

Archways

NO HANDS BUT OURS

Doing Christ's Work in the World

Shining Examples

New York Catholics in Service to the Community

Priesthood Now

Where We Came From, Where We're Going

Saying Yes to Christ

Becoming Catholic as an Adult



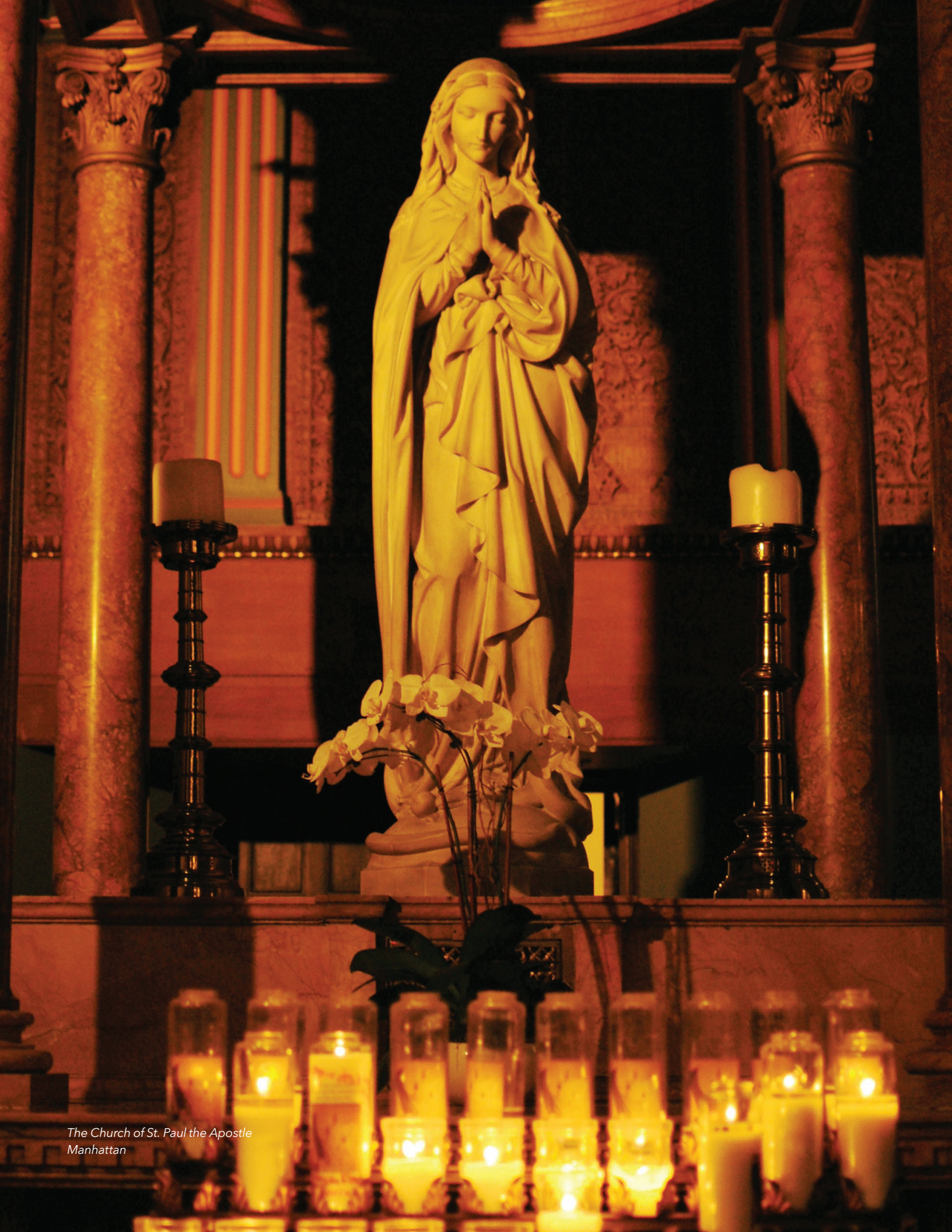
Plus:

Hospital Chaplains

Crisis of the Faithful: Rebuilding Trust

Why So Many Feast Days for Mary?

Must-Attend Events Around the Archdiocese



The Church of St. Paul the Apostle
Manhattan

FROM THE CARDINAL

SHINING A LIGHT

Every year around the start of November we turn the clocks back by an hour and, all of a sudden, it seems as if we are plunged into darkness. Night intrudes upon the day, and the people you pass on the street look grim, gnawed by an awareness of the frigid winter days ahead.

Why then, a few weeks later, though the winds are colder and the darkness has only increased, are many smiling again? Because they know that the great feast celebrating the birth of the “light of the world” is coming.

In some ways, the onset of winter seems especially dark this year, after months of news reports about past sexual abuse by Catholic clergy and past cover-ups by Church leaders. Although the Church in 2002 put in place a strong system for preventing victimization of children, it has become apparent that there are still gaps and needed reforms. These reports confronted us once again with the shame of past actions and have exacerbated the pain of those who suffered at the hands of clergy who betrayed a sacred trust.

So this year we are especially thankful to God for sending His son to



redeem our sins and shine His light upon the world. We humbly pray for Christ’s help and wisdom as we get on with the hard work that needs to be done in order to set His Church back on its proper course.

In this issue of *Archways*, you will find information on what happens when someone approaches the Archdiocese of New York to report a claim of abuse, along with reflections on how the crisis has affected everyone from survivors to priests to the laity in general, and how the Church and

the faithful might move forward. You will also find plentiful evidence that the Church remains a mighty instrument of Christ’s mercy and love in the world.

When I read in these pages about the teachers, chaplains, sisters, priests and lay leaders who are so passionately and selflessly engaged in ministries like feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, comforting the afflicted and teaching the Gospel, I realize that there is much reason to be hopeful. I am inspired by the faith with which you, the people of the Church, are carrying on the work of Christ in service to our community. We must make certain that this good work continues and is not cast into shadows.

“You are the light of the world,” Jesus said. “Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” At times like this each of us can help bring His light into our cities, towns and neighborhoods. The people in these pages shine a light for all to see.

So, be not afraid. Be of good cheer. Have a peaceful and joyful Advent, Christmas and New Year. Keep up the good work. And don’t hide your lamp under a bushel basket.

Faithfully in Christ,

+ *Tim. Card. Dolan*

Timothy Michael Cardinal Dolan
Archbishop of New York

12 EVERYDAY HEROES

Our parishes and our communities are better places because of Catholics who devote their lives to service

22 PRIESTHOOD NOW

Parish priests from three generations talk about their calling, their lives as clergy, and their thoughts on the future

28 SAYING YES TO CHRIST

The stories of three people who have elected to become Catholic this Easter

1 FROM THE CARDINAL

Shining a Light

4 FORUM

Answers and ideas

6 NEWS AND NOTES

Responding to the abuse crisis; chaplaincy training; what's so important about Al Smith; our teen reporter files from New York Catholic Youth Day; gifts for readers

32 EVENTS

Faith-based happenings around the archdiocese

Students from St. John Chrysostom's School, Bronx, at the Cardinal's Christmas Luncheon, 2017
Photo © Maria R. Bastone

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ASK A PRIEST

Why are there three separate holy days of obligation devoted to Mary, and why is one of them on New Year's Day?



The feasts of the Blessed Virgin Mary occupy a special place in the liturgical year. Not only is Mary a model of virtue, as is every saint, but through her holy life, she played an essential role in the saving works of Christ. She conceived and gave birth to Jesus, shared in His life and ministry, remained by the foot of the cross, witnessed to His resurrection and received the gift of the Holy Spirit along with the apostles at Pentecost. She was assumed into heaven body and soul and continues to be a part of her Son's saving work by interceding for us, praying that we may each grow in holiness and one day join her and her Son in heaven.

We honor Mary and pray to her throughout the year, but we do so in a special way on these three days: January 1, the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God; August 15, the Assumption of Mary; and December 8, the Immaculate Conception. These days focus on three of the most significant aspects of Mary's holy life: her role as the Mother of God, her assumption into heaven, and her preservation from all stain of original sin (that with which we are born as a result of Adam and Eve's rebellion in Eden). Each offers us an opportunity to reflect on her sanctity and virtues, as well as her agency in bringing all of God's people closer to her Son, Jesus.

These holy days of obligation trace their origins to the year 431 and the Council of Ephesus, which officially recognized Mary as Theotokos ("Mother of God"). Following that pronouncement, many feast days dedicated to Mary were added

to the liturgical calendar. In particular, the date chosen for the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, has an interesting history.

In ancient Rome, January 1 was a day dedicated to the god Janus, who is often depicted as facing simultaneously in two directions: toward the old year and the new. His day was marked by feasting and riotous celebrations. To contrast with these pagan festivities, the early Christian church observed January 1 with fasting and penance.

Writing to Christians in the early fifth century, Saint Augustine said, "Let them give new year's gifts; you should give alms! Let them sing boisterous songs; you should open your hearts to the word of God! Let them rush to the theater; you should rush to the church!" It is hardly a surprise, however, to learn that many people were more drawn to feasting than fasting. After the Council of Ephesus, therefore, the Church decided to step back from the day of penance and instead redirect the new year's celebratory spirit toward a more noble purpose: a feast in honor of Mary, the Mother of God.

