bit of very mild scatological humor.

CNS Rating: A-I — general patronage

MPAA Rating: PG

Wonder

(Lionsgate)

This is a gentle, moving drama about a 10-year-old boy (Jacob Tremblay) born with facial deformities and his struggle to win acceptance from his peers as he transitions from being educated at home to attending fifth grade at his local middle school. His sympathetic parents (Julia Roberts and Owen Wilson) offer support as does his older sister (Izabela Vidovic), despite the fact that his emotional needs have left her feeling overlooked by Mom and Dad. The attitudes of the boy's fellow students (most prominently Noah Jupe, Bryce Gheisar and Millie Davis) range from open friendliness to cruel hostility with Jupe's character representing a case study in moral subtlety and the negative effects of peer pressure. In adapting R.J. Palacio's bestseller, director and co-writer Stephen Chbosky has created a winning and memorable film about the significance of ordinary life and the lasting impact of everyday choices. Despite a few mature elements, the movie's ethical lessons make it appropriate and valuable fare for most teens. The film has a scene vaguely referencing married sexuality, fleeting scatological material, a couple of fistfights, one use of profanity and a single mildly crass term.

CNS Rating: A-II — adults and adolescents

MPAA Rating: PG



2



3

Daddy's Home 2

(Paramount)

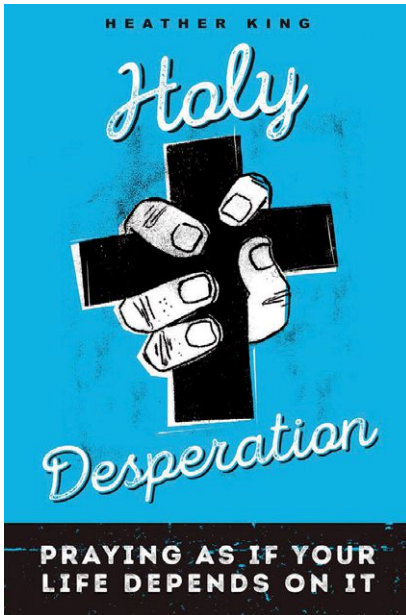
Silly slapstick predominates in this follow-up to the 2015 comedy about the blending pains of a post-divorce family. As the stepfather (Will Ferrell) and biological dad (Mark Wahlberg), whose rivalry fueled the first outing, try to preserve the fragile harmony they've achieved during a Christmas visit by their own temperamentally contrasting fathers (sensitive John Lithgow and trouble-loving womanizer Mel Gibson), returning director and co-writer Sean Anders busies himself finding outlandish mishaps for Ferrell's character to undergo. Although the film is mostly harmless, late scenes mix lame holiday-themed sentimentality with weirdly uncomfortable attempts to wring laughs from one shared child's (Owen Vaccaro) emerging sexuality, putting this strictly off-limits for young viewers. Much sexual humor, including a sight gag about homosexuality, a few mild oaths, occasional crude and frequent crass language, an obscene gesture.

CNS Rating: A-III — adults

MPAA Rating: PG-13

CNS (Catholic News Service) RATINGS: **A-I** general patronage; **A-II** adults and adolescents; **A-III** adults; **L** limited adult audience, films whose problematic content many adults would find troubling; **O** morally offensive.

MPAA (Motion Picture Association of America) RATINGS: **G** general audiences. All ages admitted; **PG** parental guidance suggested. Some material may not be suitable for children; **PG-13** parents strongly cautioned. Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13; **R** restricted. Under 17 requires accompanying parent or adult guardian; **NC-17** no one 17 and under admitted.



Holy Desperation: Praying As If Your Life Depends on It

By Heather King

Chicago: Loyola Press, 2017. 224 pages. Paperback: \$10.84; Kindle: \$9.99; Nook: \$10.49

Like Heather King's previous books, the most accurate word to describe this one is "honest" — sometimes brutally so. However, it is that very quality that makes "Holy Desperation: Praying As If Your Life Depends on It" so powerful. It is the honesty of a soul who has gone about as far down into the abyss as one can go, only to be overwhelmed and lifted out of those depths by the unconditional love of a forgiving God. Such an experience leaves a person changed forever.

As I read through the 13 chapters of this book, I thought how much the tone of King's words echoed those of St. Paul, for it is obvious that she too is on fire with the love of God. By telling her story — without pulling any punches — "Holy Desperation" ultimately becomes a book of hope for those who thought they had none left.

Although it is a reverent book, it is not a pious one, at least not in the ordinary sense of that word. The author makes no attempt to cover up the grittiness and messiness of life that brings people to God, nor does she say that, in order to approach the Almighty, one has to have on, as it were, one's "Sunday best." God, who knows us as we truly are, simply asks us to show up. "Come, all you who have missed the mark, who are dying for lack of meaning, all you who are sick and anxious and lonely and

afraid unto death," she says. "Come ... you who are caring for a parent with Alzheimer's while your siblings play golf. ... Come, you who live in chronic physical pain, you who are perpetually broke ... you who live a life of hidden, silent martyrdom that not one other person sees or cares about."

"Come close. Come as close as you can."

It was for these that Christ came into the world, she continues, for the sick, the wounded and the rejected. "Christ, with his special heart for the mentally and emotionally ill, constantly cast out demons from the people who came to him," she writes. All that God requires of us is to acknowledge our own neediness and admit to our own demons.

That, however, is the hard part, and one that most of us do not come to easily. For King, who was battling her own demon of alcoholism, it came at the end of a very dark road. Then, what seemed like despair became instead the sincerest prayer of all. "The essence of prayer consists in doing what most of us have never

done before and that no human being does unless we are utterly, completely out of ideas," she admits, "and that is to acknowledge defeat and ask for help. Kneeling, our heads are close to our hearts. Kneeling, we feel our exhaustion. Kneeling, we're the height of children."

The balance of the book consists of lessons learned, experiences shared and encouragement to continue no matter where in our journey of life we happen to be. There is a chapter devoted to the traditional prayers of the Church, which the author loves and prays on a daily basis, but we are also invited to join King's own prayers, which are as honest and sincere as everything else in the book. "Heavenly Father, help me believe that I am loved in spite of my ongoing incompetence, littleness and brokenness," she prays near the beginning. "Help me remember that our brokenness is why you came. Help me not be afraid to come close to you, in any way, at any minute of the day or night."

This book is highly recommended.

VTC • Kay Winchester

About the Author

Heather King is an essayist, memoirist, blogger and former lawyer. She struggled with alcoholism for many years, got sober in 1987 and converted to Catholicism in 1996. She has written several books including "Stripped," "Parched," "Redeemed," "Shirt of Flame," "Poor Baby" and "Stumble." A contributor to the Catholic magazine *Magnificat*, her column "The Crux" appears in *Angelus*, the publication of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. She currently lives in Los Angeles.

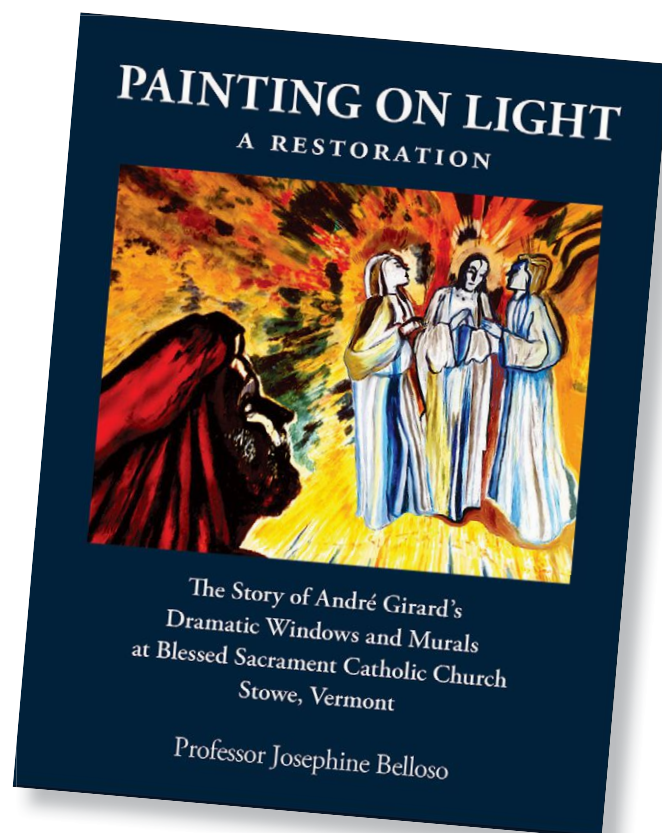
New book sheds light on Stowe church art, history

“**P**ainting on Light — A Restoration” is a new book about the history of Blessed Sacrament Church in Stowe, a church dedicated to Brother Joseph Dutton, a Vermonter who served the lepers of Molokai, Hawaii, with St. Damien De Veuster. It is also a collection of photographs of the murals on the outside of the church and the church windows.

In 2010 the artworks were at the brink of being lost, so the parish formed an Art Restoration Committee to preserve the 12 murals that depict the work with the lepers and the 36 windows with Gospel stories, all created by French artist Andre Girard.

“When we completed the restoration in 2013, the committee decided that we needed to make a durable record of all the artworks,” explained Lynn P. Altadonna, a parishioner of Blessed Sacrament Church and chair of the book committee. “Of course, we have digital files now, but we know that the technology will continue to change and the digital records we leave in 2017 may not be ‘readable’ in 20 or 30 years. We see the book as the durable record.”

The author of the book is Professor Josephine Belloso, a student and friend of Girard.



The goals for the book are to create a revenue stream for maintaining the art; support the movement to recognize Brother Dutton with sainthood and honor Girard as a gifted artist.

“Girard was in the French Underground. The violence of World War II is visible in the powerful images he painted here just after the war,” Altadonna said. “Girard makes manifest the intensity of Christ’s Passion in his Stations of the Cross. Girard captures the Gospel scenes so you feel what is happening at the Nativity, the Sermon on the Mount, the Crucifixion and the Resurrection. The outside murals are black paint on white pine boards. One can see life on Molokai with the lepers, St. Damien and Brother Dutton in full color. The lesson Girard captures is we all must simply serve God by serving our neighbor.”

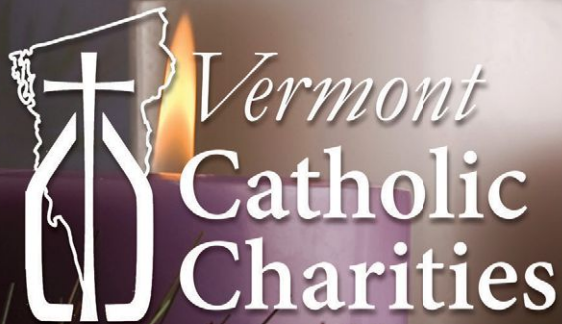
Donors who give \$50 to the Art Restoration Fund will receive a copy of the 128-page, hardcover book.

It is hoped that a book launch party will take place at Blessed Sacrament Church by Christmas.

For more information, call Blessed Sacrament Rectory at 802-253-7536 or visit bscstowe@myfairpoint.net.

VTC • Cori Fugere Urban





2017 Advent Appeal

A message of hope: Will you help us make a difference in the lives of Vermonters in need of assistance?

The annual Vermont Catholic Charities Inc. Advent Appeal is underway to help persons in need in Vermont with essentials like warm clothing and help with rent and emergency needs like assistance with car repairs, continued electric service and medication.

“The ‘Season of Giving’ has no bounds for people in need. At Christmas time and throughout the year, it is a daily struggle for many Vermonters to maintain housing, stay warm or feed their families,” said Mary Beth Pinard, executive director of Vermont Catholic Charities. “This Advent Season, please help us alleviate some of these stresses for our friends in crisis, including some of our more vulnerable populations — children, the elderly and the sick.”

This is the Diocese of Burlington’s 23rd Advent Appeal.

Last year, the appeal raised \$69,142; the goal this year is to exceed that.

Funds donated to the appeal help the working poor avoid homelessness, maintain electric service for single parents, assist the disabled and much more.

Last year 256 families were helped — 81 families from 25 parishes and 175 families not through parish referrals. There were 483 adults and 474 children served.

“We expect the needs will be the same as in the prior years,” Pinard said. This includes helping individuals and families meet basic needs such as food, utility disconnects, fuel assistance and back rent/security deposits throughout the year.

For Christmas, some families need help with fuel assistance, unexpected expenses, food cards and gift

cards to help provide children with Christmas gifts

“With your support, we can continue to help our neighbors in need and show God’s love,” Pinard said.

“Please know that every gift — whatever the size — makes a difference.”

“Thank you so much. We’ve been scraping by, and this will make Christmas much nicer,” said one of last year’s Advent Appeal recipients. “It’s been a tough time the last three years and we’re very appreciative of the help. We consider it a hand

up not a hand out,” commented another.

Excess funds will be used to help individuals and families throughout the year through Vermont Catholic Charities’ Emergency Aid Fund.

“Great to still have people in today’s society who give and help,” said another of last year’s beneficiaries from the appeal.

VTC • Cori Fugere Urban

DONATE BY MAIL: 55 JOY DRIVE, SOUTH BURLINGTON, VT 05403
ONLINE: vermontcatholic.org/adventappeal

This year’s Advent Appeal deadline is Dec. 31, but donations are appreciated all year. Make checks payable to Vermont Catholic Charities Inc.

Thank You

Sending generosity to the soldiers

The boxes of donated items to four different charities during Advent are a testament to the generosity of the families at St. Paul School in Barton.

With only about 50 families, the school sends boxes of gifts to active soldiers, pet items to the local animal shelter, toys to the Toys for Tots program and food to the local food pantry.

"This is little Barton, and our families sacrifice to [send their children] here already. They are so thankful and somehow able to still be generous," said Principal Joanne Beloin.

There are 68 students in pre-kindergarten through eighth grade, and 30 percent of the students qualify for free and reduced lunches.

"A lot has been done for us at St. Paul's or we wouldn't still be here," she said. "It's the right thing to do to pass on that generosity and help others."

The school community sends two boxes of toiletries, games, candy, writing material, socks and homemade cards to soldiers during Advent and another for Valentine's Day.

"Our school as a whole really supports our vets," Beloin said, and that support reaches to today's soldiers.

"They support our country, and we want to honor them and support what they are doing for us," said Jennifer Wilson, the third- and fourth-grade teacher, as her students worked on a poppy-themed art project to send to veterans.

"It's nice to do this. They are risking their lives for us," Micha Sicard, 9, a third grader said of the boxes sent to soldiers.

Classmate Akira Conley, 8, said she likes collecting for the animal shelter because "God doesn't want to see the animals starve because they're His creation."

Mara Royer, 13, an eighth grader, usually contributes to the Toys for Tots collection because she likes to help ensure a child's happiness on Christmas morning. "You want to welcome Christ by being full of cheer, and you want everyone to be as happy as possible."

Riley Perry, 13, also an eighth grader, said her family and school community model generosity for her: "It's important to be generous because you can share happiness."

"Giving is just as good as receiving," Mara added. "It makes you happy deep down inside."



1

VTC • Cori Fugere Urban

1. A certificate indicates that the flag flown at St. Paul School in Barton was previously on a special operations aircraft during a combat mission over Afghanistan. Sgt. Christopher Duff, a member of the Army National Guard from Massachusetts and a recipient of a gift box from the school community, arranged for the flag to be sent to the school. **2.** Students at St. Paul's School in Barton have a special connection to veterans and often make greetings for them. Here children work on a poppy craft project. The school community sends holiday packages to active soldiers too. **3.** Mara Royer (left) and Riley Perry, both 13 and eighth graders at St. Paul School in Barton, sort through donations for four different charitable works the school community undertakes during Advent.

— Cori Fugere Urban photos



2



3

Are you ready to be a child again?

The approach of Christmas always brings me back to my childhood.

Oh, to be a child again, especially as we journey through Advent toward Christmas! We can return to the simplicity of childhood — at least spiritually.

Caryll Houselander, a popular 20th-century spiritual author and poet, wrote, “To become a child is a challenge to our courage. It demands, first of all, that we dare to grow up, to give ourselves to life, to accept life as it is — and above all, to accept ourselves as we are.”

Houselander suggested that going back to childhood means rediscovering “true values, instead of those that are based on materialism, public opinion and snobbery; that we must regain simplicity and humility ... and, above all, we must regain the courage that is partly a boundless zest for living and partly an unquestioning trust in an all-powerful love.”

Although these words were penned in 1949, they could have been written today. So much in our lives is driven by materialism and public opinion. Our attention is fragmented by constant multi-tasking and the incessant flow of information, which prevent us from fully experiencing the activities in which we are engaged at any given moment. This is especially true in the holiday season that begins with Thanksgiving.

According to a national survey provided by New Dream, an organization that promotes simplicity, more than 75 percent of Americans wish the holidays were less materialistic. Nearly nine in ten believe that holidays should be more about family and caring for others than exchanging gifts.

Recent studies in social neuroscience have found that loneliness causes serious health risks. Yet more than a third of

U.S. senior citizens experience frequent or intense loneliness, and 94 percent of people with disabilities feel that they lack meaningful community participation.

New Dream suggests that we create holiday traditions “that instill more meaning into the season and encourage more sharing, laughter, creativity and personal renewal” rather than the accumulation of material goods and credit card debt.

For adults like you and me, our childhood holidays are often our most precious memories. Yet many of us get caught up in the frenzy of materialism, rushing around so much that we are never really able to appreciate the heart and soul of Thanksgiving, Advent and Christmas.

While we still have time, let’s resolve to become children again. Let’s rediscover true values of faith and family, the love of humble things and simple pleasures, gratitude and a commitment to nurturing relationships — especially with those who are at risk of being marginalized or who are in need of special attention.

Let’s ask for the grace to recover the ability to live in the present moment and to fully experience

whatever we are doing, a boundless zest for living and an unquestioning trust in the power of our loving God to provide for all our needs.

In this journey back to childhood, we can count on the assistance of the saints, especially those who particularly exemplified simplicity and spiritual childhood. Among these

are St. Francis of Assisi, St. Therese of Lisieux and the foundress of the Little Sisters of the Poor, St. Jeanne Jugan, who frequently counseled her spiritual daughters to “be very little before God.” We can also count on two of the Church’s newest saints, Jacinta and Francisco of Fatima, who were just young children when God called them

to a vocation of historic proportions for the Church and the modern world.

Finally, in our journey back to childhood we are always accompanied by Mary, whose littleness drew down the gift of God, and who constantly sang of her gratitude and her sense of wonder at the marvels God was accomplishing in her. She is eager to help us to become, anew, children of a loving God.

“Many of us get caught up in...rushing around so much that we are never really able to appreciate the heart and soul of Thanksgiving, Advent and Christmas.”



Sister Constance Veit is director of communications for the Little Sisters of the Poor.



1. College of St. Joseph seniors Tammy Robitille (left) and Jane Cretella stand in the college library. They are both Provider Scholars and say the program made a college education possible for them.

— Cori Fugere Urban photo

2. Jane Cretella of Naugatuck, Connecticut, a senior at the College of St. Joseph in Rutland, volunteers at Vermont Foodbank.

— Submitted photo

Serving the community, getting an education

The College of St. Joseph in Rutland — once known as The College of St. Joseph the Provider — provides students who might not otherwise be able to attend college with financial aid that benefits both the students and the community.

The college is furthering its mission and addressing national concern about the rising cost of higher education by offering the Provider Scholarship Program. The scholarship for full-time undergraduate students, worth \$65,500 over four years, incorporates a commitment to academic excellence, personal and professional growth and community service.

Each Provider Scholar is required to serve the community for a minimum of 15 hours a semester, but most do more.

Tuition and room and board are \$35,900 a year for residential students and \$24,000 for commuters; both are eligible for Provider Scholarships.

Senior psychology majors Tammy Robitille of Lowell and Jane Cretella of Naugatuck, Conn., are among the nearly 170 Provider Scholars.

Cretella said she always has been community minded. As a Provider Scholar, most of her hours this year have been spent at Rutland Community Cupboard; last year was at Vermont Foodbank. “I have a desire to do it,” she said.

Likewise, Robitille is motivated by a desire to help others; much of her Provider Scholarship service has been with DREAM, a Vermont mentoring organization that builds communities of families and college students to empower children from affordable housing neighborhoods so that they may recognize their options, make informed decisions and achieve their dreams.

The Provider Scholarship Program “falls in line with the core values of the Sisters of St. Joseph,” said Elicia Mailhiot, associate director of communications.

Those values include hospitality, love of neighbor without distinction, reconciliation and unity of all people

with God, one another and all creation.

Provider Scholars have completed more than 18,000 hours of service in the greater Rutland region since the program’s inception in fall 2013.

According to Kimberly Rupe, community engagement coordinator at the college, “The partnerships and relationships built with outside organizations have been wonderful.”

Among the organizations students serve are Habitat for Humanity, Loretto Home/St. Joseph/Kervick Home, Dismas House, Vermont Achievement Center, Rutland Regional Medical Center, Rutland County Child-Parent Center, Rutland County Women’s Network and Shelter and Vermont Foodbank.

Hanna Snyder, volunteer coordinator for Vermont Foodbank, noted that about a dozen Provider Scholars — many of them repeat volunteers — help each week to pack bags of food for weekend meals for about 1,300 students in Vermont.

“CSJ is invaluable,” she said. “We’ve come to rely on them,” she said of the college students. “They are great volunteers we know we can count on every single week.”

Applicants who are accepted to the college are eligible for consideration for the Provider Program. Provider Scholars are intellectually curious, want to make a difference on campus and in the community and have a 2.0 to 4.0 grade point average.

“We care about our community. Everybody has to look out for each other,” Mailhiot said.

VTC • Cori Fugere Urban



Welcoming New Americans



Our commitment to host a refugee family in our home and to acclimate them to American life was to last one week.

In 2004, my husband, toddler son and I waited at Burlington Airport as a Somali-Bantu woman named Zahara Arbow came though the arrivals door with a baby knotted to her back. Behind her trailed four youngsters, ages 3, 5, 7 and 9, shuffling in oversized Keds supplied by the resettlement agency.

At the 23rd hour, Zahara's husband stayed behind in the Kenyan refugee camp where she bore each of her children. So she came as a single mother to Vermont, a name that meant nothing to her other than a place of safety where her children could be educated.

This stoic woman became excited during one of our first drives around town. A translator communicated her

question posed to me as she pointed out the window: "Is that the school where my children will go?"

In those first days, I helped round up coats and boots, and prepped the family for the impending cold. The only explanation of the winter season they received prior to resettlement was to hold a small block of ice during an orientation session in the camp. I recall the eldest daughter, Madina, phoning me after the first snowfall, asking if it was safe to go outside; they feared they might die of exposure.

