

Branches on the Vine

NEWS FROM THE ARCHDIOCESE OF HARTFORD

APRIL 11 - 17, 2026

Local Parent Educator Featured in Catholic Charities' *Traveling Museum*

- Story by Joe Pisani

Marcus Wilson grew up in foster care and understands the importance of having a secure family environment. For the past five years, as a parent educator for Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Hartford, he has helped many families by providing the tools they need so parents and children can break the cycle of insecurity and develop stronger relationships.

In recognition of his work with Parent Support Services, Wilson has been selected with 40 other employees and volunteers, chosen from 169 Catholic Charities nationwide, to be featured as part of the People of Hope Museum, which highlights ministries and services of Catholic Charities.

"His compassion is genuine, and families feel it right away."

"The museum will bring to life their meaningful and memorable encounters with families and individuals in need," says Scott Griffin, director of Communications & Public Relations for Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Hartford.

The museum, which is housed in a tractor-trailer, will travel around the country and be available to the public April 14 to 15 at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Hartford.

Visitors will view the video stories of Wilson, record their own stories of hope and service and gain a greater understanding of poverty in the state and country, Griffin says. "To have one of our people, who is serving the community,

featured in the museum is an incredible honor, and we are very proud of Marcus," Griffin says. "He and his team visit people in their homes to help parents create stronger families.

They are among 11,000 individuals we served last year. Even though we are a faith-based organization, you don't have to be Catholic to receive services. You only have to need help, and Catholic Charities is here to help."

The goal of Parent Support Services is to establish a family environment that has "a circle of security," Wilson says.

"A lot of parents were never taught how to know when their children are seeking security because they didn't have it when they were growing up," he says. "Some parents never thought about it or just didn't know."

The program's curriculum has two components: one is designed to give parents the tools to make their children feel secure by providing the emotional support, and the other establishes a structured home environment that has rules, rewards and a routine.

One important skill parents should have is the ability to listen to their children, Wilson says. "Sometimes children need reassurance, and parents have to know how to give them their undivided attention and listen," he adds. "But if the parents grew up in a home without affection or they were ignored, they might not have those skills, so we bring awareness to them. We can't fix the problem, but once parents are given the knowledge, they can use it and make the choice to seek help or develop the skills they need."



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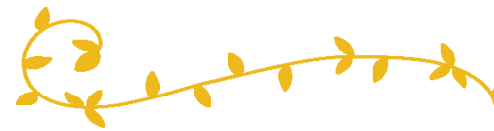
Jennifer Raines-Pusey, program manager for Parenting Support Services, praised Wilson. "Marcus brings incredible heart to this work," she says. "His compassion is genuine, and families feel it right away. He has a special way of meeting parents exactly where they are, without pressure or pretense, and helping them see their own strengths." She adds that Wilson is deeply committed to helping families grow and succeed.

"He truly lives out the mission of Parenting Support Services every day, which exists to walk alongside families who are often overlooked or struggling quietly," she says.

The People of Hope Museum will be open to the public at the Cathedral of St. Joseph, 140 Farmington Ave., Hartford, from April 14 to 15 in the rear parking lot off Asylum Avenue.



Upcoming Events



APRIL 14 - 15 @ 11AM - 7PM
PEOPLE OF HOPE MUSEUM
 Cathedral of Saint Joseph rear lot,
 off Asylum Ave, Hartford

Step inside for an inspiring look at how Catholic Charities agencies bring compassion to help people in need nationwide. Visit www.ccaoh.org/poh to learn more.



APRIL 17 @ 6:30PM
YOUNG ADULT 21+ GROUP
 Our Lady of Knock Parish, St. Patrick Church, Farmington

Candlelight Mass will be held at 6:30 PM with Trivia, Tacos, Drinks, and Social following the Candlelight Mass.



APRIL 17 - 19
INTERNATIONAL EXHIBIT OF EUCHARISTIC MIRACLES
 St. George Church, Guilford

Fri, 17 April, 4:30 - 9 pm | Sat, 18 April, 10 am - 8:30 pm | Sun, 19 April, 9:30 am - 3 pm
 Talks on St. Carlo Acutis & St. Manuel Gonzalez Garcia. 1st class relics of both St. Carlo and St. Manuel will be available for veneration. For more information, contact Donna Yatchko at 203-453-2788.



