

The Hands of Christ

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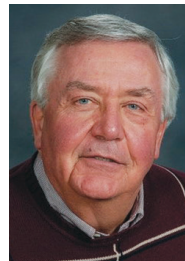
Dear friends,

Greetings, as we enter the holiday season with Thanksgiving, the watchful days of Advent anticipation, and finally, the Christmas season. The holiday season brings to mind thoughts of the traditions of the Bausch family and how they helped us celebrate life.

As you may know my dad's business was an electrical retail store. Dad took decorating the store for Christmas seriously. It was tradition to start decorating Thanksgiving week with the Bausch boys participating in that venture. Helping with the "family business" was just part of the family ethic. This decorating venture helped set the table for our Thanksgiving celebration and Advent. As I reflect, I am reminded how much we had to be thankful for as we anticipated the coming of Christ.

The Advent wreath at dinner was another tradition. It was a reminder of our anticipation around my childhood home. This tradition reminded us to slow down and not get ahead of ourselves, which was easy to do when involved in a business that was all about Christmas gifts.

Decorating the front of our home was another tradition. It was a family effort that usually consumed a Sunday; after Mass, of course. Time together was spent making sure every light was



perfectly placed. The day ended with a special Advent dinner.

A few days before Christmas the traditions continued with the tree coming into the house. It stood bare until Christmas Eve. After we went to bed Santa visited and mysteriously had time to decorate our tree. This tradition complimented the mystery of Jesus' birth in the world.

Finally, the tradition of Christmas morning was to get to 6:30 AM Mass, come back home for a big breakfast, and proceed to the living room to have "our Christmas"!

Traditions are an important part of who we are as family, as I mention a few of the Bausch traditions. Family traditions hopefully reflect the traditions we have as Catholics; a religion that has had many traditions for 2000 years. Please do have a blessed Advent and Christmas season!

Let us continue to pray for peace and for the end of terrorism in our world!

In peace and courage,



Rev. Michael J. Bausch
Pastor

PS - We are the Hands of Christ is a quarterly newsletter and we are pleased with the very positive response, thank you! If you have any suggestions for topics, please send them to our editor Nancy Wahl at nancy.wahl@dor.org.

Upcoming Events at Transfiguration

This is just a small sample of upcoming events, the 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.

DECEMBER

December 2-3, 9-10: Gathering Area - Christmas Basket Sign Up – All Masses

December 3: 4 p.m. Church - Christmas Concert

December 4, 11, 18: 7 p.m. Church - Advent Evening Prayer

December 19, 20, 21: PLC - Christmas Basket Pre-Assembly, Assembly and Delivery

JANUARY

January 23: PLC Gym – 6:30-8:45 p.m. Discovering Christ initial meeting

FEBRUARY

February 10, 11: Gathering Area – Bake Sale after all Masses

February 14 – Ash Wednesday: 6:45 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. – Masses, 12:10 p.m. Word and Ash Service

February 19, 26: 7 p.m. Lenten Evening Prayer

MARCH

March 4, 11, 18: 10:15-11:15 a.m. PLC Double Room – Joe Kelly Series, The Gospel of Mark

March 5, 6, 7: 7 p.m. Tri-Parish Lenten Retreat (See website and bulletin for locations)

March 12, 19, 26: 7 p.m. Lenten Evening Prayer

March 24, 25: Palm Sunday – All Masses

March 29: 7:30 p.m. Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord's Supper

March 30: 2:30 p.m. Good Friday Service

March 31: 8 p.m. Easter Vigil

BUILDING UPDATE



Church and Parish Office

Anyone walking into our church this winter will be welcomed with warmth – from the smiles of our greeters and the heat output of the HVAC system installed late this summer. Thank you to all who have given to the Building Restoration Fund, to date we have approximately \$444,000 pledged. Pending work includes replacing drainage lines and downspouts, and sealing the heating ducts to prevent further water damage. We hope to complete this effort soon, and some of it may have been finished while this newsletter was being completed! Next year we will replace the Church roof, and repair the PLC roof.