We ferried the family to doctor appointments and grocery stores until Zahara got a driver's license and purchased her own van. My husband arranged mentors for each of the children. Through the years, we attended parent-teacher conferences, graduations and college tours and even provided refuge for two of the girls when they got kicked out of the

house by their new stepfather.

Why I ever imagined that our hosting commitment would last a week, I don't know.

Thankfully, our connection has continued strong for 13 years to the present day.

Our encounter with this refugee family (they are American citizens now) has been nothing short of life changing for our family. We acknowledge the "First World problems" we used to fuss over, such as dropped cell service or a stained favorite T-shirt. Our expectations about what constitutes a meaningful life have shifted — from acquiring things (we downsized our home recently) to engaging with people; from fulfilling wants to serving needs. We fail miserably at times. Still, our relationship with this New American family keeps us anchored in what's most important as followers of Jesus.

At no other time in human history have so many people been forcibly displaced throughout the world — some 65.6 million people, with an increasing 20 people per minute. One of Pope Francis' signature themes in recent years has been to encourage people of faith to create "cultures of encounter" with refugees and migrants, to fight indifference in ourselves and to share the journey with people outside of our normal lives. The pope predicts an inner transformation of sorts; I can say with utmost humility, I know of what he speaks.

**VTC • Marybeth
Christie Redmond**



A reunion of Redmonds and Arbows (2016) gather along with the family's step-siblings (front, right) and some neighborhood friends.

— Submitted Photo

Share the Journey ✝

#sharejourney

A prayer, a share on social media, a voice of support in a letter to the editor — supporting migrants can take many forms. Pope Francis hopes Catholics will act during the next two years to encounter people on the move.

Share the Journey is an initiative of Caritas Internationalis, the global network of Catholic charitable agencies. It urges Catholics to grow in understanding of migrants who have fled poverty, hunger, violence, persecution and the effects of climate change in their homelands.

In the United States, the Church's leading organizations have developed a series of activities that families, parishes, schools and individuals can undertake during the Share the Journey campaign the pope opened in September at the Vatican.

U.S. partners in the effort are the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and its Migration and Refugee Services, Catholic Relief Services and Catholic Charities USA.

The effort will give Catholics the opportunity to learn and explore Catholic social teaching, said Joan Rosenhauer, executive vice president of U.S. operations for CRS.

"Catholic social teaching has clear messages of caring for strangers, the importance of hearing their stories and understanding their needs," she said.

Much of the effort will be focused on sharing stories about migrants, said Kristin Witte, coordinator of domestic Catholic educational engagement at CRS.

"The hope is that through the stories that are presented, the images presented, that people will be moved from their place of comfort to a place of encounter. That's what the Church is calling us to. That's what the pope is calling us to," she said.

There also is an advocacy component to Share the Journey, Rosenhauer said, giving U.S. Catholics the opportunity to take what they learn about migrants and approach federal policymakers to better allocate international assistance to address the factors that cause people to flee.

On the Share the Journey launch day, Sept. 27,

Burlington Bishop Christopher Coyne participated in the #ShareJourney social media campaign, posting a picture with arms outstretched in front of the Bishop Brady Center in South Burlington. The caption read: "Reaching out is the first step in loving neighbors fleeing war, persecution and poverty."

Later, Elias Bakhsh, from Aleppo, Syria, spoke to students at Rice Memorial High School in South Burlington and to a group at the University of Vermont Catholic Center about his experience as a Syrian refugee.

Michael Hagan, coordinator of religious education and catechesis for the Diocese of Burlington, encourages persons of all ages to read the stories on the Share the Journey website. "Remembering that these are people created in the image of God, not just names and faces on television, will help convert our hearts and spur us to prayer and action," he said.

For more information and resources, visit sharejourney.org.

CNS • Catholic New Service
Cori Fugere Urban contributed to this report.



How are you encountering strangers and loving your neighbor? Post using the #ShareJourney hashtag to join the conversation online.
— Twitter image

Celebrating THE Mass

As New Americans continue to resettle in Vermont, members of the Catholic community embrace them and help them to make the Green Mountain State their home.

They do this in myriad ways including helping immigrants find and set up homes, access social services and jobs, maintain their culture and practice their faith in meaningful ways.

For example, in Burlington, St. Joseph Co-Cathedral hosts Mass in French for members of the Francophone African community.

Father Lance Harlow, rector, celebrates the Sunday evening Mass about once a month to help the participants preserve their Catholic faith and their culture. “They have a purity of Catholic faith through their culture but not affected by the Puritanism that affects most of North-east America,” he said.

At a recent Mass, about 50 people — children, teens, adults and the elderly — gathered in the front left section of the co-cathedral, many wearing clothing made of traditional African cloth and featuring designs of the Blessed Mother. They sang and clapped; some

played instruments like drums and shakers, others made a “sound of joy” like a trill they called “bikelekele,” or waved a scarf.

“It’s great. You get to get back to the same experience as back home. It kind of recreates that,” said Rachel Miyalu who left the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and came to the United States seven years ago, three years ago to Vermont.

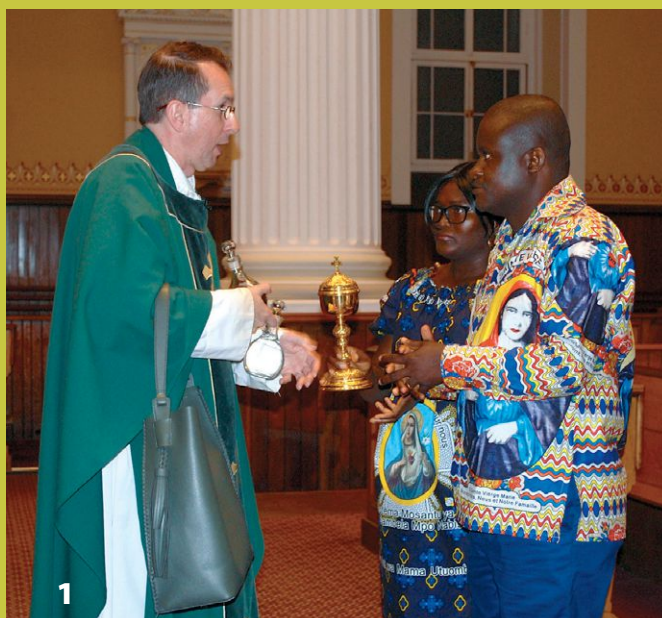
“I like Mass in French,” said Gertrude Maboueta who came to Vermont six years ago from the capital of the Republic of the Congo, Brazzaville. “Father Lance teaches us in French because French is our language.”

Father Harlow took French classes in high school and college and continues to take private lessons through the Alliance Française of the Lake Champlain Region.

He celebrates Mass in French and preaches in French, to the delight of the congregation.

“I am very, very happy,” said Claudine Nzanzu who came to Vermont five years ago from the DRC. “This is a lovely Father, a good Father, who celebrates the Mass for us in French. He’s an angel to us.”

Most of the members of





this congregation are from the DRC, and their English proficiency varies, but they all appreciate Mass in French and its liveliness. “English Mass is not active. We don’t dance,” said Nzanzu who shook a rattle-like instrument and waved her arms in joy and praise during the Mass.

Ophthalmologist Jules Wetchi, 39, left the DRC and came to Burlington in 2013; he works as a medical technician and is studying for a master’s degree in public health from the University of Vermont. He was active in his church in the Archdiocese of Kinshasa and formed the French-speaking Catholic community in Burlington.

A language barrier is often the first challenge New Americans face when they come to Vermont, he said, and that is especially difficult at Mass. So his goal was to create a community to help people maintain their Catholic faith and to be engaged in the Mass; the French Mass began in 2016.

The co-cathedral was the perfect place for the community to form, not just because Father Harlow speaks French — and can hear confessions in French — but also because of its central location for Mass and other religious gatherings like the recitation of the rosary and Gospel study and social gatherings like post-Mass potluck dinners.

Wetchi, an extraordinary minister of holy Communion who speaks four languages, said finding a home in an historically French parish is especially meaningful for the French-speaking African community there which now numbers nearly 50.

“When you come for God, you need to be happy because God loves us and nobody loves us like God,” Nzanzo said. “This Mass is a blessing.”

VTC • Cori Fugere Urban



1. Father Lance Harlow, rector of St. Joseph Co-Cathedral and Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception parishes in Burlington, accepts offertory gifts during a special Mass for members of the local African community. **2.** Members of the choir wear special clothing made of traditional African cloth and featuring designs of the Blessed Mother. **3.** St. Joseph Co-Cathedral in Burlington hosts Mass in French for members of the Francophone African community at which members play various instruments. — Cori Fugere Urban photos

ONCE A Stranger Now A FRIEND

Merida Ntirampeba's first impression of St. Francis Xavier Church in Winooski was one of welcome.

She had left her native Burundi in 1993 and came to Vermont in 2004 after 11 years in an overcrowded refugee camp in Tanzania where threats and violence were not uncommon.

After settling into an apartment in Winooski with her family, she wanted to go to church and was directed to the two-spired brick church on St. Peter St. "The first time I went to the church the community was welcoming. Everyone I met was so kind," she said in Kirundi, her 24-year-old daughter, Claudine Nkurinziza, translating for her. Someone gave Ntirampeba money to help set up her new family home, another person offered her rides from church, and others helped her family with needed items like school backpacks.

In addition to helping this woman from Burundi, St. Francis Xavier Parish helps refugees and children of refugees in myriad ways from providing food and clothing, finding a place to live and engaging legal and interpreter services to providing scholarship assistance for children to attend Catholic schools and a cemetery plot for a dying man to ease his anxiety about where he would be buried.

It also supports the Catholic CARES Network. (See story on page 24.)

"I do whatever I feel I am capable of doing," said St. Francis parishioner Diane Potvin, the executive

assistant to the pastor.

Clearly, she has extraordinarily capabilities as she escorts refugees — mostly from Africa — through their needs and requirements until they can function here on their own. She works closely with other agencies that are helping them.

"We do anything that makes them have a sense of self worth and that they are not alone," Msgr. Lavalley said.

The assistance is offered to Catholics and non-Catholics alike. "The Gospel doesn't say just take care of your own," said Msgr. Lavalley, who was seen in local hip-hop trio A2VT's video for their song "Winooski, My Town." (It is a tribute to the new home of three young refugees from Africa.)

There are about eight African families in St. Francis Xavier Parish, and numerous children have attended St. Francis Xavier School.

"Our Catholic values extend to everything we do, and the importance of charity and humility that comes with our faith is evident," said Principal Eric Becker. "It's important for us to be members of our Winooski community and see all the issues [refugees] are facing. We want to be good neighbors."

Ntirampeba, 59, has given birth to 10 children; seven are still living — four in the United States and three in Burundi. She praises her parish for the help she and her family have received, both physical and spiritual assistance. This includes food, financial help, clothing and scholarships for St. Francis Xavier School and South



Claudine Nkurinziza (left) and her mother, Merida Ntirampeba, are parishioners of Winooski's St. Francis Xavier Church, where they say New Americans are embraced.

— Cori Fugere Urban photo

Burlington's Rice Memorial High School. Msgr. Lavalley baptized three of her children together.

"Only God knows how much the church and Msgr. Lavalley have done for me," Ntirampeba said. "He is like a parent to me."

She did not expect people here to be "so nice," she continued. "I feel grateful and cared about. It's supernatural for so much love."

Her daughter, too, is grateful. Now working as an instructional aid at J.F. Kennedy Elementary School in Winooski, she tries to "give back in any way I can." Often that is by translating for new Americans and assisting with programs of Catholic CARES Network. "I never say no to them because they've done so much for us," she said.

Her faith influences this attitude, and she cites the

Gospel of Matthew: "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'"

Her motto, she added, is "treat everyone the way you want to be treated."

Ntirampeba offered her gratitude to the people of St. Francis Xavier Parish "because they do so much for so many people." Her family now plays a part in making St. Francis Xavier the same welcoming community that they encountered over a decade ago.

St. Francis Xavier Parish, once mostly populated by Winooski's French Canadian immigrants and their families, is now comprised of people who "come from all around," Msgr. Lavalley said.

And they are embraced.

VTC • Cori Fugere Urban

ADVOCACY
C.A.R.E.S.
 COMPASSION
 RESPITE
 SERVICE
 BURLINGTON
 EDUCATION

ST. MARK
 ST. FRANCIS XAVIER



Cecile Robert of St. Francis Xavier Church in Winooski (left) accepts a shower bench from Sharon Brown, volunteer parish nurse, as part of the CARES Catholic Network ministry of St. Francis Xavier Church and of St. Mark Church in Burlington. — Cori Fugere Urban photo

About a year ago Cecile Robert of Winooski fell, breaking her pelvis, scapula and a rib, and as part of her rehabilitation at a local nursing home she needed a walker.

She remembered reading in the bulletin of her church, St. Francis Xavier, about CARES Catholic Network, a ministry that, among other things, provides a medical equipment exchange.

Through CARES, Robert got the needed walker plus a shower bench and a bedside commode — all at no charge.

The ministry saved her more than \$300.

“It would have been difficult without a service like this,” she said.

CARES — an acronym for Compassion, Advocacy, Respite, Education and Service — has served scores of people in the three years since it began.

A ministry of St. Francis Xavier Church and of St. Mark Church in Burlington, CARES provides a host of services in addition to the medical equipment exchange, including sewing lessons, a fellowship/arts and crafts group, handyman services, home and nursing home visitors, repair of four-wheeled walkers with brakes, parish nurse services and a rosary group. In addition, volunteers pick up baked goods and bread twice a week from a local

restaurant to distribute to St. Joseph’s Home and Mount St. Mary Convent in Burlington.

The Francis Center, in the former convent next to St. Mark Church, is the activities hub for CARES, a ministry that assists people of all faiths.

Sharon Brown, volunteer parish nurse, coordinates the health and wellness ministry. She hopes in the spring to add a beginner sewing class and a knitting group.

She delivers medical equipment to people like Robert, 89, and instructs them in the proper use. The elongated shower bench, for example, is safer because it allows the user to sit down and then lift his or her feet into the tub, reducing the risk of falling.

Items like shower benches, walkers and commodes are donated to CARES for distribution to those who need them, and when the items are no longer needed, CARES asks for them back to offer to someone else.

Donations are accepted but not solicited.

Robert said this is just one way the parishes are helping others: “Doing good: Isn’t that what the Church is all about?”

For more information about CARES or to volunteer or donate goods or services, contact Sharon Brown at 802-922-2958 or caresparishnurse@gmail.com.

VTC • Cori Fugere Urban

Shelter for homeless youth opens at co-cathedral

St. Joseph Co-Cathedral Parish in Burlington is believed to be the first parish in the Diocese of Burlington to make space available for an overnight warming shelter.

The parish is working with Spectrum Youth and Family Services in Burlington to provide space for 10 cots for homeless young persons from Nov. 6 until the end of March. The space in the parish hall is open from 5 p.m. to 8 a.m. seven days a week.

“Each of us is committed to serving the homeless population during the cold Vermont winters, and I am hoping that our first year in partnership will help to save the lives of young adults who would otherwise find themselves in jeopardy,” said Father Lance Harlow, rector of the co-cathedral and Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception parishes.

According to Mark Redmond, Spectrum’s executive director, the agency had 25 beds available to this young population of homeless persons, but that became insufficient to meet the needs.

“We had a wait list, which is terrible,” he said, because that meant some youth had no place to get shelter.

It was his idea to approach the Catholic Church for help, an idea he said Burlington Bishop Christopher Coyne met with a “green light” and referral to Father Harlow.

The co-cathedral space will be used for 17- to 22-year-old homeless persons who will access dinners at other sites and then sleep at the co-cathedral hall. Snacks and a light morning breakfast will be provided there, but shower and laundry facilities will be accessed at a nearby drop-in center.

“The beauty of it is we’ve got everything nearby, except the beds. The parish hall will have that,” Redmond said.

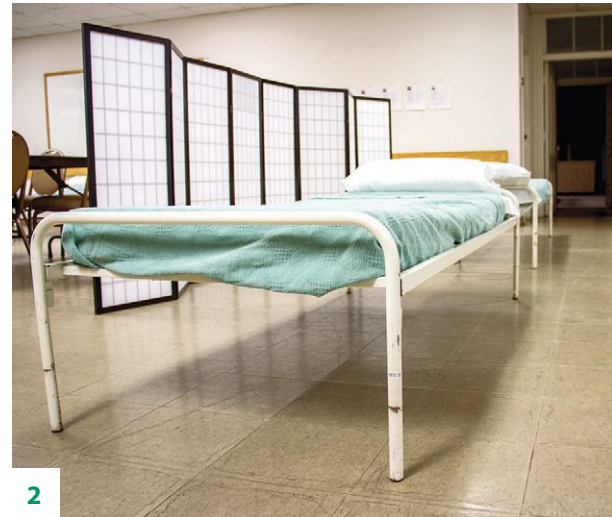
Two Spectrum staff members will be on duty until 1 a.m. at the parish hall, and one staff member will stay awake there from 1 to 8 a.m.

“Those overnight hours will have a minimum impact on the church’s schedule, and if there is a conflict with evening Masses, Spectrum personnel will come in at a later time,” Father Harlow said.

Spectrum will pay for the use of the parish hall, kitchen and restrooms to cover operating expenses.



1



2

1. Mark Redmond, executive director of Spectrum Youth and Family Services in Burlington, has been instrumental in establishing a warming shelter at St. Joseph Co-Cathedral parish hall in the Queen City for persons age 17 to 22. **2.** Cots are set up at St. Joseph Co-Cathedral in Burlington for Spectrum Youth and Family Services’ warming shelter to provide space for 10 cots for homeless young persons.

— Cori Fugere Urban photos

“I am happy to be able to collaborate with Mark Redmond at Spectrum and his staff who are doing excellent work with this [young homeless] population,” Father Harlow said. “It is very much a cooperative ministry. The church has the space and Spectrum has the personnel.”

Asked what the collaboration says about the bishop, rector and co-cathedral parishioners, Redmond responded, “It says they’re awesome.”

Many of the young persons the shelter will serve have lived in poverty or numerous foster care homes. “Most have lived chaotic lives,” are behind in their education, lack job skills and have low self-esteem, Redmond said.

Spectrum offers a variety of programs to help them improve their lives.

“I see great potential in each one of them,” said Redmond, a parishioner of Holy Family/St. Lawrence Parish in Essex Junction.

“It is in line with the corporal works of mercy” to shelter the homeless and feed the hungry, he said. “The Catholic Church is doing the right thing here.”

VTC • Cori Fugere Urban

PEOPLE OF prayer, PEOPLE OF action

When Vermont Catholics are asked to assist those who have been affected by natural disasters like hurricanes and flooding, they respond with generosity.

Recent collections for victims of Hurricane Harvey raised nearly \$212,000; for those reeling in the aftermath of Hurricane Irma, Vermont Catholics donated more than \$95,000.

Sandy relief efforts here in 2012 raised just under \$15,000; Irene fundraising in 2011 was nearly \$154,000, which stayed in hard-hit Vermont.

Nearly \$400,000 was collected for victims of Hurricane Katrina over the course of one year from Septem-

ber 2005 to October 2006.

Earlier this year Burlington Bishop Christopher Coyne requested all 73 parishes throughout the statewide Diocese take up a collection and respond generously to the victims of Hurricane Harvey. Collections continued for natural disasters that followed.

“Along with all of the other generous people of the state of Vermont, the Catholic community





A Shining Beacon of Hope A Prayer After a Hurricane

is ready to stand in solidarity with our suffering brothers and sisters whose lives have been so devastated by these natural disasters. We are not just people of prayer. We are people of action,” he said.

All donations for humanitarian and recovery efforts were distributed by Catholic Charities USA to areas in greatest need.

About \$7,500 was collected for this year’s relief efforts at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Williston and Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Church in Richmond, where Father Daniel Jordan is pastor. “People were very generous, especially with the beginning of school” and related expenses at about the same time the collections were taken, he said. “It tends to be a fairly hard time for a lot of people.”

He was gratified that people gave as much as they could to help their neighbors in hard-hit areas. “This is neighbor helping neighbor beyond the borders of a parish or state. ... It is helping our brothers and sisters in Christ, all made in the image and likeness of God,” he said. “Our faith calls us to respond to all those in need. Even though we are a small diocese, the Vermont Catholic community is very generous.”


VTC • Cori Fugere Urban

Mary, Star of the Sea,
We ask your intercession for our brothers and sisters,
who have weathered too many storms and
borne too many hardships.
Be near them in their time of trouble.
Comfort all whose homes have been washed away.
Console all who have lost loved ones.
Fill those who wait in fear and uncertainty with your peace.
We pray for a spirit of perseverance,
especially for those who have emerged from the storm as
caretakers and victims;
Be a shining beacon of hope as they begin the journey of
recovery.
And stand us firm beside them in solidarity.
We ask this in the name of Jesus, your Son.

Amen.

— From Catholic Relief Services

1. Jessica Greenblatt, 10, paints a heart on a banner Sept. 2 at St. Mary of the Isle Church in Long Beach, New York. The banner was to be delivered with relief supplies to the victims of Hurricane Harvey in Houston. — CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz **2.** The altar of the destroyed St. Peter Church in Rockport, Texas, is seen Sept. 8 in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey. The parish is home to mainly Vietnamese-American Catholics. — CNS photo/Bob Roller



"You shall love the Lord your God
with all your heart, and with
all your soul, and with all
your strength, and with
all your mind; and
your neighbor as
yourself."

— Luke 10:27

— iStock photos

LOVE your NEIGHBOR



"Love is at the service of others."
—*"Amoris Laetitia"*

Vermont Catholics are indeed sharing the love; that is, God's love reflected through them and their own love as companions on the journey with those they meet.

They are responding to Jesus' call to "love one another," serving as His hands to help persons in need in a plethora of ways.

