

Saint Mary Parish

August 23, 2026

Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary
Time



26 Dodgingtown Road, Bethel, CT 06801

Phone: (203)744-5777

Website: www.stmarybethel.org Email:
rectoryoffice@stmarybethel.org

Visit us on Facebook: [StMaryChurchBethel](https://www.facebook.com/StMaryChurchBethel)

PARISH OFFICE SUMMER HOURS:

9am –1:30 pm, Mon. – Thurs.,
closed Friday.

(Closed Weekends and Holidays)

STAFF Father Corey V. Piccinino, *Pastor , Vicar for Clergy & Religious for the Diocese of Bridgeport*
Father Johnson Singarajan, *Parochial Vicar*
Father Milan Dimic, *Resident*
Deacon John DeRoin
Deacon Eric Keener
Kate Fitzgerald, *Bulletin Editor*
Carolyn Schlichtig, *Parish Secretary*
Maggie Kent, *Office Manager*
Debbie Burke, *Business Manager*
Alex LaFleur, *Property Manager*

ST. MARY SCHOOL (744-2922) Michelle Powrie, *Principal*
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (743-4557) Mary Ferri, *Director*
Maggie Kent, *Secretary*

OCIA (203)744-5777 Call if you are interested in becoming a Catholic or completing your initiation as a Catholic with Confirmation and/or Eucharist.

UNITED YOUTH MINISTRY Renzo Ortega (203) 240-8059
MUSIC MINISTRY Michael Ferrari, *Music & Choir Director*
FINANCE COMMITTEE (733-7335) Bob Kozlowski, *Chair*
CEMETERY DIRECTOR: Bob DiMatteo (203)744-5777

BAPTISMS: Sundays at 12:15pm (excluding the 1st Sunday of each month). Please call the Rectory at least six weeks in advance to schedule your Baptism and to sign up for the Baptism Class that is required for both parents and Godparents. These classes are offered on the first Sunday of each month. Anyone requesting a Sponsorship form must be a currently registered and practicing Catholic, and they must attend one of the Baptism Classes to receive it. There is a 3-month waiting period for a sponsorship form for the newly registered. The Catholic requirements for a Godparent/Sponsor are: you must be at least 16 years old; received the Sacraments of Baptism, First Holy Communion and Confirmation in the Catholic Church; attend Mass regularly on Sundays and on Holy Days of Obligation; receive the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Communion regularly; sincerely try to follow the moral teaching of the Catholic Church; and if married, were married in the Catholic Church.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR MARRIAGE: All couples must meet with a parish clergyman at least six (6) months before the marriage is to be celebrated.

PASTORAL CARE AT DANBURY HOSPITAL: Prior to your hospitalization, you or a family member should notify the Catholic chaplain at the Hospital.

HOLY COMMUNION FOR THE SICK: To any of those who are homebound or hospitalized and interested in having a visit by a priest, or are interested in serving in this ministry, please call the Parish Office at 744-5777.

PRAYER LINE: If you or someone you know is in need of prayer, please call our Prayer Line. Our team leader is Maggie Kent (203-731-4738).

SEXUAL ABUSE HOTLINE: ONLINE: www.lighthouse-services.com/diobpt. TOLL FREE TELEPHONE: English speaking USA and Canada: 833-990-0004; Spanish speaking USA and Canada: 800-216-1288 E-MAIL: reports@lighthouse-services.com (must include company name with report). When contacting the hotline, an individual may or may not choose to identify him or herself.

FATHER COREY'S EPISTLE

† Throughout history, there have been many Catholic saints who developed a love for the natural wonders of God's creation. Here are some saints and other well-known Catholics to help inspire you in your love of nature, gardening and the beauty of our world.

St. Fiacre of Breuil St. Fiacre was an Irish priest and hermit who lived during the 7th century AD and is the patron saint of gardeners. The saint was raised in a monastery, where he eventually became a priest. St. Fiacre longed for solitude and decided to sail to France to try and find it. The bishop of the French city of Meaux allowed St. Fiacre to establish a hermitage for himself in a forest in the region of Brogillum (later known as Breuil). There, he spent his time cultivating a vegetable and herb garden, praying, fasting, and taking in and caring for weary travelers who passed by his way.

