St. Christopher Parish

538 Brewer Street
East Hartford, CT 06118
860-568-5240 (Phone) • 860-568-0673 (Fax)
E-mail: stchris-eh@sbcglobal.net
Website: www.stchris-eh.org

Rev. John P. Gwozdz, Pastor
E-mail: pastorstchris@hotmail.com

Mr. Philip J. Gosselin, Deacon
E-mail: imgoose@comcast.net

Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God ~ January 1, 2017

 MASS SCHEDULE
Saturday Vigil: 4:00 p.m.
Sundays: 8:00, 10:30 a.m.
Monday – Thursday: 7:30 a.m.

 CONFESSIONS
Saturdays: 3:00 – 3:45 p.m.

 WEDNESDAY DEVOTIONS
6:30 – 8:00 p.m.
Eucharistic Exposition and Adoration • Scriptural Rosary • Perpetual Novena in Honor of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal • Benediction

 FUNERALS
We will help you plan the Mass of Christian Burial for your loved one after arrangements have been made with a funeral home.

 BAPTISM
By appointment; please call the parish office to schedule.

 MARRIAGE
Please contact the parish office at least six months in advance of your intended wedding date.

 OFFICE MANAGER
Bonnie Szalay • 860-568-5240

 ST. CHRISTOPHER SCHOOL
Mrs. Kathleen Welch, Principal
Audrey Cesana, Secretary
www.saintchristopherschool.org • 860-568-4100

 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
Maria Sousa • 860-895-8692
stchrisre@gmail.com
Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God
January 1, 2017

“Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart.” – Luke 2:19

Mass for the Week

Saturday, December 31 – 4:00 p.m.
Maurice “Moe” Harden (Wife & Family)
Marianne Harden (Mom & Family)

Sunday, January 1 – 8:00 a.m.
Reverend Richard R. Russell

Sunday, January 1 – 10:30 a.m.
Joe Kronen (Ronald Bielawiec)

Monday, January 2 – 7:30 a.m.
Mr. Gilles Larochelle (Mr. & Mrs. Gilles Bureau)

Tuesday, January 3 – 7:30 a.m.
Rev. George P. Burnett

Wednesday, January 4 – 7:30 a.m.
Rose Santos (Ken & Louellen Johnson)

Thursday, January 5 – 7:30 a.m.
Diane Olinatz (Family)

Saturday, January 7 – 4:00 p.m.
John St. Onge – 6th Anniversary (Wife Simone & Family)

Sunday, January 8 – 8:00 a.m.
Virginia Zack
In Remembrance of Her Birthday (Jeanne Sciarrra)

Sunday, January 8 – 10:30 a.m.
Stan Traynor (Wife Ann & Family)

PARISH SUPPORT
Due to the early transmission deadline imposed by our bulletin publisher for this weekend’s bulletin, the report for the Christmas weekend collections will be available in next weekend’s bulletin.

STEWARDSHIP REFLECTION
The blessing included in the First Reading from the Book of Numbers is one with which most of us are familiar. “The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord let His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you...” In the Jewish culture this has been known for centuries as the Aaronic blessing as it was dictated by God Himself to Aaron. It is important to note that it begins with “The Lord bless you.”

All blessings come from God. One error we make is to conclude that blessings always mean happiness or security or prosperity. God knows what blessings we need, even if we do not. The key for us is to be grateful for whatever blessings we may have. That mind set is at the hub of stewardship — knowing all blessings come from the Lord, and our need to be appreciative of them.

To be “kept” by the Lord is to turn our lives over to Him, to know that He is with us and that He loves us, blesses us, and does indeed “keep” us ever in His care. The truth is that to be blessed by God is one of the greatest gifts we can receive. It is available to all of us without exception.

During this continued Christmas season, it is well to remember and repeat the classic statement by the character Tiny Tim in Charles Dickens’ immortal A Christmas Carol: “God bless us, every one,” for certainly He does.

– catholicsteward.com/blog

SANCTUARY LAMP
The lamp beside our church tabernacle reminds us of the Real Presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist.