For centuries, Christians have sought ways to honor Mary as a model of virtue and to ask for her intercession. The liturgical year is a powerful means by which we can enter more deeply into the Paschal Mystery of Christ by recalling the unique role of Mary in her Son's life and in our lives every day.

*Fr. Matthew Ernest
Director, Office of Liturgy
Archdiocese of New York*

What are the steps for an adult to become a member of the Catholic Church?

The path to becoming Catholic is the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, or RCIA. It is made up of several stages, each with its own initiation rites.

The RCIA's focus is on preparing unbaptized adults to enter the Church, but the same program, with modifications, provides for the initiation into the faith of non-Catholic Christians and adults who were baptized as Catholics but never completed their sacraments.

It's like a relationship. First, you meet and you want to get to know each other. That is the period of inquiry. For most, this begins with a meeting with the pastor or the head of the RCIA program at the parish you would like to join, and may continue with subsequent meetings and discussions to ensure that this is an appropriate path for you. This period lasts for as long as you need it to.

Then you "go steady." That is the period of the catechumenate, during

which you receive instruction about the Catholic faith. It begins with the Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens, at which participants (called catechumens if unbaptized and candidates if baptized) are welcomed into their new congregation at a Mass. Like the inquiry period, the catechumenate lasts as long as you need it to.

Then you get engaged, so to speak, entering what is called the period of purification and enlightenment, which coincides with Lent. It begins with the Rite of Election, where you are presented to a bishop at a service in the cathedral and he calls you to the sacraments at Easter.

At the Easter Vigil, catechumens are baptized, then make first communion and are confirmed. Candidates, who, as we said, have been baptized previously, do not need to be baptized again, but they do receive communion and confirmation. This celebration is



a bit like a wedding and reception all in one. The honeymoon is the period of mystagogy, when you continue to meet with the people who have accompanied you through this process, receiving further catechesis and deepening your understanding of what you have received.

This is the way our Church welcomes and blesses, forms and informs those seeking to share our life.

*Fr. Donald Baker, Pastor
Parish of St. Monica /
St. Elizabeth of Hungary /
St. Stephen of Hungary, New York*

*For more about RCIA in the
Archdiocese of New York, see
"Saying Yes to Christ," page 28.*

Have a question for a priest (or deacon or nun)? Send it to archways@archnyc.org and we just might answer it in our next issue!



The Catholic Planner vs. Alexa

It's Jesus' birthday, and once again He's not asking for any gifts for Himself. Still, while none of the packages under the tree have His name on them, in a sense they are all given in His name – so why not err on the side of the saints? First-person shooter game? Maybe not. High-speed gaming computer? Dubious. Amazon Echo, aka Alexa? Hmm...

To be clear, we're not saying there's anything inherently wrong with Alexa or Google Home or other networked gadgets, and there's no denying that the technology behind them is amazing. Like everything connected to the Internet, however, they must be used wisely, or they can lead us into questionable choices. God is not part of their algorithms.

That's where the Catholic Planner comes in. Day-Timer traditionalists will love its sumptuous leather binding; the pages inside have something for everyone: scripture readings, facts about saints, a calendar of feast days, a Path to Sainthood goal-setting tool and a Weekly Retreat with space to record personal prayers. Taken together, the Catholic Planner is an invitation to keep spiritual goals in focus when planning the activities of daily life (catholicplanner.com).

Once that's taken care of, Alexa can help you out with reminders and check your schedule for conflicts. Just don't ask, "Alexa, what would Jesus do?" ❄



ISSUE

CRISIS OF THE FAITHFUL

In the summer of 2018, a flood of media reports appeared concerning sexual abuse of minors and young people by Catholic clergy in the United States. Almost all of these reports concerned assaults that occurred before 2002, when the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) issued the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People (also called the Dallas Charter). Nevertheless, some deeply troubling new details emerged concerning cover-ups and lack of accountability as well as information about abuse of seminarians.

American Catholics have entered a

period of deep soul-searching. Many feel grief-stricken and want a clear demonstration from Church leaders that meaningful steps are being taken to right wrongs, prevent future abuse and rethink the relationship between the Church and the faithful.

On the following pages, we ask Fr. Daniel Kearney, pastor of Manhattan's Church of the Ascension, to give us a parish priest's perspective, and Sr. Eileen Clifford, the victim assistance coordinator for the Archdiocese of New York, to explain what happens when an abuse survivor makes a report.



Cardinal Dolan with Judge Barbara Jones.

Photo © Maria R. Bastone

STRENGTHENING PROTOCOLS

In September, Cardinal Dolan held a press conference at which he announced the appointment of Judge Barbara Jones as Special Counsel and Independent Reviewer for the Archdiocese of New York, and asked her to do an exhaustive study of archdiocesan policies, procedures and protocols regarding allegations of clerical abuse of young persons. The cardinal also detailed many of the archdiocese's existing policies, among them "reporting all cases to the DA, [commissioning of] outside investigations, referral to our independent lay review board, and 'zero tolerance' of guilty priests, with their names published." He indicated that Jones would be working beyond the issue of abuse of minors to "enhance and strengthen our protocols for accusations of inappropriate behavior by anyone abusing his or her position of authority." (The full text of the cardinal's remarks, along with a detailed overview of the archdiocese's response to this issue since 1993, is available at cardinaldolan.org/index.php/category/blog.)

Jones's investigation is expected to extend into 2019.



REBUILDING TRUST *An interview with Fr. Daniel Kearney*

Archways: In 2002, the Dallas Charter laid out new practices to end the plague of clerical abuse of minors. Why are we having a second crisis?

Fr. Kearney: By and large, the focus of the current scandal is that there were still people in leadership positions who continued the secrecy and the cover-ups of pre-2002 cases – and in a few instances, post-2002 cases – after the Dallas Charter came out. This should never have happened.

Archways: Priests today must feel like they are under a microscope. Is there any way to get past this?

Fr. Kearney: It's frustrating, it's difficult, it's almost humiliating, because so many of the problems that have come up in recent months were created by leadership. No one's perfect. Priests, cardinals, bishops have done horrible things. And I pray that this will never be repeated. But we also need to live in the present moment. We need to move forward.

Archways: Was there too much deference accorded to priests in the past?

Fr. Kearney: There absolutely was and there still is, even after all that has happened. Clericalism – holding priests up above others – has been one of the great sins of the Church. You know, I'm no different than you. When I walk out of church on Sunday morning I want people to be respectful, but it's the same respect that I'm giving to them. I would hold myself equal to my people rather than being above them. We all received a high calling at baptism, and we're all trying to live up to that. Doesn't matter if you're a priest, doctor, candlestick maker, whatever you are

– if we're trying to live the Gospel seriously, that's a high calling.

Archways: What have we learned from the errors of the past?

Fr. Kearney: Obviously we haven't learned as much as we should have or we wouldn't be in the position

this extra layer of accountability, that could be really positive as we move into the future.

Archways: Many Catholics are engaged in critically important work – running shelters, food pantries, health-care facilities ... the list is very long. What do we lose if a lot of good people walk away?

"There has to be another level of transparency, and it has to include lay people."

we're in right now. Parishioners are saying to me, "The bishops have lost their moral authority. The only way they're going to get it back is by looking at themselves honestly and saying, 'Where have we failed? What do we do to regain the people's trust?'" What I'm hearing from people is that the secrecy must end. There has to be transparency.

Archways: Looking ahead from the present moment, what will be the state of the Church one, two, five years from today? If we achieve a good outcome, what will we have done to get there?

Fr. Kearney: I can't envision how we could allow ourselves to move forward without some kind of change. A couple of the bishops from the USCCB have talked about the need to have a lay supervisory board over the bishops – concerning overall Church governance, not just sexual abuse. My parishioners are saying this as well: that there has to be another level of transparency, oversight. And it has to include lay people, and it has to include women. I do believe that God's spirit is very much present in the world and in the Church, and if His spirit can move the bishops to be open to

Fr. Kearney: I have parishioners who tell me that the reason they belong to Ascension is because we have so many outreach programs for the vulnerable. For those parishioners, that's the Gospel message, to care for those who are the least among us, and they're going to keep doing it, regardless of what a bishop is saying or not saying. We will lose some members if things don't change. But the people doing the volunteering are the ones who get that this is what being a person of faith is all about, and I don't think they're going anywhere. This is what we do. We feed the poor, we house the homeless, we shelter people.

Archways: What would you say to Catholics who are considering leaving the Church?

Fr. Kearney: I completely get why some would consider that. I can't say there haven't been times I've thought the same thing. But if someone gets food poisoning, they don't stop eating food. The reason to remain in the Church is to be present with Christ in the communal setting and to receive the Eucharist. Priests and bishops come and go. What remains the same is Christ's message of love.

ISSUE

SUPPORTING SURVIVORS

An interview with Sr. Eileen Clifford

Archways: What happens when someone reports abuse of a minor to the archdiocese?