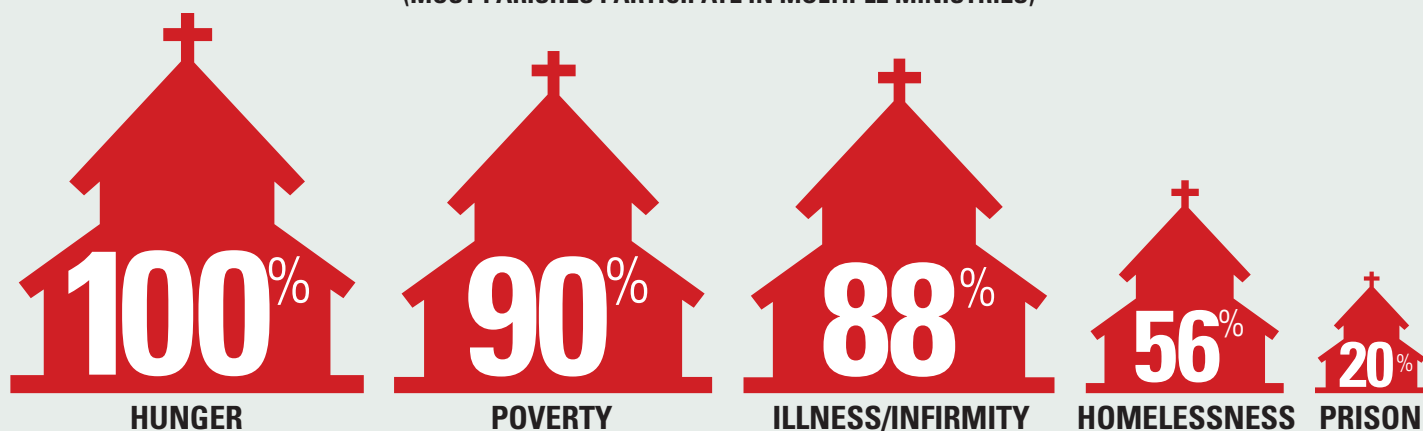
According to the 2017 Social Ministry Survey conducted by the Communication Office of the Diocese of Burlington, 100 percent of Vermont Catholic parishes participate in ministries to serve those experiencing hunger. Vermont Catholic parishes hold nearly 1,000 food drives each year. More than half of Vermont Catholic parishes prepare and serve

meals to members in need in their communities; 15 operate their own food shelves.

Although feeding the hungry is perhaps the most evident way in which Vermont parishes are living the Gospel mandate to love one another, parishes also help those in need by providing clothing, emergency assistance, company and access to the sacraments. They help the homeless, the aged, the sick and the lonely. Twenty percent of Vermont parishes participate in prison ministry.

The statistics provided in the following pages demonstrate the breadth of services that Vermont Catholics provide. They truly are serving as the loving face of God for others and seeing the face of Jesus in those that they meet.

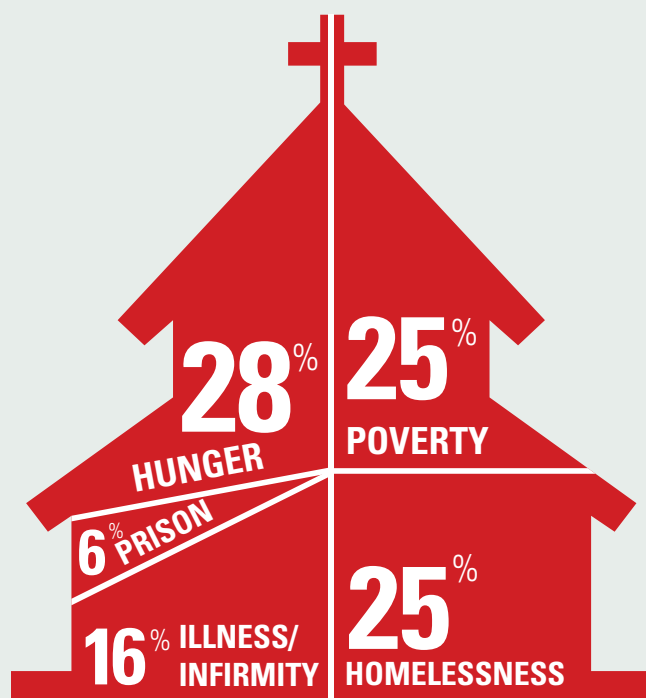
PARISHES PARTICIPATING IN INDIVIDUAL MINISTRY*
(MOST PARISHES PARTICIPATE IN MULTIPLE MINISTRIES)



**VERMONT CATHOLIC PARISHES DONATE
NEARLY \$175,000 EACH YEAR
TO SUPPORT THOSE IN NEED**



**AVERAGE DISTRIBUTION
OF MINISTRIES PER PARISH**



*Numbers based on responses to the Diocese of Burlington's 2017 Social Ministry Survey as of Monday, Oct. 9, at 5 p.m.

**Responses of "weekly" or "ongoing" were estimated as occurring 52 times per year.

Hunger

100% of Vermont Catholic parishes participate in ministries to those experiencing hunger.

73%

of Vermont Catholic parishes donate collected food directly to community members.

1,331

Vermont Catholic parishes donate food to approximately 1,331 households annually.

1,000 Vermont Catholic parishes hold nearly 1,000 food drives per year.**

68%

of Vermont Catholic parishes prepare and serve meals to the community.

15

Vermont Catholic parishes operate their own food shelves.

2,000

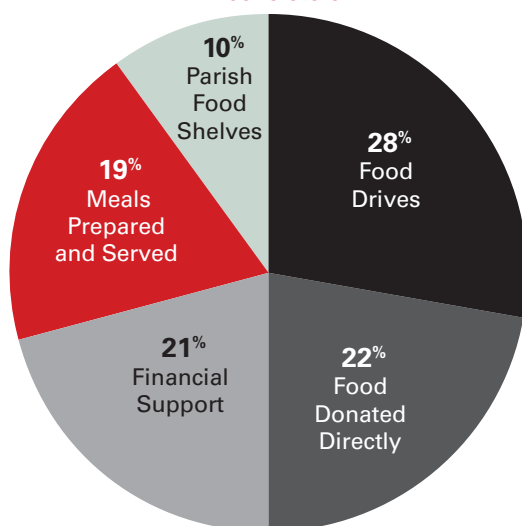
Nearly 2,000 households are served by Vermont Catholic parish food shelves each year.

1,100

More than 1,100 households are served by Vermont Catholic parish's community meals.

MINISTRY TO THE HUNGRY

consists of



\$75,000+

Each year, Vermont Catholics donate more than \$75,000 to support those experiencing hunger.

76%

of Vermont Catholic parishes financially support ministries to the hungry.

Poverty

90%

of Vermont Catholic parishes participate in ministries to those experiencing poverty.

\$70,000

Each year, Vermont Catholic parishes donate nearly \$70,000 to those experiencing poverty.

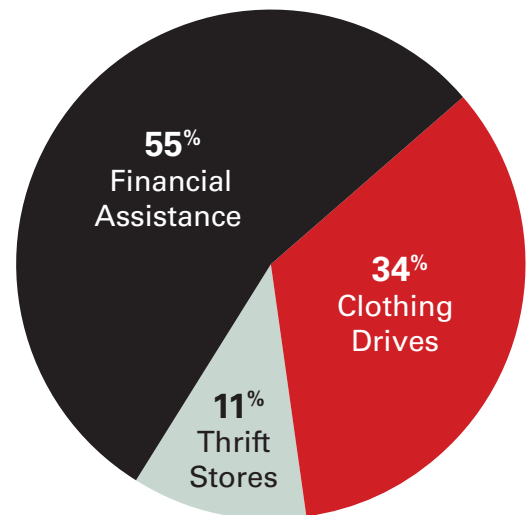
83%

of Vermont Catholic parishes financially support ministries to the poor.

7

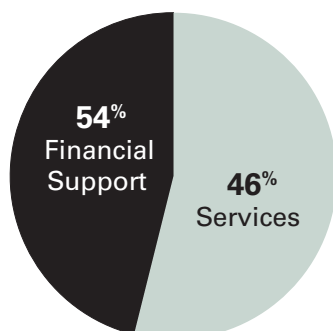
Vermont Catholic parishes operate their own thrift shops.

MINISTRY TO THE POOR *consists of*



Homelessness

MINISTRY TO THE HOMELESS *consists of*



\$19,000

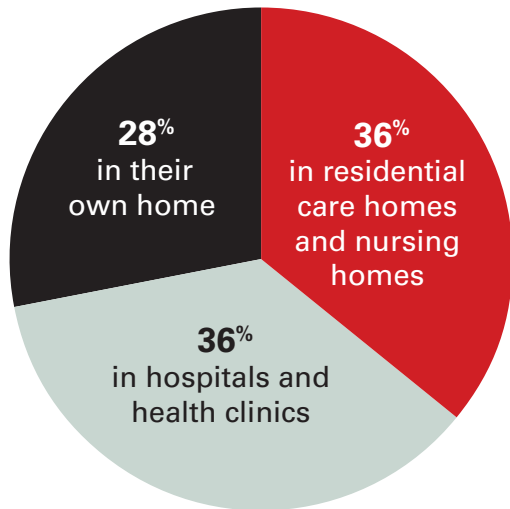
Each year, Vermont Catholic parishes donate approximately \$19,000 to aid those experiencing homelessness.

76%

of Vermont Catholic parishes participate in ministries to those experiencing homelessness.

Illness/Infirmary

MINISTRY TO THE ILL/INFIRMED *consists of*



88%

of Vermont Catholic parishes participate in ministries to those experiencing illness/infirmary.

68%

of Vermont Catholic parishes provide direct services to those experiencing illness/infirmary.

\$9,400

Each year, Vermont Catholic parishes donate approximately \$9,400 to support those experiencing illness/infirmary.

Prison

\$1,750

Each year, Vermont Catholic parishes donate approximately \$1,750 to support those experiencing imprisonment.

20%

of Vermont Catholic parishes participate in ministries to those experiencing imprisonment.

59% **DONATE SPACE**

More than half of Vermont Catholic parishes donate space to local organizations including:

- | | |
|--|---|
| Addison County Elderly Services | Islands in the Sun Senior Center |
| Alburgh Volunteer Fire Department | Knights of Columbus |
| Alcoholics Anonymous and other substance abuse help groups | Lions Club |
| American Red Cross | Northfield High School |
| Boy Scouts | Swanton Community Food Shelf |
| Challenge Club | Vermont Department of Health |
| Everyone's Child | Wellness Center of North Country Hospital |
| Girl Scouts | |

Organizations

VERMONT CATHOLICS SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING ORGANIZATIONS

3 Cathedral Square	Champlain Housing Trust	Forest Hill Community Care Home
ANew Place	Champlain Elementary School	Genesis Elder Care
Aspire	Chittenden County Food Shelf	Gill Odd Fellows Home of Vermont
Barre Gardens	Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility	Good Samaritan Haven
Bennington Interfaith Food & Fuel Fund	Coalition for the Homeless	Goodwill
Berlin Convalescent Home	Colchester Community Food Shelf	Graham Shelter
Berlin Health & Rehab Center	Colchester-Milton Rotary	Grand Isle County Food Shelf
Birthright of Burlington	Colchester Thanksgiving Baskets	Green Mountain Nursing Home
Black River Good Neighbors	Community Cupboard	Harbor Place
Bradley House	Community Emergency Relief Volunteers	Harvest House Soup Kitchen
Brattleboro Memorial Hospital	Converse Home	Heavenly Pantry
Breakfast on Us	Copley Hospital	Helen Porter Healthcare and Rehabilitation Home
BROC Community Action	CropWalk	Hinesburg Food Shelf
Burlington Day Station	Crudem Foundation (Sacre Coeur Hospital in Haiti)	Holton Home
Burlington Food Shelf	Dismas House	HOPE
Burlington Health & Rehab	Duxbury Elf Shelf	Howard Center
Cambridge Food Shelf	Duxbury Food Shelf	Islands in the Sun Senior Center
Care Net	Elderly Services Inc.	Jay Food Shelf
Castleton Food Shelf	Essex-Jericho-Underhill Ecumenical Food Shelf	Johnson Food Shelf
Catholic Relief Services		Joseph's House
Central Vermont Medical Center		Knights of Columbus



Kurn Hattin Homes for Children

Lamoille County Food Shelf

Listen Community Services

Loretto Home

Lund

Mad River Valley Interfaith Council/
Good Neighbor Fund

Mansfield Place

Maple Hill Residential Care Home

Martha's Kitchen

Mayo Healthcare

McAuley Square

Meals on Wheels

Michaud Memorial Manor

Misty Heather Morn Community
Care Center

Newport Health and Rehabilitation

North Country Hospital

North End Food Pantry

Northwest Correctional Facility

Northwestern Medical Center

O'Brien Family Center

Operation Happiness

Pine Heights

Pittsford Food Shelf

Pleasant View Elderly Home

Porter Medical Center

Project Against Violent Encounters

Ringer's Home Care Inc.

Rutland County Jail

Rutland Regional Medical Center

St. Ambrose Have a Heart
Food Shelf

St. Brigid's Kitchen and Pantry

St. Joseph Kervick Home

St. Monica Food Shelf

St. Pauly's Clothing Donations

St. Vincent dePaul Society

Salvation Army

Samaritan House

Shelburne Food Shelf

Springfield Hospital

Shard Villa

Southern State Correctional Facility

Starr Farm Nursing Home

Swanton Community Food Shelf

The Arbors

The Gardens

The Open Door Mission

Thompson House

University of Vermont Medical
Center

Vergennes Food Shelf

Vergennes Residential Care Home

Vermont Catholic Charities Inc.

Vermont Catholic Community
Foundation

Vermont Food Bank

Vermont Refugee Resettlement
Program

Vermont Respite House

Wake Robin Lifecare Community

Waterbury Area Food Shelf

Waterbury Good Neighbor Fund

Williamstown Community
Food Shelf

Williston Community Food Shelf

Winooski Emergency Food Shelf

Woodridge Nursing Home

GOOD Neighbors

This issue of *Vermont Catholic* magazine highlights some of the ways the faithful of the Diocese of Burlington are loving their neighbors across the state. Content Editor/Staff Reporter Cori Fugere Urban asked Catholics throughout Vermont which ministries of the Church are important to them.



Timothy E. Loescher, president/head of school at Mater Christi School, Burlington: “The ministry of Catholic education is important because at the root of every academic discipline — at the root of math, of social studies, of science — is God the

designer, God the creator. To teach under the assumption that we can acknowledge God at the root of all things allows us to fulfill what it says at the entrance to our school: Christ is the reason for our school.”



Theresa Gingras, St. Thomas Parish, Underhill Center: “I think that the outreach that we do for the community food shelf is really important because it’s a simple thing for parishioners to be able

to do. Every week the kids bring the food up to the basket (during Mass), and then once a month we do give food out to the local families and community. It’s just a simple thing to do, and it’s really helpful.”



Laura Limoge, St. Amadeus Parish, Alburgh: "What's really nearest and dearest to me is all the services we provide to our seniors. I feel they are the most underserved group in our community, probably in the whole state. And so we

provide meals at holiday time; we have clothing for them, food on a weekly basis. We've even helped some of them with their electrical bills and things when they're up against the wall. That's my favorite part of working here" at the parish.



Luella Aube, St. Jude Parish, Hinesburg: "The Church elderly care ministry is important to me because it provides ways to socialize and to know that people care and are there when [they] are needed."



Joyce Roberts, Our Lady of Seven Dolors Parish, Fair Haven: "In the ministry of the Church is religious ed. I'd like to see more children participate in the Church and follow the way of Christ, the way He wants us to be part of His ministry, and bring more children and their friends to believe in the Lord and help guide them through life."



Allison Croce, sophomore, St. Michael's College, Colchester: "The caring for the Earth ministry is important to me because as Pope Francis says, we can share a common home. And by sharing a common home, we have to respect future generations and practice conservation."



Dr. Robert Goddard, vice president of academic affairs at the College of St. Joseph, Rutland: "I'm interested in our students being engaged in Bible study. I think that's how they're really going to grow as Christians."



Deacon John Guarino, St. Anthony Parish, White River Junction: "Emergency aid to people coming to the church for assistance is an important ministry because I think it offers us not only the opportunity to help with an immediate need but also to put folks in touch with people and agencies that can help them solve the long-term problems to make it more sustainable for them."

Generosity of Spirit

Delivering groceries, providing clothing, distributing holiday gifts, assisting new mothers and sending cheerful greeting cards are just some of the ways members of St. Thomas Church in Underhill Center are looking out for their neighbors and letting them know someone cares.

“Love of God is very important in this community,” and it is manifested in works of charity and social action, commented Laura Wells, the parish director of religious education.

The Eucharist nourishes people in their service, she said. “You can see those people coming every week [to Mass] opening their hearts and minds and eyes to the world” and its needs.

One of the parish volunteers is Louise Mathews, a retired case worker whose church activities include chairing the yard sale, coordinating the Ladies Group (which provides Christmas gifts to a local family in need) and helping send holiday greeting cards to the sick and shut-ins and to married couples on their anniversary.

The greeting card ministry sends about 500 cards a year; cards are donated, and the parish purchases the stamps. “We want them to know they are not forgotten,” Mathews said.

Each weekend parishioners bring non-perishable food to Mass; children bring some items to the altar during the offertory. Thus “the children get the sense that not every child has as much to eat as they have,” Mathews commented.

Some parishioners bring food to the church during the week, and what is donated goes to the Essex-Jericho-Underhill Ecumenical Food Shelf, where several parishioners volunteer.

The religious education program sponsors annual



1. The greeting card ministry at St. Thomas Parish in Underhill Center sends about 500 cards a year. 2. Louise Mathews signs a card; people appreciate receiving the handwritten notes. — Cori Fugere Urban photos

food and fruit baskets at Christmas and Easter, and confirmation students work on a host of social action activities including emergency relief, Operation Christmas Child, Vermont Catholic Youth Serve projects and the COTS walk for the homeless.

The active Knights of Columbus St. Thomas Council #7810 contributes to the wellbeing of others through fundraisers that allow the Knights to donate to organizations like the local fire department, Special Olympics and a shelter for homeless veterans. They have donated to Christmas food baskets and helped someone get a service dog and someone else get a hearing aid.

St. Thomas parishioners support the prolife cause with donations to the Baby Bottle Campaign to benefit Aspire Together in Burlington and St. Albans, and they support Vermont Catholic Charities Advent Appeal for persons in need.

After the parish tag and rummage sales, clothing is donated to agencies that help veterans, military families, infants, refugees and others.

One organization pays cash for leftover clothing, and the funds the parish gets go to help people in Indonesia, said Sharon Leonard, a Finance Council member and rummage sale chair.

Parishioners also support the Jim Farrington emergency fund to help people throughout the year who need help.

“There is a generosity of spirit here,” Wells said. “People really open their hearts to their neighbor.”

VTC • Cori Fugere Urban

— iStock illustration

Good Samaritans

The members of this group at Most Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Morrisville could be called Good Samaritans, or even Good SAMs.

That's because they do the work of the Social Action Ministry — known as SAM — and assist those in need, even outside the parish community.

"We all have Christ in our hearts, and when we help others ... it's really Christ working through us. We are His hands and feet," commented Mary Elfer, parish ministries coordinator. "It's Christ within us that connect us to one another."

Throughout the Catholic Church in Vermont, parishioners are reaching out to their neighbors in need through social outreach programs like SAM.

"Their faith drives them to do it," commented Deacon Tom Cooney, a member of the ministry.

In Lamoille County, SAM connects people in need with necessary services, helps to support a community breakfast, provides emergency financial assistance, distributes Thanksgiving baskets, provides hot meals in winter to residents of low-income senior housing, donates to two local food shelves and collaborates with the Morrisville Rotary on an annual coat giveaway (for which the ministry purchases a dozen new children's coats).

Most recipients are not Catholic, Elfer said, noting that the ministry is a mission of the parish; parishioners generously donate to it. "It's important to see Christ in each other and the suffering Christ in those who suffer and to align ourselves with Christ through that suffering."

She mentioned one man who received three phone cards through SAM, gifts Elfer was told will give him a new lease on life.

"Our hearts are raised up in helping each other," she said.



Members of the Social Action Ministry at Most Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Morrisville show some of the food to be distributed during the holiday season. They are (left to right) Mary Elfer, Ramona Audet and Connie Cooney.

— Cori Fugere Urban photo

Ramona Audet, a member of the Social Action Ministry, commented, "It makes you feel so good when you help somebody. People are so thankful."

Pam Kozikowski, a parishioner of Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Williston, said that parish is involved in a variety of outreach work including a ministry to senior citizens, support of the local food shelf, a winter coat drive, participation in Operation Christmas Child, support of Kurn Hattin Homes for Children in Westminster, Christmas gifts for clients of Howard Center in Burlington and support of Joseph's House in Burlington. "It's important for the community to know that we care and that we're there for them," she said. "We try to reach out to people so they know [the parish] is a warm, safe place to go, and if they have been away from the Church for a while this is where they want to come back to."

The goal of these outreach ministries, Kozikowski said, is "to spread joy, love and warmth."

Connie Cooney, a member of SAM, said persons engaged in such work are living out the Gospel. "Jesus told us to love one another, and when you love one another, you take care of one another. And this is what we do."

VTC • Cori Fugere Urban

Many Parts, One Body UNITED IN CHRIST

Parishioners of churches joined by the ministry of one priest are making their way toward greater unity by collaborating on outreach projects.

In Essex, for example, members of Holy Family/St. Lawrence and St. Pius X parishes came together as the

Essex Catholic Community to help their neighbors — both parishioners and non parishioners — through Serve Our Neighbor Day.

The project, begun by Holy Family/St. Lawrence parishioners, takes place in the fall and spring to help people with chores like small home repairs, window washing, raking and gutter cleaning. Most recently about 125 volunteers spent a day on 24 projects.

“An event like this brings us all together,” said John McMahon, a project coordinator who is also the Holy Family/St. Lawrence faith formation director.

Teams for the projects are made up of members from the difference churches so parishioners get to know one another. “It’s a lovely expression and breaks down barriers,” he said. “It’s part of the process of bringing the churches together ... mobilizing the parishes to joyfully serve people in need.”

It can be challenging to bring two distinct parish communities together, each having its own identity and traditions.

“When I arrived at my two parishes they had their own distinct way of putting God’s call to us ‘to love thy neighbor’ into practice,” noted Father Yvon

Royer, pastor of St. Peter Church in Vergennes and St. Ambrose Church in Bristol. Though much of that

distinctiveness remains, the parishes do offer free community meals once a month, open to both communities. “We are feeding on average 275 people per month between the two of them,” Father Royer said.

Edmundite Father Charles Ranges is pastor of the three Essex churches, two in Essex Junction and one in Essex Center. “Essex is really one community and all of the students go to the same high school,” he said. “The churches are close together and people attend all three of the churches.”

The parishioners served on “Serve Our Neighbor Day” are generally elderly and unable to do this work themselves. The day begins and ends with prayer and reflection and the work is done in the name of Jesus.

“The work has been enhanced by joining forces and is advertised as an event of the Essex Catholic Community,” Father Ranges said.

Other activities on which the Essex Catholic parishes work together are “Essex Eats Out,” a monthly community dinner, collecting food for Heavenly Pantry in Essex Junction and the Essex Jericho Underhill Food Shelf.

“As we prepare for Christmas, all three churches will have ‘giving trees’ and baskets with food will go out to needy families. The attempt is to have a unified message at all churches so we are united in our charitable activities,” the pastor said. “Bringing the good works of both parishes together is a ‘work in progress,’ but I know that we are going in the right direction since when united we can accomplish more.”

VTC • Cori Fugere Urban



Edward Mahoney trims hedges as part of the biannual “Serve our Neighbor Day.” More than 120 members of the Essex Catholic Community spent a fall morning in service helping parishioners with raking, window washing and cleaning up their lawns for the winter.

