

Branches on the Vine

NEWS FROM THE ARCHDIOCESE OF HARTFORD

JULY 25 - 31, 2026

New Tabernacle Opens Door to *Honor God*

- Story by Joe Pisani

Throughout the day, Father Jaime Maldonado sees people kneel and pray before the tabernacle in Sacred Heart Church of Southbury, a place for people to sit in silence in the presence of Jesus Christ.

Father Maldonado, the pastor of Midd-South Catholic, the Roman Catholic Parish of Middlebury and Southbury, was in search of a new tabernacle for Sacred Heart Church. The project was completed earlier this year when Jesus received a “beautiful home where we reserve the most precious gift we have — the Blessed Sacrament,” he says.

“This was a very important decision because the tabernacle is the centerpiece of our church. We have God, himself, choosing to remain present with us in the Eucharist — the Body and Blood of Christ — and we have a place where we can encounter him.”

Father Maldonado searched for a tabernacle that would match the modern decor of Sacred Heart Church and finally found a brass cylindrical one with a dome top through Adrian Hamers Inc. of Larchmont, N.Y., a company that specializes in liturgical art and church interiors.

The new tabernacle, which has a Celtic cross on the door and a crown on the top, had been at another parish. To match the furnishings of Sacred Heart Church, the pastor had it nickel-plated and mounted on a base of Vermont Verde Serpentine, which is a dark green metamorphic rock only found in a quarry in the Green Mountains. The base matches the church's altar and baptismal font.

The tabernacle resides in an open area to the right of the altar and is surrounded by chairs and kneelers where the faithful can meditate and pray.



Father Jaime Maldonado, pastor of Midd-South Catholic Parish, kneels in front of the new tabernacle at Sacred Heart Church in Southbury. The tabernacle resides in an open area to the right of the altar and is surrounded by chairs and kneelers for meditation and prayer. PHOTO BY AARON JOSEPH

“To preserve the intended design of the church,” Father Maldonado says, “we wanted the new tabernacle to look as if it was always meant to be here.” The church's former tabernacle, which has two glass sides, will be used as a reliquary. Another advantage of the new tabernacle, the pastor adds, is that it is “made of solid and inviolable material and cannot be removed.”



The new nickel-plated tabernacle at Sacred Heart Church of Southbury has a Celtic cross on the door. PHOTO BY AARON JOSEPH

“The Church has said we have a responsibility to protect Our Lord Jesus Christ to the best extent possible, just as Our Lady nurtured Jesus and protected him as a child,” Father Maldonado says. “The Blessed Virgin Mary was given the mission to keep Jesus safe, even though he was an all-powerful king and the second person of the Blessed Trinity. The son of God was born a child and had to be nurtured and protected. The Eucharist is the same person.”

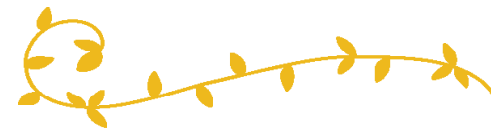
A spiritual benefit of the tabernacle is found in its beauty, he adds. “God is beauty. His attributes are truth, beauty and goodness, and to the extent that we can see something beautiful as an expression of God, we are led to him and transcended.”

The tabernacle has been well received by parishioners.

“It holds Christ himself, and is not to be taken lightly,” Father Maldonado says. “We should do our best to honor him, to pray to him, to appeal to him and to protect him in the tabernacle. And our job as Catholics is to lead other people to Jesus in the Eucharist.”



Upcoming Events



JUNE 4 - AUGUST 27 @ 6 - 8PM
**SUMMER ALPHA YOUNG
ADULT GROUP**
St. Margaret Mary Church,
Rector's Basement, South Windsor

Welcome to all people ages 18 to 39 years old. Join us for food, friendship, faith, and fun, every Thursday throughout the summer! Every week we share pizza, watch faith-based videos, and participate in small group discussions. If you have any questions, text 860-816-6149. Our welcoming group would love to have you join us!



AUGUST 13 - 16
UNIQUE BOUTIQUE TAG SALE
St. Teresa Of Calcutta Parish,
St. Bridget Church, Manchester

Come join and explore at the St. Bridget Church Tag Sale! On Thursday, August 13th from 5pm - 8pm admission fee is \$10.00. Thursday admission includes wine and cheese while you shop. Admission Friday, August 14th from 4pm - 8pm is \$1. Admission on Saturday, August 15th from 9am - 4pm is free. Admission on Sunday, August 16th from 9am - 11am is free.

Items for sale include furniture, books, jewelry, collectibles, toys, hardware, artwork, household items, linens, glassware, sporting goods, holiday items, crafts, stationery, gardening supplies, luggage, pocket books and much more!



AUGUST 6 - 8 @ 5PM - 10PM
**HOLY ROSARY'S ANNUAL
ITALIAN FESTIVAL**
Our Lady of the Valley Parish,
Holy Rosary Church, Ansonia

Our Annual Italian Festival offers wonderful Italian food, featuring our handmade meatballs, lasagna, pasta e fagioli, porchetta, fried calamari, fried dough and more! Don't forget to grab some Italian pastries for dessert! Enjoy live music, dancing, raffles, and fun for the kids. Bring your family and friends and your appetite!



JULY 24 - 26 @ 7PM
**TRIDUUM IN HONOR OF GOOD
SAINT ANN**
Blessed Michael McGivney Parish,
St. Michael Church, New Haven

The Saint Ann Society would like to invite you to the annual Triduum in honor of good Saint Ann. The dates of the Triduum will be July 24th, 25th, and 26th (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday) at 7:00pm. The Triduum begins with two nights of rosary and prayers invoking the intercession of Saint Ann. The third and concluding night is a Mass with a reception afterward. Please extend this invitation to anyone whom you feel may benefit from this experience or just wants to join us. Also, we are always actively looking for women who may want to become new members of the St. Ann Society.



JULY 29 @ 5:30PM
**HOLY HOUR TO PRAY FOR THE
END OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING**
All Saints - Todos Los Santos Parish,
The Shrine of St. Anne, Waterbury

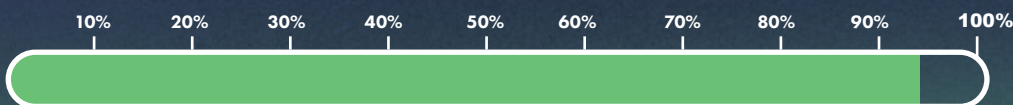
Human trafficking is a grave offense against the God-given dignity of every person. An estimated 27 million women, men, and children worldwide are exploited through sex and labor trafficking.

The Human Trafficking Task Force of the Archdiocese of Hartford invites you to a bilingual Eucharistic Holy Hour to pray for victims and survivors of human trafficking, and for an end to this exploitation. This service, to be held on the eve of World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, will be in English and Spanish.

Following the Holy Hour, attendees are welcome to stay for the Parish's daily Mass at 6:30 P.M. or to speak with Task Force members about ways to support awareness, prevention, and survivor assistance through this important ministry.

2026 ARCHBISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL

Scan the QR code to learn how you can make a lasting impact!



Total Goal: \$10M 95.35% as of 7/13/26

\$9,534,606.01 in pledges from 26,316 generous donors

**This figure does not include bequests given to
the Archbishop's Annual Appeal*



**WE ARE
ONE**

www.archdioceseofhartford.org/appeal