Sr. Eileen Clifford: When someone contacts the archdiocese to report that they were sexually abused by a member of the clergy, they may contact the office by phone, email or postal mail, but I always respond immediately and try to speak with them directly. I listen to their story and I offer to meet with them.

We ask the victim-survivor for a signed statement of what happened. That's difficult for them. It's hard enough for them to contact us in the first place because it means they have to go back and remember what happened to them, which many times a person will have worked hard not to think about for years.

Archways: Who investigates the allegations?

Sr. Eileen Clifford: We ask the victim-survivor to call the district attorney in the jurisdiction where the abuse took place – I provide them with the name and telephone number. At the same time, we let them know that the archdiocese always informs the DA of any allegations of clerical abuse of a minor in their jurisdiction.

When the office of the DA has completed its investigation, the archdiocese then starts its own inquiry. For impartiality, we use a third-party service, whose investigators are mostly former FBI agents, to interview the victim-survivor and conduct a follow-up investigation. We do an in-house inquiry as well. The results of these investigations go to the members of the Advisory Review Board, who

read and discuss the reports and then make a recommendation to the cardinal. If the charges are credible

“There are consequences to abuse, not only for the victim-survivor, but also for their parents, spouses, children and other loved ones, that can play out for decades after the abuse has ended.”

and substantiated, the accused will be removed from ministry. In addition, the district attorney may pursue a criminal prosecution.

Archways: What support does the archdiocese offer to the survivor and their families?

Sr. Eileen Clifford: There are consequences to abuse, not only for the victim-survivor, but also for their parents, spouses, children and other loved ones, that can play out for decades after the abuse has ended. Many terrible things can happen: substance abuse, marital problems, even suicide. We offer referrals to outside counseling services and pastoral services to help survivors and their families deal with the emotional and psychological repercussions of what occurred, and the archdiocese pays for the treatment.

While money can never right these wrongs or make the pain go away, many victim-survivors are also eligible for a financial settlement from the Independent Reconciliation and Compensation Program. For the record, the money for this program doesn't come out of your charitable contributions to your parish or the

Cardinal's Annual Stewardship Appeal; it comes from a long-term loan leveraging archdiocesan assets.

Archways: Is this problem ever going to get better?

Sr. Eileen Clifford: I've been doing this work since 2002, when the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops adopted the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. Since then, I have sadly received a great number of reports of abuse from 2002 and earlier, but thankfully allegations of clerical abuse occurring in the archdiocese after the adoption of the charter have been extremely rare. This does not alleviate the deep pain and outrage caused by the terrible abuse that occurred prior to that time, but it does signal that, if we remain watchful, we can effectively eliminate this evil and keep children safe now and in the future. ✱

To report sexual abuse by a priest, bishop or deacon, please contact Sr. Eileen Clifford at 646-794-2949, or by emailing victimassistance@archny.org. Complaints may also be submitted online at archny.org or via U.S. mail to Victims Assistance Coordinator, 1011 1st Avenue, New York, NY 10022, in a sealed envelope clearly marked CONFIDENTIAL.



ARCHCARE UPDATE

A HEALING SPIRIT

A human being can only handle so much. You're stuck in the hospital. You or your loved one has just received a diagnosis, undergone an operation, suffered a setback. You feel lost and alone.

At some point in our lives, the majority of us will have an experience like this. The doctors have done what they can, and now we need God's help. Thanks to ArchCare, the health-care ministry of the Archdiocese of New York, there is a corps of priests serving the hospitals of the archdiocese and trained to guide us through such crises.

In 2016, Cardinal Dolan approached Fr. John Anderson, vice president for mission integration at ArchCare and a board-certified chaplain, about strengthening the hospital chaplaincy program in the archdiocese. "Is the service adequate?" Cardinal Dolan asked. "Can everyone who wants sacraments get them? And beyond the sacraments, are we serving people's spiritual needs?"

The result was the development of ArchCare's Chaplaincy Apostolate –



With patients at White Plains Hospital: Fr. Thomas Chellan Joseph (left photo) and Fr. John Devaney (above).

which now has 22 chaplains serving 27 hospitals and visiting with more than 100,000 patients a year – and the creation of standards and training and support programs for chaplains, parish priests and lay ministers. At the heart of the training is a regimen called clinical pastoral education (CPE), which provides training in the essential skills and knowledge required to minister to patients and their families in the hospital setting.

"The chaplain-patient interaction is about lending a compassionate ear, understanding what patients are going through and helping them in their journey. It is a skilled encounter," says John Schultz, director of the archdiocesan chaplaincy and a board-certified chaplain. These interactions are important moments where the Church is meeting people where they are and when they need it most. They are transformative experiences for both the patient and the priest.

The enriched training and other support the priests receive under ArchCare

allows them to connect more deeply with patients and play a more integral role in their overall spiritual and sacramental care and physical healing. CPE, in the words of one chaplain, "teaches me to bring myself to that mission and help the person through whatever they are experiencing."

In addition to priests, lay volunteers can receive training. A significant part of the chaplaincy mission is carried out by Eucharistic ministers, who bring the sacrament – and the Church – to the patients they visit. And now ArchCare is developing a five-year plan to offer this training more widely to EMS workers and other non clerical caregivers.

"These are rich opportunities for evangelization," Fr. Anderson says. "A time when people are reminded of the presence of God in the moment and can come closer to a sense of peace and wholeness."

For more information on the ArchCare Chaplaincy program or to make a contribution, contact Minnie Shin at mshin@archcare.org or 646-335-4146. ✱

PAST PRESENT

AL SMITH'S CATHOLIC LEGACY

Chances are you've heard of the Alfred E. Smith Memorial Foundation Dinner, where political, media and business leaders gather once a year to share a meal and raise funds to help needy New Yorkers. Every fourth year, the event makes headlines in a particularly big way as one of the last pre-election meetings of the two major-party presidential candidates, who



Smith served four terms as governor of New York and ran for president in 1928.

exchange good-natured jibes for an evening in support of a worthy cause. At this year's dinner – on the 90th anniversary of Smith's historic run for the presidency – guests were treated to a celebration of his life of faith and service to the people of New York.

Al Smith was born and lived most of his life on Manhattan's Lower East Side. When his father died, Al dropped out of St. James School and went to work at the Fulton Fish Mar-



Smith was heavily involved with Catholic Charities, alongside his friend Patrick Cardinal Hayes.

ket for \$12 a week to help support his family. He never graduated from high school, yet he went on to become one of the most important political leaders in New York history. He served four terms as governor and in 1928 became the first Catholic to run for president as the nominee of a major party.

Smith was known throughout his life as a champion of the poor, the immigrant and the working class. He came to prominence as a young state legislator in the aftermath of the tragic 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist factory fire, spearheading the enactment of 38 new state labor laws that became the model for national labor regulations. In 1928, his presidential campaign unwillingly cast a spotlight on virulent anti-Catholic prejudice throughout the country, as Smith battled the Ku Klux Klan and many others who challenged his ability to lead the United States as a Catholic. Though he lost the race, his proud stance against religious bigotry inspired many and blazed a trail for later Catholic leaders.

Smith's most lasting legacy may be his impact on the culture of charitable giving. "The voluntary act of

giving charity," he said in 1933, "has a spiritual value ... that this country cannot afford to lose." Together with his lifelong friend Patrick Cardinal Hayes, Smith helped build Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York into the powerhouse of compassionate action that it remains today, and the Alfred E. Smith Memorial Foundation, in large part through that famous annual dinner, continues to raise millions of dollars annually for needy children and families. ✱



Al and Katie Smith at a presidential campaign stop in 1928.

NEXT GENERATION

BOLDER AND WISER

The Westchester County Center was vibrating with energy on October 20. The buzz was not about a basketball game or a professional wrestling match or a car show; it was the unmistakable electricity generated when 1,000 teenagers and youth ministers gather to pray, share joys and struggles and perform charity work.

We asked 14-year-old Naia Charland, a ninth grader and aspiring writer at Hunter College High School and a parishioner at St. Charles Borromeo in Harlem, to give us her take on the event.

When I first heard about New York Catholic Youth Day, which our youth ministers urged us to attend in preparation to be confirmed this upcoming year, I have to admit that I was less than thrilled. But the minute I walked into the Westchester County Center, I could tell the day would be nothing like what I had expected. In keeping with the theme of the event, "Be Bold," there were many activities encouraging the youth in attendance to be unafraid and forthcoming about their faith. The program included two main sections for all the participants, a break for lunch, and a Mass at the end of the day celebrated by Cardinal Timothy Dolan. I enjoyed all of it.

During one of the sections, all the attendees took part in a service project. Working in shifts, we packed up more than 71,000 meals to be delivered to hungry people in the African nation of Burkina Faso. It felt unreal that the work we did in our three groups for just an hour each would be able to feed that many. It was truly inspiring.

The other section consisted of separate workshops for the young men and women about how to be bold in our faith. The girls were directed to a theater upstairs, where a beautiful woman named Vanesa Zuleta talked to us about finding God in her life, or rather how God found *her* during one of the hardest times in her life. I would have to say that her presentation is what res-

onated with me the most. I still haven't stopped thinking about it.