— Submitted photo

Senior LUNCH

AT ST. JUDE PARISH

Maxine Burritt is a regular at the Senior Meals that St. Jude Parish offers in Hinesburg. She brings her mother for the “good camaraderie,” hot meal and bingo games. “It’s fun, and the meals are good,” said the parishioner of St. Catherine Church in Shelburne.

Active St. Jude parishioners Kathy and Ted Barrett began the lunches nearly 10 years ago in the parish hall to “do something” for the seniors in the parish and in the community; one need not be Catholic to attend.

Ted, a retired engineer, saw a need, so he and his wife set out to meet it.

She is a retired preschool teacher and lactation consultant, and she wants to send the message that “our doors are always open, come join us” at St. Jude’s.

The Senior Meals take place on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month from noon to 2 p.m.; serving begins at noon.

Caregivers are welcome too.

According to Edmundite Father David Cray, pastor, the meals — before which grace is said — are a way for the parish to help seniors eat well and enjoy community life.

“We consciously make a lot of things happen here and let people know St. Jude’s is here,” he said. Such happenings include not only the Senior Meals but also Tae Kwon Do, Tae Chi, line dancing, Red Cross trainings, contra dances and baking classes.

Non-Catholics or lapsed Catholics who attend these events at the church might be drawn back to the practice of their faith or to join the Church. “We see it as part of the New Evangelization to be visible in the community,” Father Cray said.

On a recent Tuesday, the bingo games after the dinner were punctuated with laughter and good-natured banter. “They love it [attending the meal], especially during the winter” when there are fewer opportunities to socialize, Barrett said.

Friendships form, participants help one another. Some share the bounty of their garden; some bring in prizes for bingo.



Kathy Barrett of St. Jude Church in Hinesburg pours coffee at a Senior Meal at the church as guests play bingo in the background. — Cori Fugere Urban photo

“I like having a happy place for people to come and talk, enjoy themselves and get a good meal,” Barrett said. “It’s a wonderful place to have something like this” in the parish hall, in the same building as the church.

“We have church members hosting people in their church house,” Father Cray said.

Barrett specifically chose to have the meals served to the guests, no buffet-style here, and no paper plates. “We want to make it festive and homey,” she said. “How would I want my parents or in-laws treated? With a little extra help and kindness,” said the mother of four and grandmother of four.

The hot meals are prepared by FitzVogt food service in Rutland and are subsidized partially by Age Well, formerly Champlain Valley Agency on Aging. The suggested donation for the meal is \$4 per person.

The parish contributes as needed.

About 25 guests come to each meal, some arriving early for coffee and conversation.

“This is a good thing for the church to do,” Burritt said. “We are taught to share and give and share Jesus’ love. That’s what this is.”

VTC • Cori Fugere Urban

St. Amadeus CLOTHES CLOSET

What began as a Girl Scout community service project to collect coats for people in need has been zipped up into the St. Amadeus Clothes Closet in Alburgh, providing all kinds of clothing for all ages.

"There are a lot of low-income people in this town, and there was a need" for the coat project that began about a dozen years ago, explained Denise Pardee, one of the organizers of the project and a parishioner of St. Amadeus Church.

The Clothes Closet has become an important part of life for many people in this northwest corner of the statewide Diocese of Burlington. Some come often, others come infrequently, to get clothing for themselves and their families and baby goods like strollers, dressers or changing tables.

Many customers don't drive, so the Main Street location in the parish hall across from the church is convenient.

Sometimes volunteers get requests from the elementary school next door for essential winter wear for one of the students. "If we don't have it, we get it," said Connie Cosgrove, co-coordinator of the Clothes Closet with Pardee.

Word about the parish's clothing ministry — located in a converted front porch — spreads through the school, the local health center, veterans' groups, the fire department and the senior center so people know clothing and other goods like bedding are available.

Working poor and retirees in need of a helping hand come not only from Alburgh but from neighboring towns as well.

Operated by a volunteer team of four who sort and — when needed, mend and launder — the donated items, the Clothes Closet accepts donations for all items; there are no set prices. "You put in what you want," Cosgrove said; some people put in \$20 for a bag of clothes while others can put in only coins.

And that's OK.

"We have an abundance of clothes," she continued. "God made sure. We don't care what they put in. We want to help."

In addition to the coats and jackets, there are shirts, pants, sweaters, pajamas and even holiday apparel.

The Clothes Closet takes in about \$150-\$200 a month; it is added to parish funds.



Asked why they volunteer with the clothing ministry, Cosgrove and Pardee agree it's the way they were raised. "I like to sort and organize, and I know there is a need in our community. This is the way I was raised. ... I would go without so somebody else could have something," Cosgrove said.

"Ninety-nine-point-nine percent of the people say or show their appreciation," commented Laura Limoge, a parish secretary.

She knows some people might abuse the system, but says that her faith informs her to respond kindly and "to overlook some things I might not otherwise," especially when it comes to food. "Having people go hungry in [one of] the richest countr[ies] in the world is an abomination."

The parish also has a food shelf in the parish center, adjoining the Clothes Closet. It offers fresh foods and baked goods from Hannafords on Wednesday and Friday from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. Non-perishable food is available at the rectory on Tuesday and Thursday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The Clothes Closet is generally open Monday and Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. from April through December and at other times for emergency needs by calling the rectory at 802-796-3481.

VTC • Cori Fugere Urban

PRUDENT PURCHASES

What was once a kindergarten classroom in the former St. Mary's School in Fair Haven is now filled with clothing, shoes, dishes, glasses and seasonal decorations. There is more thrift store merchandise in the adjoining room, once a library.

The lesson volunteers at Our Lady of Seven Dolors Thrift Shop have learned is that their efforts have multiple benefits.

First, the profits from the thrift store benefit the parish maintenance fund with about \$15,000 a year. Second, the minimal prices ensure people who desire life's necessities — and niceties — can afford them.

The third benefit is the community built at the thrift store, not only among the dozen volunteers but also among them and their customers. "It's rewarding to see and meet so many people," said volunteer Jean Close. "We all become friends."

The thrift store is a place parishioners can leave items they no longer want, allowing them to make sustainable choices after cleaning out their cupboards and closets by not putting reusable items into the trash.

About four years ago the parish council learned that it would cost about \$300,000 to take down the school building — located across the street from Our Lady of Seven Dolors Church — and to dispose of the materials. Because that was not feasible, parishioners looked for ways to raise funds not only to take care of the building but to get the parish out of debt and care for the church and rectory.

Joyce Roberts sug-

gested establishing a thrift store in the former school, and when she got the go ahead, she "worked like a Trojan" to keep it up and running, said volunteer Theresa Crucitti.

"There is a need for this in the area," said Roberts, the store manager.

Our Lady of Seven Dolors Parish, other churches and social service agencies have the same goal: to meet the needs of the community.

The thrift store "is a ministry" and volunteers "come joyfully," said Vocationist Father Antony Pittappillil, pastor. "They come with a passion for serving and making our parish known to other people."

Often, volunteers attend morning Mass before reporting to their posts at the thrift store.

"We want to get more people involved," Father Pittappillil said. "Christ is walking ahead and we are following."

Most clothing costs \$2, winter coats are \$10, shoes are \$2 a pair. Most household items are less than \$5 as are the seasonal decorations and religious items.

"You name it, you can find it. People come in and are amazed at what we have," said volunteer RoseMarie Doran.

The thrift store is open on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. from April to December.

VTC • Cori Fugere Urban

Vocationist Father Antony Pittappillil, pastor of Our Lady of Seven Dolors Church in Fair Haven, and Joyce Roberts, manager of the Our Lady of Seven Dolors Thrift Store, place the sign outside the store, located in the former parish school. — Cori Urban photo





FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

— Wikimedia Commons photo

WHAT IS A DIOCESAN SYNOD?

A diocesan synod is an extraordinary gathering convened by the diocesan bishop for the purpose of advising him in his role as chief shepherd and legislator for the Diocese. The bishop can convene a synod as he seeks advice about major issues facing the Church and how to deal with those issues through major diocesan policies, legislation (“particular law”) and teaching.

WHY ARE WE HAVING A SYNOD NOW?

Burlington Bishop Christopher J. Coyne has decided, after consulting the Diocesan Presbyteral Council, to convene a synod to establish a new pastoral plan for the immediate future of the Diocese in order to help the Catholic Church in Vermont to more effectively carry out her divine mission of saving souls by spreading the Gospel (“evangelization”) and bringing people to encounter Christ.

WHO WILL TAKE PART IN THE SYNOD?

The bishop presides over the sessions of the synod, which is made up of delegates from throughout the Diocese, including priests, deacons, members of religious orders and lay men and women. The number is limited because all the delegates are invited to express their opinions on the questions submitted to the synod by the bishop.

WHEN WILL THE SYNOD HAPPEN?

The actual synod sessions will take place in 2018. The exact dates have not yet been determined, but the likely timing is in the early fall. An implementation phase will follow the synod sessions and will include the publication of the synodal decrees and declarations, setting forth the legislation and teaching the bishop decides to issue after hearing the advice of the synod delegates. The preparatory phase for the synod is underway now and will continue until the first session opens.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE PREPARATORY PHASE?

Bishop Coyne has appointed a Preparatory Commission made up of priests, deacons, religious, diocesan staff and lay members of the Diocesan Pastoral Council, which is helping to guide the planning for the synod. The commission is now planning an extensive process of consultation, which began in the fall of 2017, involving multiple conversations throughout the Diocese, in parishes and at the deanery/regional level. The goals of these consultations are to help refresh and renew Catholics’ understanding of the nature and mission of the Church, to promote a broad-based conversation about the state of our Diocese and how to meet the challenges we face and, ultimately, to advise the bishop

and assist him in discerning the synod's goals and refining the questions he will submit to the delegates.

CAN I PARTICIPATE? DO I GET TO ASK QUESTIONS AND SHARE MY THOUGHTS?

Yes. There will be multiple consultative meetings with parishioners throughout Vermont to help you learn about the synod and enable you to raise questions or concerns and share your views. Bishop Coyne has committed to seek input from all Vermont Catholics, to listen to all and to discern with all. For those who are unable to participate in parish meetings, there will be ways to offer comments online. See vermontcatholic.org/synod for the link to submit your comments.

IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE I CAN DO?

You can pray. Please add to your prayer intentions the successful planning and celebration of the diocesan synod, for the glory of God, the good of the Church in Vermont and the salvation of souls. Add this intention to the prayer of the faithful at Mass, make it part of your rosary or other family prayers, etc. And please pray, by yourself and with others, the official Synod Preparation Prayer.

Prayer for the Diocesan Synod

Almighty and ever-living God,
You continually guide and sustain your
pilgrim Church, which you established as
“the universal sacrament of salvation.”

Direct the Church in Vermont during this
time of preparation for the Diocesan Synod.
Help us to discern the signs of the time wisely,
that we may joyfully proclaim the Good News
of salvation through Jesus Christ.

May we never fail to trust that “with God,
all things are possible.”

We ask this, with the help of the Holy Spirit,
through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Mary, Mother of the Church, Pray for Us.

*Cf. Lumen Gentium, 48; Bishop deGoesbriand's and
Bishop Coyne's episcopal mottos; Mt 19:26; Prv 3:5.*

Year OF THE Family

THE JOY OF LOVE

"The Joy of Love experienced by families is also the joy of the Church... the Christian proclamation on the family is good news indeed." — "Amoris Laetitia"

Following a successful Year of Creation in the Diocese of Burlington, 2018 will be celebrated throughout the Catholic Church in Vermont as the Year of the Family with a particular focus on Pope Francis' 256-page apostolic exhortation on the family, "Amoris Laetitia," ("The Joy of Love").

"Like last year's Year of Creation, this Year of the Family offers us a year to ponder the Church's teaching on the family and embrace it ourselves," Burlington Bishop Christopher Coyne said in announcing the special celebration.

Among the components of this special year will be a new diocesan Pre-Cana program, a World Marriage Day anniversary Mass, a Catholic men's conference and diocesan women's retreat, the annual Family Mass at St. Anne's Shrine and other diocesan-wide and parish activities that are still developing.

"The purpose of the Year of the Family is to explore, reflect upon and implement the message of Pope Francis' 2016 apostolic exhortation 'Amoris Laetitia,'" explained Stephanie Clary, manager of mission outreach and communication for the Diocese.

The 2017 year-long focus on "Laudato Si'" and 2018's year-long focus on "Amoris Laetitia" aim to assist the faithful in understanding these global documents at the local level and supporting Vermont parishes with resources and ideas for furthering these Vatican messages in Vermont communities.

"While certain events during the Year on the Family will focus on specific family situations (for example, Pre-Cana

prepares a man and woman to start a new family together as husband and wife, and the annual Family Mass at St. Anne's Shrine brings together multi-generational families of many forms for a celebratory day of joy), the overall focus of the Year of the Family is the joy and love that are experienced by being attentive to the important relationships in our lives and serving as an example of that love — God's love — for those we encounter," she said. "No matter into what model our families fit — or don't fit — they can serve as examples of joy and love in the world if they strive to be domestic churches committed to God's will."

Pope Francis writes of how "the Lord's presence dwells in real and concrete families, with all their daily troubles and struggles, joys and hopes" and "every family ... can become a light in the darkness of the world."

Emulating what Pope John Paul II did in writing "Familiaris Consortio" in 1994, Pope Francis seeks to highlight the challenges that families face today and proposes ways for the

Church to proactively respond in a new way: "Nowadays, pastoral care for families has to be fundamentally missionary, going out to where people are," commented Deacon Phil Lawson, executive director of evangelization, catechesis, divine worship, marriage and family and respect life.

The husband and father of six hopes his family exhibits love and joy. "The world needs more of both of these. As Pope Francis states in 'Amoris Laetitia:' The strength of the family 'lies in its capacity to love and to teach how to love' and later on he refers to a 'joy-filled witness.' If my family and all our families can be agents of love and joy, we will have served our

“

The Lord's presence dwells in real and concrete families, with all their daily troubles and struggles, joys and hopes.

— "Amoris Laetitia"

”



Lord's mission well in the world," he said.

Michael Hagan, coordinator of religious education and catechesis for the Diocese, emphasized that the Church truly is a community. "It is easy to make the faith strictly personal and forget that we are deeply connected with the other members of the Church as members of the Body of Christ," he said. "If we want to help and support

families within our Church that are going through hard times, we will first have to take seriously the truth that we are deeply, spiritually connected to them."

He noted that Pope John Paul II many times made the point that the future of humanity is closely linked to that of the family. "The claim, then, is that the world depends on the success of the family," Hagan said.

But how could the family hold so much significance? "The family reflects the Trinitarian community of persons, the family is the community in which God chose to become man, the family is where we first experience love, share ideas, form relationships, and the family is where we hone our skills to enter into society at large," he continued.

As persons seek to do God's will "on earth as it is in heaven," it is clear that the family is a gift from God to be both celebrated and protected, he said.

"The Church needs families!" enthused Josh Perry, director of worship for the Diocese of Burlington. "In so much as families hold the presence of Christ, the Church — which we know to be the Body of Christ — is strengthened by the presence of families. Throughout the document, the Church is referred to as a 'family of families.' The Church needs you!"

At the same time, the Church recognizes the many difficulties families face today. For some, Christ's presence in the family can seem completely absent. "The Church tirelessly works to strengthen and support families through its accompaniment in pastoral ministry and its celebration of the sacraments," Perry emphasized.

In keeping with the themes of joy and mercy, Pope Francis wrote, "It is my hope that, in reading this text, all will feel called to love and cherish family life."

VTC • *Cori Fugere Urban*

Ways parishes and families can celebrate the Year of the Family:

- Offer special blessings at Mass to families, anniversary couples, children, engaged couples, pregnant women and those celebrating birthdays.
- Get "Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers" published by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops for special occasions at home.
- Gather the family and invite the parish priest to bless the home.
- Attend Mass as a family.
- Pray together as a family.
- Sponsor a parish family fun day that begins with Mass or adoration.
- Pray the rosary on a family car trip.
- Share the faith on social media.
- Begin an intergenerational faith formation program.
- Invite persons who might otherwise be alone to share a holiday meal or a Sunday dinner with your family.
- Reach out to an estranged family member.
- Read "Amoris Laetitia" and discuss it as a parish family.

Topics to explore during the Year of the Family:

- Reconciliation with a family member who has been hurtful
- How the loss of a family member affects family dynamics
- How to support a family member struggling with doubt about faith
- Living in a model of family you never anticipated (single parent, widow, step family)
- The role of faith in your family
- How to help a broken family heal
- Nurturing good physical, emotional and spiritual health within your family

The Catechism of the Catholic Church at 25

Pope John Paul II called the Extraordinary Synod of 1985 to assess what had gone right and wrong in two decades of implementing the Second Vatican Council. It was styled “extraordinary” because it fell outside the normal sequence of synods. Synod 1985 also was extraordinary in the ordinary sense of the word.

It occasioned an almighty row over a book-length interview, “The Ratzinger Report,” that pretty well set the terms of debate in the synod hall. It was the synod that came up with an interpretive key that linked the 16 documents of Vatican II, through the image of the Church as a *communio*, a communion of disciples in mission; thus Synod 1985 accelerated the Church’s transition to the Church of the New Evangelization. And it gave us the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

John Paul II promulgated the Catechism of the Catholic Church on Oct. 11, 1992. For those expecting a Q&A format like the old Baltimore Catechism, the Catechism of the Catholic Church was a surprise. Divided into 2,865 bite-size sections, the catechism is a discursive exposition of Catholic faith in full. Its structure, which mirrors the Catechism of the Council of Trent, reaches back to the early Church and the patristic catechumenate. The catechism’s four parts reflect the four pillars of Christian initiation: “Profession of Faith” (the Creed); “Celebration of the Christian Mystery” (the Sacraments); “Life in Christ” (Christian Morality); and “Christian Prayer.”

Each of these four parts is then subdivided. Part One begins with a reflection on revelation and our response to it before examining

the 12 articles of the Apostles Creed, the baptismal creed of the ancient Roman Church. Part Two is structured around the seven sacraments. Part Three vastly enriches the Tridentine pattern by beginning with the Beatitudes and our vocation to beatitude and happiness, which sets the framework for the exposition of the Ten Commandments. Part Four begins with a meditation on Jesus and the Samaritan woman, explaining the Lord’s “thirst” for souls as the beginning of prayer, before illustrating Christian prayer through the seven petitions of the Lord’s Prayer.

Parts One and Two of the catechism illuminate God’s action in seeking us out; the catechism’s very first section speaks of the divine invitation to communion, while the sacraments are described at the beginning of Part Two as the extension of Christ’s earthly life in us.

Parts Three and Four outline our response to God’s action through the moral life and prayer. Part Three is a rebuff to those rigorists and laxists who continue to misconstrue Christian morality as a form of legalism: The moral law is important, the catechism

insists, because these are the guideposts provided by revelation and reason for the pilgrimage to beatitude and happiness, the goals of the moral life.

Part Four speaks forcefully of “the battle of prayer,” the fight “against ourselves and against the wiles of the tempter who does all he can to turn

man away from prayer, away from union with God.”

The Catechism of the Catholic Church has made a considerable difference throughout the past 25 years, because it was one crucial answer to the question posed to me in 1996 by a great first-generation Christian, Cardinal Francis Arinze of Nigeria. Speaking of one problem Synod 1985 was

called to address, the cardinal asked, “How can [anyone] join a group of permanently confused people who don’t know where they’re going?”

And while there’s still considerable work to be done to deepen the reform and renewal of catechetics, the mere fact of the catechism helped to establish a compelling, and in many cases quite beautifully written, benchmark and pattern for the future.

If you’ve not read the catechism, this silver jubilee is a good occasion to do so. Then share it with a friend.

“
Divided into 2,865 bite-size sections, the catechism is a discursive exposition of Catholic faith in full.”



George Weigel is Distinguished Senior Fellow of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C.



— Istock photo

‘Each one of them is Jesus in disguise.’

— St. Teresa of Kolkata

It was hard not to notice this woman. She first came to my attention the night the manager of a small diner where we were eating dinner threw her out for her apparently drunken behavior. True, she stumbled and swayed, and her words were slurred, but she kept insisting, in a louder and louder voice, that she was not drunk. One by one, conversations at the other tables ceased as we watched the confrontation between the two escalate, until finally a threat was made to call the police. That was when the woman, obviously angry and upset, left, while the manager made it abundantly clear that she was never to come into the diner again.

As it turned out, it was the manager who was mistaken. I found this out about a week later when I mentioned the incident to an acquaintance I knew who was familiar with the woman's case. Far from being intoxicated, the woman suffered from a neurological disorder that made her appear impaired. She apparently had no family to fall back on, and her condition often led to misunderstandings like the one in the diner. Because she could not hold a job, she got by on some sort of assistance and whatever kindness other people showed her. She wandered from place

to place, the acquaintance said, because no one anywhere seemed to want her.

For the next month or so, I occasionally saw her shuffling along on the sidewalk, but little did I think I would actually have any contact with her again. That all changed, however, the night of the parish supper.

It was an evening in Lent, and we were hosting a free soup and sandwich meal that was open to the public. Supper was to be followed by a speaker, whose topic was along the lines of justice for the poor among us. At 6 p.m., the doors opened and the first person to appear was this woman.

She was obviously hungry because she sat right down and began to eat. It wasn't until she was halfway through her second bowl of soup that she suddenly looked up at all of us and asked,

“

‘It’s all right that I’m here, isn’t it?’ I was stunned and then shamed by her question, not because she asked it, but because she felt she had to ask it.

”

“It’s all right that I’m here, isn’t it?” I was stunned and then shamed by her question, not because she asked it, but

because she felt she had to ask it. What was it about our welcome — or lack of welcome — that made her wonder if our hospitality was real? And no matter what was presented in that night’s talk, had we already said quite eloquently what was really in our minds and hearts?

The woman must have wandered to the next town shortly after that, because I never saw her again. But 35 years later, I still hear her question, and I still wonder who was really asking it that night. Was it, as St. Teresa of Kolkata maintained, Jesus Himself appearing in the distressing disguise of the poor?

I strongly suspect that’s exactly who it was.

VTC • Kay Winchester



Pursuing justice, RESPECTING LIFE

Both the responsibilities to respect life and pursue justice are founded on the basic principle of the inherent dignity of the human person, created in the image and likeness of God.

People sometimes disagree about how to handle pro-life and social justice issues, particularly when it comes to public policy when there are competing interests at play. “This can lead to a false assumption that social justice and pro-life are somehow at odds. They are not,” said Carrie Handy, respect life coordinator for the Diocese of Burlington.

“Acknowledging the inherent worth and dignity of all human beings compels us to be particularly attentive to those who may not be able to care for themselves — the most vulnerable among us,” said Handy.

