

The Hands of Christ

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A Message from Father Rob

Dear Friends,

I cannot believe we are almost to fall! I am one who likes to hold onto summer as long as possible. This summer has been especially enjoyed as I became the Pastor of the Church of the Transfiguration with my current pastorate of Saint Catherine of Siena! I am blessed.

First of all I am blessed by the Lord Jesus who has filled me with so many graces. The Lord has been so faithful to me in my almost 38 years of being a priest. Each parish I have been assigned to brought me much more than I ever offered. The faith communities of each parish gifted me with the joys of our Gospel. When I moved from each parish I took with me much wisdom, faith and goodness.

Secondly, I have always been enriched, encouraged and supported by the best of dear friends and family. I cannot say enough how my heart feels just thinking about these loved ones.

Thirdly, after fourteen years of being at Saint Catherine of Siena, it was the well deserved upcoming retirement of Father Mike that led our two faith communities to begin the discussion of clustering. With the support of Bishop Matano our parishes

brought together Parish Pastoral Council leadership to begin the conversation. These excellent women and men brought forward the interests of what would be spiritually appropriate for this new time in our lives. They communicated well with one another, the two parishes and the Diocese of Rochester.

When it was time to share what our chosen new mass schedule would be it coincided with Bishop Matano informing me that I would be welcomed to be Pastor of both parishes. I was so humbled, grateful and excited for this opportunity!

The Parish Pastoral Staffs and the congregations of both parishes have been so supportive, welcoming and affirming. I will admit I have been blessed to have thought I should pinch myself to see if this is really happening. And, it is!!!!

Thank you my sisters and brothers of the Church of the Transfiguration for welcoming me, sharing your faith and being willing to go forward living the Good News of our Lord Jesus Christ!

God Bless you all,
Father Rob



UPCOMING EVENTS

September

Monthly Food Drive – Sr Regis Food Cupboard – Sept 4-5
Grief Share – Sept 8, running on Wednesdays for 12 weeks
Men in the Spirit – Sept 20
Margaret House Sale – Sept 25-26 after Mass

October

Monthly Food Drive – St. Andrew's Food Cupboard – Oct 2-3
Joe Kelly Fall Series – Oct 6, 13, 20, 27
Men in the Spirit – Oct 18

November

Monthly Food Drive Thanksgiving Baskets – Nov 6-7
Men in the Spirit – Nov 15
Thanksgiving Turkey Drive Drop Off – Nov 22

December

Monthly Food Drive—Christmas Baskets – Dec 4-5
Christmas Basket Program – Assembly– Dec 17-18
Christmas Basket Program - Delivery – Dec 20
Men in the Spirit – Dec 20

Joe Kelly Fall Series— The Unique Features of the Gospel of Luke

On the First Sunday of Advent 2021, our Sunday Gospel readings will once more come from the Gospel of Luke. As we listen to these readings, we often hear much that is familiar to us. But in fact, there is a great deal of material (about 40%) found in this Gospel that is **found only in Luke**. This 4-week series will explore some of the wonderfully unique stories and themes that add so much to our understanding of the ministry of Jesus. Come and be surprised and inspired by this amazing Gospel. We will meet at the Church of the Transfigurations on Wednesdays in October, from 7—8:30 p.m. We hope to see you there!



MONTHLY FOOD COLLECTION

We are so grateful for the incredible generosity of the parish with our food donation program. During COVID we were continuously collecting and distributing food, thanks to the steady stream of donations and the work of our volunteers to drive the donations to the different destinations.

With attendance picking up at Church it is now time to go back to the monthly food collection, as we did in the past. Generally the collection will be on the first weekend of a month; please check the bulletin and weekly email for the specific dates.

The donations will support the following organizations and ministries: St Joseph's House of Hospitality (January), Bethany House (February), Eastern Service Workers (March), Pittsford Food Cupboard (April), House of Mercy (May and August), Sr. Regis Food Cupboard (June and September), St Andrew's Food Cupboard (October), the Thanksgiving Turkey Drive (November), and the Christmas Basket Program (December).

