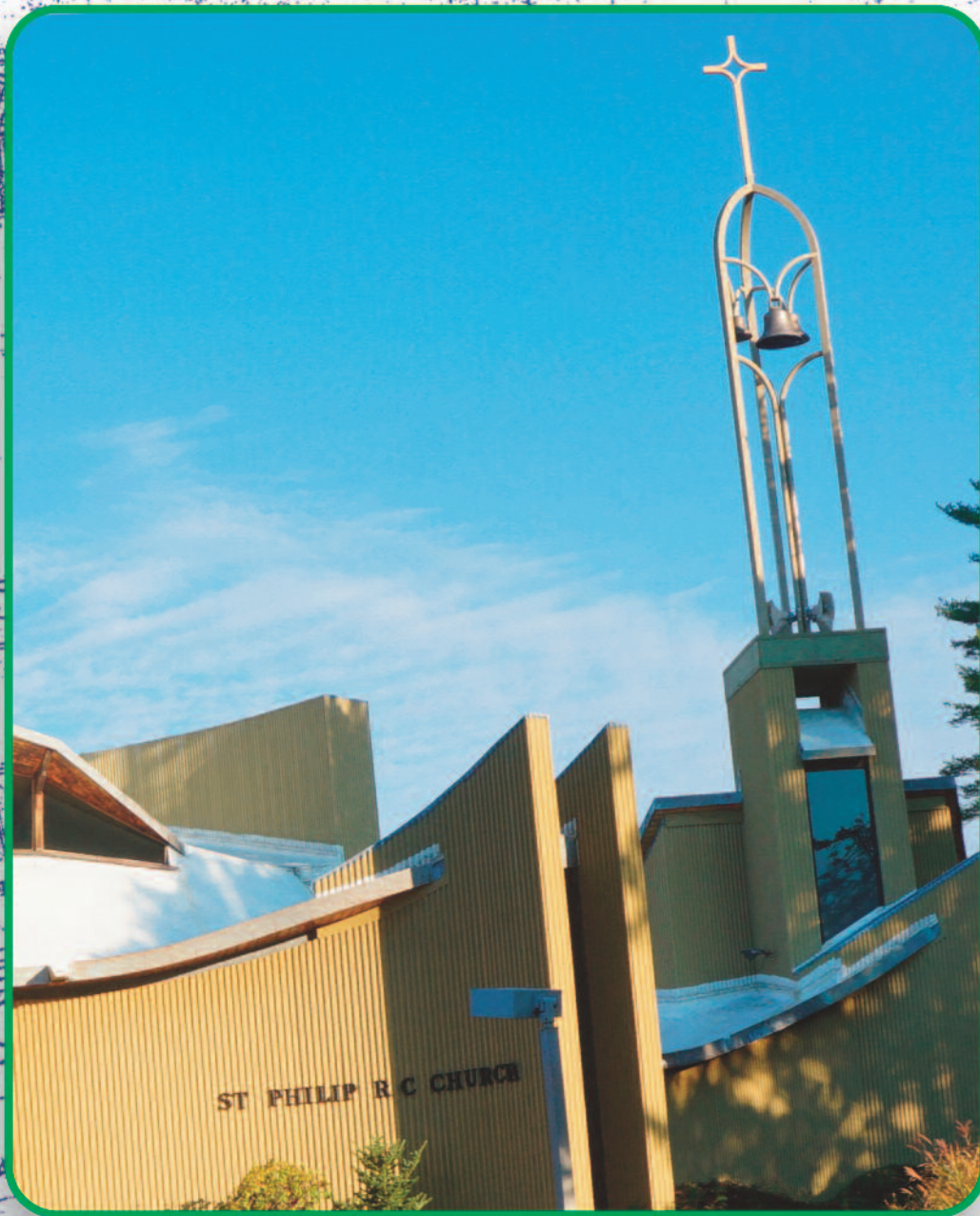




St. Philip Church
50th Anniversary
1964-2014



ST. PHILIP CHURCH

FIFTY YEARS
OF BRINGING ALL TO CHRIST



APOSTOLIC NUNCIATURE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

3339 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20008-3610

No. 8286

August 3, 2014

Dear Bishop Caggiano,

Pleased to learn that Saint Philip Parish in Norwalk, Connecticut, in the Diocese of Bridgeport, has been celebrating its 50th Anniversary throughout this year, I have the special honor of conveying to Your Excellency as Local Ordinary, to the Reverend Father Michael A. Boccaccio, Pastor, to all his Staff, and to each parishioner the warm greetings, heartfelt congratulations and spiritual closeness of His Holiness Pope Francis.

On this wonderful occasion, the Holy Father gives thanks to the Lord for the abundant graces of these past 50 years, mindful of the countless clergy, religious and laity, who, by their many sacrifices, paved the way to this day, laboring generously for the growth of the Church and leaving behind a lasting legacy of faith and good works.

His Holiness is confident that this commemoration will inspire in all of the faithful, particularly the young, a renewed awareness of their mission to bear joyful witness to the Lord each day in word and deed, and he fervently prays that they will grow in appreciation of their baptismal dignity as children of God and members of Christ's Body, recommitting themselves to serve the community at large, particularly the poor, the homeless, the stranger, the sick, and all who suffer.

With these sentiments, the Holy Father commends Saint Philip Parish to the maternal protection of Mary, Mother of the Church, as well as to the prayerful intercession of its heavenly Patron, and he cordially imparts his Apostolic Blessing as a pledge of hope and strength in Christ Jesus.

Offering my own personal best wishes, I remain,



Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ *Carlo Maria Vigano*

Archbishop Carlo Maria Vigano
Apostolic Nuncio





OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

DIocese of BRIDGEPORT

238 Jewett Avenue • Bridgeport, Connecticut 06606 • 203-416-1352 • FAX: 203-371-8323

August, 2014

Reverend Michael A. Boccaccio
Pastor
Saint Philip Roman Catholic Church
1 Father Conlon Place
Norwalk, CT 06851-3897

Dear Father Boccaccio and Parishioners:

Permit me to offer you my warm and heartfelt congratulations as Saint Philip Roman Catholic Church celebrates its Fiftieth Anniversary.

From its founding in August, 1964 the beautiful church of Saint Philip has stood as a community of faith, worship and service. It is a vibrant family of faith rooted in the gospel, engaged in religious formation, dedicated to the worship of the living God, and generous in its long-standing service to parishioners of all ages as well as to those most in need.

I take this occasion to thank the priests, staff members, advisors and parishioners of Saint Philip. Your spirit of willing service and generosity makes Saint Philip a wonderful and vital part of this diocesan family of faith.

I wish all of you a very blessed and joyous Anniversary. Be assured of my special prayers.

With prayerful best wishes, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Frank J. Caggiano

Most Reverend Frank J. Caggiano
Bishop of Bridgeport





Saint Philip Church

1 Father Conlon Place • Norwalk, Connecticut 06851-3897
(203) 847-4549

Dear St. Philip Parishioners,

When it was announced by Bishop Curtis that I would become the third Pastor of this grace-filled community, starting on Friday Noon, June 10, 1988, I received a number of welcome phone calls from St. Philip members. Among which was one from the then Parish Council president, Gintas Zemaitaitis. He told me that the parish was in the process of preparing for its 25th Anniversary of its founding [1964] to be celebrated in 1989. I told him how excited I was to be a part of the parish, let alone delighted to be involved in its Silver Anniversary. I then thought “where will I be when it’s time for the 50th anniversary.” Well, here I am – and so happily so – 25 years and 4 months later! What an honor.

During the period of serving St. Philip, I have come to embrace this ministry. This is my fourth parish assignment and my first pastorate. You and I have witnessed so much: from completing the Sacred Art of the church’s interior, erecting a new bell tower; to pies-in-the-face and dunking pool. With you, the future contains many more opportunities awaiting our attention, e.g., expanding our ministries, replacing the church’s boiler, etc.