Vermont Catholic Charities Inc. supports life and justice ministries through its partnership with the Diocese to support Project Rachel (a ministry to those affected by abortion), through caring for residents at residential care homes and through deGoesbriand Grants to agencies supporting life and justice initiatives. “Human life is sacred, and Vermont Catholic Charities is committed to the dignity of the human person,” emphasized Mary Beth Pinard, executive director.

“We do ourselves a disservice when we speak of social justice and protection of life as two separate issues,” said Stephanie Clary, manager of mission outreach and communication for the Diocese. “Protecting life is an issue of social justice and social justice is always an issue of protecting life.”

“In both arenas, the weaker and relatively defenseless are pitted against the more powerful,” said Deacon Peter Gummere, director of the Permanent Diaconate for the Diocese, bioethicist and adjunct faculty member at Josephinum Diaconate Institute where he teaches courses in medical morality and moral theology. “In abortion, a tiny human is threatened by a big, powerful human. In assisted suicide, a weak person is invited to die earlier than

they would otherwise for the convenience of society.”

Pro-life convictions lead Catholics not only to advocate for the unborn and the terminally disabled but also for others who are weak and marginalized. “It should include sensitivity for the single mom, reaching out to her with a supportive network,” he said. “It should include helping to ensure the wellbeing of the disabled, the sick and others who are marginalized. It should include working to eliminate barbaric practices like excessively harsh conditions in prisons and capital punishment. And we should work toward more ecologically sustainable practices in order to protect our planet.”

“To authentically work for justice in one area we must consider the connectedness of that issue with other aspects of reality,” Clary said. “When we work toward clean water, we quench someone’s thirst. When we reduce carbon emissions and prevent a crop-killing drought, we feed someone’s hunger. When we demand breathable air, we decrease the likelihood of birth defects and increase the life expectancy of elders.”

As Pope Francis points out in his encyclical, “*Laudato Si’*,” “we need to be attentive to the relationships that exist among creation if we truly wish to address injustices and protect life,” she added.

“What the Catholic Church means when it identifies as prolife is pro all life, not only because all life is connected, but more importantly because all life is of God. It was created with intention, purpose and love and it gives glory to God by its very existence,” Clary said. “We each have our own passions, areas of interest and expertise. The important thing is that we’re always considering the big picture and working together with those of different passions, interests and expertise to collectively pursue justice, the protection of life in our world.”

VTC • Cori Fugere Urban



ROMAN CATHOLIC
DIOCESE OF BURLINGTON



2016 BISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



YOUR GIFTS IN ACTION:

Joe lives alone and is disabled but manages to work part time. He visited Vermont Catholic Charities Inc. for the first time in January, asking for help to stretch his oil and wood supply because of the harsh winter and increased need. Catholic Charities negotiated with his fuel company to increase his oil delivery and worked with other agencies to ensure that Joe could get a cord of wood delivered to see him through the remainder of the winter.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Last year we reached 95 percent of our pledge goal (see graph below), and this year we are already 96 percent of the way there. Please prayerfully consider making a first or second gift this year to help us reach our goal. On the following pages, you can learn more about the impact of the Bishop's Annual Appeal on so many ministries and charitable efforts around the state. Any gift made by the end of December will be matched with an anonymous grant. Will you help us reach our goal?

With Gratitude, *Ellen Kane*

Ellen Kane, Executive Director of Development

802-658-6110 ext.1226 • ekane@vermontcatholic.org

BISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL 2016 FINANCIALS

*Pledge payments for each Bishop's Annual Appeal cross two fiscal years (Jan. 1, 2016, to June 30, 2017) and numbers may vary from the Roman Catholic Diocese of Burlington audited financials which represent July 1 – June 30.



99 Churches
33,720 Families
11,790 Pledges
11,584 Pledges Fully Paid
206 Pledges Outstanding
\$226 Pledge Average

TO GIVE TO THE BISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL VISIT: BISHOPSAPPEALVT.ORG

TAX STATEMENT:

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Burlington is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and all donations received are fully deductible for tax purposes.

BISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2016, we were able to raise \$2,627,941 toward our \$2.8 million goal and provide the services necessary to assist the most vulnerable among us, to enhance the spiritual lives of our parishioners, to evangelize and spread the Good News of Jesus Christ, to educate children in Catholic schools and religious education programs, to train future clergy, and to provide marriage and family services. It is only because of the generosity of the Catholic community that we are able to expand our outreach efforts and engage more young people and families while maintaining essential support services to our 73 parishes, 87 cemeteries, 14 Catholic schools, more than 1,000 employees and 118,000 Catholics throughout Vermont. **This executive report provides some highlights of our accomplishments and end-of-year financials for the 2016 Bishop's Annual Appeal.**

Statewide Direct Support Services

- **Catholic Cemeteries:** 87 Catholic cemeteries and three managed by the Diocese.
- **Vocations:** nine men in formation and four seminarians.
- **Tribunal:** statewide marriage conflict resolution and annulment process.
- **Safe Environments:** Child Safety training and background checks for 4,000 volunteers and more than 1,000 employees.
- **Financial and human resources:** services provided to 73 parishes and more than 1,000 employees statewide.
- **Office of Facilities & Insurance:** building inspections of more than 400 buildings each year offering maintenance recommendations, repair guidance and risk improvement consultation.



Evangelization & Catechesis

- **New Evangelization Workshops:** 21 workshops (two in each deanery) involving 480 parishioners.
- **Annual Women's Retreat:** 108 attendees.
- **New Adult Confirmation:** 7-week process implemented.
- **New Lay Ministry Formation Program:** established with 27 candidates.
- **Religious education:** 406 young people participated in Totus Tuus and 2,677 students were served in religious education programs.
- **Marriage & Families:** 57 couples in Pre-Cana.
- **Respect Life:** 150 teens and young adults attended pro-life speaker Sarah Mary Toce's presentations; 57 youth and adults travelled to the "March for Life" March in Washington, D.C.; 200 people attended the annual Rally for Life at the Statehouse; financial aid for unplanned pregnancy.
- **Office of Liturgy & Worship:** 97 parish assessments to develop training opportunities to enhance liturgy and music. In May, Oregon Catholic Press partnered with the Office of Worship and St. Michael's College to present a day-long conference for music ministers.



NEARLY
900
PARTICIPANTS

Youth Ministry

Nearly 900 young people participated in youth ministry programs from throughout the state. Southern Vermont retreat, 60; Rutland-area initiative/ongoing program, 80; Steubenville, 138; Mary Theotokos retreat, 20; fall rally, 170; Barre rally, 100; YouthLead retreat, 30; Catholic Youth Organization Basketball, 230; Vermont Catholic Youth Serve, 60 (served at Spectrum, King Street, Monitor Farm, St. Joseph, Dismas House, Ronald McDonald House and other places).



\$340,000
IN TUITION AND
FINANCIAL SUBSIDIES

Catholic Schools

- **\$340,000 in tuition and financial subsidies:** 14 Catholic schools (*includes newly established St. Therese Digital Academy*).
- **St. Therese Digital Academy:** Nine students enrolled in 2016 and 52 enrolled for this year.

Vermont Catholic magazine

- **Catholic Press Awards:** four.
- **Publication Changes:** redesigned quarterly issue and new online news site; new weekly *The Inland See* parish bulletin; eNews; and social media communications.



QUARTERLY
PUBLICATION



EMERGENCY AID FOR
1,814
PEOPLE

Vermont Catholic Charities

- **Prison Ministry:** 80 inmates per week visited by volunteers and priests, and 27 former inmates receive financial assistance.
- **Residential care homes:** assisted living for approximately 200 elderly people.
- **Emergency Aid:** 1,814 people (adults and children combined) in financial crisis.
- **Counseling Services:** 146 clients receive 2,812 counseling sessions system wide.
- **Advent Appeal:** 957 people were helped (adults and children combined).
- **Dentures/other health items:** 80 people.
- **Thanksgiving support and baskets (Burlington/Rutland):** 169 families.



2017 *Year of Creation* IN REVIEW

The Year of Creation in the Diocese of Burlington lead to a greater awareness of how caring for “our common home,” the Earth, and caring for each other are deeply connected.

Inspired by Pope Francis’ 2015 encyclical, “*Laudato Si’: On Care For Our Common Home*,” Burlington Bishop Christopher J. Coyne called for the Year of Creation.

Its purpose was to facilitate the exploration, reflection upon and implementation of the teachings of the encyclical.

It included an Action for Ecological Justice conference; an energy efficiency audit program in partnership with Commons Energy, “Stations of the Cross with John Paul II: On the Path of Ecological Conversion;” a Catholic Schools Care for Creation day; a Sing Praise to God All the Earth concert; a Mercy2Earth weekend event; coverage of creation care topics in Vermont Catholic publications; and the implementation of a composting program at diocesan headquarters.

“It was a great inspiration on the part of the bishop to call us to a Year of Creation and form a committee” to address the topic, said committee member Father Thomas Houle, a Capuchin Franciscan and pastor of St. Peter Church in Rutland and St. Alphonsus Church in Pittsford. “The Year of Creation enlightened us all.”

His churches have been leaders in the Diocese in implementing the use of solar energy.

“I hope that people have more fully realized how interconnected everything is,” commented Stephanie Clary, manager of mission outreach and communication and coordinator of the Year of Creation Committee. “While we each have our own areas of interest, advocacy and service, it’s only by working together in holistic ways that justice can be achieved. That’s what Pope Francis highlights in ‘*Laudato Si*’ with his term ‘integral ecology’ — essential attention to

the relationships that exist among creation.”

And to those who deny climate change, she commented, “We’re called to protect life regardless of whether it is being threatened or not. So denial of climate change does not mean that you aren’t still called to live in a way that affirms life — it’s part of our role as Catholics.”

For Joseph Gainza, a member of Year of Creation Committee from St. Augustine Church in Montpelier, the Year of Creation was an important step forward in educating Vermont Catholics and others that the Church includes environmental stewardship in the body of its social teachings, which are constitutive of the Catholic faith.

Father Houle said he hoped the momentum of the Year of Creation will continue.

The Year of Creation committee has compiled a care for creation resources list that can be used by parishes or community groups to continue to explore “*Laudato Si*” and the rich history of creation care within the Catholic faith. Copies can be obtained by emailing outreach@vermontcatholic.org.

The energy efficiency audits and projects taking place in parishes throughout the state will continue. “As new technologies are developed, there are always new ways that we can adapt our buildings to be more efficient and sustainable,” Clary said.

Those who want to stay involved in creation care efforts are encouraged to form Creation Care Teams in their parishes or regions. Discussions are underway to form a statewide chapter of the Global Catholic Climate Movement as well.

VTC • Cori Fugere Urban

Looking back, moving forward: Celebrating a Year of Creation in Vermont



Dec. 2016

Burlington Bishop Christopher Coyne announces 2017 as a Year of Creation in Vermont, inviting Vermont Catholics to explore, reflect upon and implement the teachings of Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical, "Laudato Si'."

Si': On Care for Our Common Home."

Bishop Coyne shares his motivation for the Year of Creation in a video at vimeo.com/206305551.

Jan. 1, 2017

Partnering with Commons Energy, the Diocese of Burlington launches a program for affordable energy efficiency projects in Church buildings, which will reduce energy use and allow the Church to put more of its money into its ministries and mission. Commons Energy offers technical advice, helps design energy saving projects and oversees installation of equipment. The first step of this process is for a parish obtain a free energy efficiency walk-through audit. Eighteen Church buildings have begun this process including Holy Family Parish in Essex Junction, which replaced parking lot lights with energy efficient LED light bulbs, and the Brady Center in South Burlington, which is planning to upgrade to a more energy efficient HVAC system and energy efficient LED lighting in the diocesan offices.

If you're interested in exploring ways for your parish to become more energy efficient, talk with your pastor and email outreach@vermontcatholic.org.

Jan. 17, 2017

Staff at the Bishop Brady Center in South Burlington learns about waste reduction strategies and why they're an important part of caring for our common home and loving our neighbors. Reusable ceramic coffee mugs are made available and composting of food scraps and paper products is implemented at the Brady Center diocesan offices. ***View the then-live presentation by Chittenden Solid Waste District in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Burlington Facebook page videos.***



March 3, 2017

Vermont Catholics gather at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Burlington on this first Friday of Lent

to pray "The Stations of the Cross with John Paul II: On the Path of Ecological Conversion," led by Bishop Christopher Coyne. Prayer is followed by presentations on the history of fasting in the Catholic faith and the global impact of abstaining from certain foods, like meat—as is tradition on Lenten Fridays. A seasonal, locally sourced, meat-free soup and bread supper accompanies the presentations.

To learn more about the impact of prayerfully fasting from certain foods, visit catholicclimatemovement.global/fasting-for-climate-justice.

April 12, 2017

Catholic Schools Care for Creation Day includes activities of education, prayer and action that focus on beholding God's glory, responsibly stewarding resources and being attentive to those most affected by climate change and environmental degradation. Initiatives include immediate tasks and long-term projects.

Check out your local Catholic School to find out how they're caring for creation each and every day!

April 23, 2017

Holy Family-St. Lawrence Parish in Essex Junction hosts an event for Mercy2Earth Weekend, a combined celebration of Earth Day and Divine Mercy Sunday. Evening prayer focused on Pope Francis' 2016 message of mercy for the Earth is followed by roundtable discussions on topics related to creation care including renewable energy, energy efficiency, waste management, clean water, living simply, impacts on communities and eco-spirituality.



Learn new ways you can bring mercy to Earth at mercy2earth.org.

May 19, 2017

Vermont Catholics give glory to God for the gift of creation with Sing Praise to God All the Earth, a concert by composers from Oregon Catholic Press. The music featured is inspired by "Laudato Si'."

Get a copy of OCP's "Our Common Home" song collection at ocp.org/en-us/collections/pg/630.



Sept. 30, 2017

More than 200 people from at least eight different states gather at St. Michael's College for the Action for Ecological Justice: Celebrating a Year of Creation conference with keynote address by Dr. Carolyn Woo, former CEO and president of Catholic Relief Services. Following a locally sourced, plant-based lunch (served on compostable dishware), participants attend breakout sessions on: the spiritual place of food and farming in our lives; the place of economics in understanding the environmental crisis; creation care as a common ground initiative for interfaith collaboration; strategies to engage your community in social mission; how science can support social, political and ethical climate justice issues; critical information about local water quality; spirituality and ecojustice; providing access to clean water for the poor throughout the world; and consuming ethically in today's world. The day closed with song and reflection led by composer Bob Hurd of OCP.

Review the morning programming from the conference at vimeo.com/238045283.

What's next?

- Host a "Laudato Si'" enrichment series at your parish. Contact outreach@vermontcatholic.org for study and discussion guide suggestions.
- Speak with your pastor about exploring ways that your parish can become more energy efficient. Email outreach@vermontcatholic.org to begin the energy efficiency audit and project process.
- Sign the "Laudato Si'" Pledge at liveLaudatoSi.org.
- Encourage the use of compost bins in your home, parish or workplace.
- Abstain from eating meat for one day a week, year round — not just during Lent.
- Form a Creation Care Team at your parish or in conjunction with neighboring parishes. Learn more at catholicclimatecovenant.org/cct.
- Support the formation of a Vermont Chapter of the Global Catholic Climate Movement. Email outreach@vermontcatholic.org to get involved.

Supporting women means upholding the dignity of all life

A little-known fact about the women's movement is that it did not begin with the pro-abortion agenda that characterizes it today. Suffragettes of the early 20th century were concerned primarily with obtaining the right to vote, not the right to abort their children.

According to Marjorie Dannenfelser, president of the pro-life Susan B. Anthony List, "Early leaders of the women's suffrage movement in the U.S. believed that the rights of mother and child are inextricably linked and that the right to life and the right to vote are rooted in the inherent dignity of each human person."

Nearly 100 years after women won the right to vote, the movement has transformed from its early focus to one which effectively places women in competition with their children and at odds with their fertility. Modern feminist ideology promotes the dangerous notion that women "need" abortion and contraception as solutions to such problems as poverty, hunger, domestic abuse and single parenthood. Pro-life advocates who work to prioritize the protection of the unborn are sometimes accused of ignoring the social and economic causes that lead women to seek abortions.

In fact, to be "pro-life" has always been to be pro- "all life." Whereas there are some such as Charles Camosy ("Beyond the Abortion Wars") who describe the unborn as "innocent aggressors," whose right to life is subordinate to that of their mothers, Catholic moral teaching views the lives of mothers and their unborn children of equal dignity and worth and supports a "both-and" approach to solving the problems that lead to abortion. That is, we work

both to protect the unborn and to solve economic and social problems that threaten families.

A nationwide movement known as Women Speak for Themselves has emerged whose mission is to challenge the prevailing notion that women "need" access to abortion and contraception, focusing specifically on "how women are disadvantaged respecting dating and marriage, particularly because of contraception and abortion, and about how to reconnect sex with marriage and children for the good of all people."

Inspired by Women Speak for Themselves founder Helen Alvare, who is a nationally known speaker, writer and attorney Joanna Bisceglia of Waterbury

was moved to organize a chapter in Vermont. "As a Vermont professional, mother, wife, athlete and a Catholic, I am amazed at the abuse women often put themselves through by not standing up for ourselves and each other in this throwaway culture that devalues women constantly," Bisceglia said. "We women often don't support each other enough and

stand up for how we were made to be treated, in God's divine image."

She said her goal is to bring women together around topics of mutual concern with the hope that even on those issues about which there is disagreement, they can work toward greater understanding and respect. "I

truly believe that what unites us is greater than that which divides us," she said.

The emergence of groups like Women Speak for Themselves is evidence that the false dichotomy underpinning the modern women's movement is increasingly giving way to a more authentic "both-and" approach to women's issues that recognizes pro-life and pro-woman goals as mutually supportive, not

mutually exclusive. As Catholics, we are called to throw the full weight of our creative and moral energy behind policies and reforms that uphold the dignity of all, born and unborn.

The Respect Life Speakers Bureau 2017-2018 features several talks related to this topic.

For more information and to register visit vermontcatholic.org/marchforlife.

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Modern feminist ideology promotes the dangerous notion that women 'need' abortion and contraception as solutions to such problems as poverty, hunger, domestic abuse and single parenthood.

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Carrie Handy is the respect life coordinator for the Diocese of Burlington.



Diocese organizes 2 March for Life trips

The Catholic Church in Vermont is planning to send two busloads of pro-life advocates to Washington, D.C., in January for the annual March for Life.

The event will take place Jan. 19, and one bus will take adults and families to the nation's capital to show their support for life at the day's events while the other will take youth and their chaperones to the events and to pilgrimage sites.

The mission of the March for Life is to provide all Americans with a place to testify to the beauty of life and the dignity of each human person.

The January timing of the march coincides with the anniversary of the legalization of abortion in the United States on Jan. 22, 1973. The march brings together pro-life leaders and groups to organize, unite and strategize around a common message and to communicate this message to the government, the media and the nation in a way that affirms life.

The adult and family bus will leave Vermont on the evening of Jan. 18 and is scheduled to return on the morning of Jan. 20, travelling through the night in both directions.

This bus is not for youth groups or minors traveling without parents.

The cost is \$75 per person.

The Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries is organizing a separate youth group bus.

The "Life is Precious Trip" will leave Rice Memorial High School in South Burlington on Jan. 18 at 5 p.m. with an additional pick up at Mount St. Joseph Academy in Rutland about 7 p.m.

Participants will attend the Jan. 19 Rally for Life



— Photos courtesy of marchforlife.org

and the March for Life in Washington, D.C. On Jan 20 they will visit the St. John Paul II National Shrine and The Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception and engage in homeless and nursing home outreach. They will return to Vermont on Jan. 21.

For cost and more information, call 802-658-6110, ext. 1130 or 802-846-5812.

"It is an extremely rewarding but exhausting undertaking for those who go" to the march, said Carrie Handy, respect life coordinator for the Diocese of Burlington.

Traditionally, Vermont participants march together with a banner from the Diocese of Burlington.

"Because Vermont has become known for its liberal abortion laws, this is a great way for Vermonters to make a statement that there are many of us who support life and restrictions on abortion," Handy said.

Those who attend the march say it is "energizing and encouraging to see so many people — hundreds of thousands — in support of life and standing against abortion as the killing of innocent life," she added.

For more information on the march, go to marchforlife.org/mfl-2018.

VTC • Cori Fugere Urban

Unwrapping the Good News

“I proclaim to you good news of great joy...” (Lk 2:10).

The angel’s announcement at the birth of Jesus let all who heard it know God had fulfilled His promise: He had become one of us in “all

things but sin” to set us free from the tyranny of sin. This is Good News of great joy! This angelic announcement was given to a world not unlike our own, riven with strife, political difficulty, senseless violence, tears and hardship, especially for those on the margins — the poor, the

sick and those of low status in Roman society. It was to these — the poor shepherds — that this announcement of Good News was first given.

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. ... Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing” (Lk 4:18-21).

As He begins His public ministry, Jesus proclaims that the Good News first foretold by the prophet Isaiah to the people is now fulfilled in their hearing: He is here to offer liberty to captives, glad tidings to the poor and sight to the blind.

Who reacted with joy? The captives, the poor and the sick whom we see Jesus encounter throughout the Gospels embraced Jesus with great joy. Yet not all reacted with joy — the leaders of the people responsible for governing and those responsible for leading them closer to God often reacted with hostility.

What is our reaction to this Good News? Do we see that it is Good News? Are we ready to encounter Christ and look more deeply at what this Good News means for our lives? How can we be “set free?” Are we

ready to sell all for this “priceless pearl” and bring others to encounter Christ and be set free as well?

“The Joy of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus.”

Pope Francis reminds the world of the Good News as he begins his apostolic exhortation, “*Evangelii Gaudium*,” “The Joy

of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept his offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness” (EG, 1). This is Good News! For whom? For everyone. God heals wounds, fills empty hearts, provides purpose and gives each of us the grace to become that which He called us to be from the beginning. I have seen this repeatedly in my work with those entering the Church through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults process. This is Good News for everyone: those who are wounded, suffering from addiction, lonely, insecure, purposeless or seeking love. In the silence of our

hearts, when we find ourselves alone with God, we realize our complete weakness and how much we need Christ and this Good News! Come Lord Jesus and set us free.

How do we unwrap the Good News?

The joy and peace of Christ should be tangible wherever the Good News is shared and lived. As we look around our parishes and communities, we can ask what we see and compare the scene to what Francis describes in the early Church:

“In the Acts of the Apostles we read that the first Christians ‘ate their food with glad and generous hearts’ (2:46). Wherever the disciples went, ‘there was great joy’ (8:8); even amid persecution they continued to be ‘filled with joy’ (13:52). The newly baptized eunuch ‘went on his way rejoicing’ (8:39), while Paul’s jailer ‘and his entire household rejoiced that he had become a believer in God’ (16:34). Why should we not also enter into this great stream of joy” (EG, 5)?