Keep an eye on the bulletin and an ear open at Mass announcements for more details, sometimes the organizations can tell us exactly what they need. But generally the following items are the most requested: tabbed open soups, stews, canned pasta meals, macaroni & cheese, instant potatoes, rice, pancake mix/syrup, canned vegetables, canned fruit, canned chicken, tuna, canned beans of all kinds, evaporated or shelf stable milk, ramen noodle packs. Thank you for your continued generosity, your donations go directly to the poor and hungry in our community.

Sacraments

We have been busy the first part of the year with our Sacraments! Again we are fortunate that our baptisms (14) outnumber our funerals (10), even with funeral services delayed into 2021 due to COVID. The Formation staff has been busy preparing our young parishioners! This Spring were blessed to have 23 youngsters celebrate First Communion, and 45 teens celebrated Confirmation. It's wonderful to see the youth in our Parish keeping the faith alive for another generation.



Meet our Deacons

We are blessed to have 3 deacons across our clustered parishes. Kevin Carges and Jim Carra are based at St. Catherine's, Eric Bessette is based at Transfiguration. With all that talent to choose from, Fr. Rob has established a rotation so that a deacon is present at every weekend Mass, sometimes giving the homily. All of the deacons have shared a bit of their background at Mass, and here is a recap in case you missed it!

Eric Bessette Eric's family consists of spouse Marlene (35 years!) and adult children AJ and Danielle, both residing in NYC. Eric is a financial analyst at General Motors, with plans to retire next year. Eric grew up an agnostic and found God later in his life. He was ordained in 2011 and has been assigned to Transfiguration ever since.

Eric remarked on his life as a Deacon: "I have always felt called to evangelization, helping others find God's love, especially those on the margins of our church. I try to convey the message "All are welcome" to our church since so many feel otherwise".

Eric's sense of humor often surfaces at Mass. He recounts one funny moment: "I was preparing the altar. I'm supposed to

pour all the wine (The Blood of Christ)... into the Chalice for the priest to consume and then add a drop of water (symbolizing our humanity). But at one Mass I had a brain skip and realized I had done things backward! Panic! Rather than ruin the flow of Mass, I simply poured all the wine into the cup, giving poor Fr. Mike a lot to drink. As I handed him the Chalice, I warned him "Mike, just so you know, there's an awful lot of humanity in the cup today!".



Kevin Carges Kevin is the father of 4 grown children with 5 grandchildren. He has worked at Canandaigua Quick Print for the last 26 years. Kevin was ordained 2005 and assigned to St. Patrick's Church in Macedon NY with Fr. Rob. After a couple other assignments, Kevin came to St. Catherine of Siena in July of 2020.

In 2012 Kevin was assigned to Catholic Relief Services. Kevin commented: "I am sent around the country to do talks and sermons about our Church's work around the world. "

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"Lord, how good it is for us to be here..."

Matthew 17:4

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Meet our Deacons—cont.

Kevin Carges—Continued



Kevin added: "I've traveled to Kenya, Nicaragua, Haiti and have my own non-profit (Eight 4 World Hope - www.eight4worldhope.com) that builds schools and orphanages in Jamaica. Creating awareness and being a voice for who have none in this world is my passion and gift that God has given me."

Kevin's recounts one story from a trip to Jamaica. "I met a young girl of 7 or 8 when passing candy out at a school I was building. I gave her one of those small suckers. She opened it, licked it 2 or 3 times, smiled and wrapped it back up. She said "thank you, it is so sweet, I am going to take the rest home and share it with my sister and mom". Blessed are the pure of heart, they will see God, I saw God in her that day, and yes, I snuck her some more suckers when the other kids weren't looking."

Jim Carra

Jim is married to his spouse Jo. He became a Deacon in May of 2009, ordained by Bishop Clark. Jim's first assignment was at St. Joseph's in Rush. Almost immediately Jim gained experience in clustering. In 2010 St. Joseph's clustered with Good Shepherd and Guardian Angels and eventually became St. Marianne Cope. When in 2015 Jim heard that the Deacon at St. Catherine's was retiring, Jo encouraged him to call Fr. Rob, and soon Jim was assigned to St. Catherine's. Jim is deeply grateful for the prayers of all his friends, especially those at St. Catherine's, as he battled illness. He was diagnosed with esophageal cancer right when the Pandemic started. Treatment in began March 2020, and we are delighted that he returned to work in June.