I'm really glad that I attended New York Catholic Youth Day. The event definitely encouraged me to "be bold" about my faith and helped me understand that, when others were my age, they too struggled with finding God. I know now that I'm not alone. ✱



Cardinal Dolan at New York Catholic Youth Day.



Naia Charland of St. Charles Borromeo, Harlem.



Mass recessional at day's end.

CULTURE CORNER

For gift-giving season, here is an assortment of volumes for a variety of readers.

God Is Young by Pope Francis, with interviewer Thomas Leoncini. Pope Francis remains a powerful writer on subjects of faith and humanity. Here, he shares his thoughts on and for young people at a pivotal time for the Church and for humankind. *Random House*; \$26

One Goal: A Coach, a Team and the Game That Brought Together a Divided Town by Amy Bass. An influx of Somali Muslim refugees in a Maine town creates an uneasy divide until a high school soccer coach unites his team – and the town – around the beautiful game and values of love and acceptance. *Hachette*; \$28

Biography of Silence by Pablo d'Ors. This Zen-influenced monograph by a Catholic priest, a literary phenomenon in

Spain, gives a fascinating account of his struggle to surrender to quietness in order to free his soul. *Parallax Press*; \$14.95

The Year of Our Lord 1943: Christian Humanism in an Age of Crisis by Alan Jacobs. In the waning days of World War II, some notable Christian writers, including C.S. Lewis, T.S. Eliot and W.H. Auden, warned that technocracy was threatening to overwhelm faith and leave the world vulnerable to amoral forces. Their perspective can illuminate the new crossroads that we face today. *Oxford University Press*; \$29.95

Sacred Space: The Prayer Book 2019 by *The Irish Priests*. Scripture and theology readings for every day of the year, curated and interpreted by priests of the Irish Province of the Society of Jesus. Yes, it's available on the Internet; this is for those who prefer to pray with a book. *Loyola Press*; \$16.95



EVERYDAY HEROES

NO HANDS BUT OURS

*Our parishes and our communities are better places
because of Catholics who devote their lives to service*

We are surrounded by people in need. A mother and child are in need of shelter. A child with a crippling neurological condition requires 24-hour care. A family can't afford school supplies or enough food to get through the week. A widow finds she just can't get over the devastating loss of her husband. A teenager is depressed and suicidal.

The list goes on. An HIV patient needs long-term care. A father learns that his daughter is addicted to opioids. A man learns that his kidneys are failing. A husband recovering from a failed marriage feels that his life is over. It's overwhelming – enough to make a person give up, or turn a blind eye to the suffering of strangers.

In the face of such suffering, New York's Catholic faithful have stood up again and again and said, "Let us help." Through their prayers, their contributions and their service, they reflect the words of Cardinal Dolan,

writing about health care in 2014: "Forced to adapt to the new environment, many ... have said, 'We can't!' We as Catholics say, 'We can and we will!'"

Those whose stories and images appear in the following pages are shining examples to us all. When they

financial, for the ones who devote themselves to the service of others.

"You are the body of Christ. Each one of you is part of it," Saint Paul wrote in his First Letter to the Corinthians (12:27). "If one part suffers, every part suffers with it. If one part

"Christ has no body now but yours. No hands, no feet on Earth but yours. Yours are the eyes through which He looks compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which He walks to do good. Yours are the hands through which He blesses all the world."

– Saint Teresa of Avila

read this, they will protest that they don't deserve to be singled out, that all honor belongs to Jesus and that many others, Christian and non-Christian, are engaged in remarkable works. And, full disclosure: There is considerable positive return, though not

is honored, every part shares in its joy" (12:26). Let us honor these Catholics and share in their joy by supporting their efforts and letting them inspire us to our own acts of mercy and compassion in our community and our world.

FEEDING THE HUNGRY

In this country, 16 million children go to bed hungry each night. Right here in the Archdiocese of New York, more than two million families live below the poverty line and cannot afford adequate nourishment. Many of us help with donations of canned goods or money. Some of us volunteer our time in food pantries or soup kitchens. Then there are those called

to dedicate their lives to fighting hunger, who create and manage the pantries and kitchens, who evangelize and pave the way for others to join in the work. At every level, these workers, supporters and leaders are delivering something that business and government cannot: along with the sustenance of life, they offer the love and mercy of God.

Below: Paul and Linda Zalanowski manage the Deacon Jack Seymour Food Pantry in Newburgh, distributing hundreds of meals a week to families in need and dozens of food-filled backpacks every weekend to schoolchildren who might otherwise go hungry. Working out of a transformed warehouse, more than 100 volunteers pool their efforts to transport, receive, unpack and distribute an array of nutritious foods every Friday and Saturday. (For more, see "Table of Plenty," Archways Fall 2018.)



Above: Volunteers at the pantry unload truckloads of food and begin to prepare them for distribution to the families served.



Students and youth ministers at New York Catholic Youth Day 2018, in White Plains, assembled and boxed for shipment more than 71,469 meals for hunger-plagued Burkina Faso.





GIVING SHELTER

Homelessness in New York has been rising steadily in recent years, and as winter begins, the needs of the homeless intensify. A real solution, if we can craft one, lies in compassionate public policymaking, including a less porous economic safety net and a cultural commitment to social justice. Meanwhile, on our streets, people are suffering, and it is left to the more fortunate to reach out with direct aid whenever and wherever possible. This is a challenging mission: to provide

beds and blankets and a welcoming, safe space to people who have no other place to go. Clients may be facing a spectrum of problems that shelter volunteers cannot address: immigration issues, physical and mental health challenges, family discord of various sorts. It's a complex set of factors introduced into a setting designed to meet basic needs: a roof, a bed, a bit of food. What our homeless brothers and sisters can get from us that they cannot get from a city or county shelter are our prayers and the mercy and grace of our Lord.

At Ascension – Holy Trinity Shelter on Manhattan’s Upper West Side, parishioners provide a safe place to sleep plus supper and breakfast for up to 20 men each Saturday and Sunday night. Shauna Vey (left) is one of several lay leaders of the ministry. More volunteers on the night we visited in November (next page, left column, from top): The Fiaschetti family on kitchen duty, Jim Sherwood setting up beds and Fiona Foley keeping things ship-shape.



Sanding (above) and staining (below) bunk-bed parts at Capuchin Youth and Family Ministries in Garrison.

MAKING THE BED

Every child deserves a bed. That’s a basic tenet of the Capuchin Youth and Family Missions, whose Family and Friends Service Retreat every November brings together dozens of volunteers, youth ministers and Capuchin friars and interns to make bunk beds for kids whose families can’t afford to buy them. At the CYFM retreat center in Garrison, amid the autumn colors on the banks of the Hudson, teenagers work alongside parents to sand and stain bed parts. In the evenings, they participate in prayer, discussions and a presenta-

tion to inform them about the issues faced by families for whom the beds are being built. A week or so later, another team of volunteers delivers the beds and assembles them in the children’s homes. “This mission provides comfortable beds for children who previously had none,” says CYFM Executive Director Tom Brinkmann, “and an essential experience of service and Gospel community for the young people who come together in behalf of needy kids. In the process, our teens begin thinking of their faith as their own, not just their parents’.”



BODY AND SOUL

For 40 years, the Terence Cardinal Cooke (TCC) Health Care Center in Harlem has been serving medically needy people who would otherwise have no place to turn. Managed by ArchCare, the health care service of the Archdiocese of New York, the center houses a 550-bed nursing home, a hospital for children and young adults with severe developmental disabilities, specialized long-term care for people with HIV/AIDS, and a 48-bed unit for care of people with Huntington's and other neurodegenerative diseases.

In addition to a dedicated team of health professionals, a platoon of volunteers helps make life better for the patients at TCC. Rory Kelleher is the coordinator for a group of 60 or so vol-

unteers who pitch in over the course of each year as members or auxiliaries of the Order of Malta – a 900-year-old Catholic lay religious order – helping with Mass every Sunday morning by getting worshippers to the chapel, distributing communion, then getting patients settled back into their rooms again. “It sounds a bit mechanical,” he says, “but in addition to pushing their wheelchairs or steadying the walkers, you are bringing some social interaction to people who can feel very isolated. You very quickly get to know the residents. You’re happy to see them and they’re happy to see you.”

Volunteers also serve an early Thanksgiving dinner and hold a Christmas party for residents. Once a month they host a musical gathering singing chil-

dren’s songs to the kids, and once a year a circus for the children and their families. The TCC team works with the volunteers to organize a band, balloon makers, games, clowns, musical chairs – “or musical wheelchairs,” Kelleher says.

“These children have severe disabilities,” he notes, “and they can’t necessarily show you their response. But once in a while you can see a sparkle in the eye or another barely detectable reaction that makes it all worthwhile.”

To volunteer at Terence Cardinal Cooke Health Care Center, contact Tom McDonald (tmcdonald@arch-care.org; 212-360-1099). To learn more about the Order of Malta or inquire about volunteering as an auxiliary member, contact Rory Kelleher (rorykell@aol.com; 917-602-7885).



At Terence Cardinal Cooke Health Care Center in Harlem. Left: Volunteers with a patient at the annual circus for severely disabled children. Above: Distributing communion during Mass. Below: Order of Malta coordinator Rory Kelleher with a patient.