APRIL 18 @ 9:30AM - 3PM **\$70**
MARRIED COUPLES RETREAT DAY
 Sacred Heart on the Lake Retreat Center, Higganum

Strengthen your marriage by spending the day at our Retreat Center! Presenter- Sr. Lany Jo Smith, ASCJ. Call Sr. Lany Jo 203-606-9102 to RSVP. Donation asked \$70 a couple - Includes a Continental Breakfast and a Full Lunch.



APRIL 18 @ 5:30PM **\$30**
KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS "SPRING FLING"
 Our Lady Queen of the Apostles Parish, St. Mary Church, Derby

Evening get-together with door prizes, basket raffles, dinner, dessert, and Beer/wine/soda. Entry Tickets are sold at the door (\$30) or at the Parish Office (\$25) until April 16. Cash/Check only please.



APRIL 24 @ 7PM
SEEN: A NIGHT OF HOPE & HEALING
 St. Paul VI Parish, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, Hamden

Join us for a Holy Hour and Reception including Adoration, prayer teams, guided prayer, support and resources for those struggling with pregnancy loss or infertility. Registration required. Please reach out to m.ricci@hamdencatholic.org to RSVP.



APRIL 27 @ 7PM
SPEED NETWORKING AND MENTORING
 Holy Angels Center, Meriden

Join Young Catholic Professionals Central Connecticut and meet inspiring professionals, connect with other young adults, and walk away with practical insight for your career and faith. Food and drink will be provided. We will be having Stations of the Cross and prayer at 7pm, and the speed networking and mentoring will start at 7:45.



MAY 2 @ 4PM
LATINO VOCATION DISCERNMENT NIGHT
 St. Augustine Parish, Hartford

Join us for 4PM Vigil Mass, followed by free dinner and a Q&A panel of speakers from all different vocations. Registration required. Email kathleen.pencz@aohct.org to RSVP.



MAY 8 @ 6PM
SEEN: A NIGHT OF HOPE & HEALING
 The Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, Waterbury

All are welcome for a night of prayer and support for those experiencing infertility or pregnancy/child loss. We will have welcoming remarks, Mass, a reflection, Adoration with Praise and Worship, and a reception to follow with light refreshments, veneration of relics, resources, community, and opportunities to meet with Religious Sisters and Prayer Teams. Registration required. Please reach out to hello@waterburybasilica.org to RSVP.



APRIL 24 @ 7PM
YCP SPEAKER EVENT
 Bl. Michael McGivney Parish, St. Mary's Church, New Haven

"AI. Faith. Your Career. Are They Compatible?" Come join Young Catholic Professionals Central CT for our next Executive Speaker Series Event! Come enjoy light refreshments and networking along with a talk by Omar Kouatly on AI and faith in the workplace. We look forward to meeting you there!



MAY 8 @ 6PM
WOMEN'S HOLY HOUR & DINNER
 St. Bridget of Sweden Parish, Cheshire

Are you seeking peace and direction? Join us for an evening dedicated to women's vocational discernment. We'll begin with a Holy Hour featuring beautiful music, prayerful silence, and an inspiring reflection. Please stay for a free dinner and community fellowship. Registration required. Email cdemiany@ascjus.org to RSVP.



MAY 9 @ 9AM - 2PM
DAY WITH MARY | RETREAT
 Precious Blood Parish, St. Agnes Church, Milford

Join us for A Marian Eucharistic Day Retreat with the Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate. Day will include: Holy Mass, Confession, Conferment of the Miraculous Medal, Fatima Video, Benediction, Marian Procession, Conferment of the Brown Scapular, Recitation of the Rosary and talks by Franciscans. Inclement weather, check status www.daywithmarywest.org Retreat is FREE, bring a snack!



MAY 10 @ 10AM **Adults \$50**
MOTHER'S DAY BRUNCH
 Holy Family Passionist Retreat Center, West Hartford

Children 4-12, \$15 | Children under 4, Free
 Come celebrate Mother's Day with a special Mass for mothers and families, and then enjoy a delicious gourmet brunch prepared by our chef. Visit www.holyfamilyretreat.org/calendar.

2026 ARCHBISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL

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

10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%



Total Goal: \$10M 59.33% as of 3/31/26

\$5,932,982.77 in pledges from 16,391 generous donors



WE ARE
 ONE

www.archdioceseofhartford.org/appeal