I realize I may easily be the Pastor serving this parish for the longest time. Bishop Caggiano has decreed that as of June 30, 2014, a newly appointed pastor can serve no more than two terms of six years, at the most three terms. What an incredible blessing to think that I may have literally earned a mention in St. Philip history!

I congratulate all of you for your dedication to this parish. You have done a remarkable job, in so many ways. I wish to thank the 50th Anniversary Committee for arranging the many 50th events. I also want to thank God and our Patron, the Apostle St. Philip for calling me to serve as your pastor. I shall hold this parish in my heart and prayer forever. In the meantime, again, I congratulate you and wish each one of you Eternal Blessings, ever,

In Christ,

Fr. Michael A. Boccaccio





REFLECTIONS ON ST. PHILIP, OUR PATRON

On September 6, 2006, Pope Benedict XVI reflected on our patron, St. Philip. His message is abridged here.

In the lists of the Twelve, Philip always appears essentially among the first of the apostles. Although Philip was Jewish, his name is Greek, as is Andrew's, a small gesture of cultural openness that must not be underestimated. The Gospel of John tells us what we know of him. Like Peter and Andrew, he is from Bethsaida, a small city under the tetrarch of one of Herod the Great's sons, who was also called Philip.

After being called by Jesus, Philip meets with Nathanael and says, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. In face of Nathanael's skeptical response—"Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"—Philip answers, "Come and see." Philip demonstrates the characteristics of the authentic witness: he is not content with presenting the announcement, but suggests that Nathanael experience what was proclaimed. Jesus has the same response when two disciples of John the Baptist approach him to ask him where he lives: "Come and see."

On the occasion of the multiplication of loaves, Jesus asks Philip where it is possible to buy bread needed to feed all the people following him. Practical Philip answers, "Two hundred days' wages worth of food would not be enough for each of them to have a little." Yet we know that Jesus took the available loaves, and after praying, distributes them and satisfies the crowd's hunger.

In another instance, before the Passion, some Greeks arrive in Jerusalem for the Passover and ask Philip, "Sir, we would like to see Jesus." Philip tells Andrew; then together they tell Jesus. Once again we witness his prestige among the apostles. He carries out the functions of intermediary between the request of those Greeks—he probably spoke Greek and was able to act as interpreter—and Jesus; although he joins Andrew, the foreigners turn to him. This teaches us to be willing to accept requests and invocations wherever they come from, as well as to direct them to the Lord, as only He can satisfy them fully. It is important to know that the Lord, not we, is the last recipients of the requests: we must direct to Him those in difficulties. Each one of us must be an open path to Him!

During the Last Supper, Jesus says that to know him is to know the Father. Philip naively says: "Master, show us the Father, and that will be enough for us." Jesus reproaches: "Have I been with you for so long a time and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father?' Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me?" These sublime words in the Gospel of John are an authentic revelation.

The evangelist does not say whether Philip understands Jesus' answer fully. But according to some accounts, Philip evangelizes Greece and then Phrygia, and there he faces death in Hieropolis, by crucifixion or stoning.

We end by reflecting that to find Jesus, as Philip found him, we must try to see in Him God Himself. Philip invites us to let ourselves be conquered by Jesus. In this way, seeing, finding God, we can find true life.





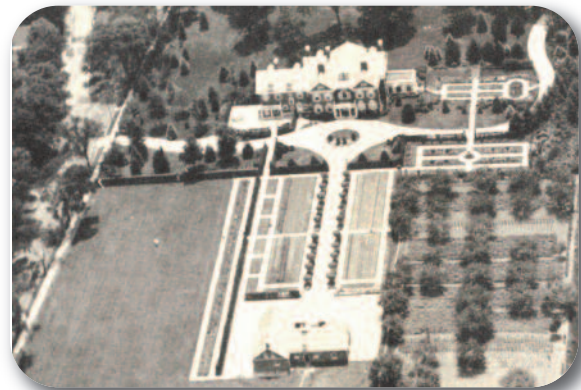
A HISTORY OF ST. PHILIP

Buildings and Grounds

St. Philip Parish, once a small onion farm, later a Manice DeForest Lockwood estate called Oak Hill, then the home for the St. Mary Parish convent and school, came into existence on August 21, 1964. It was created by Bishop Walter W. Curtis who carved the new parish out of the northeastern portion of the vast St. Mary Parish, the oldest in Norwalk.

First, a little history: Oak Hill included a 15-room mansion, stables, and outbuildings. The eight-acre tract was purchased for \$75,000

in 1947 by the Rev. Henry M. Callahan, then pastor of St. Mary. Ground was broken for the school in 1953. Originally planned as a nine-room building, it was expanded to 17.

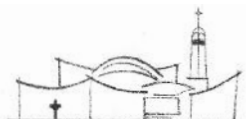


The sprawling St. Mary parish was eventually divided to allow creation of St. Matthew (1958),

St. Jerome (1960), and St. Philip (1964). According to popular parish lore, Father Callahan enjoyed relating how, when he purchased the estate, he was forced to buy the triangle at the corner of North Avenue and France Street for an additional \$3,000. Father Callahan later sold that triangle as the site for a pair of gas stations—netting more than he had paid for the entire land package.

Bishop Curtis appointed Father Leonard Conlon, then the pastor of St. Mary, as St. Philip's pastor in 1964, with Father Robert Albert as assistant. They resided in St. Mary rectory until our first rectory was completed on the corner of West Rocks Road and Jarvis Street. The old St. Mary convent and school at the corner of France Street and North Avenue was deeded to the newly-formed St. Philip, and for the first five years masses and other liturgical services were celebrated in the school basement. Weddings and funerals were celebrated in St. Mary Church on West Avenue. In June 1966, a fund-raising drive was begun to build a church and the present rectory.

St. Philip (1964). According to popular parish lore, Father Callahan enjoyed relating how, when he purchased the estate, he was forced to buy the triangle at the corner of North Avenue and France Street for an additional \$3,000. Father Callahan later sold that triangle as the site for a pair of gas stations—netting more than he had paid for the entire land package.





The church was designed by George J. Lechner, a St. Philip member and an architect with Lyons & Mather of Bridgeport. After a successful fund drive, and the cooperation of Bishop Curtis, a contract for the church and the attached rectory was awarded on May 23, 1967 to the Thomas J. Riordan Company of Norwalk. Standard Electric received the electrical contract, and Connery Brothers installed the plumbing, heating, and ventilation. The total price was \$580,000.

The church received an Excellence in Architecture award from the Association for a Better Community Design.

The first Mass was celebrated on Easter Sunday, April 6, 1969, and Bishop Curtis formally dedicated the church on November 16, 1969.

Many dedicated church members helped to keep the church and grounds in operating order over the years. Overseeing much of this activity was the late John Fahey. John attended to the scheduling and working of various



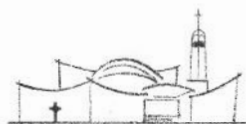
Ground Breaking Ceremony with (left to right) Father Conlon, Sister M. Noreen Corbett, Bishop Curtis, Mayor Frank N. Zullo

trades people. When cement was poured, he was there. When wires were pulled, he was watching. When pews were tailored, he guided and helped.

Under the direction of Father Michael Boccaccio, church members prepared for the 25th anniversary by establishing a Church Commission to complete the church as sacred space, which was rededicated on September 24, 1995.

Significant changes took place over the years. Not only did the physical building take on a new life with each addition of new art, but the entire

congregation also was rededicated and re-energized with the evolution of the new church space. The nave and sanctuary were restyled and refurbished, complete with new flooring, carpets and art pieces. Sound walls were erected on either side of the sanctuary. Embedded into these walls are twin display cases. On the Baptismal side, an ambry displays three decanters containing the sacred oils used for the celebration of the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and the Anointing of the Sick.