Some of our parishioners are on campus for Mass, but do not attend events during the week. A question was asked – how much use do we get from our buildings? Are they used only on weekends?

Our campus is comprised of the Church, the Chapel, the Parish Office, the Education Building and the Parish Life Center (home to the gym, nursery and several conference rooms). Of course, the church and chapel are used for daily and weekend Mass, as well as weddings, funerals and baptisms. In addition, the attic storage areas behind the altar are full, this is where all the decorations and banners are placed when not in use.

The Parish Office is fully occupied by Parish staff, with some doubling up in offices.

So, what about the Education Center? Most of our youth formation activities take place there – Bridges of Faith, the High School and Middle School Youth Groups, and of course Bible School. In addition, the building is used by Community Sponsored Agriculture (each Thursday afternoon from June – November), Men's Fellowship, Yoga, and many other activities. We also rent out the Education Center on occasion, to religious organizations like Mercy High School,



HVAC Unit Being Replaced



Parish Life Center

when they want to be off-campus for retreats.

The Parish Life Center gets the most varied use. For several months of the year, CYO Basketball occupies the gym each week night and Saturday. Adults join in the basketball fun with a pick-up game each Sunday evening. Yoga classes also meet in the gym. The gym hosts our social events (like Oktoberfest and the Spaghetti Supper), parish wide service events (Christmas Basket Program assembly and wrapping, Ministry Fair) and it is on occasion rented out (Mendon High School for AP exams). The conference rooms in the PLC are used for formation events (Just Faith, Joe Kelly Series) as well as Children's Liturgy of the Word and Wee Ones Word. It is often a challenge to find a room during the weeknight, there are so many activities in the PLC.

We make excellent use of our wonderful facilities, they are being used by our parish and our faith community to further the mission of Transfiguration.

Christmas Baskets

This holiday season, please consider being a part of the Christmas Basket Program. In the past, parishioners have responded by sponsoring families directly in providing both food and small gifts for family members in the city of Rochester, Pittsford, Fairport and other local communities. This program links our parish community with others living in poverty and assists us in seeing the struggles of the poor, oppressed and marginalized.

Parish sponsored baskets are possible through the kindness of many who offer their generous donations and time with phone calls, shopping, cookie baking, gift organizing, wrapping, and delivery. Last year, we were able to provide for 197 families by extending the hands of Christ, not only in providing gifts and a meal, but a sense of family celebration on a holiday that is so special to all of us! Sponsorship takes place the first two weekends in December after all Masses. Gift and grocery guidelines are provided. Come join us! Organizing begins in early October. Please contact Margie Benza at 248-2427 x244 or margie.benza@dor.org.



Christmas Basket Program - Wrapping and in the Spirit.



Christmas Basket Program - Parish Life Center Full of Christmas Spirit.

Christmas Concert

Sometimes we are so busy during the holidays we lose sight of the beauty and peace the holiday is intended to impart. Wouldn't you love to relax for a couple of hours, listen to beautiful holiday music, and be reminded of the reason for the season?

Our Social Committee is delighted to sponsor a Christmas Concert that features the talents of our Transfiguration parishioners. The concert is planned for Sunday, December 3, at 4:00 p.m. in the Church. Refreshments will be served.

Please plan on joining us to hear performances by talented singers and instrumentalists from Transfiguration's various choirs and ensembles. We hope to see you there!

Mass Sponsorship
Weekends of 12/3 - 4
& 12/9 - 10

Basket Pre-Assembly
Tuesday, 12/19, 9:00
a.m. - Noon

Gift Wrapping
Wednesday, 12/20,
9 a.m. - Noon

Basket Delivery
Thursday, 12/21,
9 a.m. - Noon



Ready for Delivery!

