

Branches on the Vine

NEWS FROM THE ARCHDIOCESE OF HARTFORD

SEPTEMBER 26 - OCTOBER 2, 2026

Cathedral of St. Joseph Hosts 12th Annual Lourdes in a Day *Pilgrimage of the Sick*

- Story by Shelley Wolf

Catholics in Connecticut, who may be struggling with physical or mental illness or facing a tough medical diagnosis, had the opportunity right here in Hartford to wash in the healing waters that St. Bernadette discovered in Lourdes, France.

This year, those who could not make a trip to Lourdes were welcomed for the first time to the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Hartford for the 12th annual "Lourdes in a Day Pilgrimage of the Sick," which drew Catholics from throughout the state.

"This is our first year at the Cathedral and we're thrilled to be here," said Bob O'Hara, area chair of the Order of Malta. He noted the increasingly popular annual event, which drew 250 people last year, outgrew its former location at St. Peter Claver Church in West Hartford, necessitating a move to the Cathedral. "We have 300 people registered today."

"It's gaining traction all over the United States," added Mark Sullivan, a member of Malta, who founded Lourdes in a Day in Connecticut with his wife more than a decade ago.

This popular annual event in support of the sick offers the grace and healing power of Lourdes by asking for Our Lady's intercession. The Lourdes in a Day Pilgrimage is hosted by the Order of Malta, which is devoted to Christian virtue and charity by serving the sick and the poor.

Throughout the day, the Knights and Dames of Malta, dressed in red and white, provided hospitality by guiding and assisting the attendees at the Cathedral.



Gina Raymond, a Dame of Malta, offers water for washing from Lourdes, France, during the 12th annual "Lourdes in a Day Pilgrimage of the Sick" at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Hartford. PHOTO BY AARON JOSEPH

This year's event also included Archbishop Christopher J. Coyne, the archbishop of Hartford, as the principal celebrant and homilist for Mass; Bishop Richard F. Reidy, the bishop of Norwich; Bishop Emeritus Peter Rosazza, also a chaplain emeritus of Malta; and Father Joseph MacNeill, a current deputy chaplain for Malta. Additionally, numerous archdiocesan priests dispensed the sacraments.

The day's activities captured the spirit of one of the world's most popular pilgrimage sites, where in 1858 as a teenager St. Bernadette Soubirous encountered the Blessed Virgin Mary, who told her to drink and wash of the waters there. Today, Lourdes is a place of Church-recognized miracles and a place that provides inner peace.

During the full-day event in Hartford, pilgrims had the opportunity to receive numerous sacraments and blessings. The day began with reconciliation and praying the rosary using Malta-distributed rosaries. Attendees also washed their hands or blessed themselves with water from Lourdes, attended Mass with the archbishop and bishops, received the Anointing of the Sick, and listened to soothing live music.

After a complimentary lunch, the day's spiritual offerings extended to time for Adoration, a Blessing of the Sick and Benediction.

During his homily, Archbishop Coyne shared Mark's Gospel story of the disciples in their boat in a stormy sea, crying out to Jesus. "Maybe you feel exhausted or frightened. Or maybe you feel abandoned. Many violent storms within us cause us to cry out in need," Archbishop Coyne said.

It might be cancer, heart disease, blindness, the infirmity of old age, or the emotional turmoil of caretaking for others, he noted, that make people feel tempest tossed.

"Jesus did not abandon the disciples. Jesus and the disciples were literally in the same boat," the archbishop stressed, and the Lord calmed the winds and the seas. "By your faith in him, may you experience peace. Your illness will not have the final word. You are in the same boat, and together you will weather the storm."



Upcoming Events



SEPTEMBER 29 @ 7:30PM
PAUL FEY IN CONCERT AT THE CATHEDRAL
Cathedral of Saint Joseph, Hartford

Experience the Cathedral of Saint Joseph as you've never seen—or heard—it before.

