

## FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER



**SATURDAY, MAY 6, 2017** **5:00 PM**  
**FOR OUR FIRST EUCHARIST STUDENTS**

**SUNDAY, MAY 7, 2017** **7:30 AM**  
**+ALMERINDA CORDEIRO**  
**R/B JASON AND LUISA MACHADO**

**10:30 AM**  
**+ROSEMARY CONLAN**  
**R/B LENORA AND JOHN RICE**

**6:00PM**  
**IN HONOR OF ST. JUDE FOR FAVORS**  
**RECEIVED R/B A PARISHIONER**

**MONDAY, MAY 8, 2017** **8:00 AM**  
**+CHRISTOPHER GENTILE**  
**R/B HIS MOM, DAD AND SISTER JENNIFER**

**TUESDAY, MAY 9, 2017** **8:00 AM**  
**+EDWARD B. WYSOCKI, JR.**  
**R/B MOM, DAD & FAMILY**

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 10, 2017** **8:00 AM**  
**IN HONOR OF ST. JUDE FOR FAVORS**  
**RECEIVED R/B A PARISHIONER**

**THURSDAY, MAY 11, 2017** **8:00 AM**  
**IN HONOR OF ST. JUDE FOR FAVORS**  
**RECEIVED R/B A PARISHIONER**

**FRIDAY, MAY 12, 2017** **8:00 AM**  
**+MILDRED TAGLIERI**  
**R/B THE FAITH GROUP**

**SATURDAY, MAY 13, 2017** **5:00 PM**  
**+VIRGINIA DESANTIS**  
**R/B THE CASTONGUAY FAMILY**

**SUNDAY, MAY 14, 2017** **7:30 AM**  
**+DUARTE CORDEIRO**  
**R/B JASON AND LUISA MACHADO**

**10:30 AM**  
**FOR ALL MOTHERS**

**6:00 PM**  
**FOR ALL PARISHIONERS**

## PARISH SUPPORT

<b>APRIL 23 – REGULAR</b>	<b>\$4,749</b>
<b>ON LINE GIVING –Regular</b>	<b>\$ 435</b>
<b>Rice Bowl Additional</b>	<b>\$ 7</b>

“And Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ...’ ACTS 2:38

The word “repent” means to turn from sin, to change our actions. When it comes to change, do we take responsibility for change or do we think that others have to change instead? Change that is permanent comes from within, we must take control and be disciplined. Remember though that we are not alone, Jesus is there to help lighten the load.

### READINGS AND WHAT DO THEY MEAN?

#### First Reading: Acts 2:14a, 36-41

With great authority, Peter proclaims to the people that the Christ who was crucified is indeed the Messiah. Urging them to reform and be baptized in the name of Christ, three thousand responded to his words and were baptized.

#### Second Reading: 1 Peter 2:20b-25

This is a strong exhortation from Peter to the people to endure suffering for Christ as he did for them. Healed by his wounds, they have “returned to the shepherd.”

#### Gospel: John 10:1-10

Christ uses the beautiful image of the shepherd to describe his care for his sheep. He also says he is the sheep gate and promises that “Whoever enters through me will be safe.”

## **SPECIAL REPORT FROM THE OFFICE OF PASTORAL PLANNING OF THE DIOCESE**

### **PASTORAL PLANNING OVERVIEW**

As in so many dioceses around the country, pastoral planning in the Diocese of Norwich has been moving ahead steadily for several years. The need for pastoral planning is driven by many factors, such as population shifts from the North and Northeast to the South and Southwest, a general decline in church attendance, a decline in the number of priests, and in New England a decreasing and aging population.

In our diocese, the first phase in recent pastoral planning efforts was a series of meetings held in every deanery which resulted in the formation of parish clusters. These clusters were encouraged to work together in order to pool resources and improve parish Life. The parishes that did work together found their efforts well rewarded when, in the next phase of pastoral planning, the parishes were yoked under the leadership of one pastor.

Since then, as circumstances have required it, yoking has continued until today, when 49 parishes, or 64% of the parishes of the diocese are yoked. Only 27 parishes in the diocese continue to have the "one pastor – one parish" structure.