And why was there such joy? The Good News brings great joy! God has become one of us, Emmanuel, God with us. God has come among us: We have a Savior who knows us completely and loves us absolutely so that we can always trust in His merciful love. He will always come to us when we call, and in that encounter, He changes our lives for the better. Good News yesterday, today and forever. May we unwrap this Good News in our hearts and joyfully announce it anew to our communities and the world.

“

Jesus proclaims... the Good News first foretold by the prophet Isaiah. ... He is here to offer liberty to captives, glad tidings to the poor and sight to the blind.

”



Deacon Phil Lawson is the executive director of evangelization, catechesis, divine worship, marriage and family and respect life for the Diocese of Burlington. He can be reached at plawson@vermontcatholic.org.

Sacrificial ministry is incomplete without the cross

Cautious: This article concerns working with the poor, the homeless, the mentally ill and addicts. If your experience of this kind of ministry is limited to the occasional conference talk on social justice in an air-conditioned building, bolstered by small group discussions followed by a tasty lunch, you won't appreciate it.

If you have hands-on experience with the above-mentioned population, who rejected your good intentions at "helping them," then you will understand the Gospels in their complexity and entirety.

For most Christians, the seminal Gospel passage often quoted regarding social justice and ministry to the poor is Matthew 25:35-40: "I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me." Then the righteous will answer him and say, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison and visit you?' And the king will say to them in reply, 'Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.'

This Gospel makes clear the various acts to be performed, but the sacrificial act of ministry is not complete without the cross. For ministry to be fruitful the mystery of the cross looms behind every act of charity. An act of love, met with

the rejection of the intended recipient, if united with the suffering of Jesus on the cross, can produce spiritual fruit more efficacious than any pious sermon on the preferential option for the poor.

Remember what happened to

Jesus in John 5:1-16 when He bestowed two healings on the man at the Pool of Bethesda who had been paralyzed for 38 years? The man is healed but nonetheless intentionally betrays Jesus to the authorities for having told him to carry his mat on the Sabbath which led to an intensified persecution of Jesus.

Jesus' act of charity is met with ingratitude, betrayal and suffering. But, did Jesus stop healing the sick? No.

So, what do you do when the sandwich you offer the hungry man is thrown with contempt in the garbage? You still feed the hungry. When the water you offer the thirsty one is left behind for alcohol? You still give water to the thirsty. When the clothes you offer the poor family are exchanged

for drugs? You still give clothes to the poor. When you offer kindness and compassion to the mentally ill or addicts and they calumniate you? You remain kind and compassionate. But, most importantly, you pray to the Father from the

depths of your soul uniting your frustration, hurt feelings and misunderstood intentions to Jesus so that He may elevate those acts of charity to the supernatural heights of mercy which we alone, without the cross, are unable to accomplish.

From those heights a shower of grace descends upon the poor, which a mere sandwich, bottle

of water, pair of boots or kind smile was unable to achieve by itself. Such is the complexity of social justice and ministry to the poor. Not every recipient of charity is ungrateful, obviously. And many will be kind, pleasant and enjoyable. But don't let those who betray you and hurt your feelings stop you from performing the good works of the Kingdom.

Jesus didn't stop. And neither did the saints.

“

Don't let those who betray you and hurt your feelings stop you from performing the good works of the Kingdom.

”



Father Lance Harlow is the rector of Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception and St. Joseph Co-Cathedral parishes in Burlington.

To everything there is a season

There is a story of a pastor who decided to hire a gardener for the poorly kept parish grounds. Year round the gardener worked diligently, mulching, preparing the soil, weeding, planting, pruning and nurturing the plants with great attention. One day, the pastor strolled into the flowering garden with a neighboring priest, anxious to show off the magnificent new creation.

Gesturing to the many different plants and flowers, the pastor said, "I praise God for all of His handiwork!"

With clippers in hand, the gardener stepped out from behind a bush and chastised the pastor saying, "Don't you go giving all the credit to God. Just remember what this place looked like before I got here and God had it all to himself!"

Attention is a sacred gift. "The moment one gives close attention to anything, even a blade of grass, it becomes a mysterious, awesome, indescribably magnificent world in itself," wrote Henry Miller.

When we give this kind of attention to others, it becomes a gift of love, one that nourishes and nurtures and helps bring a person into full bloom. When we have this kind of love, our world holds all the beauty of a tended garden. When we don't, life can become a cold, dreary night.

There was a time when I felt like my world had become an eternal

winter, and I couldn't see beyond the moment in time when my father died unexpectedly, leaving me alone to care for my mother, who was a hospice patient.

But time goes on. Today, it doesn't seem possible that my father has been gone almost 22 years. Still, each year, as Valentine's Day approaches, I am reminded of the last Valentine's Day

we spent together, him unconscious in a hospital bed, me in tears hoping that he could at least sense how much I loved him. He died the next day.

When I returned home that night and curled up in my dad's much-loved recliner, I recalled the words of Paul Gallico, the author of

"The Snow Goose," one of my favorite books as a child: "When two people loved each other, they worked together always, two against the world, a little company. Joy was shared, trouble split. You had an ally, somewhere, who was helping."

This was my relationship with my dad. Gallico's words spoke to me, not only of what is ours when we are loved, when there is someone in our life who gives us the sacred gift of attention but what we don't have when

that someone is gone, no matter what the reason. It is the aloneness of grief, the dark night of loss, the realization that you are now a company of one.

A year later, I lost my mom.

When we suffer losses such as these, we often look for reasons why. But, in all honesty, no reason could console us or take away the terrible hurt and emptiness we feel. We may cling to our faith in these inconsolable times, but even faith doesn't erase the pain.

I have found that the only way through it all is to consider grief a season of life, a season of loss that ebbs and flows and forever changes who we are. We never learn about it in school, but life will teach us and Scripture can guide us:

"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:

A time to be born, and a time to die;

A time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;

A time to kill, and a time to heal;

A time to break down, and a time to build up;

A time to weep, and a time to laugh;

A time to mourn, and a time to dance. ..."

The writer of Ecclesiastes understood there is divine wisdom in all of God's creation, and that we must embrace that wisdom in our own lives as well. The garden in winter is not dead, just dormant, having prepared for this season during the autumn. When the time and conditions are right, new life will spring forth from roots and seeds hidden from our sight.

“

Consider grief a season of life, a season of loss that ebbs and flows and forever changes who we are.

”



Mary Regina Morrell is a freelance writer, editor, syndicated columnist, blogger and religion consultant at Wellspring Communications. mary.wellspring@yahoo.com • Twitter @mreginam6

Love and marriage go together

In 1955 the song “Love and Marriage” — originally composed for a 1938 production of the play “Our Town” — was popularized by Frank Sinatra. The song was a commercial success, and recordings by other singers capitalized on the popularity of the song.

No doubt contributing to the commercial success were a pleasant melody and good recordings, voices and marketing. Perhaps the song’s underlying theme also contributed to its success.

The theme was quite simple, that love is integral to marriage. At the same time, marriage is the natural consequence of a man and woman loving each other.

That very concept is sometimes taken for granted, but at other times it almost seems quaint and archaic, despite strong evidence of its validity.

A loving marital relationship is the most suitable place for children to be nurtured and raised. Yet none of us can deny the tragedy of unhappy marriages and divorced and separated spouses. For that reason, the Church must continue to improve its marriage preparation efforts.

Let’s examine the concept of loving marital relationship more deeply.

When Pope Francis issued his document, “Amoris Laetitia,” in English “The Joy of Love,” he sought to highlight the vital role that marriage plays in society and in the Church. He cited several scripture passages in his reflection on marriage.

Let us focus on just three of those concepts.

First of all, Genesis 1:27 tells us that God created humans “... in his own image and likeness, male and

female He created them.”

The second reading comes from the Song of Songs (Song of Solomon), a love poem depicting the relationship between the king and his bride, probably Solomon and his wife. Their love and intimacy are described. This is clear evidence that about 3,000 years ago, God had revealed that married love is actually sacred.

In the poem, the bride says, “My beloved is mine and I am his. ... I am my beloved’s and my beloved is mine” (2:16; 6:3). The bride is speaking of the mutuality of love and self-giving that is essential to a marriage.

But the poem also is seen as a metaphor, or a story, depicting God’s love for the people of Israel; God is the king, and Israel is His bride. By extension, that love also includes all of us, the new People of God, the new Israel.

The third passage cited by Pope Francis comes from the First Letter to the Corinthians, chapter 13, a chapter discussing the very nature of

love itself. It is well known: “Love is patient, love is kind; it is not jealous. ... It does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in right. It bears all things, believes all things, forgives all things. ... Love never fails. ...”

Pope Francis elaborated on each of the clauses in that passage. It speaks to the best traits in human nature, of

course animated by the grace of God, who is Love itself. I suggest that there is no relationship in which it is more critical for a genuine love as described by St. Paul than in a marriage.

As a couple in a sacramental marriage looks at each other, they see not just the other, but a beautiful image and likeness of God. They see a reflection, a glimpse, of God who loves them.

They see a spark of God, there to remind them of God’s love for them and His presence with them.

One can even go a step further and conclude that in a sacramental marriage, God loves His people. After 44 years of a very happy marriage, I concur with that conclusion.



As a couple in a sacramental marriage looks at each other, they see not just the other, but a beautiful image and likeness of God. They see a reflection, a glimpse, of God who loves them.



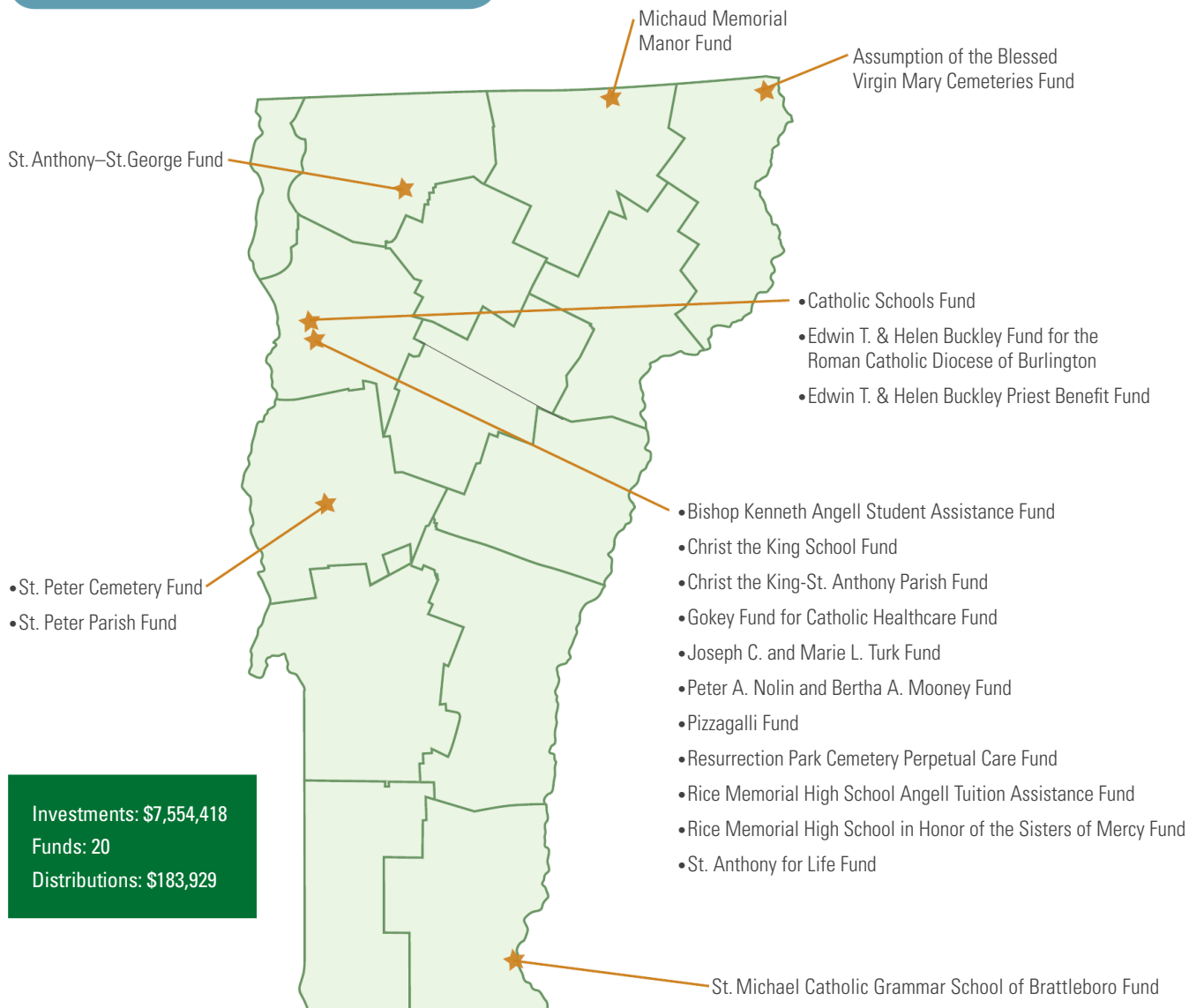
Deacon Pete Gummere is director of the Permanent Diaconate for the Diocese of Burlington and serves at Corpus Christi Parish in the Northeast Kingdom. He is adjunct faculty at Pontifical College Josephinum and teaches moral theology and medical morality courses in the Josephinum Diaconate Institute.



Vermont Catholic COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Supporting the Catholic Church and Beyond

FUND SITES AND DISTRIBUTION



ANNUAL REPORT 2017

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

June 30, 2017

ASSETS

Investments	\$7,554,418
Contributions receivable, net	150,000
Total assets	\$7,704,418

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Liabilities	
Nonprofit organization funds	\$7,410,601
Total liabilities	\$7,410,601

NET ASSETS

Unrestricted net assets	143,817
Temporarily restricted	150,000
Total net assets	293,817
Total liabilities and net assets	\$7,704,418

The Vermont Catholic Community Foundation is a registered 501 (c) 3 nonprofit organization and all donations received are fully deductible for tax purposes: #81-0999457.

See the most current list of funds
and
view the full 2017 Annual Report
at
vtcatholicfoundation.org.

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

Year Ended June 30, 2017

	UNRESTRICTED	TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED	TOTAL
REVENUES			
Contributions	\$7,436,243	\$150,000	\$7,586,243
Less contributions to nonprofit organization funds	(7,299,209)	—	(7,299,209)
Net contributions	137,034	150,000	287,034
Net realized and unrealized gains on investments	7,311	—	7,311
In-kind services	68,169	—	68,169
Other income	21,804	—	21,804
Total revenue	234,318	150,000	384,318
EXPENSES			
<i>Program expenses:</i>			
Grants approved, net	183,929	—	183,929
Less grants from nonprofit organizational funds	(183,752)	—	(183,752)
Net grants	177	—	177
Grant administration and related program activities	—	—	—
Total program expenses	177	—	177
<i>Supporting services:</i>			
Management and general	76,999	—	76,999
Development	13,325	—	13,325
Total supporting services	90,324	—	90,324
Total expenses	90,501	—	90,501
Change in net assets	143,817	150,000	293,817
Net assets — beginning of year	—	—	—
Net assets — end of year	\$143,817	\$150,000	\$293,817

Couples need help forming, following consciences, pope says

Marriage and family life are blessings for individuals and for society, but both are filled with difficult choices that Catholic couples must be helped to face prayerfully and in the light of their consciences, Pope Francis said. Unfortunately, too many people today confuse a rightly formed conscience with personal preferences dominated by selfishness, the pope said in a video message to an Italian meeting on "Amoris Laetitia," his exhortation on the family. "The contemporary world risks confusing the primacy of conscience, which is always to be respected, with the exclusive autonomy of the individual" even when the individual's decisions impact his or her marriage and family life, the pope said.

Pope's encyclical guides climate action plans

An international alliance of Catholic social justice organizations called on governments to respond to climate change in ways that reflect the sentiments Pope Francis expressed in his encyclical, "Laudato Si'." In a position paper released last month at the United Nations climate talks in Bonn, Germany, International Cooperation for Development and Solidarity said the success of the Paris climate agreement depends on "our own cultural and spiritual transformation," as described by the pope. "We will not be able to alleviate poverty and develop in a progressive way without recognizing the connection between ourselves and nature, and the important role nature plays in enabling us to develop. Likewise, we will not tackle climate change without addressing the social, economic and political factors that drive our current development pathway, putting us at odds with the stability of the planet on which we depend," the paper said.

French author speaks on single people, celibacy

Single people are the forgotten members of the Catholic Church, said a Catholic journalist who



Marian icon gift: Pope Francis accepts a gift of a Marian icon as he meets people attending a conference on building a world free of nuclear weapons, at the Vatican last month. The conference brought together 11 Nobel laureates, top officials from the United Nations and NATO, diplomats from throughout the world, experts in nuclear weapons and the disarmament process, scholars, activists and representatives of bishops' conferences. — CNS photo/L'Osservatore Romano



Seminarian training: Michael Caraway, a seminarian from Diocese of Lake Charles, Louisiana, uses a treadmill in the new gym at the Pontifical North American College in Rome. A seminary is not typically known for its emphasis on physical activity and fitness, but many seminarians see it as an integral part of daily life. "The Catholic Church is a real supporter of both body and soul," said Michael's cousin, Joseph Caraway, a seminarian from the Diocese of Lake Charles, who did graduate studies in exercise physiology before entering the seminary. — CNS photo/Robert Duncan

has developed expertise on this issue during the past 20 years. "There are more and more single people, yet they are almost never mentioned in the Church. They are completely forgotten," said Claire Lesegretain, a religion reporter for French Catholic newspaper La Croix. Since she published a book about the reality of single

people in the Church in 1998, she often has been asked to speak on the issue and recently wrote a document on single people for the French bishops' conference. "This is the Church's blind spot. It's there, very present, but nobody talks about it. We don't see them," she explained while in Quebec for a series of conferences.

From slave to priest:

Father Augustus Tolton, the first recognized American diocesan priest of African descent, is pictured in an undated photo. A one-man show, "Tolton: From Slave to Priest," tells the story of his life, faith and the racism he endured and is touring several cities in the United States. The Archdiocese of Chicago opened his cause for sainthood in 2011, giving him the title "servant of God." For more about the play, go to stlukeproductions.com.

— CNS photo/courtesy of Archdiocese of Chicago Archives and Records Center



Religious freedom must be protected, says Catholic-Muslim forum

Christians and Muslims believe that freedom of conscience and religion are the most important human rights and, "therefore, our collective duty demands that we respect, preserve and promote such rights," said members of the Catholic-Muslim Forum. The forum was established in 2008 by the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue and an international group of Muslim scholars who had signed "A Common Word," an open letter to then-Pope Benedict XVI and other Christian leaders urging a dialogue based on values the two faiths hold in common. Christianity and Islam both teach that God bestowed on every human being inalienable dignity from which fundamental human rights are derived, as well as the obligation of governments to protect them.

Vietnamese Diocese rebuilds church ruined in '67 air raid

A diocese in northern Vietnam has begun construction of a church dedicated to Dominican martyrs, replacing the ruins of an earlier one destroyed during a United States air raid in 1967. Bishop Joseph Vu Van Thien of Hai Phong celebrated a special Mass in November to begin the construction of the new church at the Hai Duong Martyrs Shrine, about 35 miles southeast of Hanoi. "Today, 50 years after the destruction of the martyr shrine, we are happy to begin the construction of the new church. This is a historic landmark of our diocese," Bishop Thien said during the Mass.

Pope bans cigarette sales at the Vatican

Concerned by the damage caused by smoking, Pope Francis has banned the sale of cigarettes in Vatican City State. Starting in 2018, the Vatican "will cease to sell cigarettes to employees," Greg Burke, Vatican spokesman, said. "The reason is very simple: The Holy See cannot contribute to an activity that

Continued on next page



National Climate Assessment: The stump is all that remains of a tree cut down near the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C., earlier this year. The Fourth National Climate Assessment mandated by Congress concluded that it is "extremely likely" that human activities, especially regarding emissions of greenhouse gases, are the leading cause of a warming planet. — CNS photo/Tyler Orsburn

Continued from previous page
clearly damages the health of people," he said. "According to the World Health Organization, every year smoking is the cause of more than 7 million deaths throughout the world."

World Youth Day '19 will invite youth of other faiths

The Panamanian archbishop helping to organize World Youth Day said the 2019 celebration in his country would invite youth of other faiths to participate. "We want it to be ecumenical," said Archbishop Jose Domingo Ulloa Mendieta of Panama in a Nov. 13 interview with Catholic News Service. "We're working to include youth from other communities of faith to participate." The international event is a religious celebration that takes place every three years for Catholic youth from throughout the world. Archbishop Ulloa said Pope Francis told him to give the upcoming one a distinct flavor of the realities of Latin America so it will touch on themes of immigration and ecology and feature martyrs and saints of Latin America as models for youth.

Bishops approve pastoral plan for marriage, family life

U.S. Catholic bishops acknowledged that Catholic families and married couples need more support from the Church at large and hope to offer it by giving parishes plenty of resources through a pastoral plan for marriage and family life. A proposal for such a plan was approved on the second day of their annual fall assembly in Baltimore last month. The pastoral plan was described by Bishop Richard Malone of Buffalo, New York, a member of the bishops' Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth, as a response to Pope Francis' 2016 apostolic exhortation "Amoris Laetitia" ("The Joy of Love").

Mass not time for idle chitchat, pope says

Mass is the highest form of prayer and not an appropriate moment for small talk,



Inspecting the dome: Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, and Archbishop Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States, inspect the recently completed Trinity Dome project with Msgr. Walter R. Rossi, rector of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. The dedication of the mosaic dome was scheduled for Dec. 8, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. — CNS photo/Tyler Orsburn

Pope Francis said during a weekly general audience last month. At church, Catholics should spend their time in silence before Mass, preparing "to meet with Jesus" instead of engaging in "chitchat," he said. "Silence is so important. ... Silence prepares us and accompanies us."

Nuncio to Canada says mercy is rooted in dialogue

Pope Francis' representative to Canada said diplomats today "are called to be peacemak-

ers, in a sincere dialogue." In a talk at Laval University last month, Archbishop Luigi Bonazzi, apostolic nuncio, stressed that pontifical diplomacy aims at serving humanity, trying to be a united family. He said mercy is rooted in a culture of dialogue, which must be fostered in any peace process. Archbishop Bonazzi said the Vatican is trying to deploy its human resources to bring comfort and consolation in countries where it has diplomatic relations in addition to having, when necessary, a mediation role.