Jane Dunne at the Church of St. Paul the Apostle in Manhattan.

EMOTIONAL HEALING

For a Catholic, the failure of a marriage can carry not just a devastating sense of loss but also shame and guilt, compounded by the notion that they may no longer be allowed to take communion. “This is not true,” says Jane Dunn, who started a support group for separated/divorced people at St. Paul the Apostle on Manhattan’s West Side that is now in its 20th year. “Jesus still loves them and the Church still welcomes them. In the support group they learn that they are not alone.”

Dunn now leads support groups at a second parish – St. Thomas More on the East Side – while continuing to lead the ministry at St. Paul. “I started in this ministry because I believed I could turn the pain of my own divorce into the joy of helping. It’s a great way to transform and give meaning to your suffering.”

In Orange and Putnam counties, Helen Piltman has also led separated/divorced groups for over 18 years. In 2017, her pastor at St. Thomas of Canterbury / St. Joseph Parish in Cornwall-on-Hudson asked her to start a bereavement group, so she went for training and led her first such group this past summer. “We became a little family after eight weeks. They opened up in ways that really touched my heart,” Piltman says.

Meanwhile, Helen continues to minister to the separated and divorced Catholics at St. John the Evangelist in Goshen. “So now both missions are calling me,” she says. “After so many years, it would be very easy to say I don’t need to do this anymore. But God calls.”

Training for bereavement and separated / divorced ministries is provided by the Family Life Office of the Archdiocese of New York. For more information, visit their website at nyfamilylife.org.



Helen Piltman leads a bereavement group at St. Thomas of Canterbury in Cornwall-on-Hudson and a separated/divorced group at St. John the Evangelist in Goshen.

FAMILY SUPPORT

Families are the heart of the Church. Starting one is among the great joys of life, but there's a lot of effort involved – and inevitably some heartache, too. Volunteers in the family ministry help to fill in the gap when a couple needs help.

Arielle and Lorenz Oberhauser are mainstays of the Archdiocese of New York's marriage prep program, which guides engaged couples to an understanding of the spiritual, emotional and financial issues that they can expect to face in their marriages. Several times a year they lead daylong Pre-Cana sessions for the Family Life Office. "It's very satisfying to watch couples learning to talk to one another about issues like mutual trust,

appropriate sharing and conflicting expectations," says Arielle. "It has made our own marriage stronger, too," Lorenz adds.

"A first-time mom is often nervous and afraid she'll do everything wrong," says Denise Matranga, who has been leading weekly sessions for the Parenting Center of Our Lady of the Assumption in the Bronx for 12 years. "We have presentations about things like how to handle a tantrum, how to make sure your child is eating nutritiously – and the parenting group also works as a network for comparing notes and offering mutual support." The group meets in the church basement, where kids are cared for in a separate play area while the moms

and dads and caregivers get a break. "The parents learn they are not alone in their struggles. They actually learn as much from each other as they do from the presenters," Matranga says. Every December she leads the group in a service project to provide gifts for children at Good Counsel Home, a Bronx shelter for single mothers. "It's completely voluntary, but I've never had a family that didn't participate. We buy the gifts and wrap them up with the kids' names on them. It's something that makes our families feel great – and it moves them toward a life of service."

For details about marriage preparation or parent care, visit the Family Life Office website at nyfamilylife.org.



Above: Lorenz and Arielle Oberhauser at St. Malachy's The Actors Chapel, Manhattan. Right: Denise Matranga guides parents and caretakers at the Parenting Center at Our Lady of the Assumption, Bronx.



Sr. Alice Marie Giordano with members of the UN Connections club at the Academy of St. Ursula, Bronx.

GUIDING THE YOUNG

The next generation of Catholics will have to maintain and strengthen the faith against an ever-intensifying onslaught of technology and negative peer pressure. They are going to need help.

Fortunately, there are dedicated teachers and youth ministers at parishes and Catholic schools around the archdiocese. Parish youth ministers and catechists (religious education teachers) devote themselves to leading the children and teens of a parish toward service and spirituality and away from materialism and self-indulgence by emphasizing the teachings

of Christ and modeling loving Christian behavior.

We can all find inspiration in Sr. Alice Marie Giordano. After more than five decades in education, she continues to inspire the girls of the Academy of St. Ursula in the Bronx as social justice minister. Once a year, she takes the students in her UN Connections group to the United Nations for the International Day of the Girl and for the weeklong meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women, where they meet girls and young women from around the world. These are eye-opening gatherings that help

them put their own lives in perspective, offering a glimpse of a world filled with poverty and injustice but also a sense that they have the power to stand up and make a difference. Group discussions led by Sr. Alice Marie help the students process the experience. "I will never forget what I've learned at the UN and in this club," one of the students says. "It has given me confidence to step up and speak out."

For details about the Office of Youth Ministry of the Archdiocese of New York, go to oymny.org. For information about Catholic schools in the archdiocese, visit catholicschoolsny.org. ✱



At New York Catholic Youth Day, youth ministers from St. Charles Borromeo, Harlem (left) and the Hispanic Catholic Charismatic Center, Bronx (center). Right: Tom Brinkmann, executive director of Capuchin Youth and Family Ministries, Garrison.



Fr. Stephen Ries (left),
Msgr. James Sullivan (center),
Fr. Brian T. McSweeney (right)

PRIESTHOOD NOW

For priests who are just trying to do what they feel they were called to, the past year has been particularly difficult. We asked three parish priests from three generations to tell us about their calling, their lives as clergy and their thoughts on the future.

On a crisp November day, we sat down at the Capuchin Youth Ministry retreat center in Garrison with Msgr. James Sullivan, pastor of St. Martin de Porres, Poughkeepsie; Fr. Brian T. McSweeney, pastor of St. Augustine, Ossining; and Fr. Stephen Ries of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton parish, Shrub Oak. Here is a condensed transcript of what they had to say.

ON BECOMING A PRIEST

Msgr. Sullivan: When I graduated from eighth grade, in 1958, at St. Angela Merici School in the Bronx, there were 37 guys who graduated. Four thought about becoming priests and two went on to be ordained. In those days, it was not unexpected that such would happen at a Catholic elementary school. So it was very easy to think about becoming a priest. At least it was for me.

I grew up in a place where there were lovely priests. There were just great priests at St. Angela, and I grew up with the thought that I might want to be like them.

My beginnings are, I think, very typical of a kid growing up in the south Bronx who was impressed by priests, whom I knew as an altar server. Certainly I grew up in an environment where I never felt that it was anything but appropriate to think about being a priest.

Fr. McSweeney: I started thinking about it in third grade. Catholic grammar school – Sisters of Charity and then the Dominican Sisters of Sparkill. Whenever we had the discussion about what you want to be when you grow up, I always wanted to be the priest. That changed in high school, where the brothers were a great influence, but the focus was to do well so you could get into a good college. Nobody ever asked what do you think God wants you to do. And when I was in college everyone said you have to do well in college so you can get a good job. So I graduated, I got a job, and they said you have to get

an MBA, so I went at night and got an MBA. Got my own place in Scarsdale and had everything the world said was supposed to make you happy. I couldn't figure out what was missing until I realized I had never thought about what God wanted me to do. And I started asking questions about that. Talked to the vocation director of the archdiocese. I think I actually talked to you [*nods toward Msgr. Sullivan*] around that time.

Msgr. Sullivan: Yes.

Fr. McSweeney: And that's when I realized that what would make me fulfilled was to go back to remembering what God wanted me to do. I think Msgr. Sullivan told me at the time to write – I remember very clearly – to write a note to myself about why I felt called to the priesthood, and to seal it, and if I should ever doubt, open it up. It's still sealed in my desk, 30 years later. That's my story.

Fr. Ries: I grew up in the 1980s and 1990s, without that sort of Catholic culture. I went to Catholic grammar school but I never had a religious sister or brother teaching me. I went to high school with the Marianist Brothers at Chaminade, on Long Island. It was really their example of faithfulness, their work with young people, their own dedication, their lives, that made me begin to ask those bigger questions: What is my purpose in life, what does God want for me? I had envisioned myself going off to college, probably getting a degree in business – but I ended up at 18 joining the Marianists.



"[I] had everything the world said was supposed to make you happy. I couldn't figure out what was missing until I realized I had never thought about what God wanted me to do."

I was with the brothers for eight years, I got my degree, I taught, but as I was preparing for final vows, I felt more and more called to the priesthood. So I discerned to leave the brotherhood, and I studied at Douglaston, then Dunwoodie [Saint Joseph's Seminary], and was ordained in 2015. My parents were sort of hesitant yet supportive, which I think is something that a lot of my younger friends in seminary related to, the idea that parents are not maybe as supportive as they once were. Because it's not so much a part of the culture anymore. And I think like any parent, they ultimately wanted their child to be happy.

ON HANDLING THE SORROWS OF PARISHIONERS

Fr. McSweeney: John the XXIII was asked a similar question once: How did he deal with all the challenges in the world? And he said, “Before I go to bed, I say, ‘God, it’s your Church, I’m going to bed.’” I think that’s how it is sometimes.