There are other statistics that might be helpful in understanding our present situation in Norwich. For instance, in 2000 there were 92 diocesan priests assigned to parish ministry in the diocese. Today there are only 62. Also since 2000, parish population, as measured every year in October, has fallen by an average of almost 45% throughout the diocese.

In the Diocese of Norwich, one of the more challenging developments for parishioners and pastors alike has been yoking. For

parishioners, such an arrangement can be very unsettling, and can raise anxiety about the future of a beloved parish. For pastors, the care of multiple parishes can be challenging and at times even overwhelming. But the experience can also be enriching and rewarding for both pastors and parishioners. Not everything is perfect, of course, but the positive results far outweigh the difficulties.

A singular challenge is to find a balance between parishes being individual congregations, and the need to bring the congregations together to form one community.

The Holy Spirit Community, in the Norwich deanery, consists of three parishes; St. Catherine of Siena in Preston, St. Thomas in Voluntown and St. Mary in Jewett City. These three parishes were at first clustered, and now, for the last five years, have had one pastor, Father Ted Tumicki. The Community also has the ministry of Father Steven Gulino and Deacon Paul Baillargeon, along with a very capable staff to coordinate activities in the three parishes.

In taking on this assignment to pastor three parishes, Father Tumicki said that he needed to "rethink" both parish administration and his own ministry. In a new situation, he said, new ideas had to be tried. Over the course of the past five years, various activities have brought the three groups of parishioners together. Most successful has been having one music director for the three parishes, who coordinates not only music, but also choirs. Holy Week services are celebrated at St. Mary's in Jewett City, with a combined choir from the three parishes. Other Holy Week observances such as Stations of the Cross or Morning and Evening prayer are celebrated at the other two parishes. In that way, all three parishes participate in the Holy Week observances. Also, the Holy Spirit Community enjoys an annual Christmas party, a tri-parish picnic and other combined activities throughout the year.

## FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Certainly, challenges remain. There is some resistance to change on all sides, but generally, this adventure for the Holy Spirit community, the parishes of St. Catherine, St. Thomas and St. Mary, appears to have been a positive experience.

Also in the Norwich Deanery is the Divine Mercy Community, consisting of the parishes of St. John, Montville, Our Lady of the Lakes, Oakdale and Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Quaker Hill, all under the pastoral leadership of Father Robert Buongiorno, assisted by Father James Sucholet and Deacon William Herrmann, and a staff to coordinate activities in all three parishes. Here also, there have been, over the last few years, a mixture of administrative and pastoral adjustments, including a unified music program, a single weekly bulletin, a unified website, and a Community Committee made up of representatives from the three parishes. Parishioners from the three parishes come together for "Family Film Night" once a month as well as a Fellowship and Pot Luck. There is also an annual celebration on Divine Mercy Sunday, which the Church observes just after Easter.

Certainly, neither the pastors interviewed nor their parishioners would say that the yoking process is ideal, or even simple. But experience shows that when priests and people work together, cooperating, accepting change and setting priorities, parishes are able to continue and even to flourish under this structure.

There are several other priests in the Diocese of Norwich who are pastoring multiple parishes, and they will be interviewed in the coming weeks.

Sister Elissa Rinere, C.P.

This article first appeared in the May 2017 issue of the Four County Catholic

### Diocesan Priests Assigned to Parishes

Born before 1943 and now at or over retirement age – 3 Priests

Born between 1943 and 1953 and will reach retirement age in 2027 – 14 Priests

Born between 1954 and 1963 and will reach retirement age in 2037 – 24 Priests

Born between 1964 and 1973 and will reach retirement age in 2047 - 11 Priests

Born between 1974 and 1983 and will reach retirement age in 2057 – 9 Priests

Born between 1984 and 1993 and will reach retirement age in 2067 – 1 Priest

Projected Ordinations to the Priesthood –  
Two in 2018 and One in 2020.

### SOME CURRENT STATISTICS DIOCESE OF NORWICH 2017

**In 2006:** 78 parishes and 10 mission churches

2 parishes yoked - Sacred Heart, Wauregan and All Hallows, Moosup (2% of parishes)

**In 2017:** 76 parishes and 3 mission churches  
49 parishes yoked (64% of parishes)

**In 1995:** The October Count (annual sampling of Mass attendance) for the diocese totaled 60,857.

**In 2016:** The October Count for the diocese totaled 32,292. A decrease of 47%.

**In 2017:** The diocese has 62 diocesan priests active in parish ministry as pastors, administrators or parochial vicars.