Several pews were removed on the baptismal side to make the space wheelchair-accessible. The music loft and the acoustic canopy were built. A tabernacle shrine wall was erected on the pulpit side of the sanctuary. Outside, signs were created to announce the presence of St. Philip Roman Catholic Church to passers-by.

Timothy (Tex) Devine, whose life on this earth was much too short for all of us, was a constant clerk of the works for much activity. More recently, Art Petrone and his group of merry volunteers continued this work. These parishioners are prime examples of what it means to be involved and have a sense of ownership of one's parish. Their dedication

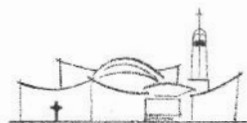
reflects the commitment that has been an integral part of this parish's history.

Another significant event from 1999 occurred outside, "On Holy Ground!" The new parking lot with its ramps, closer to the church spaces, and well-lit walkways, was upgraded and all fully functional by mid-Spring. The garden areas near and approaching the church were manicured, thanks to Father Albert Pinciario (now pastor of St. Cecilia Church, Stamford); Norma Jordan, Chris Schreiner, Ed Spires, and other parish gardeners, including Jean McDonough assisted.



The fenced basketball court and new electric garage doors were added to the rear of the property. Fencing and speed bumps were added to protect children and other pedestrians from vehicles. A playground was positioned opposite the Youth Activity Center.

Over time, the convent left the mansion and VITAM moved in. Then VITAM left for larger quarters of its own, causing a significant reduction in our income. A St. Philip properties committee looked hard at our expenses. The Montessori Middle School was a brief tenant in the school building, and Carousel Day Care is the present long-term tenant. Administrator Steve Bagnell oversaw the conversion of the heating system from electric to oil. Subsequently the conversion to oil extended to the other buildings. The present administrator, Alan Yoder, converted the school to gas heat, and developed plans to convert one of the church's two boilers to gas to allow heating flexibility.





In 2005, we learned that the bell tower had to be dismantled for extensive repairs. It was replaced, interior repairs were made to the church beams and a new floor was installed over the next couple of years. Artists came to the mansion to create St. Philip Artists' Guild (SPAG). *See more about SPAG in the article Art as Worship.*

In 2010 the mansion was made more attractive with a grant for its external restoration. We also received money to power-wash the exterior, paint the window frames, etc. Icing that cake was another donation for a walkway from the Holy Family Chapel to the mansion. The mansion was invigorated, both internally and externally.

All of which brings us to the kickoff of our 50th anniversary at the Mass on Thanksgiving morning, 2013. A true delight was hearing original members share their memories of the founding—over 60 original families are still actively involved in our parish life. Our year-long celebration ends with Bishop Frank Caggiano presiding at a Mass on October 19, 2014. As we've now looked back on our previous 50 years as a parish, it is time to look forward to what the next 50 years will bring.



Celebrants of the 50th Anniversary Mass offered Thanksgiving Day 2013 included church staff and many of the original parish founders.



ART AS WORSHIP



St. Philip Church, a sweeping concrete house of worship reminiscent of Middle-Eastern tents that ancient Israelites pitched to house the Ark of the Covenant, offers a visual history of the Catholic Church's way of teaching the Faith over 2,000 years.

When the pastor, Father Michael Boccaccio, arrived at St. Philip on June 10, 1988, he was introduced to our church's modern interpretation of an ancient place of Judeo-Christian worship. Bas-reliefs by artist Leslie Dorr of St. Philip top the east and west entrances of the church. Inside the

main entrance, the abstract 70-foot concrete and stained glass wall, also by Dorr, that separates the main vestibule from the church interior suggests a fishing net, reminding us of Christ's words to fisherman Peter, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will be catching people." Looking down the nave and past the altar one saw the modern abstract sculpture of a Risen Christ. The Blessed Virgin Mary was represented in the abstract on the pulpit side.

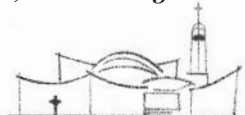


In the 26-plus years Father Boccaccio has been pastor, St. Philip's visual message of the Church's teaching has changed and expanded, perhaps in ways he could not have predicted in the beginning of his service here. Still, there were hints: His deep feelings about art in our lives shaped his years in all the previous churches he was assigned to—St. Pius X in Fairfield; St. Augustine Cathedral in Bridgeport; and Christ the King in Trumbull.

The biggest influences were the sabbaticals in 1981 and 1986 that took him to the Vatican and throughout Italy. Our pastor readily says that love of art is in his Italian DNA. Still, he was overwhelmed by the power of works by the great painters and sculptors he encountered on that visit. "I studied church history by literally walking through it. Centuries of art were all around me." He explains: "Art was the first formula for evangelization. Faith has been taught for centuries by art to Christians and non-Christians, most of whom were unable to read. It is invaluable because art is a medium that lives forever and speaks to all people. It is the first textbook of our faith."



Coming to St. Philip seven years after those sabbaticals, he began a journey to bring those centuries of understanding to our parishioners. He worked with parishioner Ed Spires and key works were replaced. The original Risen Christ figure now hangs on the wall of the Holy Family Chapel. The present Christ on the Cross features a human Jesus on a cross with four panels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The panels change to reflect the liturgical





seasons. Today, the Virgin Mary is represented by a Spanish-style, compassionate figure. Now on the baptismal side near an entrance to the chapel, Mary is seated on a pedestal that itself has a special history—the stone for the pedestal and the floor of the shrine was imported from the Holy Land.

Long-time parishioners may remember that the first replacement of the original statue of Mary was a beautiful statue carved from white pine that cracked beyond repair. The bust of that statue still can be seen

in the School Board Room. The artist was Father John Giuliani, a former priest at St. Mary Church, who later founded the Benedictine Grange in West Redding and was the recipient of the Mother Teresa Award for Religious Art in 2007.



A Word about Ed Spires

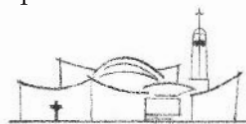
From the beginning, Fr. Boccaccio enlisted the help of talented, artistic parishioners and area residents. Father met Ed at St. Pius X parish in 1972. When Ed moved to Norwalk and attended St. Mary Church, our pastor invited him to join the St. Philip community. Father credits Ed and his extensive professional background in theater, music and the decorative arts as the primary lay force behind our present church setting.

Ed’s eyes and hands and research are seen in everything from the hydrastone casts of a 13th century Spanish frame for the six tiles around the present statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the design of St. Mary of the Way sculpture outside the main entrance to the church, the colorized Stations of the Cross and many other works. He is the parish “artist-in-residence,” and served as the overall artistic supervisor and engineer of the church design. That’s literally from the floor up—he designed and hand-cut the flooring tiles, created the setting for the Holy Family painting in the Holy Family Chapel, and devised the inventive use of materials from secular sources, especially from United House Wrecking in Stamford, for a range of works.

In many cases, if he didn’t execute a final work, he designed and supervised the production, as in the “Blest Are They” shrine on the wall of the main vestibule that acknowledges parishioners for their generosity to the church. In recognition of his immense contribution, Ed became the first parishioner to be awarded the Bridgeport Diocese’s St. Augustine Medal of Service, in 2005. Similarly, he designed the four-foot-high figure of our patron St. Philip in the church garden near the chapel entry and the outdoor altar that honors the donors in the 2008 “Lift High the Cross” campaign.