Christmas and New Year's Masses

We are fortunate our parish offers many beautiful celebrations of the Christmas Liturgy. Our first Christmas Mass was held in a barn, and featured live Nativity animals. Our new Christmas traditions include the Children's Living Gospel and a beautiful Midnight Mass. The sparkling lights, music of Christmas, and the softness of candlelight make Midnight Mass a beautiful way to welcome Christ. We hope to see you, your family and friends at the upcoming Christmas and New Year's Masses.

Here is the schedule and a description of the Mass:

December 23, 4:30 PM and December 24, 9:00 AM - these two Masses celebrate the fourth Sunday in Advent. Note there is no 11:30 Mass on Sunday, December 24, Christmas Eve.

CHRISTMAS MASSES

December 24, 3:30 PM - this Mass is celebrated with our children. Students in Grades 2,3 and 4 have lovingly rehearsed a living Nativity, complete with shepherds, Mary and Joseph, and of course the baby Jesus. Doors open at 3 p.m.

December 24, 5:30 PM - this Mass is also designed for families, and those who don't want to stay up late for Midnight Mass or go out early for Christmas Mass.

December 24, 11:30 PM - this is our Midnight Mass. A prelude of beautiful music starts at 11:30, with Mass beginning at midnight. This Mass is truly special, with the contrast of the light and warmth of Christ against the stark cold and darkness of the night.

December 25, 10:00 AM - for those of you whose tradition is to celebrate Christmas morning at church, this is the Mass for you!

December 30 and 31 - we will celebrate the Holy Family during our normal weekend Masses at 4:30 PM Saturday, December 30 at 9 AM and 11:30 AM on Sunday, December 31. You will be home in plenty of time for football and New Year's Eve parties!

January 1 - New Year's Mass, and a Holy Day, will be celebrated at 10 AM, later than the normal Monday Mass, and hopefully more convenient for everyone who stayed up to ring in 2018. This Mass honors Mary, and her loving response to God's call.



Bell Ringers Heidi Insalaco, Connor McInerney and Megan Mogauro

Youth Music Ministry

In past issues of the newsletter, we have highlighted our adult music groups – the 4:30 folk ensemble, and the 9:00 choir. But we have many young and talented musicians at Transfiguration, and they have always been an integral part of our music ministry, generously giving of their time and talent.

The Bell Choir might be the most visible youth music group. Playing the bells is a unique musical experience – each bell plays one note, and only through the team work and spot-on timing of the bell ringers can cohesive music be made. For that



Bells ready for Ringing

reason, the bell ringers are students in grades 5-12 who can read music. Our Bell Choir rehearses for an hour a week, and typically performs at our holiday Masses, and the occasional 9:00 Mass.

The vocal talents of our young parishioners are highlighted in two groups. Our teens sing at the 11:30 mass, alternating with adult contemporary music group Matthew 17. The teens perform a variety of styles, from traditional hymns to contemporary religious music. Some of them share their instrumental talents as well.

Our youngest parishioners can participate in MorningStar, a vocal group for grades 4-8. MorningStar sings at the 9:00 Mass once a month, and rehearses for an hour each week. They also are a key part of our holiday Masses, especially during Christmas.

These youngsters work hard in rehearsal and during Mass, using their talent to enhance the reverence and beauty of Mass. Please be sure to give our young musicians a few kind words of encouragement and appreciation after Mass! And if anyone is interested in joining any of the youth music groups, please contact Sue Wallace (sue.wallace@dor.org) or Pam McInerney (pamela.mcinerney@dor.org).

Global Solidarity Ministry - Nicaragua

Our Ministry is currently working to grow awareness and funds for our Clean Water Project in San Lucas, Nicaragua. The project budget is \$133,000 and project information can be found in the binder on the display table in the Gathering Area. The project plan outlines in detail the supplies and labor needed to bring fresh potable water to the communities of El Mogote and La Manzana. These communities are in the far north of the country and are greatly underserved. The women and children of these communities walk great distances to fetch water. They bring home as much as they physically are able to carry but this barely satisfies the daily need for each family. The time this takes prevents children from going to school.