**In 2027:** The best estimate is that the diocese will have between 40 and 45 priests available for parish ministry.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

**PARISH VITALITY**

This is a combination of attendance, sacramental life, faith formation for youth and adults, finances and geography.

In our diocese, some parishes are very vital and active, but others are not.

56% of our parishes have no post-Confirmation youth ministry.

32% of our parishes have little or no adult faith formation.

89% of our parishes are fewer than five miles from a neighboring parish.

**MOVING FORWARD**

**How does the diocese best use its personnel and resources to bring vitality to our parishes, stable parish ministry to our priests, and stable parish ministry to our parishioners especially with respect to faith development, access to the Eucharist and sacrament life?**

\*\*\*\*\*

**FAITH FORMATION INFORMATION:**

We can be reached at 860-875-4951 or [stlukere@gmail.com](mailto:stlukere@gmail.com). The office is open Sunday (when classes are in session) 8-11 am, Monday 1-8:30 pm, Tuesday 1-8:30 pm, Thursday or by appointment. Hours are subject to change so please call ahead.

**Religious Education 2016-2017**

Thank you to our students, parents and teachers for a great year! All students received a packet to work on over the summer. Parents please review packet with your child and always remember to pray with them each day, the best way for them to practice their prayers is to pray them daily.

**Kindergarten, First Grade and New Families**

If you have a student entering Kindergarten, First Grade or are new to the parish with school age children in the Fall, please contact the Faith Formation Office, at [stlukere@gmail.com](mailto:stlukere@gmail.com) or 860-875-4951. Give us your name, address, phone number, children's names and grade in the Fall. Online registration for the 2017-2018 year will begin on August 1, 2017.

**For Adults: Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) New Session Will Be Beginning May 10 at 6 PM.**

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults is the process in which a person who is not baptized or baptized in another faith denomination, has not received instruction, first communion, or

confirmation, journeys with others like them and other Catholics to be fully initiated in the Catholic faith. It is a process of formation. There are four steps in this formation process which culminates at the Easter Vigil with the celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation, Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. The parish community, through its prayers, witness, worship, service, and catechesis, offers the invitation and support for the men and women to be initiated into the Catholic Church. Weekly meetings will be beginning MAY 10 – WEDNESDAY.

If you or anyone you know may be interested, please tell them they may just show up MAY 10 AT 6 PM. in the St. Luke Parish Center.

If there are any questions, please feel free to get in touch with Deacon Frank at [fhann2012@gmail.com](mailto:fhann2012@gmail.com) or 860-462-8032 or direct questions to Laraine Kennedy at 860-810-5070. They are the RCIA coordinators.

**PERENNIAL PLANT SALE – WILL BE HELD ON THE WEEKEND OF MAY 20 AND 21!**  
Gardeners who are dividing perennials, please consider donating your extra plants to the plant sale. Proceeds will be used to purchase plants for the church property. We are in need of plant containers. Donations may be left next to the lawn/garden shed at the back of the parking lot.

**ACTS RETREAT FOR WOMEN – JUNE 1-4, 2017**  
Sponsored by South Windsor Catholic Community  
Retreat Location: Immaculata Retreat House, Willimantic  
Come join a group of Catholic women who will present an ACTS weekend retreat under the guidance of a Catholic Guide. The retreat theme is "Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them 'Peace be with you...receive the Holy Spirit.'"  
Transportation is provided. Ladies, treat yourself to a weekend away with Our Lord, private room and private bath, delicious meals, and fellowship with an amazing group of women from the parish and surrounding area.  
Registration forms are on the tables at the entrances to the church. Call Elizabeth Percy at 860-648-2615, Tina Pelletier at 860-503-9744 or Angelee Carta at 860-643-1954 for more information.

**ASCENSION THURSDAY IS MAY 25 AND A HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION. MASSES ARE ON THURSDAY AT 8 AM AND 7 PM ONLY. EFFECTIVE WITH THIS HOLYDAY THERE WILL BE NO MORE VIGIL MASS ON THE DAY BEFORE A HOLY DAY.**