St. Fiacre was known for his extensive knowledge of herbal medicines as well as many miraculous healings. Towards the beginning of his time at his hermitage, some hunters came upon St. Fiacre's garden. These hunters were welcomed openly and were amazed to find such a lovely haven amidst such a somber forest. Soon, the word was out about St. Fiacre's garden, with more and more travelers stopping to visit. It became so popular that the saint needed to go back to the bishop and request more land to accommodate those coming to see him and his garden.

Gardeners can call on the intercession of St. Fiacre to aid them in their endeavors during the growing season. He can also help remind us of the quiet tranquility the practice of gardening can be, even during the most hectic moments.

St. Francis of Assisi Likely one of the most well-known Catholic saints, St. Francis of Assisi is often noted for his love of nature. He is the patron saint of the environment and of animals. St. Francis' love of nature stemmed from his intense love for God. He was able to perceive God's hand in the beauty of creation. St. Francis would address all creatures as "brother" or "sister," including not only animals but other natural phenomena like water, fire, wind, the sun, and the moon. (See his wonderful poem, "The Canticle of the Sun," a beautiful ode to God and creation.)

There are many stories of St. Francis interacting with wild animals in unexpected, miraculous ways. A famous story that illustrates the saint's feelings on nature is his sermon to the birds. While walking from town to town, St. Francis noticed a group of birds gathered in a tree. St. Francis saw nature as a mirror of God and, at that moment, felt compelled to preach to this group of birds on being gracious for the wonders God provides. The birds listened intently, and when St. Francis was done, they flew away forming the shape of a cross, seemingly to show they understood St. Francis's sermon.

St. Francis of Assisi stands as a testament and reminder to appreciate the beauty of nature. Next time you're out in the garden, take a moment to admire the wonder of God's gifts...and maybe take some time to converse with a near-by bird or two.

Pope Benedict XVI Catholics today will know Pope

Benedict XVI. He was known for having a strong, theological mind. One aspect of Benedict's papacy that is not always so well-known is his strong convictions on ecological issues. When it comes to Popes and ecology, many today think of Pope Francis and his encyclical, *Laudato si'* (On Care for our Common Home), which is certainly an important document in itself. However, it is Pope Benedict who has been dubbed the "Green Pope" for his promotion of environmental issues.

Pope Benedict authored and contributed to a number of writings that deal with the environment and care of creation, including his second encyclical, *Caritas in Veritate*, his 2009 book *The Environment*, and his 2012 book *Ten Commandments for the Environment* just to name a few. Pope Benedict once spoke on visiting a botanical garden and reflecting on the wide array of flowers our Creator had provided our world. In the same way, the Pope reflected on the diverse garden of saints throughout the ages we can look to, from all walks of life, each uniquely living out the love of God in their lives.

A respect and care for creation is something of utmost importance. In his 2010 message for World Peace Day, Pope Benedict spoke passionately about the need to respect creation, our obligation not to neglect the nature, and of the "covenant between human beings and the environment, which should mirror the creative love of God, from whom we come and towards whom we are journeying."

St. Kateri Tekakwitha St. Kateri was an indigenous woman who converted to Catholicism. She is known as the Lily of the Mohawks and is the patron saint of ecology.

Smallpox was only one of the hardships she experienced due to colonization. Conflict arose between the Mohawk tribe and the French and Dutch colonists over the local fur trade. The French set fire to villages, forcing Kateri and her family to flee. Eventually, the Mohawks and the French signed a peace treaty. It was then, when she was around 11, that St. Kateri encountered Jesuit missionaries and first learned of Christianity. At 17, St. Kateri fled from her home to avoid being forced into an arranged marriage. She found shelter with a Jesuit missionary and confessed her desire to become a Christian. From then on, she studied the faith and lived a life of prayer and service with the Jesuits. This is also when she took the name Kateri (or Catherine) after St. Catherine of Siena.

A strong tie to the land and care for creation are important in many Indigenous spiritual traditions. St. Kateri kept this close to her heart, spending much time in the woods conversing with God and listening to God speak to her through nature. In this way, she bridged the gap between the traditions of her youth and those of her new found Catholic faith.

St. Kateri's witness can serve as a reminder to gardeners to listen for God's voice in every weed plucked, every seed sown, and every flower tended to. St. Kateri is also the inspiration for the St. Kateri Conservation Center, a nationwide Catholic-based organization that promotes the intersection of faith and ecology.