About St. Kateri Tekakwitha

In 1995, St. Philip Church acquired a first-class relic—a piece of bone—of St. Kateri Tekakwitha, an Algonquin-Mohawk Native American





who lived in upstate New York and Canada in the late 17th century. She was declared venerable by Pope Pius XII, beatified by Pope John Paul II in 1980, and canonized by Pope Benedict XVI on October 12, 2012.

St. Philip played a unique part in the canonization because of the relic. Father Boccaccio was invited to take part in the ceremonies in Rome. He brought back photos, which are posted on the St. Philip website at www.stphilipnorwalk.org. On July 14, 2013, parishioners celebrated a Mass and a memorable Native American purification ceremony in her honor and in the consecration of her shrine. The consecration included the unveiling of an icon by Deacon Frank Chiappetta. The icon, the deacon explained, is said to be “written,” rather than drawn or painted, because it is considered to be the Gospel in paint.

The icon and the reliquary of St. Kateri hang in the Holy Family Chapel. Relics of two other saints, Sts. Candidus and Eugenius, have been enshrined in the back of the main altar since the consecration of the church in 1969. Additionally, the Byzantine-style triptych St. Philip icon displays a “supposed” relic of our patron, the Apostle Philip.

The art of the church also acknowledges the parishioners themselves in the “Blest Are They” shrine in the main vestibule. This Pentecost designed wall of plaques acknowledges the parishioners who have donated to the church, and blessings of the Trinity received by all church members, donors, and deceased and living persons in whose names the gifts were donated.

Many other works inside and outside the church were influenced over centuries. “I wanted our art to reflect a collection of different art media that range from the 6th century to the 21st century,” Father Boccaccio says.





“In wanting to capture the liturgical signs of history, symbolism and variety, I could have gone to the ‘rack,’ that is, buy readily available art. We have done some of that (for example, St. Anna and St. Mary on the west vestibule wall and St Elizabeth on the rear of the baptismal font wall). But by working with a committee chaired by Ed Spires, we have reached out to local artists for the first textbooks of our religion.”

In recent years, art has expanded on our parish campus, beyond the church building. St. Philip founding families may remember that the historic Manice Lockwood Mansion, behind the church, served as a convent and residence for VITAM in the past, and was barely used in recent years. It is now a beautiful space for receptions and meetings. Most importantly, it has been the home for St. Philip Artists’ Guild (SPAG) since 2008 as “an artist’s space devoted to creativity, innovation, diversity, and community.” Presently, it houses thirteen artists’ studios. Father Boccaccio is more than pleased. “It bothered me that the mansion was empty, and now it is filled with people and with works by local artists.”

At times, he has offered an art tour of the church, and today he does that once a year, usually for the RCIA candidates. A self-directed tour brochure is available.

There are many more artistic expressions of faith that have not been listed here, for lack of space. For further information about the works, designers, artists and fabricators, please go online to www.stphilipnorwalk.org, then click on “About Us” to reach the art pages.





ST. PHILIP MINISTRIES

EUCCHARISTIC SERVERS/MINISTERS

Eucharistic Servers/Ministers have a special devotion to the Eucharist. Sharing and distributing the Body and Blood of Christ at Mass is an honor and a privilege. These parishioners also bring communion to those who are sick, hospitalized, in nursing homes and homebound.

GREETERS/USHERS

Meeting people with a friendly greeting and cheerful smile helps all to feel welcomed to Mass at St. Philip Church. Greeter/Ushers guide people as they enter or leave the church, distribute weekly bulletins and other useful information, as well as prompt and inform those who will be participating in bringing the gifts to the altar; and help organize seating and traffic flow for special occasions.

PARISH COUNCIL

Members of the Parish Council have an excellent opportunity to get involved with the smooth functioning of the parish. The council serves as a consultative resource for the present and future growth and concerns and needs of our parish family.

FINANCE AND PROPERTY

This committee helps provide financial oversight for the parish. Typical task areas include budgeting and financial planning and the creation of internal controls and accountability policies. This committee provides an excellent opportunity for parishioners who are good with numbers and are interested in the financial well-being of the parish.

WELCOMING

The Welcoming Committee members extend themselves to new parishioners by providing basic parish information and sincere welcome. This committee provides coordination of specific welcoming events and guides new parishioners to various parish events and organizations.

ROSARY AND FIRST FRIDAY ADORATION

Parishioners who pray the Rosary and have a special dedication to our Blessed Mother Mary, or those who enjoy spending time before Jesus present in the Blessed Sacrament, receive blessings and comfort through the Rosary and Adoration Committee.





MOMS GROUP

The mission of the Moms Group is to support Moms, Grandmas, Godmothers and Surrogate Moms in their roles within their families and the community through prayer and outreach. These women share and care and connect with other groups who may need a “mothering touch.”

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

Knitters or crocheters who like to use their talent in making prayer shawls and lap blankets for the sick and homebound will find sharing this time with others very fulfilling. This group meets on Friday mornings and sets aside time for prayer requests each week.

FOOD PANTRY

The food pantry group collects, sorts, organizes and distributes non-perishables and canned goods to people— both in our parish and in the local community, who have a need. Special collections and distributions are held for Easter, Christmas, and Thanksgiving among others. The food pantry is open Fridays.

MEN’S MINISTRY

The Men’s Ministry fosters spiritual reflection and brotherhood. Scripture readings serve as a springboard for personal reflection and open-ended dialogue. The goal is to help men with demands of everyday life by sharing their Christian commitment at Saturday morning meetings.

RCIA - THE RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS

RCIA is a process of conversion, introduction to Catholicism and entry into full communion with the Catholic Church. Beliefs, as well as the life of discipleship to which Baptism calls all Christians to live by, and practices of prayer and charitable giving are reviewed. RCIA is for those who seek Baptism into the Catholic faith and also for Catholics who have not yet completed the sacraments of initiation with Eucharist and/or Confirmation.





SOCIAL CONCERNS MINISTRY

The social concerns ministry responds to Christ's call by reaching out to those with need by welcoming, serving and supporting our parish and the greater community. We share our corporal and spiritual gifts through the Visiting the Sick Program, Special Parish Collections, Manna House of Hospitality/Open Door Shelter, Parish Nurse, Pro-Life Ministry of Consolation, etc.

LITURGY

The overall purpose of the Liturgy Committee is to coordinate sacred liturgy. The main objective is to promote a strong sense of celebration in our parish community. This committee strives to provide and encourage a deeper awareness of, and a more active participation in, Liturgy.

Altar Servers

This ministry provides a unique opportunity for young men and women to serve the Lord at Mass.

Adult Funeral Servers

Members help set up and serve the Mass of Christian Burial.

Scripture Readers

Members of this ministry proclaim and pass on the Sacred Word of God.

Assistant Sacristan

These volunteers help to coordinate and oversee the details of weekend and Holy Day Masses.

Altar Linen Group

These members help to prepare for sacred events and celebrations by washing, ironing, sewing and preparing altar linens.

