

The Hands of Christ

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Quarterly Thoughts From The Corner Office!

Dear friends,

I am writing this on a beautiful Saturday morning in mid-July following the completion of another very successful Vacation Bible School week. Wandering around the parish campus during VBS week, experiencing the happy attitude and enthusiasm of our younger parishioners, is good for heart and spirit. The week adds to the hope I have for the future of our Church, as we know we face many difficult challenges as a faith community, so it is important to remain hopeful in our efforts to spread the Good News of salvation.

This past February our state assembly and senate approved the Child Victims Act (CVA), signed into law by Governor Cuomo on February 14. By the time you receive this newsletter, the law will be active. The CVA extends the statute of limitations on criminal charges against abusers of children, allowing the pursuit of felony cases until the victims turn 28 (up from 23), and allows civil actions against abusers and institutions until the victim is 55. A one-year window opens that permits the victim to take civil action regardless of when the abuse occurred. The New York State Catholic Bishops said the following about the CVA: "We pray that the passage of the Child Victims Act brings some measure of healing to all survivors by offering a path of recourse and reconciliation." (1/28/19)

None of this long struggle has been easy for anyone involved, most especially the victims, and I pray that someday they can have peace and calm in their hearts. Over the years, since the scandal first broke in 2002, I have had hundreds of conversations with victims, parents and those who just cannot understand how the Church allowed this happen. Be assured that none of these conversations were easy; they were deeply painful for everyone involved. By the grace of God, I have had the grace to extend some level of compassion to the victims and their families. There were mixed results of these conversations, varying from people walking away from the Church forever to people understanding that the Church is made up of human beings, the latter circumstance allowing them to forgive even if they may not be able to forget.



As you read this article, we most likely will be the midst of media blast concerning lawsuits taken against the Diocese of Rochester, which will raise even more concerns and negative feelings about the Church. Let me share with you some of the positive things the diocese has done to address the crisis in our Church. Starting in 1982, the diocese has provided training to over 25,000 clerics, educators, employees and volunteers on how we create a safe environment for our children. The diocese further requires that all clerics, educators, employees and volunteers sign a stringent code of conduct, and a screening process for those applying for ordinations has been put into place. In addition, free counseling is provided to victims, and a review board composed of lay people is in place. All complaints are independently audited—a practice with which we have always been in compliance. All of these procedures and policies have resulted in no new contemporary cases of sexual abuse of a minor having been reported in 13 years.

Yes, this has been a very sad time for our Church, and our No. 1 priority must be the care and healing of all victims of abuse. With this in mind, please know that my heart and ears are open to you if you need to discuss this issue on any level.

I realize some of you have stayed away from the Church because of the sex abuse crisis and the coverup by some of our leaders. Please know that you are always welcome here, and you are an important part of the Transfiguration community.

Let us pray for peace and an end to terrorism in our world!

In peace and courage,

Rev. Michael J. Bausch
Pastor

PS – Bishop Robert Barron, auxiliary bishop of Los Angeles, has authored a book titled "Letter to a Suffering Church: A Bishop Speaks on the Sexual Abuse Crisis." I highly recommend this book, and I will be talking about it more soon.

Upcoming Events at Transfiguration

We have a wealth of formation, service and social activities this Fall. Please take a quick look at the offerings and see what might be of interest to you and your loved ones. A full schedule of events is in the bulletin and on our website. As dates get closer, please check the bulletin or website events calendar for any last-minute changes.

SEPTEMBER

September 8

Confirmation Kickoff for parents and candidates
6:30 p.m., Education Center Upper Level

September 9

Women in the Spirit, 7 – 8:30 p.m., Education Center Upper Level

September 10

High School Teen Group's weekly Tuesday meetings start, 7-8:30 p.m., Education Center Teen Room

Women's Bible Study begins, 12:30- 2 p.m., Parish Life Center

September 11

Grief Share begins, 12:30 - 2 p.m., Parish Life Center

September 15

First Reconciliation and First Communion Sessions begin, 10:15-11:15 a.m., Education Center, Upper Level

September 16

Men in the Spirit, 6 – 8:30 p.m., Education Center Upper Level

September 17

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Parent Introduction, 2:30 p.m., Education Center

September 22 (12:30- 2:30 p.m.)

September 23 (5:30- 7:30 p.m.)

Bridges of Faith starts up, along with the Middle School Youth Group, Education Center

OCTOBER

October 2

Parent Meeting – Helping Teens with Stress, Anxiety and Depression , 7 – 9 p.m., Education Center

October 7

Women in the Spirit, 7 – 8:30 p.m., Education Center Upper Level

October 9, 16, 23, 30

6 p.m. Join in for a free will offering dinner and viewing of the series The Chosen, a series telling the story of Jesus from the perspective of those who followed him.