Msgr. Sullivan: And if each of us were a doctor, lawyer or candlestick maker, wouldn’t we be assisting people in terms of their own sorrows, maybe expressing it somewhat differently than they would to us? Doesn’t the sorrow that you’re dealing with in a person

become an opportunity for you to appreciate how active God is in your life? And please: God is going to touch the life of that person who is coming to you with their own sadness. The moment always presents the challenge to appreciate that the presence of God is made real, hopefully, by our presence.

Fr. Ries: They can teach you only so much in the seminary, and until you confront some of those great challenges – the loss of a child, or having to be with someone at the hospital when they’re dying – you feel in a sense

unworthy of it, because you wonder, what am I going to say, what am I going to do? But it’s in those moments that I feel God’s grace probably the most, because he seems to work in spite of my own frailties or my own struggles. And so much of it is just to be there with the people. They just appreciate having a priest there, to pray with them, to bring some comfort or sense of healing. But there is a sense of unworthiness, a sense in which you just say, I have to leave it in God’s hands and he has to help me through it, because I can’t do it on my own.

“I think the greatest witness we can give the world is to be holy, faithful priests and build up strong parishes. I think that’s the greatest testimony.”

ON OTHER CHALLENGES FACED AS A PRIEST

Msgr. Sullivan: At this part of my life, soon to be 75, the great challenge is, your friends are dying. I don’t want to call it loneliness, but the realization that you are being called into a time of separation, in terms of human relationships. And you begin to take a look at your own fragility and frailty – the arthritis in the legs and the knees become a little more real – and as you anoint people and call them to a realization that there’s no moment in their life that God is not with them, you maybe begin to think a little bit more about this yourself. And you appreciate that now there is going to be

a movement away from being a pastor at age 75, hopefully continuing on in a parish as an associate, but with the realization that – you don’t want to say death is around the corner, but that certainly becomes more and more a focus of your attention. So each epoch has its own challenge. I see now the appreciation of the time spent in priesthood, with great gratitude for it.

Fr. McSweeney: In light of the revelations of the summer: I remember as a newly ordained priest, probably just three years in, I was in Poughkeepsie when a priest was arrested for abusing a young boy. And I remember the challenge when the kids in the parish asked you to go someplace. For instance, I remember a boy was having a karate exhibition at mid-Hudson Civic Center right after the papers announced the arrest, and here you are going to go to one of your kids’ events, and walking down the street as a priest. It was a challenge. You realized who you are, not just as an individual, but what you represent because you wear the Roman collar. That was one of the early challenges, to realize that there are imperfect priests out there, and we have to do the best that we can and continue to do what we are supposed to be doing even though that can be challenging.

Msgr. Sullivan: There was a tradition at the seminary when I was a student, on Thursday night, amateur night, faculty would get up and give a little chitchat for half an hour. I guess it was 1967, and [amid the social upheavals of the 1960s] some priests were just beginning to leave the Church. We certainly knew some of them. Some of them were our heroes. And Fr. Jim Connolly, the liturgy prof, got up and he gave a talk about “Who is the hero?” He talked about the humanity of the priesthood, and ultimately said, “If the pope were to leave tonight, would that destroy my faith? If it does, then my faith is in the wrong person.” And he just kept drawing us back to: “It is in Jesus, it is with Jesus, and it is because of Jesus.” And if there’s anything I remember from Seminary, in a sense, it’s that Thursday night speech.



At the moment it didn’t seem to have an impact. But when you throw it into the context of what we’re all experiencing today ... It’s ultimately a crisis in holiness: that we don’t recognize and realize what we are called to be in terms of our own relationship with Jesus, how it’s constantly a challenge to recognize our weakness and our sinfulness but also find the strength to overcome that which may be weak and sinful. Jim’s reflection with us that night about “There is only one hero, and his name is Jesus” has meant more and more to me as the years have gone on. We all struggle with our relationship with the Lord and its improvement. We say it, we preach it, but if we don’t work at it, guess what?

Fr. Ries: I entered religious life in 2003, a year after Boston [the *Boston Globe* clergy sex abuse exposé] broke. So that was always a reality for me as a priest. I think for the guys who are studying or discerning, it’s always in the back of your mind at this point. It seems like every time we get a step ahead, there’s another headline or another article or something that

“We all struggle with our relationship with the Lord and its improvement. We say it, we preach it, but if we don’t work at it, guess what?”

emerges. I haven’t had any sort of any hostility, but every once in a while if I’m out running an errand, I’ll have a quick conversation with somebody, and they’ll sort of – they’re sort of surprised by the whole thing, that somebody young would be a priest, or why would you want to enter? You have to wonder what are they thinking. I think in everything we do now there’s a little bit of a reflection. Something as simple as, you’re having a ministry meeting with kids, it’d probably be a good idea to have another adult present. It has changed the way that we minister and the way we see our role as pastors or shepherds. I think the greatest witness we can give the world is to be holy, faithful priests and build up strong parishes. I think that’s the greatest testimony.





ON THE JOYS OF BEING A PRIEST

Msgr. Sullivan: I've been blessed over the years in most of the assignments that I've been in, to enjoy living with other priests. Whether it was at the schools where I've taught – Farrell, Spellman, Neumann – or in the house now up at St. Martin's in Poughkeepsie, I've been blessed by knowing that I have the opportunity to live in community with my brother priests. We pray with one another. We console one another. We support one another. I've been blessed by being able to live in that kind of community.

Without that, without the challenge and support of living together, I worry. This is not so much about myself, but the younger priests, who are much more isolated and might end up living

alone at a rectory far from any other priests – that without the challenge and support of living in community, we become the lone rangers and we can lose ourselves in ourselves. Priests are not going to always agree, we have different ideologies, but that never takes away from the common bond of what we do as the priests in a parish, celebrating the goodness of God in our lives touching the lives of other people.

Fr. Ries: I would agree with that 100 percent. I think one of the sad effects of the vocation crisis is that most of my peers envision that at some point we might be alone at a rectory. It is a great worry. Because we are not called to be the Lone Ranger. There's a great bond in our vocation, because

"I've been blessed by knowing that I have the opportunity to live in community with my brother priests. We pray with one another. We console one another. We support one another."

we share the priesthood. It's not ours, it's the priesthood of Christ. As the Bible says, it's not good for a man to be alone. I think it's true for a priest as well. I don't think it's beneficial to have guys isolated.

But getting back to the joy: Before I was ordained, a former student of mine entered the seminary. I didn't know he was entering, and I was just

about to be ordained. And we caught up and he said, "You probably don't remember that you said this in freshman year religion, but I never forgot." And this just showed – wow – not only was someone actually paying attention in class, but that God can work through me and bring about something very powerful. Someone comes up after a sacrament and says thank you for bringing me to the church, thank you for hearing my confession, or somebody says, "Father, I've always struggled with that Gospel reading and you explained it to me in your homily." To see people get it – to begin to understand, start to comprehend – that always is very powerful, when you can see God working and God's insight coming to someone else.

Fr. McSweeney: I would echo that sentiment. I taught five years of high school, and one of the most chal-

lenging things is to teach morality to 16-year-olds. But one of my former students, right after high school, entered the convent. And – not that you take any credit for it – but helping not only to educate them through class but also to spiritually direct some of the students ... there's a lot of joy there to know that they got it. She's been a sister now for over 25 years, and I remember when she was a freshman in high school. There's a lot of joy there.

Msgr. Sullivan: My biggest joy, no matter what I did, was, to use a Pope Francis word, to accompany guys in terms of their journey to the priesthood. And I've been lucky because I've been in positions as vocation director to be able to do that, and maybe a little bit to continue doing it with some of the seminarians in the summer. As somebody said, as priests we're not going to be biologically transcendent by

passing on life in terms of our physical genes – but maybe our "spiritual genes" are going to touch the life of somebody to make them think about a vocation.

And one of our great fears is: Is the media now so impacting the message that it can't even be heard? That what we're saying about ourselves or about what we perceive to be the goodness and the joy of the priesthood doesn't seem to even get through? If there's a sin – and there are many of them, in terms of the epoch that we're experiencing now and the issues that some of our brothers have brought us to – you wonder if it's that it's given the enemies the opportunity to put up that sound screen, so that the young person who is contemplating any aspect of discipleship is beginning to wonder, "Well, are they all frauds, is this whole thing a fraud?"

ON HOPES FOR THE FUTURE OF THE PRIESTHOOD

Fr. McSweeney: I was at a dinner last week with the Knights of Columbus for Westchester-Putnam, raising money for the seminary. Fr. Cleary, who teaches scripture at the seminary, gave a talk, and he mentioned how remarkable it is to see young men today, with all that's going on, still coming to be priests. He told us about a nun who came to speak at the seminary recently and reminded them of 9/11. She said that when the nation was under attack and everybody was fleeing the World Trade Center, there were those who went in to help, to save lives. She said "The Church is under attack, and you're the guys who are going in." And for me it was beautiful imagery of how heroic it must be for young men today, with all of the challenges that our nation and our church are going through, to say they're going to go ahead and do it, because that's where lives have to be saved, that's where souls have to be saved, that's where God's calling me to go. I give them a lot of credit.