⚙️ The candle in our church burns this week
For Peace on Earth
and Goodwill Toward Men
PRAYER FOR THE NEW YEAR
Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.
O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
Amen.
– Attributed to St. Francis of Assisi

PAINT NITE “FUN”DRAISER
Reservation Fee due by Thursday, January 5
Our Parish Council will be hosting a Paint Nite “Fun”draiser on Friday, January 13 from 6 - 9 p.m. in our parish hall. (Snow date is January 20.) An instructor from the Camp Simon Art Center will guide both beginners and advanced painters to create your own unique artwork. Plan to come to relax, find your inspiration and channel your inner artist. Adults only (21+). BYOB. Cost is $40 per person and includes all materials. You will take home a beautiful 16” x 20” canvas painting that you created. Please see the board in the hall for the picture that we’ll be painting. To reserve your seat, please contact Lori Brunette at 860-655-9367.

ADULT BIBLE STUDY!
Steve Cadwallader and Deacon Phil will be co-facilitating an Adult Bible Study group beginning Wednesday, January 18, from 6:30 to 8:30 pm in our chapel. The group will meet every other Wednesday. Our study will begin with the Gospel of Mark. Please contact Deacon Phil at 860-568-5001 or by e-mail at imgoose@comcast.net or Steve Cadwallader at 860-568-5477 for more information.

SAINT CHRISTOPHER SCHOOL
HOSTING OPEN HOUSES
Our parish school will be hosting two Open Houses this month.

Wednesday ~ January 11 ~ 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Tuesday ~ January 31 ~ 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Bring your 3 or 4 year old to see our beautiful Preschool and to meet our dynamic staff. We offer both full-day and half-day options in a safe, nurturing environment that is so inviting. Families who are exploring other options for their child in Grades K-8 are encouraged to visit and see what we have to offer in an environment of academic excellence and faith-based service to others. Mark your calendar and join us! Help us to spread the word. If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact Mrs. Welch at 860-568-4100 or welchk@saintchristopherschool.org.

MERRY CHRISTMAS WISHES
FROM SAINT CHRISTOPHER SCHOOL
A beautiful video of the students of our parish school is available for viewing on YouTube at the web address listed below. We encourage you to take a few minutes to watch the video to hear our students offer you their best wishes for this Christmas season.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=efwwYhUfa9A

ANNUAL PARISH APPEAL
Our Annual Parish Appeal is underway! We thank those of you who have already responded to this year’s appeal and encourage those who have not yet responded to prayerfully consider doing so. A gift in any amount will help us to reach our goal. Thank you!

Parish Appeal Statistics
(as of December 21)
Total # of Parish Families: 1,005
Total # of Participating Families: 206
% of Participation: 20.5%
Appeal Goal: $50,000
Total Amount Pledged: $46,675
Total Amount Received: $45,800
Average Gift Amount: $226.58

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STREET PARKING
We’ve been reminded that parking on either side of the street in front of our church is not allowed on Sunday mornings between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon. We encourage you not to park in the street during these hours as you will be subject to a parking fine as the East Hartford Police will be taking notice. We also wish to remind you that the driveway between the church and the rectory is not for parking as it must remain open for emergency vehicles.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
The January business meeting will be held on Thursday, January 5, at 7:30 p.m. in the parish hall following the Msgr. Thomas Drennan Fourth Degree Assembly meeting. There is still time to receive information and consider joining the largest Catholic lay organization in the world. Please contact Grand Knight Bob Falkevitz at 860-568-5452 for more information.

PAINTING OF OUR CHURCH
We’re sure you’ve noticed that the sanctuary in our church has been repainted. It’s the first step in an ongoing effort to repaint the entire church. Funds for this part of the project were taken from our Parish Annual Appeal.

It is our hope to continue painting, this time from the walls and woodwork on either side of the sanctuary (where the statues of Mary and Joseph are located), all the way to the pilasters on the south side of the old confessional. The painter has given us an estimate of $5,200 to do this work (which is quite reasonable).

If you would like to help move this project forward, then you can give to a fund we’ve set aside only for this purpose. Your contribution may be inserted in an envelope marked “Paint Fund” and can be placed either in the collection basket or sent through the mail. To make it even more convenient for you, special envelopes have been made up for you to use that can be found near the bulletins. Thank you.