Clean water is a God given right, and we are fortunate to have an abundance of it here in Pittsford and in the United States. We individually consume hundreds of gallons of water each day, barely giving thought to what and how much comes out of the faucet. Clean water is necessary for thriving, growing and the enrichment of all life. Everyone should have access to it. Please think of this ministry and cause this holiday season as you reflect on your charitable giving. We have raised \$33,000 so far, so we are at 25% of our goal. Thank you for your consideration.

In light of our project funds to date, and scheduling conflicts in 2018, we will be postponing our mission trip to San Lucas until 2019. This allows us time to get closer to our goal so when we do go, we can celebrate the completion of the project alongside our brothers and sisters. Please continue to pray for our sister communities. They need to know of our commitment and love.

— Lauren Burruto



Transfiguration Visit to Nicaragua in 2017

National Catholic Youth Conference

On Wednesday, November 15, thirty-five teens and several adult chaperones from Transfiguration departed for Indianapolis for the biannual National Catholic Youth Conference. They joined 500 other pilgrims from our diocese and 23,000 from around the country for this high energy weekend of fellowship, prayer, workshops, and worship. NCYC is a profound moment for young people that can have life-changing effects. They experience being a part of the BIG Church and the powerful faith of their peers and mentors. Our group has been preparing for this pilgrimage for a year. Please hold these young people in your prayers, they represent all of us on this pilgrimage. They have been praying for everyone back home as well, with great gratitude for all the spiritual and financial support from the parish that makes this conversion experience possible.

Thank you for supporting our youth!

Discovering Christ

We are thrilled to announce a new ministry, Discovering Christ, for our parish. The format is simple: seven Wednesday evenings, starting January 17th, we will gather together for a shared meal, a video teaching, small group conversation, and prayer. In the middle of the session, there will be a Saturday retreat day on February 17th.

Please join us for this time to be together in a friendly, supportive community and explore the questions that we all have: What is the meaning of life? Why does Jesus matter? Why does the Church matter?

We all want our church to be a place where everyone feels welcomed, is nourished, and where we can come together to support each other through the ups and downs of life and our faith journey.

We want the church to be home for us.

Most of all, we hope that all can have a real experience of God's love. Rather than just to sit in the pew for an hour a week to do our duty, we hope that each one of us can come to actually know Jesus, to feel His love for us, and to respond to Him in a personal and real way.

Is that what you want too?

Maybe this invitation is meant for you.

Everyone is welcome and invited to join. We really hope you do! Even if you have never signed up for anything at church before, this will be a great one to try. Invite a friend who might not be connected to the church at all. All are welcome.

For more information, please go to our website or contact the parish office.

AUTUMN YOUTH FORMATION ACTIVITIES



Confirmation Year One Retreat



New Bridges of Faith Youth Formation Program - Shared Meals and Learnings



New Youth Formation Program - Wee Ones Word

ADVENT THEME –

Be Watchful

After time spent with the scriptures of the Advent Season and prayerful reflection, our Advent Theme Sub-committee (Nancy Zinn, Kim Fluet and Rick Reed) offered several potential themes to our Liturgy Committee (Fr. Mike, Betsy Brent, Marilyn Steane, Nancy Zinn, Roger DeBell and staff members) for thoughtful discussion and selection. This theme is then woven through worship space and Gathering Area design as well as into our homilies and faith formation.

This year the theme is “Be Watchful”, chosen from the gospel reading the first week of Advent. In that reading (Mark 13: 33-37) Jesus tells his disciples to always be ready and watchful for the coming of the Lord. Even though we all know the timing of birth of baby Jesus - Christmas Day – Advent is a time for us to be watchful and joyfully anticipate His arrival on Earth.

Our Advent Candlelight Prayer on Mondays at 7 p.m. is also a time for quiet reflection in the midst of a busy season in calling us to be alert and ready for this joyous occasion.