BIBLE STUDY MINISTRY

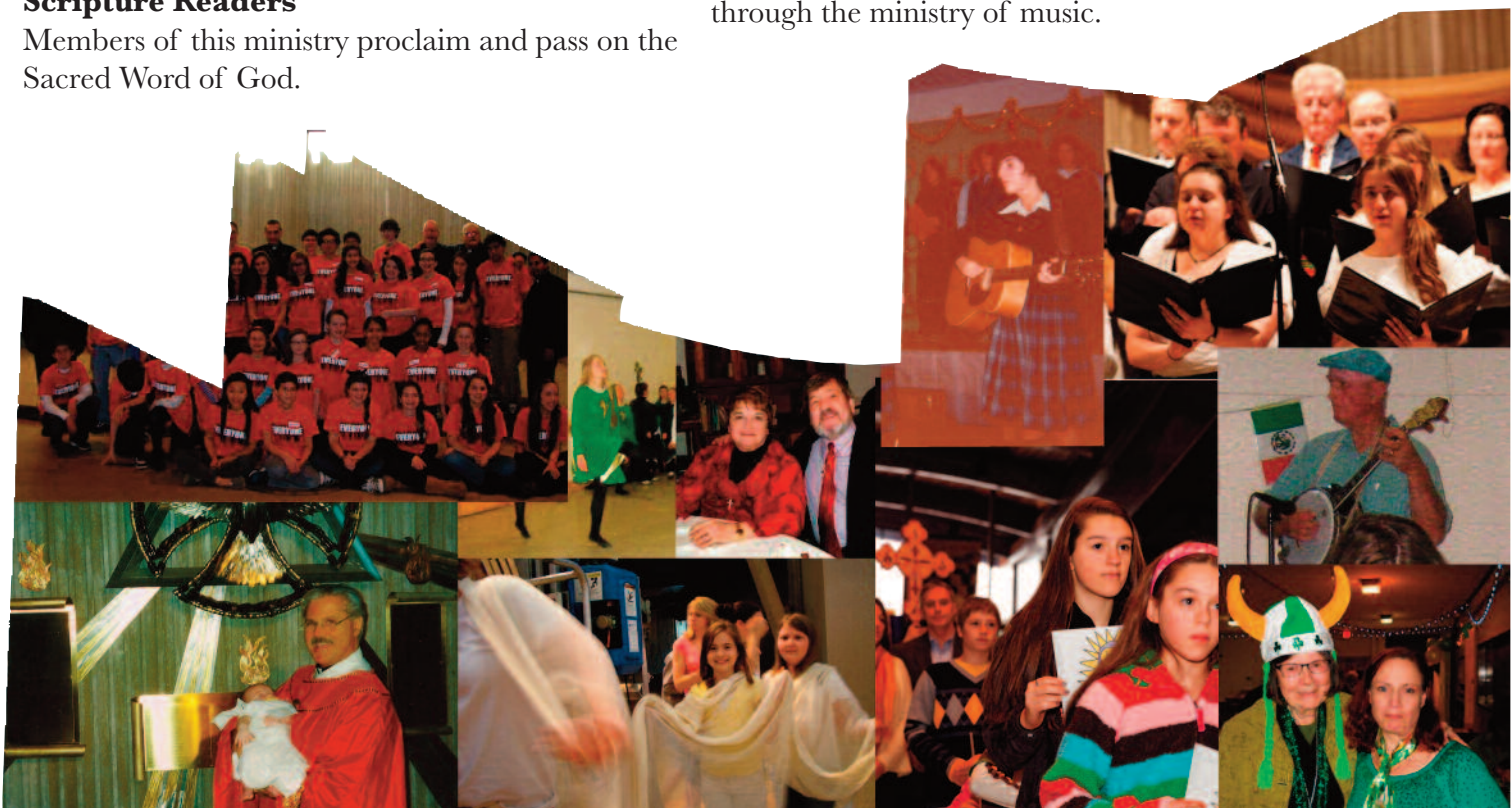
Members of this group meet once a week to grow in knowledge and love of the Scripture and share the Good News.

PARTY MINISTRY

The mission of this ministry is to organize and run various social events that bring parishioners together. They endeavor to strengthen our faith community and build relationships by providing joyful gatherings for St. Philip Parish. Some traditional events include: the Bunny and Santa Breakfasts, Mardi Gras, International Dinner, etc.

MUSIC/CHOIR MINISTRY

St. Augustine once said, "One who sings prays twice." Members of this group serve the Lord through the ministry of music.





This ministry also helps to select music for liturgies and consists of: the Adult Choir, Junior Choir (children and teens), Cantors (adults, teens and children) and Instrumentalists.

ARTS AND ENVIRONMENT MINISTRY

The Arts and Environment Ministry members design and decorate the church for liturgical seasons and events.

FAITH FORMATION

AND EDUCATION MINISTRY

Catechists/Aides/Substitutes/Hall Monitors

Parishioners willing to share their faith and time with the youth of our parish grades 1 through 5 meet on Tuesdays and Wednesdays after school.

SPYCE (St. Philip Youth Catholic Education) is an intergenerational, interactive religious education program from grades 6 through 8. SPYCE meets one Sunday afternoon a month.

Confirmation Prep Process

This ministry assists our 9th graders in preparing for and living the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Storytelling

These helpers present the Liturgy of the Word

for children from age 3 to grade 1 on Sundays at the 10 a.m. Mass.

Youth Ministry

High School Youth Group

This group presents an exciting and spiritual program for teens that meets Wednesday nights.

Middle School (YAC) Youth Activity Center

This group meets Friday nights to offer a spiritual and social program for middle school youth.

30-Hour Famine

Over 100 young people and adult volunteers gather and put their faith into action by fasting for 30 hours, carrying out charitable works, raising money to feed the hungry, to raise consciousness, and to make a difference in the world.

Midnight/Breakfast Run

The Youth Ministry heads into New York City a few times during the year to feed, clothe and converse with our homeless brothers and sisters.





PARISHIONERS REMEMBER

Some reminiscences contributed by parishioners were shortened in the printed anniversary book because of limited space. Here, they are printed in full, and some new letters were added.

Mavis Mennino

I have been a member of St. Philip Parish since June 1965. When I met Jim, I was not a Catholic but went to church at St. Joseph for six years before we were married in St. Joseph by Father Joseph Kohut. When we got engaged, I met Father Kohut on the street of South Norwalk and he said, "OK! Is this going to be inside or outside the rail?" As some of you remember, there was a rail in front of the altar for the non-Catholics to marry Catholics.

So I started instructions with Father Kohut and was baptized into the church on a Friday night so no one would know I had only recently converted. I received my first Holy Communion at our wedding Mass.

Then we moved up to Newtown Avenue and started going to St. Jerome. Meanwhile Father Kohut was transferred to St. Philip. He came by the house on a Sunday after Mass and said, "I haven't seen you in church." We told him that we were going to St. Jerome, whereupon he said, "I don't think so." He left and went down to St. Philip and spoke with Father Conlon, our first pastor. He came back with a registration card and said, "Sign this, you belong to us." That's when we started going to St. Philip.

Since Jim had been very active in St. Joseph, he immediately started ushering at St. Philip. That just led to us getting involved in different activities such as the Men's Society, corned beef and cabbage dinners, Scottish games, and fundraisers. We ran the kitchen at the Christmas Fair for several years.

We became close to each priest as they were assigned to St. Philip. Our door was always open and the welcome mat was always out. When our daughter started kindergarten (hers was the first kindergarten class), I started volunteering at the school. I did lunch duty, was homeroom mother and vice-president of the home school association for several years. Robert (Bob) Allred was president. I did hot-dog sales once a month since there were no hot lunches at the school. I would cook at least 300 hot dogs and the kids loved it. When our son was old enough, he became an altar boy, and was always available to serve Mass. He served many years until he got to high school and got involved with the school band.

I have been really blessed to be a part of this wonderful community for the past 49 years. I have met some great people and worked with so many of them.



Kathi Sonntag

I was raised Catholic, but after attending a church of a different denomination for many years, I got married; and my spouse did not like the church I was attending. So, for marital harmony I stopped attending that church. After many months of not attending church services, I missed participating in worship and the feeling of belonging to a church family. I asked my husband to pick a church that he would feel comfortable with us attending. He liked the architecture of St. Philip, and we started attending.

In St. Philip I found a welcoming community. Father Boccaccio is a wonderful, humorous, caring pastor who makes it a point to meet all the new families and get to know them by name. There are plenty of opportunities to become involved. The first committee I volunteered for was the Mardi Gras Party committee. I made great friends with the ladies on that committee and we have continued our friendships outside of church.