THE MEN’S RETREAT IS ALMOST HERE!
The Holy Family Retreat Center in West Hartford contacted me to convey a message to the men of our parish; DO NOT let the cost of the retreat offering keep you from attending! PLEASE go regardless of the amount you can pay; the important thing is that you attend and reap the benefits of being renewed and inspired by the paradox of simplicity and the gift of faith. The retreat is January 13-15, 2017 and includes home-cooked meals, inspirational liturgies, uplifting music, free time and workshops. The retreat begins with dinner on Friday, January 13 at 6:00 p.m. and concludes on Sunday, January 15 with a brunch at noon. I’ve attended several of these retreats and would be happy to share my experience with you. You can reach me at 860-568-5001 or at imgoose@comcast.net. You can register online at holyfamilyretreat.org or you may contact me for assistance. – Deacon Phil

COAT, GLOVE AND SOCK DRIVE
The students in our religious education program wish to thank those of you who have already supported their coat, glove and sock drive. Two deliveries have already been made to the East Hartford Shelter. A collection box has been placed in the church hall to accept donations of new or gently used coats, gloves and socks. Your donations will help us to be able to provide items of warmth to our brothers and sisters this coming winter. Thank you!

COURAGE AND EnCOURAGE SUPPORT GROUPS
Courage is a Catholic support group for men and women who experience same-sex attraction and are seeking to live chaste lives in Christ. EnCourage helps the loved ones of those who experience same-sex attraction to grow in understanding and love, while honoring the virtue of chastity. Meeting dates are as follows:

Courage: Thurs., Jan. 5 and Thurs., Jan. 19 at 7 p.m.
EnCourage: Wed., Jan. 11 at 7 p.m.

For meeting location and additional information, you may contact Fr. Robert Landback, Chaplain at 203-265-0961, x 2 or at aohctcourage@gmail.com. The website for Courage International is couragerc.org.

† IN MEMORIUM †
Please pray for these parishioners who have gone to eternal life during the month of December.

Linda Wisnieski • John Zocco
“If Christ is my life, then death is my gain.”
– Philippians 1:21
### LECTIO DIVINA & DAILY READINGS

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**What is Lectio Divina?**
While reading sacred scripture, read the words with a love and sense of discovery until something seems to strike home. Sit with the passage as one would with a good friend—not just thinking or analyzing, but instead remaining in a quiet, listening spirit, so the word can nurture and challenge you.

**Call to Prayer:** "Let us take a moment in the midst of all our activity to prepare ourselves for prayer."

**The Word of God:** Choose one of next Sunday’s readings. One person reads the scripture aloud as others are attentive to a word, phrase, or theme that is meaningful to them. Allow for a minute of silent reflection. Have another person read the same scripture a second time.

**Faith Sharing:** Begin with an open ended question such as “What strikes you from this reading?” and/or you can use the “Reflection Question” found below. Allow time for reflection & sharing.

**Closing Prayer:** At the end of the faith sharing, invite participants to pray aloud for any particular petitions or praises they may have. Feel free to close with: The Lord’s Prayer or spontaneous prayers or a faith-based song.

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**Reflection for Next Sunday, January 8, 2017 – The Epiphany of the Lord**
For a fleeting moment, what seems to be no more than another crying baby of an indigent family “appears” for who He really is – the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. The gifts he is given, prophesied in Isaiah 60:6, tell the story: gold fit for a king, incense for the worship of God, and myrrh, bitter yet precious, for the hero who will lay down his life for his people.

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**PARISH CONTACTS**

**PARISH TRUSTEES**
Marie Gallo-Garabedian
Richard “Mac” McCarthy

**PARISH COUNCIL PRESIDENT**
Lori Brunette ~ 860-655-9367
lab-1963@sbcglobal.net

**FINANCE COUNCIL CHAIRMAN**
Michael Munley ~ 860-683-8594

**SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT**
Elizabeth Rowe ~ 203-685-0645
lawlizard80@yahoo.com

**HOMEBOUND MINISTRY**
Barbara Casey ~ 860-568-4638

**PRAYER LINE MINISTRY**
Sue Ward ~ 860-633-2930
toobusysue@gmail.com

“…but not too busy to take your prayer requests!”

**DIRECTOR OF MUSIC**
Robert H. De Fiore
203-630-9295/Robert9700@yahoo.com

**PRO-LIFE MINISTRY**
Phil Gosselin ~ 860-568-5001

**FOOD BANK MINISTRY**
Diane Warner ~ 860-202-8462

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS**
Bob Falkevitz, Grand Knight ~ 860-568-5452

**PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY**
Santa Vallone ~ 860-569-1772

**GREETERS’ MINISTRY**
Anne Marie Volowski ~ 860-568-1303

**BUILDING & GROUNDS**
Stephen Roczynski ~ 860-250-0640