SAT., AUGUST 22

4:30 + Thomas Hauser — Stephanie McNamara

SUN., AUGUST 23

7:00 + Richard Shannon — Family
 8:30 + Margaret Brenna — Family
 11:00 + Phyllis Rugh — The Ruhl Family
 + Kalista Rajendran

MON., AUGUST 24

9:00 + Harry Waterbury—Eileen Freebairn

TUES., AUGUST 25

9:00 + Debbie Rapillo Merritt—Charles & Dolly Jennings

WED., AUGUST 26

9:00 + Asta Smith — Family

THURS., AUGUST 27

9:00 + Lee Penders — Family

FRI., AUGUST 28

9:00 + Alfred Battista — Family

SAT., AUGUST 29

9:00 Carmel O'Brien (*Blessings*) — Carmel O'Brien Frank
 4:30 + Teresa Francese — The Serensics Family

SUN., AUGUST 30

7:00 St. Mary Parish
 8:30 + Bridget A. Birmingham — The Henn Family
 11:00 + Matthew Hatcher — The McClellan Family



Mass Schedule

Monday-Friday

9:00am

Saturday

9:00am & 4:30pm (Vigil Mass)

Sunday

7:00am, 8:30am, & 11:00am

Reconciliation

Saturdays 3:00-4:00pm

WEEK AT A GLANCE

Sunday, August 23

12:15pm Baptism

2:30pm Men's Cursillo

6:00pm United Youth

Monday, August 24

7:00pm Knights of Columbus

Tuesday, August 25

Wednesday, August 26

First Day of School

Thursday, August 27

Friday, August 28

Saturday, August 29

3:00pm Confessions

3:00pm Adoration

Sunday, August 30

12:15pm Baptism

AROUND THE PARISH

Please join us to pray the Rosary every morning from Monday through Friday at 8:20am in the Church.

The **ST. MARY MEN'S MINISTRY** group meets on Saturdays from 7:00 AM to 8:30 AM in Father McGivney Hall, followed by the 9:00 AM Saturday Mass. For more information, Deacon Eric Keener at dnkeener@diobpt.org.

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP provides a prayerful experience of mutual support and comfort for those who are confronting the loss of a loved one. Our upcoming zoom meeting is on **September 12**. If you wish to attend, please call the parish office at 744-5777 and ask that a group facilitator call you with more information.

The **St. Mary YOUTH CHOIR** rehearses every Wednesday from 5-6pm in the Parish Hall. For more info, contact Leanna Hinger at youth-choir.st.mary@gmail.com. The **St. Mary ADULT CHOIR** practices in the Parish Hall on Wednesday evenings from 7:00-9pm. If you are interested in being part of our Parish Choir, please call the Parish Office.

MARY PARISH BOOK GROUP welcomes all adults! "Spiritual reading has made many saints" (St. Josemaria Escriva). Let's read and talk about Saint Dominic Savio. The Life of Dominic Savio, written by St. John Bosco, is our selection. Get it through a Catholic online bookstore or amazon.com. However, any resource about him will work for our discussion, including donboscowest.org, or download a free pdf at archive.org. Please join us on Wednesday September 16 at 6:00 pm in the Notre Dame Center.

Are you a Catholic woman seeking a closer relationship with Christ? If so, prayerfully consider attending a **3-DAY RETREAT** at Graymoor in Garrison, NY, September 17-20, 2026. Many St. Mary Parish women have already attended! This fulfilling experience is offered by our Diocese's Cursillo Community. For information, please email cur-sillonews.fairfieldcounty@gmail.com or call Susan at 203-733-1269.

If you would like to dedicate **ALTAR FLOWERS** in memory of a loved one at weekend Masses, call the Parish Office at (203)744-5777. Donation would be \$150 and your loved one's name will appear in the bulletin.

If you would like the **SANCTUARY CANDLE** to be lit for your departed loved one, we shall publish your loved one's name in the bulletin and the priest, while in the sacristy, will pray for the repose of their soul for 7 days. The stipend is \$10. Call the office to make arrangements.



Saint Mary SCHOOL

FAITH • FAMILY • ACADEMICS

Enrolling Now

Experience all that St. Mary School has to offer

- PreK-8th grade
- Personalized learning
- Small class sizes
- Academic excellence



Contact admissions@stmarybethelct.org to schedule a visit.

24 Dodgingtown Road | Bethel, Connecticut 06801
203-744-2922 | www.st.marybethelct.org

REGISTRATION FOR THE 2026-2027 SCHOOL YEAR IS NOW OPEN! We are now accepting applications for Pre-K -- Grade 8.