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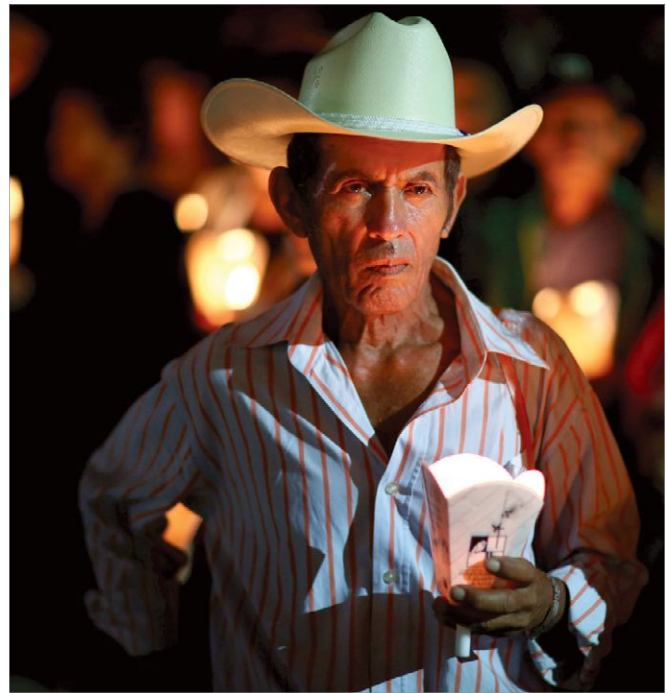
Catholic bishops' gathering:

Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, delivers the homily during Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Baltimore on the eve of the fall general assembly of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

—CNS photo/Bob Roller



Convalidation ceremony: Twenty-one couples celebrate their convalidation ceremony at Good Shepherd Catholic Church in Alexandria, Virginia. The Catholic Church must strengthen its programs "to respond to the desire for family that emerges in the soul of the young generations" and to help couples once they are married, Pope Francis said last month in Rome. —CNS photo/Tyler Orsburn



Salvadoran commemoration: Catholic faithful in San Salvador, El Salvador, participate in a procession Nov. 11 commemorating the 28th anniversary of the murder of six Jesuit priests and two employees, who were killed by government military forces during the Salvadoran civil war. —CNS photo/José Cabezas, Reuters

Rice centennial

Rice Memorial High School in South Burlington is celebrating its centennial. The 100th school year kicked off in August, an occasion marked with a special first day of school assembly and "Clap In" to which alumni and parents were invited. The celebration continues with a full calendar of events designed to engage alumni, parents and students. The mission of Rice throughout the years has remained in essence the same: to love learning, to serve others and to seek God through Jesus Christ and His Church, said Interim Principal Lisa Lorenz. For more information on the events go to rmhsvt.org/riceturns100.

Cemetery care

"Operating a cemetery is very expensive in today's world, and for that reason we need to be good stewards of all cemetery funds to provide a sacred place for those who have placed their love ones in our care," said Robert E. Brown, director of cemeteries for the Diocese of Burlington. "The Catholic faithful expect our cemeteries to be a place of reverence, a peaceful area for prayer and reflection." The Vermont Catholic Community Foundation provides pathways for Catholics to leave a legacy that will shape the future of the Catholic Church in Vermont. "One of those pathways is the Perpetual Care Fund which enables our Catholic parish cemeteries to place their perpetual care monies together for an opportunity of a higher return on their investment," Brown explained. "The foundation will manage these funds and distribute them on a percentage based on the principle invested. This will provide our cemeteries much needed funds for their operations."

Bicycle collection

A recent successful collection of bicycles and sewing machines in Fairfax will benefit people in developing countries. "There are thousands of unused and unwanted bikes and sewing machines around the country just sitting in garages or attics collecting dust," said Bob Thompson of St. Luke Parish in Fairfax, one of the coordinators of the collection of items for Pedals for Progress, a non-profit organization that ships used and



OUTDOOR ROSARY: Father Clifford Jones leads a procession through the Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary after blessing the newly installed outdoor rosary at Our Lady of Ephesus House of Prayer in Jamaica in October. "How wonderful it is to have this beautiful rosary surrounding this gigantic cross," said the retired priest of the Archdiocese of Newark now living in Whitingham. "People alone or in groups are invited to walk through this rosary, bead by bead." The illuminated Dozulé Cross of Love in the center of the rosary is 24 feet tall. The Hail Mary beads are each five feet across, and the Our Father beads are six feet in diameter. The pavers form an oval about 100 feet in length. — Submitted photo



VOCATIONS MEETING: Burlington Bishop Christopher Coyne thanks about 40 people for their participation in a November vocation ministry workshop at St. Anthony Church in White River Junction. Keynote speaker Rhonda Gruenewald, author of "Hundredfold: A Guide to Parish Vocation Ministry," said, "We are trying to create an environment where young people can hear and answer God's call" to priesthood, consecrated religious life or sacramental marriage. Her presentation was entitled "Forming a Vocation-Friendly Parish." More information is available online at vocationsministry.com. — Cori Fugere Urban photo



SENIOR PORTRAITS: Artist Louise Kenney holds a pastel painting she did of Norma Patterson, a resident of the Loretto Home in Rutland, one of the elder care homes administered by Vermont Catholic Charities Inc. Kenney, a parishioner of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Rutland, is doing a portrait for each Loretto Home resident. — Cori Fugere Urban photo



NEW EDMUNDITE PRIEST: Father Michael Carter, the newest priest of the Society of St. Edmund, blesses Burlington Bishop Christopher Coyne after his ordination to the priesthood in September at the Chapel of St. Michael the Archangel at St. Michael's College in Colchester. Born in Burlington, the son of Richard M. Carter and Kathleen M. Carter of Burlington attended Christ the King School then Burlington High School, St. Michael's College and Boston College. — Cori Fugere Urban photo

unwanted bicycles and sewing machines to help poor families provide an income for themselves and to improve their quality of life. Knights of Columbus Donald C. Kelley Council #10830 of Fairfax sponsored the collection with help from Ascension Church in Georgia and St. Ann Church in Milton. Ninety bikes and four sewing machines were collected.

Vocation Nights

A Vocation Nights program is underway in the Diocese of Burlington with programs completed or planned in Montpelier, Colchester, St. Albans and Brattleboro for confirmation students and parents. Each event includes adoration with evening prayer and benediction, a shared meal, a presentation on some aspect of vocations and a time for questions and answers. Burlington Bishop Christopher Coyne and Father Jon Schnobrich, vocations director, are scheduled to be present at each one, along with a presenter. The purpose of the events is to expose young people to different ways people respond to God's call in their life within the Church and to give good information to youth and their parents regarding prayer and discerning God's will in their lives. For more information, call the Vocations Office at 802-658-6110.

CCHD collection

The Diocese of Burlington again participated in the annual collection for the Catholic Campaign for Human Development. The appeal took place the weekend of Nov. 19; 25 percent of funds collected will remain in the Diocese to fund local anti-poverty projects, and the remainder is distributed nationally through grants. "By supporting this collection, donors are giving those on the margins a hand up, not a hand out," said Mary Beth Pinard, diocesan director of CCHD and executive director of Vermont Catholic Charities Inc. Two Vermont non-profits have recently received CCHD national grants.

Catholic Radio

"Catholic Radio is up and broadcasting in Burlington, Winooski, Essex and South Burlington! Congratulations to Donna McSoley and all who helped her make this happen,"

Continued on next page

AROUND THE DIOCESE

Continued from previous page

Burlington Bishop Christopher Coyne enthused on social media. The station went live in September. Tune in to WRXJ, 105.5 FM for Our Lady of Perpetual Help Radio, dedicated to helping listeners grow in holiness in Jesus Christ. A member of the St. Francis Xavier Parish in Winooski, McSoley landed a permit with the Federal Communications Commission to build the radio station. She now serves as its president. For programming information, go to wrxj1055.org/programming.

St. Therese Digital Academy

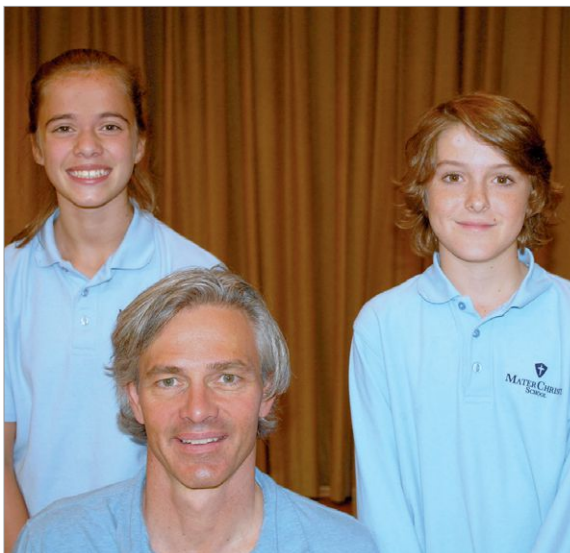
Enrollment at the Diocese of Burlington's St. Therese Digital Academy has grown from four to 52. Principal Lisa Lorenz attributes the growth to several factors including grant money from Our Sunday Visitor and the Catholic Communications Campaign of the United States Conference of Bishops, word of mouth, courses for the Lay Formation Program Institute for Missionary Discipleship, the building of the digital academy's own curriculum and existing brick and mortar schools using its courses. For more information, go to stdavt.org.

Center for Agricultural Economy

The Center for an Agricultural Economy, a non-profit organization based in Vermont's Northeast Kingdom, is the recipient of a \$70,000 grant from the Catholic Campaign for Human Development to support its organizing campaign and issues assembly that will launch the Northeast Kingdom Organizing Project. "As a member-led organization, NEKO will be a vehicle for people to have a voice in critical decisions that impact their lives," said Martha Braithwaite, lead organizer. The Hardwick-based Center for an Agricultural Economy envisions a future with thriving landscapes, healthy local food and vital, equitable communities and believes a place-based agricultural economy and intentional community development is the path to this future.

Church Mutual Nurse Hotline

Employees of the Diocese of Burlington associated with the diocesan insurance policy who sustain a non-life-threatening injury



INSPIRATIONAL SPEAKER:

Chris Waddell, 13-time Paralympic medalist and the first paraplegic to summit Mount Kilimanjaro nearly unassisted, presented One Revolution Foundation's Nametags Educational Program at Mater Christi School in Burlington earlier this school year. Pictured here with eighth graders Myla Altadonna (left) and Patrick Walsh, Waddell emphasized, "It's not what happens to you. It's what you do with what happens to you." He was inducted into the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Hall of Fame and the Paralympics Hall of Fame.

— Cori Fugere Urban photo



RICE HOMECOMING: Eight new members were inducted in the Rice-Cathedral Athletic Hall of Fame in October. Hall of Famers from previous classes welcomed the newest members at the induction ceremony during Homecoming. There were seven different events over three days. Rice Memorial High School in South Burlington had its start with Cathedral High School in Burlington, which opened 100 years ago. — Cori Fugere Urban photo

on the job can call The Church Mutual Nurse Hotline for medical information then get documentation of the triage call. "We keep our eyes out for new, innovative programs with an already-proven track record to improve outcomes for employees hurt on the job," said Betty Wyhowanec, administrative assistant in the diocesan Office of Insurance and Facilities. "This [nurse hotline] has a huge impact on the health and healing times of employees." Fast and free advice is available 24/7 through the Nurse Hotline at 844-322-4662.

Vermont Catholic Community Foundation

The Vermont Catholic Community Foundation has completed its first year of providing the Catholic community with a choice to establish endowments for what matters most to donors and leave a legacy of faith for the next

generation. The foundation currently includes 32 funds and more than \$10 million supporting Catholic ministries throughout Vermont, an increase of 12 funds and \$2.5 million since June 30. More than 70 people joined the Vermont Catholic Community Foundation Board of Directors and Burlington Bishop Christopher Coyne to celebrate a successful first year at an October meeting at Shelburne Museum's Pizzagalli Center for Arts and Education. To learn more visit: vtcatholicfoundation.org.

Death notice

Father Gerald R. Ragis, a former pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in Charlotte and St. Jude Church in Hinesburg, died Nov. 17 at University of Vermont Medical Center in Burlington. Funeral services were to be announced, and burial of his ashes will be private and at the discretion of the family.



BABY CLOTHING GIVE-AWAY:

Katelyn, Nathan and Zebedee Gratton with Nathan's father, Peter Gratton, pick up baby clothing at a Mater Dei Parish event. As part of their monthly Works of Mercy projects, the Mater Dei Youth Ministry hosted a free baby-clothing giveaway at St. Mary Star of the Sea Church in Newport in October. Each family from the Mater Dei Family Formation program was invited to donate one bag of baby clothes to the drive. The teens sorted the clothes and then distributed them to families who came to pick them up. As part of the drive, the teens learned about St. Francis of Assisi who literally gave his clothes to the poor. The event concluded with a brief time of adoration for the families who benefited from the clothing drive. — Submitted photo



CATHOLIC FAITH FORMATION DAY: Dr. Kevin Baxter, senior director and superintendent of Catholic schools for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles (left) chats with Lisa Lorenz (center), superintendent of Catholic schools for the Diocese of Burlington, and Angela Pohlen, principal of Christ the King School in Burlington. He was a keynote speaker at the fall Catholic Faith Formation Day at St. Michael's College in Colchester; 235 Catholic school educators and administrators attended. — Cori Fugere Urban photo



SISTERS OF MERCY JUBILEES: Sisters of Mercy in Vermont celebrating jubilees are Sister Jane Frances Matte (seated), a 75th jubilarian; and (standing, from left) Sister Jean Marie LaFreniere, a 60th jubilarian; Sister Germaine Compagna, a 75th jubilarian; Sister Lucille MacDonald, a 60th jubilarian; and Sister Gertrude Myrick, a 70th jubilarian. The five sisters, collectively, have provided nearly 350 years of service to the Catholic Church in Vermont. — Submitted photo

ASH WEDNESDAY

Ancient tradition thrives in modern times

In more ways than one, Ash Wednesday — celebrated Feb. 14 in 2018 — leaves a mark.

That's because not only are Catholics marked with a sign of penitence with ashes on their foreheads, but the rich symbolism of the rite itself draws Catholics to churches in droves even though it is not a holy day of obligation, and ashes do not have to be distributed during a Mass.

Almost half of adult Catholics, 45 percent, typically receive ashes — made from the burned and blessed palms of the previous year's Palm Sunday — at Ash Wednesday services, according to the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University.

Parish priests say they get more people at church that day than almost any other — excluding Christmas and Easter — and the congregations are usually much bigger than for Holy Thursday or Good Friday services.

“Virtually every parish that I’ve worked with will have more people come to Ash Wednesday than almost any other celebration,” said Thomas Humphries, assistant professor of philosophy, theology and religion at St. Leo University in St. Leo, Florida.

“We talk about Christmas and Easter as certainly being the most sacred and most attended events during the year, but Ash Wednesday is not even a day of obligation. In terms of liturgical significance, it’s very minor, but people observe it as overwhelmingly important,” he told Catholic News Service.

Humphries said part of the Ash Wednesday draw is the “genuine human recognition of the need to repent and the need to be reminded of our own mortality. Having someone put ashes on your head and remind you ‘we are dust and to dust we shall return’ is an act of humility.”

He also said the day — which is the start of Lent in the Latin Church — reminds people that they are not always who they should be and it is a chance to “stand together with people and be reminded of our frailty and brokenness and of our longing to do better.”

Jesuit Father Bruce Morrill, the Edward A. Malloy professor of Catholic studies at Vanderbilt University Divinity School in Nashville, Tennessee, thinks the appeal of Ash Wednesday is partly because participants receive a “marker of identity” as Catholics.

The day also has rich symbolism, he said, of both flawed humanity and mortality. He pointed out that even though a large percentage of Catholics do not go to confession they will attend this very penitential service because they “get a sense of repentance and a kind of solidarity in it.”

Ash Wednesday is one of two days, along with Good Friday, that are obligatory days of fasting and abstinence for Catholic adults — meaning no eating meat and eating only one full meal and two smaller meals.

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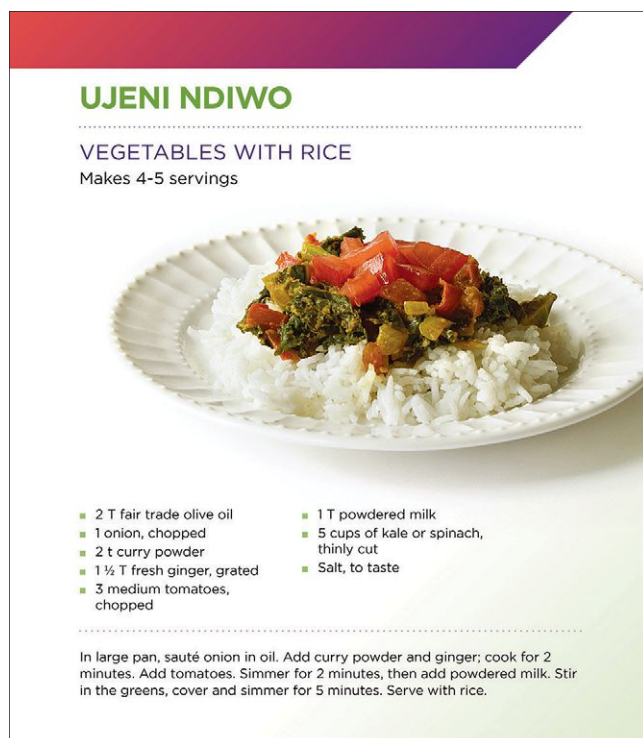
1. A child smiles during Ash Wednesday Mass March 1, 2017 at the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Houston.

— CNS photo/James Ramos, Texas Catholic Herald

2. Ann Cussen of the Archdiocese of Boston's Office of Spiritual Life receives ashes from Boston Cardinal Sean P. O'Malley during Ash Wednesday Mass at the archdiocese's pastoral center March 1, 2017.

— CNS photo/Gregory L. Tracy, The Pilot

Make meatless Fridays matter: Simple recipes to change the world this Lent



CRS RICE BOWL
CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES



Recipe card from Catholic Relief Services, crsricebowl.org.

— CRS image

2018 CRS Rice Bowl Meal, Haiti, Vegetable Stew

— CRS photo/Lauren Carroll

When Lent begins on Feb. 14, many Catholics will make dietary sacrifices — no candy, no ice cream and certainly no meat on Fridays.

Catholic Relief Services' CRS Rice Bowl program has a way to make Lent's five meatless Fridays more than a sacrifice, turning them into a way to express solidarity with people throughout the world who struggle to keep healthy food on their tables every day.

These are the people CRS serves with a wide variety of programs in more than 100 countries. Several of those countries have provided a collection of simple, easy-to-follow meatless recipes that appeal to cooks of all abilities as well as stories of hope about a person who benefits from CRS programming. These illustrate the great strides being made to improve health, education and nutrition in poor, mostly rural communities — so cooks of all ages will get to know the special ingredients that go into making the world a better place.

The CRS Rice Bowl recipes give you a way to look beyond macaroni and cheese and fried fish this Lent and turn meatless Fridays into a delicious and unique experience of solidarity with your global neighbors.

When you've cleaned your plate, remember to put the money you saved by not buying meat — an average of \$3 per person per meal — into your CRS Rice Bowl to feed people in need throughout the world.

Since 1975, CRS Rice Bowl has been the Lenten program used in more than 13,000 schools and parishes in every diocese in the United States. It is produced by one of the largest humanitarian aid agencies in the world, Catholic Relief Services which for 73 years has brought meaningful and measurable change to vulnerable communities throughout the world.

Find this year's recipes in a searchable collection on the CRS Rice Bowl website: crsricebowl.org/recipe.

CRS • Catholic Relief Services

ST. PETER CANISIUS

FEAST DAY DEC. 21

“O God, the refuge of the poor, the strength of those who toil, and the Comforter of all who sorrow, we commend to your mercy the unfortunate and needy in whatever land they may be. ...” Thus begins one of the prayers attributed to St. Peter Canisius, who was born in 1521 — the same year as St. Ignatius of Loyola. Eventually Canisius joined Ignatius, becoming one of the most renowned members of the Society of Jesus and later, one of the staunchest defenders of the Catholic faith against Protestantism.

Peter Canisius was born into wealth, the son of a prominent burgomaster in the city of Nijmegen, the Netherlands. When he was a young man, his father sent him to be educated in Cologne, Germany. An excellent student, Peter nonetheless lamented in later life “the laziness of his youth” — a tendency that he obviously overcame as, by the age of 19, he had succeeded in earning his master’s degree from Cologne University.

It was shortly after that that he met Peter Faber, one of the first followers of Ignatius of Loyola. Canisius was so impressed by Faber’s words that he joined the newly formed Society of Jesus in 1543. Now a professor at Cologne University, Canisius continued to demonstrate a brilliant and thoughtful mind, which found expression in both preaching and writing. By the time of his ordination in 1546, he was already well known for his works concerning Cyril of Alexandria and Leo the Great.

His greatest written achievement, however, was the several catechisms he compiled and published. At the time, the Church was in the midst of the Protestant Reformation, and there was a great need for a thorough, accurate and understandable presentation of the teachings of the Roman Catholic faith. Canisius’ background in theology, coupled with his long years of study and reflection, prepared him well for this task. The Council of Trent had been convened in Rome in 1545 to deal with the Reformation and, in 1547, Canisius attended several sessions. When he was sent to Germany in 1565 to see to it that the ecumenical decrees promulgated at Trent reached the Catholic bishops there, he embarked on what would be his mission for the balance of his life.

In Germany, Canisius not only delivered the decrees but became famous as a preacher and writer who could also explain them in a manner that appealed even to common, less educated people. So persuasive was he that it is said he



virtually halted the spread of Protestantism in Germany — hence, the sobriquet “the second Apostle to Germany,” with St. Boniface being the first. Yet despite his intellectual achievements, he was also well known for his simplicity and concern for the poor.

Peter Canisius died in 1597. In 1925, he had the unique distinction of being canonized and declared a Doctor of the Church at the same time by Pope Pius XI. His feast day is Dec. 21, and he is the patron of Germany.

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ST. FRANCIS DE SALES

FEAST DAY JAN. 24

St. Francis de Sales, a gentle saint, encouraged and celebrated the sanctity of both the ordained and the laity. Born in 1567 in Savoy, France, it was assumed that he would follow his father into law and politics. Therefore, it came as a great surprise to the elder de Sales when his son announced that he had decided to pursue an ecclesiastical life instead.

Francis' gentle nature solved the dispute between the two, and he was ordained in due course. For Francis, a large part of his calling would involve preaching and especially writing; his two best known books are "Introduction to the Devout Life" and "A Treatise on the Love of God."

Francis died in 1622 and was canonized in 1665. A Doctor of the Church, he also was declared the patron saint of both the Catholic press and Catholic writers. His feast day is Jan. 24.