Advent Candlelight Prayer

Join us for a break from the rush of the season at our Advent Candlelight Prayer Service. The quiet, peaceful, and dimly lit time of prayer and song takes place each Monday of Advent at 7 p.m. and lasts approximately thirty to forty minutes. This year we welcome these prayerful hours on 12/4, 12/11 and 12/18.

Many have remarked that the Prayer Service offers an opportunity to settle their hearts, to sit in reflection, and to be attentive to God's presence. This is a wonderful time to participate in the "waiting" of Advent for the gift of the Christ child.

Consider joining us for the gift of gentle quietness and an invitation to be with God. His Grace offers peace, healing, and tender care during this busy and sometimes challenging time of year.

-- Margie Benza
Pastoral Associate

Service Spotlight - Minister of Communion

There are many opportunities to volunteer at Transfiguration, but the opportunity to serve closest to our Lord is as a Minister of Communion. All confirmed adults and teens are welcome to serve in this capacity.

The joy of this ministry is being the visible sign of Christ to others in the community. Your welcoming smile as you distribute Communion could be the only kindness and warmth the individual receiving Communion has seen all week. Most special are the wonderful expressions you see on the recipients as you share the Precious Blood or Precious Body of Christ with them. The joy is evident from within as they receive the Grace of God. It is peaceful, opens your heart, and a way to share our gifts with others.

What does it mean to be a Minister of Communion? The basics are pretty simple – you volunteer and participate in a brief training session with Tim Smith. Margie Benza schedules Bread Ministers, and one Cup Minister for each Mass and the remaining cup positions are filled just prior to Mass by parishioners stopping in the Liturgy Room. You may have noticed that we have varied the number of Ministers of Communion at each Mass – there are six Bread Ministers providing the Precious Body of Christ at each Mass, of course with the president being one of the six. At the 4:30 Mass, we have eight Cup Ministers providing the Precious Blood of Christ, and twelve at the 9:00 Mass. We often adjust the number of Cup Ministers for our last Mass, depending on attendance. Ministers are asked to sign in at the Liturgy Room ten minutes prior to Mass, and pick up their Minister of Communion cross.

And, you might ask, how do the Ministers know where to stand? Each person has an assigned placement on the altar which is also written on the back of their cross they wear. As the Ministers assemble at the Altar before distributing Communion, we place ourselves on the same side we are going to serve. We are especially conscious of this sacred time and careful not to be a distraction.

If you are interested in serving as a Minister of Communion, please contact Margie Benza (margie.benza@dor.org) or Tim Smith (tim.smith@dor.org).

AUTUMN AT TRANSFIGURATION



Ministry Fair



Trunk or Treat



Ministry Fair



Garlic Harvest from Gift Garden



Trunk or Treat



Trunk or Treat



Oktoberfest



Oktoberfest

Parishioner Spotlight: The Harold Family

Advent is the season in which we await the birth of Jesus; excited and eager to welcome Him into our lives. In addition to waiting for Christmas and baby Jesus, The Harold family, our Parishioner Spotlight this quarter, had been anticipating a new arrival into their lives. Our newest parishioner, Gavin Charles Harold, has arrived! Little Gavin is the fifth member of the Harold family, with big sisters Addison (4), Brooke (2), and parents, Megan and Rob.

Megan, a Pittsford native, has been attending Transfiguration since the 1980's with her long-time parishioner parents, Jeanne and Charlie McElhinney. She earned an undergraduate degree from Penn State and a Master's degree from the University of Rochester. Although Megan is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor and former School Counselor, she says she enjoys the best job in the world for her right now – being a stay-at-home Mom. Rob has a Bachelor's degree from Niagara University and is a Regional Property Manager for Morgan Management. A Lewiston native, Rob met Megan at a coffee shop in Batavia.