Important Upcoming Dates

Wednesday, August 26
First Day of School — Half Day
9:00 a.m. — Opening School Mass

Please note: Wednesday, August 26, Thursday, August 27, and Friday, August 28 will all be half days.

Back-to-School Nights

Preschool — Tuesday, September 1
Kindergarten–Grade 8 — Wednesday, September 9

St. Mary School is looking for individuals interested in substitute teaching this coming school year on an as needed basis. Qualifications for this position are a Bachelor's degree, VIRTUS training and a background check.

We are also seeking part-time employees on a regular schedule (days can vary) for our After School Care Club. Hours are 2pm-5:30pm on days school is in session.

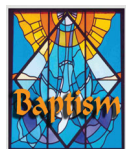
For information about either of these positions, please email the school at office@stmarybethelct.org, or call 203-744-2922.

St. Mary Religious Education
24 Dodgingtown Road, Bethel, CT 06801
203-743-4557

Hours: Mon.-Thurs. 9:30am-2pm
stmarybethelrelied@gmail.com
stmarybethel.org

Registration forms for the 2026/27 year have gone out in the mail for current families. You can find online registration on our website @stmarybethel.org. **Registration is due by September 1. After that you must register in person at the Religious Ed office.**

All children must attend Mass each week. There, the child must fill out the Mass Attendance slip available in the vestibule of the Church. The child then puts the slip in the in the collection basket.



God Bless those recently Baptized

Sofia Perri Guercio
Lucia Michelle Jerolimo

YOUR VOICE HAS A PLACE HERE.

Join the Saint Mary Youth Choir and discover faith, friendship,
and the joy of serving through music!

No experience necessary

Open to children in grades 3-12

Flexible attendance requirements with advanced notice

Weekly Wednesday Rehearsals from 5:15pm-6:00pm in Father McGivney Hall

Sing once a month at the 8:30am Mass including Christmas and Easter!

First Rehearsal, Wednesday, September 9

Questions?

Email Youth Choir
Director, Leanna Hinger
youthchoir.st.mary
@gmail.com



Are you:

- A person who has not been baptized but recognize a need for spirituality in your life and have expressed an interest in learning more about Jesus?
- A Baptized Christian of another denomination who would like to learn about and possibly join the Catholic tradition?
- A Baptized Roman Catholic who has not received the Sacrament of Holy Eucharist and/or Confirmation and would like to become a full participant in the life of the Church?
- Married to a Catholic and attend Mass but just don't know what the next step is to become on of the Catholic faithful

If your answer is yes to any of these questions, come and discover, or re-discover, the truth, wonder and mystery of our Catholic faith! The OCIA program prepares you to be received as members of the Catholic Church.

Our new sessions begin in September and we meet on Sundays in the Notre Dame Center from 12:30-2pm.

If you are interested in participating our learning more about OCIA, call (203)744-5777 or email Deacon Eric Keener at dnkeener@diobpt.org.





You're Invited

Please join us as we celebrate the

40th *Anniversary*
of

FATHER COREY'S ORDINATION

(Actual anniversary is December 20th,
but who wants to come to a cookout in the winter LOL)



SUNDAY,
SEPTEMBER 13, 2026



2:00 – 5:00 P.M.



BENNETT PARK
BETHEL, CONNECTICUT

Join us for an afternoon of fellowship, gratitude,
and a cookout as we honor Father Corey and
celebrate this special anniversary.

All are welcome

"Well done, good and faithful servant."

Matthew 25:23

This Week on Formed

Week of August 23, 2026



The Confessions of St. Augustine | Littlest Saints

A child, a sinner, a saint. Join us as we share the story of St. Augustine, tailored to our children, as he wrestles with God and comes to the faith.



Feast of Saint Monica | Catholic Saints

Throughout her life, St. Monica constantly prayed for the conversion of Augustine, her beloved son. In a moment of desperation, she even asked for the bishop's help. In response, he said, "the son of those tears surely will not perish." Truly, as this bishop remarked, Monica's tearful prayers helped build her son into the Doctor of Grace. In this video, join Dr. Gray and Dr. Sehorn as they discuss this great Saint.



Restless Heart

This film on the life of St. Augustine offers a message of conversion and redemption. It is the story of a gifted man who pursues fame and fortune without a moral compass - and the dramatic changes that occur in his soul when challenging events lead him to see the light of truth.