October 8, 15, 22, 29

7-8:30 p.m. – Dr. Joe Kelly hosts "Models of the Church"

October 19

Family Halloween Celebration with a DJ and Oktoberfest food and drink.

October 21

Men in the Spirit, 6 – 8:30 p.m., Education Center Upper Level

NOVEMBER

November 2

Memorial Mass for those we have lost in the past year, 10 a.m., Church

November 2,3

Fall and Winter Clothing Drive, after all Masses, Parish Life Center

November 4

Women in the Spirit, 7 – 8:30 p.m., Education Center Upper Level

November 18

Men in the Spirit, 6 – 8:30 p.m., Education Center Upper Level

November 25

Turkey Drive collection night

DECEMBER

December 2, 9, 16

Advent Vespers, 7 p.m., Church

December 2

Women in the Spirit, 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.

December 7

Festival of Gifts and Talents including mini-gingerbread house building, 11-3, Parish Life Center

December 18, 19, 20

Christmas Basket Assembly, Wrapping and Delivery, Parish Life Center



Spring Summer Clothing Drive



Roger and Jody DeBell



Sunset Prayer



Transfiguration once again is cultivating our Don Cushing Memorial Gift Garden. Twelve men and women of the parish volunteer their time weekly to weed, water and harvest from the garden. In past years, over a ton of produce has been donated to various food cupboards and agencies nearby, providing much needed nutrition to their clients. More help is needed and always welcomed. Please contact Diana Hamann with any questions. We truly are the Hands of Christ for those who receive the gifts from the garden!



SUPPORTING OUR PARISH

We certainly wouldn't be able to offer the multiple ministries and programs without your support!

Actions have been taken over the past years to control costs, for example the restructuring of our Financial and Business Operations support after the departure of a long-time employee. But as this article is being written, work is still underway to try to balance our budget. Not only do we have to get our expenses in line with our expected collection revenue, we need to build up our very small savings accounts, for emergencies and potential future CMA shortfalls. Our target is to put roughly \$8100 into savings this upcoming year, or .75% of the budgeted collection revenue.

Additional information on our 2018-2019 fiscal year end results and the 2019-2020 budget will be sent to you in a separate mailing. Please read it carefully. Is this the year that you can increase your financial support to the parish? A small increase multiplied by all our parishioners can go a long way to close the gap we face. Please prayerfully consider an increase in your donations in support of Transfiguration

We began 36 years ago by a band of passionate founding parishioners – many of whom have gone home to God – the next generations are in our midst today. We have the spirit of these founders among us today... however, many of these founders were exceptionally generous supporters of our parish, and we simply don't have that incoming revenue any longer. We need you to help close the gap!

Another way to support Transfiguration is through legacy giving. While most of us don't like to think about it often, all of us will be called home to Jesus at some point. Hopefully most of us at Transfiguration have started our long-term estate planning, consulting with financial and legal professionals, so we can determine how our property is distributed after passing. Perhaps you will want to continue to support your charities and church with a portion of your estate.

Sometime in September, Transfiguration will offer a free seminar on legacy giving and other important aspects of estate planning. It will be hosted by Eugene O'Connor, Attorney at Gallo & Iacovangelo. Gene's 30 years of legal expertise include the following areas of practice: estate planning, estate and trust administration, estate and fiduciary litigation, elder law, Medicaid planning and special needs planning.

Please check the bulletin and website for more details on this seminar in early September.

FORMATION NEWSLETTER ARTICLE

AUGUST 2019

The complete Transfiguration Lifelong Faith Formation booklet for the 2019-20 school year will be turning up in mailboxes any day now. Inside you'll find many opportunities for parishioners of all ages to grow closer to God and share our faith journeys together as Church. Here are just a few highlights of what's coming in the next few months:

For Our Youngest Community Members. As parents, we teach the faith in many ways, most powerfully through example. As we respond to Christ's call in daily life, our children learn to love and follow Christ. The Bridges of Faith Formation program is designed to help families learn and grow together in faith. Also, don't be afraid of attending Mass together as a family because your child can't "sit still." Our parish welcomes little worshippers as they become familiar with Mass! Wee One's Word (WOW) is a special way for preschool children (up to 4 years old) to explore the readings at Mass. We also offer Children's Liturgy of the Word for children 5 to 7 years old. As always, the nurse room is available to help engage your child in the Mass in different ways.

New Format for Middle School Youth Ministry. This year, to better meet the needs of our families, we will be changing our model for middle school youth ministry. Instead of meeting weekly on Sunday mornings between Masses, we will be meeting monthly, concurrently with the family oriented Bridges of Faith program. Kids in grades six through eight will share a simple meal, then gather in the youth room for activities and discussion about faith themes that are relevant to the real lives of young adolescents. Participants may choose to attend one Sunday afternoon or one Monday evening a month. Full details and schedule are in the Lifelong Formation booklet.