I've had many opportunities to learn and grow in my faith, understand Catholic teaching, serve others and to love the Lord more deeply because of the St. Philip family. I look forward to many more years of worshiping together with my Church family.



John & Louise Frank

We first met Father Leonard Conlon when we lived in Wilton and he was the pastor of Our Lady Of Fatima. He showed up at our front door and asked if any Catholics lived there. We told him we were, and he asked why he hadn't seen us at church. We explained that we had a baby, nine months old, and we took him to his grandmother's house while we attended St Thomas Church. By this time he had a grubby baby in his arms, dribbling all over his dress clothes. He didn't seem much concerned about his clothes, and pointed out that babies were welcome in his church, and he loved to hear them because then he knew the parents were there. He visited with us for a while and then left with "See you on Sunday."

We lived in Wilton for five years and he baptized our next three children. Then we moved back to Norwalk in St Mary's parish. Soon after, Father Conlon became pastor of St Mary's and we teased him about following us. Two days after our eighth was born St. Philip's parish was formed, including us, and Father Conlon was named pastor with an assistant, Father Robert Albert. Again we teased him about following us. The parish was assigned the school, and the mansion, which was used as the convent. Mass was celebrated in the school hall and a house was purchased on West Rocks Road to be the rectory and parish office.

Shortly after the parish was formed, we invited Father Conlon and Father Albert to dinner at our house. The children were on their best behavior, knowing this was special because we used the breakable dishes and were sharing dinner with two priests. At one point during the meal, Father Conlon commented that he would love to have heard the orders the kids got in preparation for the event.

When we were expecting our ninth and final baby, we worked on a door-to-door fund drive to build the church and the attached rectory.



Marcia (Northrop) Ciambriello

I've been going to St. Philip Church pretty much my whole life.

We had our Sunday Mass in the school basement. In fact, that's where I made my First Communion in 1964. If I recall correctly, the dress code was quite different. I believe we wore veils each week to Mass.

Though I'm one of six kids, I was the only one who went to St. Philip School. (Something about needing the discipline, or so said my parents.) Sister Rita was probably my favorite teacher. I grew up on Winnipauk Drive and graduated from Central Catholic High School.

Since then, I've always felt at home here, and though both my parents are gone and none of my siblings live in the area, it brings back memories of my family and friends.

St. Philip Church will always remain that way. God Bless.



Jim & Connie Keavney

We were not "attracted" to the parish; we lived here and Bishop Curtis dropped the parish all around us. But we were enthusiastic supporters.

Perhaps the most exciting aspect of the creation of St. Philip parish was that it came at about the same time as many of the changes introduced by Vatican II. We remember that the first Mass we attended was celebrated by the priest facing the congregation was in the school hall, where the new parish held Mass before the church was built. Probably the first Mass that we attended celebrated in English was also in that location. We were on the first lists of lay readers and Eucharist Servers.

The history of the parish says that weddings and funerals were celebrated in St. Mary's until St. Philip's had a church building. We had no weddings to celebrate, and fortunately no funerals, but we had a couple of First Communions in that period, and two baptisms. As we remember, the First Communions, involving processions, were in St. Mary's but at least one of the baptisms was in a chapel in the convent building in what is now the Community Room of the mansion. It was quite a pretty space and we were happy to have it there. It felt as if we were more a real parish.

Before the split, St. Mary Parish had both a church and a school, but they were not on the same site. Afterwards, of course, the new St. Philip got the school and had to build a church, while St. Mary built a school. Catholic schools were bulging at the seams then, and we tried several times to get our children into St. Philip School, but were unsuccessful. Religious instruction at St. Philip was given in the teacher's home, seven or eight kids per class, afternoons after school for the younger ones, and evenings for the older grades. The parents were supposed to be responsible for getting the children there and picking them up, but we remember making the rounds more than once to drop off the students—it beat waiting and wondering if the parent would ever show up.

Of course, one of the first priorities was raising money to build a church, so the parish held its very first pledge drive. Watching the church being built was awesome. Seeing a brand new Catholic church with the altar placed as it is and with no altar rail really brought home to us the new perspectives initiated by Vatican II.

Jeanne E. Pinto

It is with pleasure I share my thoughts and memories of St. Philip Church. I was introduced to St. Philip years ago when attending Christmas Masses with my daughter and son-in-law, Claudia and Terry Aloise. Each time I visited I wished I too, was a parishioner. Years later, that came true. Of course, my most indelible memory of St. Philip was the funeral Mass for my daughter, Claudia—the very dignity of the overall service, the choir and the glorious voice of Dana singing the Ave Maria. It is difficult to convey the solace, comfort and peace that ceremony bestowed on my family, to be never forgotten. It is hard to describe the warmth and friendliness that permeates throughout the church at each Mass, due to, in no small measure, the soul and leadership of Father Mike.



Rodger Lord

The first memory I have of St. Philip is the access I have to where I live and, my ability to get there in my wheelchair. When I joined the parish, Father Michael and Deacon Paul met me and welcomed me right after Mass. I have found this parish to be full of very real, caring, and wonderful people! I have nothing but good feelings about "MY" church, and tell everyone!

The deacons and Barbara Reilly have done great favors for me. I will never be able to thank Paul Einstman, enough, for all he has done! I light an online candle every morning for all of the wonderful friends, I have made there, including our wonderful cantors, Dana, Maria, Mary, Dan. Michael and Marcia are an inspiration to me.



John Fitzpatrick

I "found" St. Philip by getting lost. There must be a lesson in that somewhere. Married to a Norwalk lady in 1974, I became an occasional visitor to the in-laws for all the years that we lived in Indiana and then New York City. The family was not Catholic, and the churches they recommended to visitors were naturally St. Mary, whose steeple so nobly graces the skyline, and St. Thomas, which happened to be near my father-in-law's office. I became attached to the latter parish but somehow always managed to get lost on the way from Silvermine to East Norwalk. One day, I found myself on a byway called France Street and saw a Catholic school there. Where there's a school, there's usually a church, and sure enough I discovered the well-hidden St. Philip. No one in the family had ever heard of France Street or St. Philip. For a parish that overlooks one of the busiest roads in the nation (U.S. 1), we are remarkably invisible.

The church's distinctive interior captured my imagination at once. I'm told that the structure was intended to suggest a Bedouin tent. That it does, especially the exterior. But what captured my imagination was the sweep of the interior roof beams toward the light and toward the Christ. It seemed like the hull of a ship whose prow is pointing ever onward—a unique and effective inspiration. The impact has been somewhat lessened now that the lighting no longer emphasizes the sweep of the beams, and the stark metallic Christ figure has disappeared from the concrete headwall. But the building still makes a strong impression. Of course, the shape of a building matters little if there is no spirit in the community. Happily, I soon found a welcome at St. Philip, amid good service and preaching and fellowship. In 1997 we inherited the family house and eventually we became full-time Norwalk residents. The parish has become a spiritual home.

Joining the Music Ministry blessed with a strong voice and a lifelong love of music, I approached the St. Philip music ministry with fear and trembling. It was a well-known fact that I could not sing. My wife and my mother (both with professional training) had long said so. Indeed, I would not sing "Happy Birthday" or the National Anthem might emerge grudgingly from my lips, but beyond that I long refused to go.

The story of my conversion is too long for this space. But somewhere along the line, as I watched the parish music advance beyond the little toy keyboard that used to sit in front of the baptismal font, I was inspired to try. Some of the impetus came from a hilariously over-the-top recruiting speech given by Joe FitzHarris, who painted the music ministry as a permanent party scene presided over by the angelic voice of Ms. Maria O'Kelly. Somehow I summoned the nerve to audition. Then I disappeared. Returning a year later, I persevered through some exceedingly dubious moments to the point where I've come to make (I hope) a moderately competent contribution. I've even moved on to sing in a concert choir. St. Philip today enjoys an exceptional music program. The substantial choir, the children's choir, and the generous volunteer cantors have combined to inspire a congregation that really does sing and reverently remains through the closing hymn. We must be doing something right.