Our parish has a Formed subscription.
Visit signup.formed.org and select our parish name.

An offering from the  AUGUSTINE INSTITUTE

Offertory for the Weekend of August 15/16, 2026

Collection: \$6,815.00 On-Line Giving: \$4,751.00

Last year's offertory for the Weekend of August 16/17, 2025

Collection: \$5,613.00 On-Line Giving: \$4,458.00

Thank you for your generosity!

• UNITED YOUTH MINISTRY •

A COLLABORATIVE YOUTH PROGRAM FOR THE PARISHES OF ST. ROSE NEWTOWN, ST. JOSEPH BROOKFIELD AND ST. MARY BETHEL

Follow us on
**Facebook
& Instagram**
for more
information and
updates!



FACEBOOK.COM/CTUNITEDYOUTH

@CTUNITEDYOUTH

WWW.CTUNITEDYOUTH.COM

*United meets on Sunday evenings on the campus
of St. Rose unless otherwise noted.*



The Knights of Columbus are a Catholic fraternal service order founded by Blessed Michael McGivney in 1882. We support the principles of Charity, Unity, Fraternity & Patriotism in the Parishes of St. Mary Bethel, St. Patrick Redding & nearby communities. Charity is the first principle of the Knights of Columbus, and we are Catholic men of charitable action. If you're at least 18 years of age, we invite you to join us. Our meetings are held every second and fourth Monday at 7pm in Father McGivney Hall.

To contact us, call Alan Gambino at (203)910-3733 or Email us at gkofpavia@gmail.com

To watch a video about what we do, use the link or QR code below.

<https://youtu.be/mqkfLnpZwhl>



Most Reverend Frank J. Caggiano, Bishop of Bridgeport will celebrate the Annual Diocesan Wedding Jubilee Mass on Saturday, October 3, 2026 at 11:00 AM at the Cathedral of Saint Augustine in Bridgeport.

Couples celebrating their 25th, 40th, 45th, 50th and more years of marriage are eligible to attend. All couples who are recognized at the Mass will receive a commemorative certificate in recognition of this important milestone in their married life in addition to pictures with the Bishop.



Sun.: Is 22:19-23 Ps 138:1-2, 2-3, 6, 8 Rom 11:33-36 Mt 16:13-20

Mon.: Rev 21:9b-14 Ps 145:10-11, 12-13, 17-18 Jn 1:45-51

Tues.: 2 Thes 2:1-3a, 14-17 Ps 96:10, 11-12, 13 Mt 23:23-26

Wed.: 2 Thes 3:6-10, 16-18 Ps 128:1-2, 4-5 Mt 23:27-32

Thu.: 1 Cor 1:1-9 Ps 145:2-3, 4-5, 6-7 Mt 24:42-51

Fri.: 1 Cor 1:17-25 Ps 33:1-2, 4-5, 10-11 Mt 25:1-13

Sat.: 1 Cor 1:26-31 Ps 33:12-13, 18-19, 20-21 Mk 6:17-29

Sun.: Jer 20:7-9 Ps 63:2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9 Rom 12:1-2 Mt 16:21-27

OFF THE STREETS is an all volunteer organization that assists those in need of housing. For those individuals that demonstrate a willingness to get off the streets, we provide security deposits, furniture and household items. We ask you to consider a donation to Off The Streets so that we can continue to provide money for security deposits. The cost of apartments in our area is excessive and there is a shortage of low cost housing. A security deposit could be the deal breaker for someone seeking shelter. On the first Saturday of every month we collect donations between ten and noon at South Street Self Storage located at 39-A South St in Danbury. You can contact Mike at otsdanburymr@gmail.com with any questions you may have or scan the code for a list of items we can accept.

If you would like to support our work, please send contributions to: Off the Streets, PO Box 591, Bethel CT 06801. or donate online by cut and pasting the link below into your browser <https://gofund.me/baa5b98d>



OTS HELP PAGE



VACATIONERS - If you are visiting other areas and would like information regarding Churches in that area, you may either call 1-800-Mass-Times or visit the website [www. Masstimes.org](http://www.Masstimes.org).



BROTHERHOOD IN ACTION Thank you for your generous support of the Brotherhood in Action. The generous donations of the people of St. Mary's makes it possible for our organization to exist and be able to give those in our community a sense of hope for happy holidays and year-round. If you wish to continue to help our mission throughout the year, monetary donations may be sent to: Brotherhood in Action, P.O. Box 582, Bethel, CT. 06801. Thank you again for your generosity!!