German organist and composer Paul Fey, a rising international presence with a worldwide following on YouTube, comes to Hartford for a special evening of organ and choral music at the Cathedral.

The concert brings together the artistry of Fey at the Cathedral's magnificent organ, the voices of the Cathedral Schola Cantorum, and a specially conceived lighting design by Ryan Glista, transforming the Cathedral's soaring architecture through music, light, and color.

Come experience one of Hartford's great sacred spaces in an entirely different guise for an immersive evening of music and light.



OCTOBER 9 @ 6PM
MASS OF HEALING
St. Peter Church, Torrington

Experience the Power of Healing — In these challenging times, many of us carry burdens — be it physical ailments like cancer and kidney disease, emotional struggles like depression, anxiety, PTSD and grief, or spiritual battles. **YOU'RE NOT ALONE.** Reconnect, find solace, and embrace the healing powers of our divine physician, Jesus Christ.

A special Healing Mass with anointing of the sick will be celebrated Friday, October 9, 6:00 pm, by Rev. Emmanuel Ihemedu, pastor of St. John Paul the Great Parish in Torrington. The evening begins with the Divine Mercy Chaplet followed by the Mass. Let's come together, share our stories, and experience the transformative power of faith. Remember, Jesus is still in the business of healing. We can't wait to see you there!



OCTOBER 2 @ 5:30PM - 7PM
THOUSAND MAN MARCH
Holy Land USA, Waterbury

The Thousand Man March is a Christian men's gathering at Holy Land USA. It promises an inspiring evening of worship, fellowship, and messages from local pastors, with a peaceful silent walk along the prayer trail. Since seating and parking are limited, you'll want to bring a portable chair and carpool if you can. You can grab some Frankie's Hot Dogs with all proceeds supporting Holy Land USA!



OCTOBER 15 @ 7:30PM - 8:30PM
HUMAN DIGNITY IN THE AGE OF AI
Franciscan Life Center, San Damiano Room at the Chiara Center, Meriden

Amidst growing concerns about artificial intelligence and where it is taking us, the Church offers a balanced path forward. AI can be a powerful tool and a benefit to our world—if it is guided by the right moral compass. In this presentation, we will explore Pope Leo XIV's landmark encyclical, Magnifica Humanitas. Together, we will examine what is at stake morally and socially for the human person, and discuss how we can help steer the global development of AI for the true good of humanity. Free to attend and reception to follow. Call **203.237.8084** or visit flcenter.org to register.



OCTOBER 3 @ 5PM
TRANSITUS OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI READING
Prince of Peace Parish, St. Teresa of Avila Church, Woodbury

Join the Rosa Mystica Fraternity of Secular Franciscans for the beautiful Franciscan tradition following the 4PM Mass at St Teresa of Avila Church.

The Transitus is a reading of St. Francis's passage from Earthly Life, through Death, into Eternal Life. A celebration of hope, resurrection, and the promise that our lives are merely changed, not ended. Following the reading, all will be treated to almond cookies St. Francis's



OCTOBER 17 @ 4PM
MARY OF THE AMERICAS / MARÍA EN LAS AMÉRICAS
The Shrine of María Reina de la Paz, Hartford

Mary of the Americas is an Archdiocesan multicultural Marian celebration that brings together Hispanic Catholic communities and participating parishes from across the Archdiocese of Hartford. The event will include the Holy Rosary and a bilingual Holy Mass, followed by cultural and gastronomic presentations representing various countries of the Americas. Through prayer, faith, music, and cultural traditions, the celebration honors the Blessed Virgin Mary while highlighting the unity and diversity of the Church. All are welcome!

2026 ARCHBISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL

As of today, **16.61%** of all Archdiocesan parishioners raised **\$10 million** for our Archdiocesan ministries.
Imagine the difference if one in four parishioners joined in.
Help us reach **26%** participation in 2026!!



WE ARE  NE

www.archdioceseofhartford.org/appeal