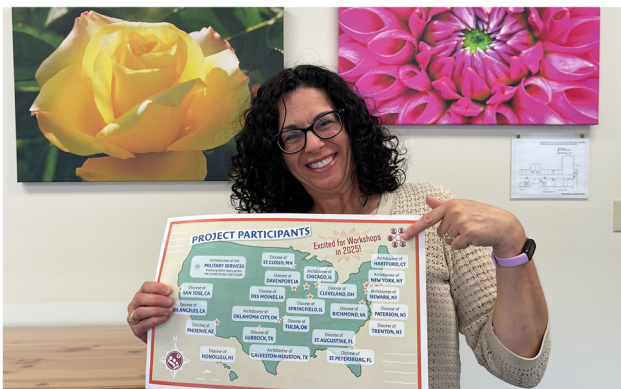




# Branches on the Vine

JULY 12 - 18, 2025



## ARCHDIOCESE IS SELECTED FOR NATIONAL PARENT AND FAMILY FAITH PROJECT

- Story by Shelley Wolf

Kelly Henderschedt, archdiocesan director of Faith Formation and Parish Life, holds up a map showing Hartford among 20 dioceses selected to participate in a national family faith project.  
PHOTO BY SHELLEY WOLF

There is a map of the United States with 20 Catholic dioceses that are part of a cutting-edge, family faith project – and the Archdiocese of Hartford is literally on the map.

Hartford appears proudly among the dioceses of New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and Honolulu on a map created by the National Community of Catechetical Leaders, or NCCL, a national association of Catholic religious educators.

“It’s kind of amazing to have Hartford be part of this huge national project that literally goes from coast to coast,” says Kelly Henderschedt, director of Faith Formation and Parish Life for the Archdiocese of Hartford.

The project, “Parents and Families at the Center of Faith Formation,” is being conducted by NCCL thanks to a five-year grant from the Lilly Endowment, a private foundation. The Archdiocese of Hartford is among 20 dioceses invited to participate in the national project, which is helping 200 Catholic parishes across the country engage 30,000 parents and their families.

The project is already underway in the archdiocese in 10 participating parishes.

The 10 parishes include: Most Holy Trinity, Wallingford; **St. Peter Claver, West Hartford**; St. Margaret, Madison; St. Thomas the Apostle, Oxford; St. Luke, Southington; St. Anthony, Prospect; St. Mary, Simsbury; St. Damien of Molokai, Windsor; St. John Bosco, Branford; and St. Paul VI, Hamden.

Together, the parishes are exploring how to strengthen faith formation at home during the first two decades of life, and create parish communities that support parents and the whole family. All initiatives are incorporating the most current thinking about faith transmission in today’s families.

According to Henderschedt, this is year two of the five-year project, which began in the fall of 2024. The first year involved information gathering. Year two includes idea generation, program development and the launch of pilot programs in the parishes. More activities will be phased in over the following years, ending with evaluation in 2028.

In each of the 10 archdiocesan parishes, parish teams have already completed parent surveys.

“We’re saying, ‘Tell us. What is your biggest struggle with your family?’

How can we help you grow your child in his or her faith? How can we support you?” Henderschedt asks. Parents, she says, were thrilled to be asked.

Some parents, she reports, want help talking to their teenagers about faith, some want advice on teaching the Bible at home, and others need help with difficult conversations.

Currently, the parish teams are using the parent data to develop new pilot programs, or tweak existing ones, to better support families in instilling Catholic faith and values. These customized family faith programs are also taking into account various cultures, family structures, caregivers, and the needs expressed by today’s parents.

“In my 25 years of doing faith formation, including my eight years at the archdiocese, I have not seen anything this forward thinking,” Henderschedt says.

“It’s super exciting. It’s so innovative. We’re really thinking outside of the box about how we are forming families. Really creative work is coming out of this,” she insists. Stay tuned for new and engaging family faith programs in the 10 parishes, beginning this fall.



# Upcoming Events

## VOTIVE MASS IN HONOR OF SAINT MARY MAGDALENE

Patron of Atrani, Italy

Thursday, July 17, 2025 – 6:30 PM

Mass in  
*Italian*  
with  
Fr. Joseph  
MacNeill



Music by Dr.  
Ezequiel  
Menendez &  
choir  
U.S. premiere  
of "Inno a  
Maria  
Maddalena"  
by Mons.  
Marco Frisina

Coffee & Refreshments to follow

Sponsored by the Societa Santa Maria Maddalena

Saint Michael Church of Blessed Michael McGivney Parish  
29 Wooster Place, New Haven, CT



07/30 WEDNESDAY 7PM

### FREE SUMMER CONCERT SERIES THE INFINITY SAXOPHONE QUARTET

Holy Family Passionist Retreat Center  
303 Tunxis Rd, West Hartford

The grounds of Holy Family Passionist Retreat Center will again resonate with the sound of music this summer. Gather your family and friends, grab a blanket or low-profile beach chair, and make your way to our pavilion for this lively concert series. You are welcome to bring food and beverages to enjoy throughout the evening. Our grounds are magnificent, so come early to enjoy our walking paths or recenter yourself with a journey through our labyrinth.

These concerts are **FREE** to attend. No registration required.

Wednesday, July 30, 2025

7:00 to 8:30 P.M.

The Infinity Saxophone Quartet

This evening's showcase features a diverse mix of jazz standards, contemporary classical, big band, folk, and classic pop music. Featuring Justin Fontano (soprano/alto sax), Steve Moran (alto sax), Rich Szulcowski (tenor sax, manager), and Matt Schmidt (baritone sax).



07/22 TUESDAY 1-6PM

### RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

The Lyceum, 181 Main St, Terryville

Join St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish and help save lives at a community blood drive. Every two seconds, someone in the U.S. needs blood. That's why St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish is on a mission to help save lives by hosting a blood drive on Tuesday, July 22, 2025, from 1:00-6:00 PM at The Lyceum, 181 Main St., Terryville.

The community is invited to take part in this special event and donate blood for patients across the country. Make a difference in our community and beyond and help ensure blood is on the shelves before it is needed.

To schedule your appointment, visit [www.tinyurl.com/4jfvbska](http://www.tinyurl.com/4jfvbska)

## 2025 ARCHBISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL

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



Total Goal: \$10M

85.76% as of 7/1/25  
\$8,576,174.71 pledges from  
25,390 generous donors

[www.archdioceseofhartford.org/appeal](http://www.archdioceseofhartford.org/appeal)

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