Special Event. Parenting teens today is so hard, as our youth are navigating a minefield of mental health issues. Join us on Wednesday, Oct. 2 at 7 p.m., upstairs in the Education Building, for an evening of conversation about how parents and other concerned adults can use gifts of faith to help teens as they struggle to learn and grow in today's culture. Special guest Diocesan Director of Youth Ministry Leslie Barkin will guide us through the highlights of Roy Petitfils' great new book, "Helping Teens with Stress, Anxiety, and Depression." Spread the word to all your friends – everyone is welcome to be a part of this important discussion!

Dinner and a Show Series. You may have heard on social media about the new, crowd-funded series called "The Chosen," which tells the Gospel story from the perspective of the people who followed Jesus. The series examines how their deepening encounters with him radically changes their lives. It is truly beautifully done! We will be showing the first four episodes of the show Wednesday evenings, October 9, 16, 23 and 30 at 6 p.m. in the gym. The evening includes a shared meal (free, but donations are accepted), episode viewing and small-group conversation afterward. Childcare is available. Come and meet Jesus in a new and heart-opening way, and meet some new friends at church, too!



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

July 8-12 was a time of great joy and fun here at Transfiguration Parish. Close to 70 children and 40 teens participated in our Vacation Bible School (VBS) this year, along with several dedicated adult volunteers.

Our church campus was alive with children's voices and joy-filled activities of all kinds. We had music, outdoor games, Bible stories, snacks and special guests. Friday night was a great capstone celebration of the week that included an ice cream social, songs and skits.

Throughout the week we hopped aboard the Vatican Express, challenging, teaching and leading the children through service, scripture, the lives of the saints and our faith traditions. We learned that God has the power to provide, comfort, heal and forgive. Most of all, we experienced the joy of growing closer to God. It was a wonderful week.

A very sincere thank you to all the volunteers who made this possible. They represented all ages, from the young to the not-so-young. We were very blessed by all who came to help. It takes every part of the church body to make VBS happen. Lord, it is so good to be here!

For those of you really planning ahead, next year VBS will be held July 13-17!



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL



PARISHIONER SPOTLIGHT

Charette Family

Our parishioner spotlight this quarter is on Ev and Jane Charette. They are the parents of son Jon, who lives in Greenwich, Connecticut, with wife Dana and three daughters Ellison (10), Alden (8) and Linley, (almost 6), and daughter Julie Tipple, who lives in Brighton with her husband Matt and their three sons, Sean (10), Simon (9) and Grant (6).

Ev and Jane met in St. Paul, Minneapolis after both completed theology degrees and were employed as religious educators in the St. Paul diocese. Prior to this Ev left Maryknoll as a seminarian and Jane left the Ursuline Order in Ohio. They married, had two children, and moved to Kalamazoo, Michigan after twelve years for Ev's work as a hospital chaplain. Jane continued to work as a religious educator in a local parish. Their third move was to Toledo, Ohio for Jane's position as a secondary administrator in a Catholic girls' academy. Ev continued his career as a hospital chaplain in Toledo.

After retirement in 2014, Ev and Jane moved to Brighton to be closer to their family. "We came to Transfiguration on the recommendation that it was an active, forward-thinking parish with a social justice emphasis," says Jane.

Together Jane and Ev are committed to a healthy lifestyle that includes walking, weight training and Tai Chi. Ev also is involved with genealogy and flower gardening, and occasionally fits in a round of golf. Jane enjoys baking and tutoring at Mercy Bridges and Saint's Place.

Initially joining Empty Nesters to meet people, the pair now have expanded their participation at Church. Both currently facilitate the Grief Share program, including the new monthly group. Ev also has facilitated in the Following Christ program, while Jane has jumped into the Just Faith experience. Ev also helps with eucharistic duties for hospitalized and home-bound parishioners. Both work with Margie Benza in the funeral ministry. Jane will begin working part-time as pastoral presence at weekend liturgies on a regular basis. And for fun, both are on the Social Committee.

"We are honored to share our gifts with the Transfiguration community and are gaining so many friends and blessings in return," Jane says.



ON-LINE GIVING

Transfiguration has signed up for a new on-line giving program called WeShare, and we invite you to join us by giving on-line if this fits your style of life.

There are benefits to on-line giving for both you and our Transfiguration parish. Donating on-line is quick, and you can set up your gift to be recurring so no need to remember your envelope or write a check! You can pay by credit card and collect your credit card rewards on your gift. Eventually we hope to have social and other event registration handled on-line, so you can both make a reservation and pay for an event from the convenience of your home computer or smart phone.