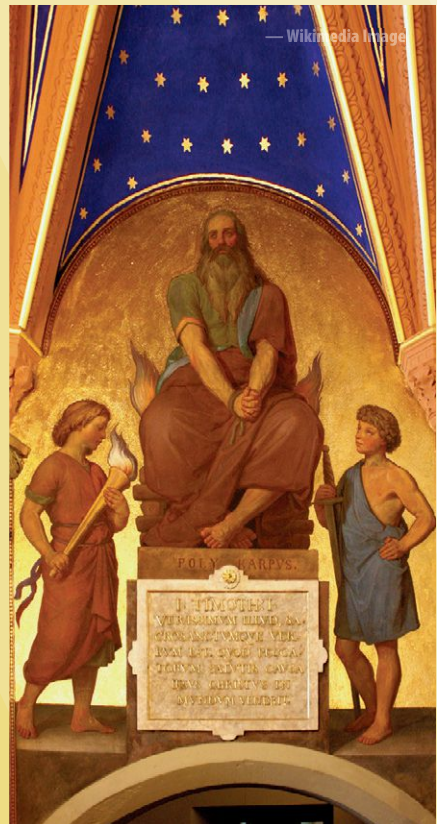
ST. POLYCARP

FEAST DAY FEB. 23

Although not as well known in modern times, Polycarp was nonetheless a major figure in the Church of the second century A.D. What little information we have on his early life seems to indicate that he was a friend of St. John the Apostle, who it is believed converted Polycarp to the Christian faith; thus he was only one step removed from having known Christ Himself.

At the age of 86, Polycarp, who was bishop of Smyrna, was rounded up by Roman soldiers and brought to the stadium in that city to be burned alive. Eyewitnesses then reported that, although a fire was lit at the feet of the saint, it miraculously arced up around him; the flames did him no harm. Ultimately, he was killed with a dagger.

St. Polycarp's feast day is Feb. 23. He is the patron saint of those suffering from earaches.



'Giving' Gifts

Bake a batch of treats with seasonal or local ingredients (e.g. cinnamon, maple, peppermint, chocolate).

FOR A CHILD: Gift them the ingredients and plan a time to bake (and taste!) the treats together.



Plan a "field trip" with children and allow them to purchase a souvenir to bring back home with them. For example, participate in prayer and praise at the Monastery of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (Westfield) and buy some homemade jam or walk the labyrinth at Weston Priory (Weston) and purchase a CD of the monks' music to listen to on the way home.

Give a certain amount of money to be donated to the organization of the recipient's choice. This is good for children or for those on a fixed income who would like to support a charity but don't have the funds to do so. (See a list of organizations that are supported by Vermont Catholics on pages 34-35.)

Design a calendar with family photos and fill in the dates of special occasions.



Give a gift card to Audible or iTunes to enable someone to purchase an ebook, download new music or listen to their favorite podcasts more easily.

Give each person a ticket to the movie theater. Then, all decide upon a film to view together. (Check the *Vermont Catholic* film reviews at vermontcatholic.org/vcm.)



FOR A CHILD, give a "mini course." Read a book about a topic then go to a place associated with it. For example, read about Ann Story, Vermont's heroine of independence, then find her grave and where she hid in the Salisbury area.

Agree to forego getting material gifts for each other and instead pool your money to put toward a shared experience, like a vacation or a pilgrimage.

Attend the various craft fairs and Christmas bazaars throughout the state to find Christmas gifts for family and friends. You'll support parishes and schools and find unique gifts. (See listed events on vermontcatholic.org/calendar.)

Encourage a child to grow in her or his understanding of the faith with "Green Street Park" or "Drop by Drop," books created by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in collaboration with Loyola Press to offer examples of how to participate in solutions to important problems that affect the lives and dignity of others. Order at: goo.gl/sh34M8.

Subscribe your loved ones to receive their favorite magazine or journal. (A \$24 donation to the Bishop's Annual Appeal gifts four issues — one year — of *Vermont Catholic Magazine*. (Sign them up at goo.gl/LziGr9 or vermontcatholic.org/vcm.)



Help deck the halls with a sustainable balsam fir wreath from Green Mountain Monastery. The fragrant, evergreen wreath includes a holiday bow and pine cones for \$25. Order at: goo.gl/AgDPTS.



Give the gift of education, health, comfort or hope to a neighbor in need with the CRS Gift Catalog. Make the donation in the name of a family member or friend at gifts.crs.org and present them with a card to commemorate the gift.



The shepherds hear the news of Jesus' birth

One day, an angel visited a young woman named Mary, who was betrothed to a man named Joseph.

The angel told Mary that the Holy Spirit would come upon her, and she would conceive and give birth to a son. She was told to name the baby Jesus.

"Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God," the angel said.

Several months later, Caesar Augustus, emperor of the Roman Empire, decided that everyone living in the empire had to be counted in a census. He sent out a decree, ordering people to go to their ancestral hometowns to be enrolled.

Since the Romans were in control of the lands in which the Jewish people lived, they had to take part in the census, too.

Joseph and Mary lived in Nazareth, which was in Galilee. Joseph was of the house and family of King David, so he and Mary had to travel to Judea to the city of Bethlehem — also known as the city of David — to be enrolled in the census.

Mary was at the end of her pregnancy and was very close to giving birth. Even so, she and Joseph made the long trip from Nazareth to Bethlehem.

While Joseph and Mary were in Bethlehem, it came time for Mary to have her baby. She gave birth to a son, just as the angel had told her. Mary wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room at any of the city's inns.

There were fields around Bethlehem in which some shepherds were living and working. When the baby was born, the shepherds were keeping night watch over their flocks.

Suddenly, an angel appeared to them. They were very frightened by what they saw.

"Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people," the angel said. "For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Christ and Lord. And this will be a sign for you: You will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger."

So the shepherds hurried to Bethlehem, where they found Joseph, Mary and Jesus, just as the angel had said.

CNS • Jennifer Ficaglia



READ MORE ABOUT IT: Luke 2

QUESTION & ANSWER:

1. Where did Joseph and Mary travel?
2. To whom did the angel announce Jesus' birth?

Answer: 1. Bethlehem. 2. The shepherds

BIBLE TRIVIA:

What is a manger?

Answer: A feeding trough for animals.

PUZZLE:

Unscramble each word, and then place the words in the correct order to reveal a sentence from the children's story.

enbe yadto orf het avdid ivsaro
ni fo a sha ronb tyci

Answers:
Words: been; today; for; the; David; savior;
in; of; a has; born; city
Sentence:
For today in the city of David a savior has been born.



9. Donate food items to a parish or community food shelf.



1. Smile at a stranger.



4. Send a Christmas card to an active soldier.



22. Call your parents or children just to say "hi."



2. Pick up a piece of litter and put it in the recycling/trash can.



8. Send a Christmas card to a hospitalized child.



6. Volunteer at a soup kitchen.



3. Donate to a local charity.



5. Link your Amazon account to Amazon Smile to donate a percentage of your purchases to a charitable organization, like Vermont Catholic Charities.



7. Donate unused clothing from your closet to a parish thrift shop.



17. Pray for peace.



12. Shovel snow for a neighbor.



16. Volunteer at a homeless shelter.



11. Take a coffee, hot chocolate or tea to the crossing guard.



10. Do something thoughtful for a family member.



21. Invite someone over for dinner.



15. Give someone a thoughtful compliment.



13. Donate to a national charity.



14. Pray for victims of natural disasters.



20. Do something meaningful for a friend.



19. Perform a random act of kindness, such as paying for the coffee of the person in line behind you.



18. Donate to an international charity.

Charitable ADVENT

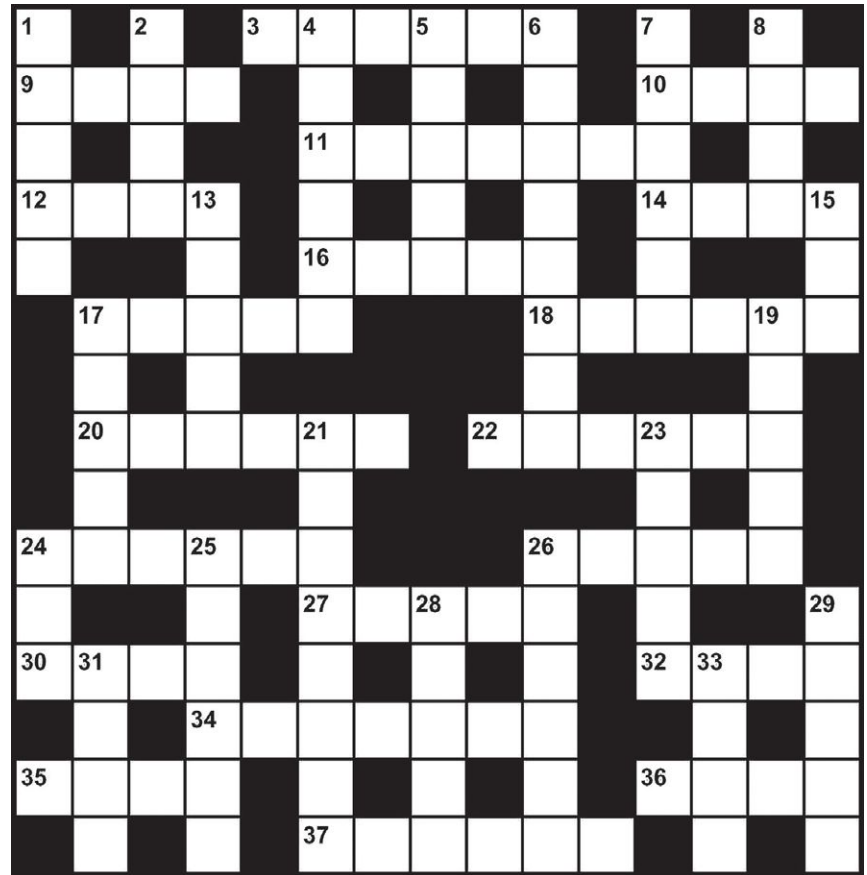
The Jesse Tree: An Advent Tradition

The Jesse Tree is a wonderfully simple way for individuals or families to take a few minutes each day to prepare for the celebration of Christmas. Learn more about this tradition and download reflections and printable ornaments from *Vermont Catholic Online News* at vermontcatholic.org/vcm.

FUN & GAMES

ACROSS

- 3 Divine ____
 9 The Archdiocese of Edmonton is in this province (abbr.)
 10 Paul preached in ____ Minor
 11 "____ Grace"
 12 Patron saint of sailors
 14 Breaks the eighth commandment
 16 Man of the ____
 17 "____ not, that you be not..." (Mt 7:1)
 18 Patron saint of Germany
 20 The Archdiocese of Oslo is found here
 22 St. Mary's Cathedral is this New South Wales capital
 24 Land in which the tower of Babel was built
 26 Brother of John
 27 Alpha and ____
 30 "Blessed is the fruit of your ____"
 32 "...that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word and ____."
 34 Month of the Rosary
 35 "Eternal ____ grant unto them"
 36 Biblical measure
 37 Blend of oil and balsam



www.wordgamesforcatholics.com

DOWN

- 1 "____ Noster"
 2 NT epistle
 4 St. Joan of Arc is a patron of this country
 5 The Diocese of Boise is here
 6 Arrival of the Magi
 7 "I will raise you up on ____ wings..."
 8 Religious ceremony
 13 Group of religious
 15 OT wisdom book
 17 Minor Prophet noted for having been swallowed by a great fish
 19 "...and darkness covered the ____." (Gen 1:2)
 21 Feature of Psalm 119
 23 Abraham was one
 24 Birds of the air don't do this (Mt 6:26)
 25 Ahab desired his vineyard (1 Kings 21:1-2)
 26 Jesus healed his daughter (Mk 5:22-42)
 28 Church days
 29 Worship
 31 "____ wide the doors to Christ"
 33 Catholic columnist Bombeck

For the solution to this month's puzzle, see the inside back cover.

DID YOU KNOW?

1. The Liturgical Year is made up of six seasons: Advent, Christmas, Lent, Sacred Paschal Triduum, Easter and Ordinary Time. (Reflect more about the Liturgical Year on page 9.)
 2. Catholic Charities USA is #9 on *Forbes*' "the 100 Largest U.S. Charities" list. (Learn more about Catholic Charities on page 13.)
 3. Every minute, 20 people are forced to leave their homes due to war and persecution. (Read more about displaced people and how you can help on page 19.)



Responding (on Facebook) to “Extern priests serving in Vermont” (a.k.a. “Go into all the world,” on pages 16-17 of the 2017 fall issue of *Vermont Catholic*):

“Many dioceses in the United States are blessed with priests from many nations who have chosen to come and minister to us. We are blessed by what a visible reminder this is that the Catholic Church is indeed catholic. It also reminds us that the Body of Christ has many parts, and each is essential to the ministry of the Church. This is a message we desperately need in a country that seems to focus only on our differences and reject those who are different. God’s message is exactly the opposite. Thank you to all the priests from near and far who help us follow God’s plan.”

— *Marlene McGiness*

“They seem to truly love the Church and mostly the Eucharist — we are fortunate.”

— *Gerri Schnobrich*

“We are very fortunate.”

— *Rose Santarcangelo*

Responding (on Facebook) to “Bright Ideas and Hopes for the Future,” pages 44-45 of the fall issue of *Vermont Catholic*:

“My hope for the future of the Catholic Church here in Vermont is that more young families will become active members of parishes throughout the state. Pope Francis encourages the spread of the faith and we need to listen to his message.”

— *Louise Carey LaBombard*

Responding (on Facebook) to “Bishops’ Legacies,” pages 24-29 of the 2017 fall issue of *Vermont Catholic*:

“God calls each to His service for reasons particular to that person. He doesn’t call all for the same reason. Our church is so blessed to have such a wide array of persons respond to His call. It is such a benefit for us all.”

— *Marlene McGiness*

“I received my copy of the fall VCM Saturday, and I have read it! What a warm issue it is! When the extra copies are available, I plan to take 2. I’ll give one to my friend Carl and read the other to Kevin. The updates on the Bishop’s Annual Appeal are very good!”

— *Millie Dupell*

Editor’s Note: You can find extra copies of *Vermont Catholic* at your local parish. Pick up some extra copies to share with friends and family this holiday season.

FROM OUR READERS

We would like to hear from you.

Send letters and comments to

editor@vermontcatholic.org

or by mail to: The Diocese of Burlington,
55 Joy Drive, South Burlington, VT 05403.

Editors reserve the right to exclude and edit letters for length or style. Letters must be signed and include the writer’s full address and phone number.

WINTER 2017 Puzzle solution





Christmas Eve & Christmas Day Masses around the Diocese

ALBURGH • **St. Amadeus** • Christmas Eve: 6:00 PM
 BARRE • **St. Monica** • Christmas Eve: 6:00 PM & 12:00 AM • Christmas Day: 8:00 AM & 10:00 AM
 BELLOWS FALLS • **St. Charles** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM; 7:00 PM & 12:00 AM • Christmas Day: 10:00 AM
 BENNINGTON • **Sacred Heart/St Francis de Sales** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM; 8:00 PM & 12:00 AM • Christmas Day: 9:00 AM
 BRANDON • **St. Mary** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM & 7:00 PM • Christmas Day: 10:00 AM
 BRATTLEBORO • **St. Michael** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM; 7:00 PM & 12:00 AM • Christmas Day: 8:00 AM & 10:30 AM
 BRISTOL • **St. Ambrose** • Christmas Eve: 5:15 PM & 9:00 PM
 BURLINGTON • **Christ the King** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM & 5:30 PM • Christmas Day: 9:00 AM & 11:00 AM
 BURLINGTON • **St. Anthony** • Christmas Eve: 4:15 PM & 8:00 PM
 BURLINGTON • **St. Joseph Co-Cathedral** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM & 12:00 AM* • Christmas Day: 10:00 AM • *Latin Mass
 BURLINGTON • **St. Mark** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM & 12:00 AM • Christmas Day: 9:00 AM
 CAMBRIDGE • **St. Mary** • Christmas Eve: 12:00 AM • Christmas Day: 10:30 AM
 CHARLOTTE • **Our Lady of Mt. Carmel** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM* & 10:00 PM • *Mass is celebrated at the Old Lantern in Charlotte.
 CHESTER • **St. Joseph** • Christmas Day: 10:00 AM
 COLCHESTER • **Holy Cross** • Christmas Eve: 4:30 PM • Christmas Day: 8:45 AM
 COLCHESTER • **Our Lady of Grace** • Christmas Eve: 4:30 PM & 7:30 PM* • Christmas Day: 10:45 AM • *Caroling begins at 7:15.
 COLCHESTER • **St. Michael's College Chapel** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM & 8:00 PM • Christmas Day: 11:00 AM
 CRAFTSBURY • **Our Lady of Fatima** • Christmas Eve: 6:30 PM
 DANVILLE • **Queen of Peace** • Christmas Eve: 7:00 PM
 DERBY LINE • **St. Edward the Confessor** • Christmas Eve: 4:30 PM* • Christmas Day: 8:30 AM • *Christmas carols 30 minutes before Mass begins.
 ESSEX • **St. Pius X** • Christmas Eve: 4:30 PM & 7:00 PM • Christmas Day: 9:30 AM
 ESSEX JUNCTION • **Holy Family** • Christmas Eve: 9:00 PM • Christmas Day: 9:30 AM
 ESSEX JUNCTION • **St. Lawrence** • Christmas Eve: 6:00 PM
 GRAND ISLE • **St. Joseph** • Christmas Day: 8:00 AM
 GRANITEVILLE • **St. Sylvester** • Christmas Eve: 5:00 PM • Christmas Day: 9:30 AM
 GREENSBORO • **St. Michael** • Christmas Day: 10:30 AM
 HARDWICK • **St. Norbert** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM • Christmas Day: 8:30 AM
 HINESBURG • **St. Jude** • Christmas Eve: 7:00 PM • Christmas Day: 10:00 AM
 ISLAND POND • **St. James the Greater** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM • Christmas Day: 10:10 AM
 ISLE La MOTTE • **St. Anne's Shrine** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM
 ISLE La MOTTE • **St. Joseph** • Christmas Day: 10:30 AM
 KILLINGTON • **Our Lady of the Mountains** • Christmas Eve: 7:00 PM
 LEICESTER • **St. Agnes** • Christmas Eve: 5:15 PM
 LYNDONVILLE • **St. Elizabeth** • Christmas Eve: 4:30 PM • Christmas Day: 10:30 AM
 MANCHESTER • **Christ Our Savior** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM; 5:30 PM & 8:00 PM • Christmas Day: 10:00 AM
 MARSHFIELD • **North American Martyrs** • Christmas Day: 8:30 AM
 MILTON • **St. Ann** • Christmas Eve: 6:00 PM* & 12:00 AM** • Christmas Day: 10:30 AM
 * Prelude music begins at 5:15 PM; ** Prelude music begins at 11:30 PM.



—Freeeph image



MONTPELIER • **St. Augustine** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM & 7:00 PM • Christmas Day: 10:00 AM
 MORRISVILLE • **Most Holy Name of Jesus** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM; 7:00 PM & 9:00 PM • Christmas Day: 8:00 AM & 10:30 AM
 N. BENNINGTON • **St. John the Baptist** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM • Christmas Day: 10:00 AM
 NEWPORT • **St. Mary Star of the Sea** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM* & 7:00 PM* • Christmas Day: 10:00 AM • * Christmas carols 30 minutes before Mass begins.
 NORTHFIELD • **St. John the Evangelist** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM & 12:00 AM • Christmas Day: 9:00 AM
 PITTSFORD • **St. Alphonsus** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM • Christmas Day: 9:00 AM
 PUTNEY • **Our Lady of Mercy** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM • Christmas Day: 8:30 AM
 RANDOLPH • **Our Lady of the Angels** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM
 READSBORO • **St. Joachim** • Christmas Eve: 5:30 PM
 RICHMOND • **Holy Rosary** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM • Christmas Day: 8:30 AM
 RUTLAND • **Christ the King** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM; 8:00 PM & 12:00 AM • Christmas Day: 7:30 AM & 10:00 AM
 RUTLAND • **Immaculate Heart of Mary** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM & 8:00 PM • Christmas Day: 8:00 AM
 RUTLAND • **St. Peter** • Christmas Eve: 4:15 PM • Christmas Day: 9:00 AM
 SOUTH BURLINGTON • **St. John Vianney** • Christmas Eve: 4:30 PM; 7:00 PM & 10:00 PM • Christmas Day: 9:00 AM & 10:30 AM
 SOUTH HERO • **St. Rose of Lima** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM
 SPRINGFIELD • **St. Mary** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM & 8:00 PM
 ST. JOHNSBURY • **St. John the Evangelist** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM & 9:00 PM • Christmas Day: 11:00 AM
 STAMFORD • **St. John Bosco** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM
 STOWE • **Blessed Sacrament** • Christmas Eve: 4:30 PM & 12:00 AM • Christmas Day: 10:00 AM
 STRATTON MTN. • **Chapel of the Snows** • Christmas Eve: 6:00 PM • Christmas Day: 12:30 PM
 TOWNSHEND • **Our Lady of the Valley** • Christmas Eve: 6:00 PM • Christmas Day: 10:30 AM
 UNDERHILL CENTER • **St. Thomas** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM • Christmas Day: 8:30 AM
 VERGENNES • **St. Peter** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM • Christmas Day: 9:00 AM
 W. CHARLESTON • **St. Benedict Labre** • Christmas Day: 11:30 AM
 WAITSFIELD • **Our Lady of the Snows** • Christmas Eve: 6:00 PM • Christmas Day: 11:00 AM
 WALLINGFORD • **St. Patrick** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM • Christmas Day: 10:00 AM
 WATERBURY • **St. Andrew** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM & 12:00 AM* • Christmas Day: 9:00 AM • *Choral prelude at 11:45 PM.
 WILLIAMSTOWN • **St. Edward** • Christmas Eve: 7:00 PM
 WILLISTON • **Immaculate Heart of Mary** • Christmas Eve: 6:00 PM & 9:00 PM • Christmas Day: 10:30 AM
 WILMINGTON • **Our Lady of Fatima** • Christmas Eve: 7:00 PM • Christmas Day: 9:00 AM
 WINDSOR • **St. Francis of Assisi** • Christmas Eve: 6:30 PM • Christmas Day: 10:30 AM
 WINOOSKI • **St. Francis Xavier** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM; 7:00 PM & 2:00 AM • Christmas Day: 10:00 AM
 WINOOSKI • **St. Stephen** • Christmas Eve: 4:30 PM • Christmas Day: 9:30 AM
 WOODSTOCK • **Our Lady of the Snows** • Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM & 9:00 PM • Christmas Day: 10:00 AM

This list was compiled from responses to a survey of parishes. If a church is not included, please call the church directly for Mass information.