St. Pauly Used Clothing Drop Off Shed



Located by the Hall Parking Lot area

- * Please put all clothes in plastic bags no larger than tall kitchen bag size
- * Please tie bags shut
- * Never put in loose clothing
- * No household goods, toys, fabric scraps or pillows

Pray for the Sick

If you or someone you know is in need of prayer, please call our PRAYER LINE.



Our team leader is Maggie Kent (203-731-4738). If you would like to join our group, send a "Request to Join Prayer Chain" email to Maggie at kentmaggie@sbcglobal.net. Your name will be added to the email chain. Thank you!

LOOKING FOR SOMETHING



If you are missing a pair of glasses, a key, a jacket, a book, a toy, or some other item, you may have left it in the Church. Be sure to check out the boxes in the Usher's room. If you find anything in the Church, please leave it in a box in the Usher's room.

THE POPE'S INTENTIONS FOR THE MONTH OF AUGUST



For evangelization in the city Let us pray that in large cities often marked by anonymity and loneliness we find new ways to proclaim the Gospel, discovering creative paths to build community.

HSPT Prep Session & Parent Info Session - Saturday, September 12th @ 9:00am

Our High School Placement Test Prep Session offers students the opportunity to learn more about the HSPT, review the math and verbal sections, along with sample questions and familiarize themselves with the format and focus of the test. Every student in attendance will receive an HSPT Prep Book to take home.

Parents are invited to attend an Information Session at 9am. No registration is necessary. A \$40 (cash or check payable to Immaculate High School) will be collected at entrance to the exam.

Register today at https://immaculatehs.fsenrollment.com/portal/public_calendars/hspt_prep_session

Mustang for a Day Shadow Visits - Begins Monday, September 21st

We invite all prospective students to shadow a current student and live a day in the life at our school as a Mustang For a Day. While spending a day is not mandatory as part of the application process, it is an excellent way for students to learn more about what it's like to be an Immaculate High School student.

Visiting students will meet their Student Ambassador host in the main office upon arrival. At dismissal, students will meet with our Director of Enrollment to discuss their day and ask any questions they may have. Register today at immaculatehs.org/visit.

Join us on Sunday, October 18, for our annual Open House at Immaculate.

This event will allow students and parents to meet with faculty, administrators, athletic staff and current students, as well as tour the classrooms, newly renovated science labs, dining hall, Chapel and Fitness Center. You will learn about our athletic, fine arts, spiritual life and extracurricular offerings. Register today at immaculatehs.org/visit

Diocese of Bridgeport Project Rachel Ministry – Jesus Keeps on Loving You, No Matter What

“As we approach Lent, please allow me to speak to all who carry the unbearable sadness and guilt of an abortion experience. Be assured that Jesus keeps on loving you, no matter what. I pray that God plants a seed of hope in every heart that is overwhelmed by sadness and despair from participation in abortion. This Lent, the Lord’s mercy awaits you. Allow Him to heal you and lift your sadness into joy.” – Bishop Daniel E. Thomas, Chairman, USCCB Committee on Pro-Life Activities.

The Diocese of Bridgeport’s Project Rachel Ministry is here to help you. For confidential assistance or information on upcoming events, please contact Maureen at 203-416-1619 or projectrachel@diobpt.org. There is hope after abortion.

MALTA HOUSE is the only transitional living program in the state of Connecticut where a mom can stay with her baby for long-term support and a "hand-up" as she journeys to independence and hope. We need your help... Since opening our doors in 1998, we have welcomed over 700 mothers and babies to our home. But we're not done yet. We are always looking for new volunteers to join our team! Please consider volunteering with us and making a difference in the lives of mothers and babies. If you are interested in lending your skills and sharing your heart with our moms and babies, please contact Claudia Escalante at cescalante@maltahouse.org.

PRAYER FOR TEACHERS AS THE NEW YEAR BEGINS

Heavenly Father, as teachers return to school, we ask You to fill them with strength, patience, and deep peace. Grant them wisdom for every lesson, grace for every challenge, and a renewed joy for the calling to shape young lives. Protect their minds and hearts, and let their classrooms be safe havens of learning.

Lord, give teachers a second wind when they feel tired. Ease their anxious thoughts as the new term begins.