Farewell to Deacon Pat DiLaura

The standing joke between Deacons Pat DiLaura and Eric Bessette was that Pat was assigned to Transfiguration just slightly before Eric, giving Pat the honor of being the senior Deacon. Pat was asked to give up his 'senior' status at Transfiguration, and serve as the sole Deacon at St. Louis in Pittsford starting in September. Transfiguration will always have a place in Pat's heart, as we were his first assignment, and he has been here for over 10 years. Per Pat, "The Diaconate has been one of the greatest blessings of my life." Pat's presence has been a blessing to us, and he will be missed!



Summer Fun !!!

Our church was busy this summer! Around 90 youth attended Vacation Bible School. Seven teens joined the Sisters of St. Joseph for a week, serving those at Daystar, Bethany House and St. Peter's Kitchen. Our volunteers did wonderful work in the Gift Garden and maintaining our extensive campus landscaping and grounds.

"Lord how good it is for us to be here..."

Matthew 17:4

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FORMATION UPDATE

As we emerge from the pandemic, we are looking ahead with joyful hope to a more “normal” year of faith formation for the 2021-22 school year. These past months have been a time of learning many new tools and skills and refocusing our energy on what’s most important: nurturing the personal prayer lives of all our parishioners. We’ve embraced hybrid learning while also valuing the relationship-building that being together in person provides. Our plans for the year ahead will incorporate the best of both worlds, combining both at-home asynchronous learning AND regular gatherings. We will be using a flipped-learning approach, and our gathered sessions will reinforce the at-home materials in fun, active, and engaging ways. Here are a few things to note for this year’s programs:

- Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, our offering for 3–6-year-olds, will gather weekly on Tuesday afternoons to pray, learn, and discover our faith.
- Our family Bridges of Faith (K-5) program is back, with both a Sunday morning and a Sunday afternoon option.
- Middle School Youth Group (grades 6-8) will meet one Sunday night a month from 7-8:30. An online Google classroom assignment completed before the monthly meeting will introduce our topic.
- Confirmation prep (typically grades 8-9) will meet one Sunday night a month from 7-8:30. Candidates also complete a monthly Google classroom assignment and attend at least 4 Middle School or High School Youth Group meetings each year.
- Senior High Youth Group (grades 9-12) will resume meeting weekly on Tuesdays from 7-8:30.
- We will continue to create seasonal online Prayer Playlists for families, teens, and adults to support your daily prayer time. Our entire library of playlists on a variety of themes can be found on our website.
- Adult formation opportunities for the year will include a series by Dr. Joe Kelly on the unique features of the Gospel of Luke, an Ignatian Day of Retreat led by Dr. Damian Zynda, a faith-sharing series on The Chosen: Season Two, and much more.



And there will be more opportunities to pray, serve, and play together. We’re so looking forward to walking the journey of faith with you and your family this year!



Farewell to Father Mike

Three hundred friends, family members and parishioners (past and present) came to Father Mike’s retirement celebration to wish him well and to share a story or two about his stay at Transfiguration. Fr. Mike’s summer plans included a little travel and recharging at home. In the fall he plans to assist other priests and parishes, and perhaps do a little work for charities.



CLUSTERING UPDATE

Our clustering with St. Catherine of Siena began in late June. Both churches have adjusted to the changes in Mass times, and the careful planning of our Clustering Committee is bearing fruit! We have welcomed Fr. Rob and Deacons Kevin and Jim to the altar, along with the expanded presence of Deacon Eric Bessette. Attendance at all Masses is robust, and we are seeing people from both parishes at every Mass. And we are also seeing people from both parishes start to take advantage of our wonderful Formation programs at both churches. Both parish staffs will continue to look for synergies across the two parishes in the coming months. We are so blessed to have a wonderful partnership with St. Catherine's!

Weekend Mass Attendance