The Harolds are an active family. They love travel, camping, and sports (Bills, Penn State, and Yankee fans). The family also takes advantage of many church formation and social activities. The children loved attending Halloween Trunk or Treat, Gingerbread House making, and the Sunset Prayer and S'mores. Megan enjoys being part of the Christmas Basket program; selecting and wrapping gifts while imagining the family feeling the love from our Parish as they open them on Christmas morning. Rob is active in Men's Fellowship, and looks forward to one day participating in the trip to Booneville, Kentucky. Both Meg and Rob attend the Advent and Lenten candlelight services, finding them peaceful and spiritually uplifting.

4:30 Mass works best for their family of little late sleepers. Megan remarked, "We do family activities during the day on Saturday, attend church, and then look for a new dinner spot!" Addison and Brooke love being useful and involved in any way possible - from handing out the collection baskets and bulletins to locking the church. It doesn't take much to excite them as they jump at any chance to be helpful. It has warmed our hearts seeing how many people have taken an interest in them. People always take the time to talk to them and ask about their lives. This will only continue to make them feel loved, cared for, and a part of the community as they grow. They most look forward to sharing the sign of peace and would make sure to get to everyone in the church if time allowed!

May the entire family, including little Gavin, enjoy the peace of Christ during the holidays!



STEWARDSHIP REFLECTIONS *with Pope Francis*

"True joy does not come from things or from possessing, no! It is born from the encounter, from the relationship with others, it is born from feeling accepted, understood and loved, and from accepting, from understanding and from loving; and this is not because of a passing fancy but because the other is a person. Joy is born from the gratuitousness of an encounter! It is hearing someone say, but not necessarily with words: "You are important to me". This is beautiful.... And it is these very words that God makes us understand. In calling you God says to you: "You are important to me, I love you, I am counting on you". (General audience, July 6, 2013)

Have you ever thought about life in this way? God counts on us to be good stewards of our lives and resources, to make the world a better place, to contribute to the reign of God. This may seem too much to think about, until we listen to Pope Francis' words above: joy does not come from things, it comes through our relationship with others. When we are good stewards of our relationships, our friendship with family and friends is a sharing in the love of God.

— Leisa Anslinger

Christmas Greetings from the Transfiguration Staff

Fr. Michael Bausch – May your Christmas be rich with our Creator's blessings!

Margie Benza – May the peace of the Holy Family bless you this Christmas season.

Eric Bessette – May the love and joy of this Christmas season inspire us all to take fewer "selfies" and create more "givies"!

Pat DiLaura – Wishing our entire Transfiguration family abundant joy and many blessings this Christmas season and always.

Anne Gallagher – Wishes you and your loved ones many opportunities to make memories together this Christmas season and throughout the new year ahead.

Meg Kastner – May God touch your heart in a new way this Christmas that leads to your deepening relationship with Jesus. Peace always.

Sandi Lazzaro – Wishes you a holiday season of hope and joy and lasting blessings.

Maureen O'Connor – Wishes you a joyful Christmas and a happy, healthy and peaceful new year.

Vicky Rippel – Wishing you a joyful Christmas season filled with blessings that will carry you through the year.

Tim Smith – Wishes you a wonderful Christmas shared with your loved ones.

Rose Volker – My wish for our parish is that we continue to be who we are. To continue to care and love others and be the face of Jesus.

Nancy Wahl – Wishes you peace and joy at Christmas, and health and happiness throughout 2018.

Sue Wallace – Wishes you peace, joy and love in your hearts

Chris Washington – Wishes you a warm and special Christmas.

Paul Celentano – I wish for peace on earth and happiness for all. Oh, and I wish everyone had a bicycle!



Fr. Mike Bausch, Chris Washington, Deacon Pat DiLaura, Sue Wallace, and Tim Smith



Maureen O'Connor and Nancy Wahl



Paul Celentano



Deacon Eric Bessette



Rose Volker, Margie Benza, Sandi Lazzaro and Meg Kastner



Vicky Rippel and Anne Gallagher