Grant them grace to handle difficult moments with calm. Help them show kindness even on hard days.

Guide their words and choices. Help them see the unique value in every single student.

Remind them that their hard work matters. Fill their classrooms with hope and excitement for the days ahead.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

MINISTRIES AND VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

LITURGY

Adult Acolyte Provide adult altar service at funerals and memorial services. Rectory Office (203) 744 - 5777

Altar Server Support the community in the Church's weekly liturgical celebrations. Kathleen Keener eajkeener@gmail.com

Lector Proclaim the scriptures and read the petitions at Mass. Rectory Office (203) 744 - 5777

Eucharistic Minister Assist in the distribution of Holy Communion on weekdays and Sundays. Rectory Office (203) 744 - 5777

Usher Assist with greeting, seating, and the collection at Mass and services. Rectory Office

Cantors/Choir Lead and assist in the music for the 11am Mass and major feasts through the year. Mr. Michael Ferrari mu-sic.saintmary@gmail.com

Youth Choir Grade 2+ - will develop vocal skills and musicianship through the singing of chants, hymns and psalms at Masses and special events. Youthchoir.st.mary@gmail.com. (Leanna Hinger)

YOUTH

CrossRoads Middle School Youth Group Join youths (grades 6-8) in the early formative years of their faith by participating in regular meetings, prayer, and social activities. Chaperones and adult aides welcome (must have completed Virtus Training). Ms. Rosie Lifreiri & Mr. Tom Reese stmarycrossroads@gmail.com

UNITED High School Youth Group (St. Mary - St. Joseph - St. Rose parishes) Join other youths (grades 9-12) in the effort to grow in their relationships with Christ and their Catholic Faith, participate in opportunities for service, fun and games, and fellowship. Chaperones and adult aides welcome (must have completed Virtus Training). Mr. Renzo Ortega (203) 240-8059

COMMUNITY

Bereavement Support Group Offers a prayerful experience of mutual support and consolation for those who are confronting the difficulties of losing a loved one. Rectory Office

Faith and Family Nights/Social Committee Join in and assist at various celebrations and social events of the Church year. Rectory Office

Men's Ministry Join other Catholic men in a positive Christian fellowship and learn ways to better strengthen one's personal faith journey. Deacon Eric Keener dkeener@diobpt.org

Women of Faith/Walking with Purpose A women's ministry dedicated to offering a variety of activities for spiritual growth, fellowship, support, and outreach. Mrs. Caroline LaFleur la_fleur@sbcglobal.net

Knights of Columbus Promote fraternal ties among other Catholic Men and participate in various charitable activities both at the Church and in the local community. Mr. Alan Gambino (203) 910-3733 or Email gkofpavia@gmail.com

Ave Maria - Young Adults Where card games, Wii Tourneys, drinks and appetizers meet adoration, rosary, and catechesis. Rectory Office

Just Desserts Help in the catering of baked goods and treats for parish celebrations. Rectory Office

Book Club ST. MARY BOOK GROUP welcomes all adults! "Spiritual reading has made many saints." (St. Josemaria Escriva). Rectory Office

SERVICE

Homebound Eucharistic Ministers Bring Communion to the home-bound and those in local nursing homes. Rectory Office

Matthew 25:35 Provides meals for either groups outside of parish (ex, Dorothy Day) or for families in need within the parish. Rectory Office

Parish Hospitality Committee/Photographers Volunteer to help set up, serve, and clean up for Parish receptions. Record events in church or photography of events. Rectory Office

Prayer Line Prayer society that receives intentions and prays regularly for them. Mrs. Maggie Kent Mrs. Deana Chamberlin (203) 731 - 4738 (203) 482 - 7149

Pro-Life Committee that strives to build a culture of life, upholding and promoting the dignity of human life. Rectory Office

Altar Linen Committee Provide regular care for the various linens used at Mass. Rectory Office

St. Martha Cleaning Society Assist in the regular cleaning and upkeep of the Church. Rectory Office

Rectory Volunteer Aides Assist the rectory staff with mass mailings and various projects. Rectory Office

Prayer Shawl and Baby Blanket Making Ministry Mary Ferri 203-743-4557

Religious Articles Store & Catholic Book Fair One weekend in both the Fall & the Spring, as well as Christmas, to help with the distribution of religious goods for purchase. Mrs. Maggie Kent (203) 743 - 4557