Fr. Ries: In spite of all the problems that we mentioned, I'm a very hopeful person, and I believe it's Christ's church, and He's going to continue to see us through. And if there is this period of storm and difficulty, God willing, good is going to come from it, whether in the form of vocations or people coming back to the Church.

Msgr. Sullivan: And maybe when we think that He's gone to sleep, it's just a reminder to us to wake up more. I'm with you. My own guess is that, rising up among us, there are men and women who are going to be able to say to themselves, "I believe, and I believe that God is going to use me to allow His light and love to become a reality in my generation." If we don't believe that, then we've thrown out more than the baby with the bathwater. I think we have to hold on to that tenaciously. ❖



"There's a great bond in our vocation, because we share the priesthood. It's not ours, it's the priesthood of Christ."

SAYING YES TO CHRIST

The stories of three people who have elected to become Catholic this Easter



The Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens at St. Francis de Sales, Manhattan.

Photo © Stephanie Massaro Photography

For most Catholics, the word *baptism* evokes the image of a baby cradled in its mother's arms beside the baptismal font. *First communion* calls to mind seven- and eight-year-olds lined up in suits and white dresses, receiving the Eucharist as cameras flash. And *confirmation* conjures those same children as teenagers, filing forward in their best attire to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Not all Catholics, however, receive baptism as babies, first communion as grade-schoolers and confirmation as teens. For a variety of reasons, some are

called to the faith as adults, and when this happens, the Church and its parish communities welcome them through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA).

Many Catholics have witnessed RCIA ceremonies during mass: the Rite of Acceptance, usually in autumn, when the Catholics-to-be are introduced to their congregations and all pledge to support them in their journey; and the receiving of the sacraments at the Easter vigil, when they are fully initiated. These are occasions of joy for a parish.

This year, *Archways* is following the progress of three adults in the archdi-

ocese who are on the path toward initiation as Catholics. Each of them has passed through the *inquiry* phase, during which they discern their calling to the Church, and all are now in the period known as the *catechumenate*, receiving intensive instruction. (For a more detailed description of the RCIA process, see *Forum*, page 5.) Their stories are a reminder to all Catholics that our faith remains a beacon to the world and that, when we stand together in love, we have the power to spread peace and joy and give support to our sisters and brothers.

St. Francis de Sales, Manhattan

Jayne Porcelli, RCIA Coordinator | Michelle Lai, catechumen

"I was raised without religion," says Michelle Lai, a medical student in Manhattan. "My parents grew up in China during the Cultural Revolution, during a time when the government made it illegal for people to practice religion. When they came to this country, there was a local Christian family that helped them a lot, so I was raised with good values, but we did not belong to a faith. It was a part that was always missing."

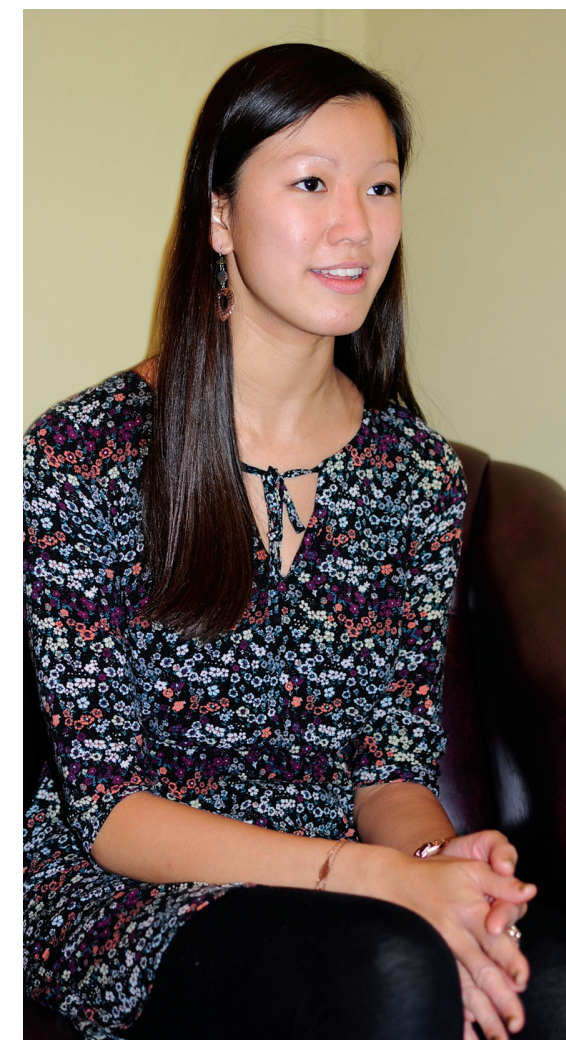
Several years ago, before moving to New York for medical school, Michelle started dating a Catholic man and saw how compassionate the community was. "I have loving people in my life now who are Catholic," she says.

"When my family came to visit me in New York, I brought them to the church, and they loved it."

Though very busy with her studies, Michelle looks forward to living out the teachings of Jesus in her future career. "Once I'm finished my course work, I will do a residency and choose my specialty – perhaps pediatrics," she says. "Clearly my chosen profession, medicine, is about helping people, and I want to bring faith to that. In med school a lot of my peers are cynical and don't have a faith, which makes medicine very dehumanizing. Coming to this Church and talking to people who are devoted to service, I've been able to rehumanize the science of medicine."



Coordinator Jayne Porcelli (right) discussing the RCIA process with a catechumen at St. Francis de Sales.



"In a troubled time in the Church, I want to bring the message, so people can see someone who wants to join."

Our Lady of Pity, Staten Island

Vincent Violetta, RCIA Coordinator | Patricia Moyse, catechumen

“I had no religion,” says **Patricia Moyse** of Staten Island. “My family is Catholic, but I did not receive baptism or the other sacraments. My parents were not big on it, and they gave me the choice.”

Patricia was interested in the Church, even drawn to it, but didn’t actively pursue it. “I used to attend Mass with a friend who was making her sacraments,” she recalls. “I used to go to keep her company and also because something

about it was just appealing to me.” She also attended Mass with a cousin from time to time, and it was this cousin who eventually urged her to join. “I’ve gone to the parish for years, just not as a member of the Church.” Now she says she is “easing into the membership and the community. I do feel a growing connection with the people.”

“What I find satisfying about RCIA is the conversations,” Patricia says.

“We read the Bible and discuss the readings. We’ve done readings about family, about relationships, about self-improvement, and the discussions have been very good. I can understand the Mass now to get to a spiritual connection with God.”

“I don’t really know how to talk about religion yet,” she says. “I have not been a very religious person. But I’m becoming one.”



“I see my life being changed quite a bit. I’m seeing more good come out of myself by helping others.”

St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta Parish, Newburgh

Sandy Corsetti, RCIA Coordinator | James Irvin, candidate

“I’m looking for that spiritual connection,” says **James Irvin** of New Windsor. “That’s what’s been missing in my life. I wasn’t receiving it in the Protestant church, to the point where I wasn’t really going to church. But with RCIA class I’m learning to get more in touch with Christ.”

James, a building engineer at the Castle Point VA hospital, served in the Navy from 1974 to 1976. He subsequently struggled with alcoholism but found Alcoholics Anonymous in 2006. “If it wasn’t for them, I wouldn’t

be where I’m at today,” he says. One of the tenets of the Twelve Step philosophy is that the alcoholic cannot hope to stay sober without the help of a higher power. “I’ve been searching for it, and now I believe I’ve found it.”

In 2016, James became engaged to Mirna Ferreris Cruz, a devout practicing Catholic. They thought that they would have to be wed by a justice of the peace until Father Bejoy Thomas, parochial vicar at Sacred Heart Church in Newburgh, suggested they talk to Sandy Corsetti, coordinator of the parish

RCIA. “Sandy said we can get married in the Church, which we did. Before we got married I got involved in the RCIA, and I’ve been doing it ever since.”

Because he was baptized as a Presbyterian, James will not receive the sacrament of baptism. At the Easter Vigil Mass, he will make a profession of faith and receive Eucharist and confirmation, and thus be fully initiated into the Church. “I see my life being changed quite a bit,” he says. “I’m seeing more good come out of myself by helping others.” ✱



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: The RCIA team at St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta parish, Newburgh; Patricia Moyse, a catechumen at Our Lady of Pity on Staten Island, with RCIA coordinator Vincent Violetta; leading a discussion at St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta parish; RCIA coordinator Sandy Corsetti with candidate James Irvin.



EVENTS

ADULT FAITH FORMATION

Enlighten: Shed light on your faith through online courses!

Classes start Tuesday, January 22

A joint program of the archdiocese and Fordham University's Graduate School of Religion and Religious Studies. *For a limited time, courses are free.* Register at: www.nycatholicfaith.org/learn

CARDINAL'S ANNUAL STEWARDSHIP APPEAL

Regional Reception in Staten Island
Wednesday, January 30 | 6:00 p.m.

Contact: kelly.lati@archny.org

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Touring Tuesdays

Tuesdays through April

Open houses at 130 Catholic schools.