The parish benefits when you make a recurring donation via WeShare, as your support continues even if you miss a Mass or two due to vacation or work travel obligations. Donations processed by WeShare do not require manual handling by our volunteers and staff (no counting of cash and checks, no trips to the bank needed, no manual posting of your check to your Transfiguration account... all is done automatically in the system).

WeShare can be accessed from our transfigurationpittsford.org home page, please take some time to check it out!



KEEPING OUR CAMPUS BEAUTIFUL

As you arrive on our campus, it is impossible not to notice the beautiful care given to the flower gardens. Our statue of Mary is surrounded by blossoms, as are our walkways.

We are so grateful for our two volunteer parishioner gardeners, Armand Fenicchia and Terry Finegan. They are the ones who prepare the ground, plant, feed and water the flowers. Thank you for making our campus look so welcoming, colorful and beautiful!



HELP WANTED

MUSICAL TALENT

Please consider joining any of our musical groups. We are always in need of instrumental talent, especially accomplished pianists to accompany our vocal talent. Make a joyful noise unto the Lord! Please contact Sue Wallace at sue.wallace@dor.org.

TECHNICAL TALENT

We always need audio-visual help during Mass, including sound board and microphones setup, and slideshow projection. If you have that hidden techie talent, we could use your help! Scheduling is flexible. Please contact Sue at sue.wallace@dor.org.

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS

Yes, it is an awesome, sacred responsibility to hold the precious body or blood of Christ in your hands. It is a wonderful gift to see the pure joy and faith of those receiving Communion. You ARE worthy to serve in this way. Scheduling is flexible, and training is provided for adults and confirmed teens. Please contact Margie Benza at margie.benza@dor.org.

ACOLYTES

Calling our young women and men who have completed First Communion: Are you called to serve at Mass? Don't worry! Training is provided, and the adults serving at Mass with you are always there to assist should you need help. This is a wonderful opportunity to participate more fully in Mass— as well as build those muscles carrying the candles and cross! Scheduling is flexible, according to your availability. Interested? Please contact Margie Benza at margie.benza@dor.org.

LECTORS

Many people fear public speaking, but the Holy Spirit will help you conquer that fear as you spread the Good News to our congregation. You don't need a professional voice, and we promise there is training and workbook provided with a website to help with those difficult to-pronounce words. Interested adults and confirmed teens, please contact Margie Benza at margie.benza@dor.org.

Usher MINISTRY

We are so grateful to the many who offer their time and talent to our parish family at our weekly Mass celebrations. You see many of them up front by the altar—our musicians, commentator, lectors, acolytes and ministers of communion. Our greeters and coordinators are usually at the back of the church, making sure all task and details are well cared for in bringing us to prayerful reverence and dignity at Mass.

In August we welcome a new “usher” ministry. You may have seen them at Mass, wearing a blue blazer and name tag for easy identification. This ministry was recommended following our security review that took place over these last months.

Ushers are there to help our parishioners and visitors. They will open the locked doors after Mass begins and be available to let in those of us who just quite didn't make it on time. Ushers will observe the parking lot, especially in winter, to make sure you walked from your car to the door safely. They will keep an eye on the corridors, especially while our children are attending Children's Liturgy of the Word or Wee Ones Word. And of course, they will help visitors with the basics—rest rooms location, infant changing tables, etc.

Forty men and women recently trained for this new ministry and we appreciate their willingness to answer the call. If you would like to know more about this ministry, please contact ministry coordinators, Devon VanVechten or Jim Walsh.



UPCOMING SOCIAL EVENTS

Our Social Committee, staff and Pastoral Life teams are always looking for ways to build on our sense of community here at Transfiguration. Social activities are a key component, and we are pleased that two fun activities will be offered this fall.

On October 19 we will have a Halloween party, complete with a DJ and Oktoberfest-type food catered in from Swan Market. Costumes are encouraged but, of course, not required. This will be a fun-filled activity for the entire family. Details will be in the bulletin and on the website as the date approaches.



On Saturday, December 7, Transfiguration will hold a ***Festival of Gifts and Talents***. This idea has been a long term hope, affirmed by our parish survey, to bring our parishioners together to share their gifts and talents with the parish community. Do you paint, sketch, quilt, sculpt, weave, make jewelry, work with wood or metal, build toys or have any other “crafty” talents? Do you write poetry or songs, sing or play an instrument? Are you a baking whiz with delicious Christmas cookie recipes? If so, mark your calendar and start building your inventory of things to show/sell or share at the talent show during the Festival. More details will be available as the date approaches, but until then, questions may be directed to co-chairs Lorey Beck (loreylyn@gmail.com) or Sue Gangemi (sc_gan@msn.com).