Fatima Coelho

We were attracted to the welcoming environment of St. Philip parish when we moved to Norwalk in 1989. Especially memorable for us were the baptism of my daughter, and volunteering for youth programs and events. St. Philip makes me feel I have a family I can count on away from home, and on moments when I feel weak in my faith and hope. The parish is committed to help the less fortunate. It is welcoming and happy, and has a great youth program.

Marian Barbieri

I do not really recall how I got involved with Mardi Gras, but I was on that committee for many years. I believe I was just swept along with my many church friends who had young children (and even though I do not have children even then I liked youth activities!)

My reflection is more, however, about how my parents—Peter and Grace Barbieri—became so much a part of St. Philip many years ago because of Mardi Gras, long before they moved to Norwalk three years ago. I helped with the decorations and took ownership of the mystery candy jar count. My visiting parents would come to help decorate, blow up balloons, count candy, etc., and then, of course, would join the party. My dad would often man the candy table or sell raffle tickets. My mom would be a judge in the King and Queen competition and help with the games, if needed. All this without being parishioners.

They enjoyed the dinner, the camaraderie, the community of St. Philip. They felt they belonged here and were welcomed and made to be at home. They would visit me every month or so and of course they attended Mass with me. My friends, and those they met working the Mardi Gras, would come to speak to them before or after Mass and, to this day, they are typically happily chatting while they wait for me to finish my ushering duties.

We—i.e. St. Philip Church—are such a warm and welcoming group. Everyone has a part in the great whole that makes us what we are. We are not faces in a sea of pews, but individuals invited to belong and to participate.

I came to St. Philip while I "belonged" to another parish that I simply could not get to let me in. I tried to register two or three times, to help with their bake sale, etc., but all with no response. Finally, after writing a letter explaining my frustration, I was released by that parish and allowed to join St. Philip. Within two to three days I had a call from Father Michael welcoming me and asking me to introduce myself when next at Mass. That is the difference. BELONGING. COMMUNITY. Again, it is a special place.



Peter and Grace Barbieri

Though we attended St. Philip's for years with our daughter, we are really new parishioners. We find St. Philip's to be, BY FAR, the most caring and spiritually uplifting parish we have attended all our lives. Our pastor, Father Boccaccio, helps make everyone family.



Deacon John and Ellen Mahon

Almost ten years ago, we interviewed Father Michael about the possibility of moving to the parish in order to prepare for the diaconate. Saying "Come to Philip," he welcomed us warmly. He recommended that we talk to Deacon Frank and Doris Chiappetta, and our rapport with them was instant. The people of the parish are good followers of St. Philip, leading newcomers and each other closer to Jesus.



Kali DiMarco

Growing up, I belonged to a parish that did not have a lot to offer. No music to speak of, nothing for youth, no real sense of community, and, believe it or not, no homilies! Sunday Mass was a quick 35 minutes—and most people walked out right after Communion. It was what I knew, until I stepped foot into St. Philip Church in 1992.

I have the benefit of my experience of church to know how special our parish is. The sense of joy is everywhere: in our music and the fact that the entire congregations sings, in our beautiful liturgies, in the extraordinary sense of community that is so welcoming and inclusive, in all that is available to each and every member of our family—from the youngest child to the elderly—it is all here! The artwork, the way that we can laugh at ourselves, the way that we care so deeply for so many—it is all here! Joining St. Philip and becoming involved with various ministries was the greatest gift we gave our family and we are ever grateful for it.



Donna DeBone

My first memory of the parish was a big warm welcome from Father Boccaccio and Sister Mary Ann. I was also especially attracted by the St. Francis Blessing of the Animals. This parish has strengthened me—I have received inner peace through my relationship with Jesus Christ.



Vincenza Rizzuti

My younger son, Anthony, received his First Communion in 1970, my twin daughters received Confirmation in 1971, my two daughters had their wedding ceremonies here—Ann Marie in 1974, Denise in 1981. My two beautiful grandchildren were baptized here with our family together. What attracted us to this parish? The beautiful modern design, when we moved from New York in 1969. The great feeling and love that has been shared from this parish strengthened our faith in God. This is a very friendly, very caring, helpful and lovable parish. Father Boccaccio and Sister Mary Ann have been so wonderful and caring to my family, with the loss of my husband, Salvatore, who went to meet God December 27, 2012. My daughter, Teresa, went to meet God in October 31, 2008. May God bless us all and the great, loving and caring parish!



Betty Hunter

My first memories of St. Philip parish are of our family joining the parish and attending Mass in the school hall. I was attracted by the friendly staff in the parish office and school, where our four children studied and graduated. My faith was strengthened by the outpouring of love, affection and help when we needed it so much. The opportunities offered for worship, service, meditation and the insightful homilies teach and inspire. I would tell anyone who has never visited or participated in our parish that they should give us a try—it is truly a welcoming, accepting, atmosphere, encouraging faith growth and participation. There's a wonderful family atmosphere and a cheerful welcome at all Masses and activities.



Anonymous

My first memory of St. Philip parish was when we were sitting in a side room of the school cafeteria for Mass. This is a parish with a great sense of community, a great leader in Father Boccaccio, and a growing community of God's people from around the world. I especially like that all those who actively participate like what they are doing.



Anita D'Andrea

Having moved to Norwalk approximately ten years ago, I joined St. Philip's parish because it was and is the church to which my other family members belong. What a pleasant surprise! Constant giving to needy causes is not merely done on holidays, as is the case in many other Catholic churches.

I look forward to Father Boccaccio's sermons because they are inspiring and relatable. His grammar is impeccable, and he usually adds a touch of humor. Happy "50th" to St. Philip Church.



Deacon Frank Chiappetta

Years before Father Michael became pastor, Deacon Gary Carpenter and I would alternate assisting at the 12:15 Mass. It was evident then that this was a holy and dedicated congregation. I was only too happy to join Father Michael as the first deacon assigned to St. Philip.

I have been blessed to confer hundreds of baptisms and to witness many marriages. I have been saddened in funerals, by the many I have put to rest. Most memorable perhaps, are the friendships that I have developed with Father Michael, the staff and the parish family.

I believe that St. Philip is one of the most spiritual and caring congregations, helping our youth encounter God, helping to feed the poor, and taking care of the infirm. These things and many more have helped me to develop a deeper relationship with God.



Doris Chiappetta

I have many fond memories of St. Philip. Like the installation of Father Boccaccio, when Bishop Curtis remarked that Father must be pleased that there was Standing Room Only at the Mass, and Father responded, “But Bishop, half of those here are my family,” and it was true—his relatives filled up the first 14 rows on either side of the main aisle. And when, during one of the Easter season Masses, I remember sitting next to Pauline Fahey as the choir sang “Rain Down, Rain Down,” and Father enthusiastically sprinkled holy water on the worshipers as he came down the aisle. Just in time, Pauline shot up her umbrella as protection. Father laughed so hard, I didn’t know if he was going to make it to the next aisle.



Ralph and Lynn Dias

The Krenicki family introduced the Dias family to St. Philip Church. Our first encounter was a poignant one as it was the day Father Michael Boccaccio announced Father Burt was joining St. Maurice in Stamford. There was not a dry eye in church that day. It was an indication that the parish, and pastor, cared. We felt at home and a part of the family from the first day.

Both my children, Stuart and Sasha, became a part of the youth ministry and Stuart was a part of the first group that started the 30-Hour Famine, which has become an annual event for a cause that once looked impossible. The Youth Ministry under the leadership of Kali and Terry have molded my children into people who care about, and give to, the community.