Visit: www.catholicschoolsny.org/admissions

Catholic Schools Week

January 27 – February 2

Celebrating faith-based learning through various events and activities.

FAMILY LIFE

Common Sense Parenting Class

Biweekly (Wednesdays)

January 9 – April 10

6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Immaculate Conception | Tuckahoe

Exploring effective, practical parenting strategies that teach positive behaviors. \$30 includes book, workbook. Contact: Sue DiSisto (646-794-3191 | susan.disisto@archny.org) or Sister Cora Lombardo (914-961-1076 | sr.cora@icaparish.org)

Wine and cheese gathering:

Looking at the Mystery of Our Marriage

Friday, February 8 | 7:00 p.m.

Saint Joseph's Seminary | Yonkers

A gathering for couples married in 2018, with a talk by Fr. Matthew Ernest, followed by fellowship, a Q&A and small groups. Contact: Joan Brisson (646-794-3190 | joan.brisson@archny.org)

Emmaus Ministry for Grieving Parents (Spanish language)

Saturday, February 9

9:30 a.m. – 7:30 p.m.

St. John – Visitation Pastoral Center | Bronx

Serving the spiritual needs of parents whose children of any age have died by any cause, no matter how long ago. Contact: Sue DiSisto (susan.disisto@archny.org | 646-794-3191) Register at: www.emfgp.org/2019-archny

OFFICE OF HISPANIC MINISTRY

All Masses listed take place at St. Patrick's Cathedral. For more information, visit facebook.com/hispanicministryny, email hispanic.ministry@archny.org or call 212-371-1000 ext. 2981.

Las Tradicionales Mañanitas a Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe (Mexico)

Tuesday, December 11 | 7:00 p.m.

Our Lady of Guadalupe Youth and Family Masses (Mexico)

Wednesday, December 12 | 10:00 a.m.

(Youth Mass), 7:00 p.m. (Family Mass)

Mass in honor of Our Lady of Nube (Ecuador)

Sunday, December 16 | 2:00 p.m.

Mass in honor of Cristo de Esquipulas (Guatemala)

Sunday, January 6 | 2:00 p.m.

Mass in honor of Our Lady of Altigracia (Dominican Republic)

Sunday, January 13 | 2:00 p.m.

Mass in honor of Our Lady of Suyapa (Honduras)

Sunday, February 3 | 4:00 p.m.

OFFICE OF LITURGY

Singing at Mass for Deacons Workshop

Saturday, February 23 | 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

St. Joseph's Seminary | Yonkers

Presenter: Dr. Jennifer Donelson, DMA, Professor and Director of Sacred Music, St. Joseph's Seminary

Register at: nyliturgy.org/workshops

RESPECT LIFE

NY Pilgrim Mass at the March for Life

Friday, January 18 | 10:30 a.m.

St. Patrick's Church | Washington, D.C.

Celebrant: Timothy Cardinal Dolan

Prayer Vigil for Life

Tuesday, January 22 | 6:30 p.m.

St. Patrick's Cathedral | Manhattan

Marking the 46th anniversary of the legalization of abortion, this event will begin with a Catholic Underground-style Holy Hour, followed by Mass at 7:30 p.m.

Advent Day of Reflection for Women on "Hope and Expectation"

Saturday, December 22 | 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

St. Vincent Ferrer Lower Church | Manhattan

Fr. Joseph Koterski, SJ, and the Sisters of Life will offer reflections. \$25 registration fee (includes lunch) payable at the door. RSVP: 212-721-4507 | nolan.jacqueline29@gmail.com

Feminine Genius Brunch

February / March 2019 | Staten Island

Sr. Virginia Joy will give a talk on the beauty of the feminine heart and the distinct attributes of women. Time and place to be announced at: www.lifeofficenyc.org



SHEEN CENTER

18 Bleecker Street, Manhattan
sheencenter.org | 212-925-2812

Faith and Duty: New York's Chaplains in World War I

Through December 15 | The Gallery

Focusing on chaplain priests from the Archdiocese of New York, this exhibit explores religion on the battlefields of the First World War.

Faith and Duty: The Role of Spirituality in Times of War

Saturday, December 15 | 4:00 p.m.

Black Box Theater

A panel discussion of academics, religious and military on the intersection of religion and war.

All Is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914

Through December 30 | Loreto Theater

Out of the violence, a silence, then a song. A German soldier steps into "No Man's Land" singing *Stille Nacht*, beginning an extraordinary night of camaraderie, music and peace.

Annual Fulton Sheen Lecture

Sunday, December 9 | 1:00 p.m.

Loreto Theater

Come celebrate the life and legacy of Archbishop Fulton Sheen! This year's speakers are Msgr. Hilary Franco and Alexis Walkenstein.

Olivier Messiaen:

Vingt regards sur l'enfant-Jésus

Monday, December 10 | 7:30 p.m.

Loreto Theater

Five distinguished pianists perform Olivier Messiaen's monumental and profound *Vingt regards sur l'enfant Jésus* ("Twenty Gazes on the Infant Jesus").



LÚNASA: Christmas from Ireland with Special Guest Ashley Davis

Tuesday, December 11 | 7:30 p.m.

Loreto Theater

Hosted by Lúnasa's renowned flute player and teller of tall stories, Kevin Crawford.

Author's Night:

Jonah Goldberg

Wednesday, December 12 | 7:00 p.m.

Black Box Theater

Jonah Goldberg, author of *Suicide of the West*, makes the timely case that democracies must find the will to defend the values and institutions that sustain freedom.

Radical Love:

Catholic Women Speak

Thursday, December 13 | 7:00 p.m.

Black Box Theater

Join authors Leah Libresco Sargeant, Eve Tushnet and Kerry Weber for a vivid discussion on the Church today.

A Sheen Center Christmas with Jamie Parker

Monday, December 17 | 7:00 p.m.

Loreto Theater

Choirs from the Christian Cultural Center, St. Stephen of Hungary School and Times Square Church will sing carols; Tony Award nominee Jamie Parker will read "A Visit From St. Nicholas."

Civility in America: On Campus

Tuesday, December 18 | 7:00 p.m.

Loreto Theater

Princeton professors Robert P. George and Cornel West, a conservative and a liberal, discuss the importance of freedom of speech in the search for truth.

Ah, Wilderness!

January 25 – February 17 | Loreto Theater

Presented by Blackfriars Repertory Theatre and The Storm Theatre, a classic Eugene O'Neill comedy about the trials and tribulations of a young man and his family in a small Connecticut town on July 4, 1906.

YOUNG ADULT OUTREACH

December Young Adult Mass

Wednesday, December 5

St. Patrick's Cathedral | Manhattan

6:30 p.m.: Confession and adoration

7:30 p.m.: Mass

Contact: kaitlyn.colgan@archny.org

Marian Consecration Event

Wednesday, December 12

Contact: kaitlyn.colgan@archny.org

New to NYC Meetup

Thursday, December 13 | 7:00 p.m.

1011 First Ave. | Manhattan

7th Floor

Enjoy free pizza and get connected to the New York Catholic young adult community.

Register at: maryelise.zellmer@archny.org

New Year's Eve Multi-Parish Bash

Monday, December 31 | 9:00 p.m.

St. Malachy's The Actor's Chapel

Manhattan

This event is 21+. Tickets \$80.

Contact: youngadults@actorschapel.org

John 3:17 Advent Celebration

Monday, December 10 | 7:00 p.m.

Immaculate Conception Church

Manhattan

Join men and women of all Christian backgrounds for a night of prayer and fellowship, with praise and worship led by Matt Maher and David Gungor.

Hispanic Christmas Party

Saturday, December 15

Auditorium Santiago Rubio

Manhattan

A night of joy, music, food, dancing and a little wine. Bring your Christmas hat and ID. Tickets \$20.

Christmas

Planning to stay in the city for Christmas? Email kaitlyn.colgan@archny.org and we'll connect you to other Catholic young adults who want to share a Christmas meal together!

March for Life

Friday, January 18 | Washington, D.C.

Join other young adults to march and pray for life. Must be 18 or older. Tickets at yamarchforlife2019.eventbrite.com; \$50.

Contact: christy.vaissade@archny.org

January Young Adult Mass

Wednesday, January 9

St. Patrick's Cathedral | Manhattan

6:30 p.m.: Confession and adoration

7:30 p.m.: Mass

Contact: kaitlyn.colgan@archny.org

February Young Adult Mass

Wednesday, February 6

St. Patrick's Cathedral | Manhattan

6:30 p.m.: Confession and adoration

7:30 p.m.: Mass

Contact: kaitlyn.colgan@archny.org

YOUTH FAITH FORMATION / YOUTH MINISTRY

Youth Ministers' Meetup

Saturday, January 19

10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

St. Joseph's Seminary | Yonkers

Leaders in youth ministry share information, resources and planning strategies.

Visit: www.oymny.org/ymmeetup

SAVE THE DATE

The Catholic Charities Gala

Thursday, April 4

American Museum of Natural History

Email: anne.macgillivray@archny.org

32nd Annual Cardinal's Open

Monday, May 13

Winged Foot Golf Club | Mamaroneck

Email: anne.macgillivray@archny.org

Archways

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