

Branches on the Vine

NEWS FROM THE ARCHDIOCESE OF HARTFORD

OCTOBER 10 - 16, 2026

Monthly Luncheons in Waterbury Keep Older Adults Connected to *One Another*

- Story by Karen A. Avitabile

Sisters Lucille and Marie Therrien wanted to help older adults in their parish community stay in touch with one another while enjoying a good meal at the same time.

For nearly four decades, various groups within St. Michael the Archangel Church in Waterbury have been involved with sponsoring a luncheon for older parishioners.

About eight years ago, Marie decided to restart the lunch for mature parishioners with the help of her sister. This monthly gathering, which is open to parishioners of Immaculate Conception Parish, has expanded significantly and now draws an average of 100 people each month.

"We have fun doing it and people enjoy the food," Lucille says. "People look forward to it."

The sisters, former residents of Waterbury, now reside in Wolcott and generously sponsor the lunch gatherings for guests. With assistance from volunteers, they handle the shopping, prepare the meal, coordinate catering if needed and help to serve it.

The volunteers also assist by setting up the church hall for the lunches by arranging tables, chairs, tablecloths, napkins, plates, cups and utensils.



Marie and Lucille Therrien, standing left to right, sponsor a monthly luncheon for older parishioners of Immaculate Conception Parish in Waterbury. They enjoy spending some time with the guests too. PHOTO BY KAREN A. AVITABILE

On a recent Wednesday, guests enjoyed a meal of ziti, meatballs, salad and bread followed by cookies and ice cream for dessert. Volunteers and guests usually bring the desserts to share.

Parishioner and Waterbury resident Donna Marburger is a regular volunteer. "It's a way of serving the church family and God," she says. "I help out wherever Marie needs me. I love this community here."

Guests say they enjoy getting together to meet up with friends and their parish community.

Jim Robinson has been attending the luncheons for about a year. "We had heard about it and people said we needed to come," he says. "It's nice to get together."

Father James Sullivan, rector of Immaculate Conception Parish,

and Auxiliary Bishop Juan Miguel Betancourt offer a blessing over the food and often dine with the parishioners.

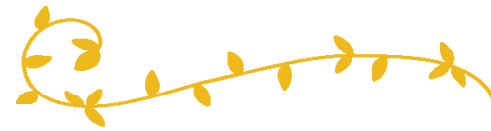
"We do a lot for the young in the parish," Father Sullivan says, "but it's great to have something just for the seniors. It creates a great community."

Bishop Betancourt concurs. "I enjoy being with them. I love the work they are doing."

Older adults from Immaculate Conception Parish in Waterbury are invited to a free lunch held on the third Wednesday of each month, noon to 1:30 p.m., in the basement church hall of St. Michael the Archangel Church, 62 St. Michael's Drive, Waterbury. No reservations are needed. For questions, call the parish office, 203.574.0017.



Upcoming Events



OCTOBER 16 & 17
CHURCH OF SAINT ANN CLOTHING SALE
Church of St. Ann, Avon

Whether you're looking for children's clothing, outerwear, jeans, sweaters, casual wear, activewear for men and women, jewelry, purses, scarves, we have something for everyone! And the best part? Every purchase supports an amazing cause! All proceeds help urban children attend Catholic high schools.

Come shop, find some great bargains, and make a difference while you're at it! Friday October 16, 4PM - 7PM and Saturday October 17th 9AM - 2PM



OCTOBER 16 @ 5:30PM
HOLY HOUR FOR WOMEN'S VOCATIONS
Mount Sacred Heart Chapel, Hamden

Come pray for women's vocations with us! All are welcome - men, women, and families. Prayer will be followed by a free dinner. Contact Carlene cdemiany@ascjus.org for questions!



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!



OCTOBER 18 @ 1:30PM
"I WILL ALWAYS BE JOYFUL": SAINT PIER GIORGIO FRASSATI'S LIFE AND WITNESS
Bl. Michael McGivney Parish, St. Mary Church Hall, New Haven

Father Philip Nolan, O.P., editor of the Magnificat magazine, will discuss the youthful sanctity of recently-canonized Saint Pier Giorgio Frassati and his relevance for today. All welcome to attend!



OCTOBER 22 @ 7PM
HOLY HOUR AND CONSECRATION TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS
Mount Sacred Heart Chapel, Hamden

Join the Apostles of the Sacred Heart of Jesus for a grace-filled prayer service to entrust yourself or your family to the Sacred Heart of Jesus! Each person or family will receive a blessed image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus for their home.

The ceremony will include:
Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
A special prayer of consecration
A blessing of each individual and family
A blessing of house keys



NOVEMBER 1 @ 3PM
FROM BROADWAY TO THE MET: A BENEFIT CONCERT FOR HAITI
St. James Church, Rocky Hill

You are warmly invited to an uplifting afternoon of music. Admission is free, and donations will be gratefully accepted to support our sister parish, St. Anne in Saintard, Haiti. Our program spans Broadway favorites, Classical masterpieces, and Sacred music.

Approximately 50 singers from various parishes across our diocese, as well as professional soloists Rochelle Bard and Daniel Juarez, will present beloved classics including The Prayer, Bring Him Home from Les Misérables, For Good from Wicked, Nessun Dorma, and much more. Bring your family and friends to experience this musical celebration for a wonderful cause!



NOVEMBER 27 @ 5PM
MEN'S EVENING OF REFLECTION
St. Paul Parish, St. Paul Church, Berlin

Young Men of Faith - this night is for you!

Join us for a free evening of fellowship and renewal!

We'll start the evening by gathering in the church hall for great food and fellowship. It is always a special time to reconnect, catch up on one another's busy lives, and enjoy the gift of friendship. Then, the Franciscan Friars of Our Lady of the Angels Province will lead us in an inspiring time of learning more about St. Francis and his joyful way of following Christ. This event is hosted by the St. Paul Church Young Men's Group.

Register using the QR or contact:
EveningOfReflectionRegister@gmail.com



2026 ARCHBISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL

As of today, **16.72%** 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