My family has been blessed in many ways through the ministries; our knowledge of our faith has become deeper and stronger. To a person who has never visited the parish before, I would say “Come and experience and love Jesus, the way we do at St. Philip.”



Ann Callahan

I remember making my First Communion in the school hall basement. When the church first opened, I also remember adults and teens talking about the Risen Christ statue and everyone was trying to figure it out—it was so new and different and ahead of its time. Very different from St. Mary’s—which had been our previous parish. Some people liked the statue but most were confused by it. People also said the church looked like a theater. My friends and I brought golf balls and released them (gently) to see if they would hit people in the back of their feet. I probably shouldn’t have admitted that. We were also very afraid of Father Conlon, but as we got older, we realized what a wonderful man he was!

I feel very fortunate and blessed that St. Philip parish has been an important part of my life for most of my life!



The Corona Family

Before coming to St. Philip, we were members of a another parish, where we very disappointed during May of 2005 when our son Luis was scheduled to make his First Communion. May was also the month that he turned 8. It had been five long years since I had seen my mother, who is also Luis' godmother. We wanted Luis' grandmother to be present at his First Communion. However, since she lives in Mexico, she would not be able to make it the day all the children were meant to be scheduled. We spoke to the pastor of the church and we asked him if it would be possible to have Luis make his First Communion at a different Mass. The pastor told us that it wasn't possible.

So later I went to St. Philip Church and spoke with a very sweet and understanding woman. I explained the situation to her, and she told me that although the dates had not yet been set for the First Communions, she would speak to the pastor, Father Boccaccio. That woman was Doris Chiappetta. Later on I received a call where I was told that the First Communions would take place on May 8. It was perfect, because it meant my mother would be able to be there. Later we would meet Father Boccaccio, a compassionate and kind man, who cannot be described in words. A moment that I will never forget was when he approached Luis after the Mass and asked him if he would like to be an altar server. I am sure that the kindness he showed to those he didn't even know was the exact same that Jesus Himself showed. I of course was very happy and fell in love with the parish, so much so that once Luis became an altar server, we became very dedicated to attending Mass every weekend.

The other parish members have always been very supportive and have always welcomed us. Even when my brother died, everyone offered us support and helped in whatever way they could. That's one of the most beautiful things about our parish. The fact that we all come together as a family and having the same loving atmosphere as a family is beautiful. Four years ago, my husband Luis suffered from an illness that left him in a coma. It was a very frightening time for everyone in the family. But the St. Philip family never let us feel alone or hopeless.

Many kind and caring individuals came to our aid when we needed it the most. I will never stop being grateful for how the parish helped us. My husband was left completely paralyzed after he woke up from his coma, and had to be transferred to the hospital for special care in New Britain. This was a scary time for us because I would go to be with him every day, and it was more than an hour's ride every single day back and forth. Although I worried about leaving my children, the parish never let me worry about my children being alone or not having a meal to eat. God has done so many great things through the members of our parish, and my husband sees that every single time we go to church. My husband didn't go to church often before he got sick, but now he thanks God every time he goes, because he is grateful for now having been given the gift of health and family. Not every church can give you the same peace of mind that St. Philip gives you.

We consider ourselves to be very fortunate to be members of this parish. There are so many great people who have come into our lives since we joined the parish. Everyone from Kali DiMarco, Mike Pappa, Doris, Father Sudhir, Sister Mary Ann, and more. All of these great individuals make up the heart of the church, and Father Boccaccio makes up the head of the church. I'd like to thank Father Boccaccio for being the amazing person that he is, and being a living imitator of Jesus Himself. You are an example for other Catholic churches. I'd like to thank Doris for having given us the opportunity to become a part of this parish. You are always in our prayers. I am always proud to answer when people ask me what church we are members of. I always answer with a smile, St. Philip parish.



Joann Puglia

My memories of St. Philip parish, since I was baptized here, were about going to church with my family and the first time I received Communion. What has kept me coming is the welcoming sense of community. Meeting the Bishop during the Confirmation ceremony was an honor. Listening to the uplifting homilies during Mass encourage me to always trust God and put my confidence in Him. St. Philip is a parish that supports the members of the church and the community through its many projects and events that bring people together.



Jim and Connie Buchta

We came here in 1968, before the church was built, and Mass was held in the school hall. It seemed to be a congregation of senior citizens...that changed over the years! Our faith has been strengthened through the meaningful liturgies, both special and Sundays, and through the closeness of the community. The parish is a wonderful example of what the Catholic Church should be: welcoming, reaching out, caring, amazing music, art and grounds, liturgies. It's truly a cohesive community.



Shirley Geitz

I used to come to St. Philip as a child with my mom, Anne Soos, who has since passed away, was so proud to make the bibs for the babies being baptized. Our son, Timothy, was baptized here, and my husband and I renewed our wedding vows here. Being a member of the Catholic community strengthened my faith in God by helping us get through hard times with sick people in the family. Betty Hunter has also come and prayed with us and given us strength to get by. Sister MaryAnn was always so helpful to me. I describe this parish to people who have never visited or participated as like family, warm and loving



Deacon Paul Reilly

I remember the 1964 announcement in St. Mary's Church that their parish had gotten too large, and everyone who lived on the east side of the Norwalk River would form a new parish, with land and school donated by the diocese. The new parishioners would bear the cost of building the new St. Philip Church. In the first five years after St. Philip parish was established we celebrated Mass either in the school hall or in the Central Catholic auditorium.

Among the most memorable moments was, of course, my marriage to Peg O'Rourke on July 19, 1969 in our brand new church. A very special memory was when my fourth daughter, Karen, was baptized at a Mass in the school hall by Father Larry Bronkiewicz with her mother present. At my other three daughters' baptisms, the custom was that the mother remained at home. The religious education department made a scroll and all 100 people present signed it. A very large cake was given to us by one of the parishioners who was a professional baker.

Our family always sat in the first pew so that our children could see everything that happened at Mass, and we all walked from the parking lot to the church like ducks, a practice suggested by our pediatrician to cure the four kids who were pigeon toed. It worked!

We have been blessed with good and faithful pastors through the 50 years. Some little things make a big impression. I remember that Father Conlon never passed a little holy water font between the rectory and the church without blessing himself. His famous last words to Father O'Connor, his successor, were: "I bequeath to you a church with a leaky roof!"



Barbara Koeppen Reilly

I wasn't a parishioner in the 1980s, but I was working at the IBM office in a Merritt 7 building. During a particularly difficult family time, I was so blessed to be able to go to midday Mass at St. Philip Church on my lunch hour. That sustained me—and I never thought I would one day be a parishioner worshipping here.

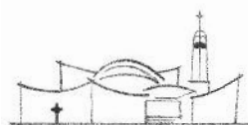
I was also present at many special liturgies focused on healing with the diocesan and parish charismatic prayer groups. What amazing things we witnessed God doing for people who attended, both at the Masses and afterward, when they came forward for individual prayer. So St. Philip holds a special place in my heart.



The Monteleone Family

When we first joined St. Philip four years ago, we said, THIS IS IT. We finally found a parish where we belonged. We were so thrilled, we felt so at home, and there were lots of activities for our kids, too.

I would describe St. Philip parish to someone who has never visited it as a great community church that makes us feel so at home and offers a lot of family activities, such as the 30-Hour Famine and the great experience our son had by participating in that youth program, and the Christmas Fair, and so much more. Thank you, St. Philip!





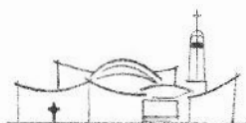
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Paul Einstman
Nicolina Enriques
Michael & Janice Falbo
Charles & Anita Falzone
Jeffrey & Damien Fanning
Jeffrey & Nicole Fatone
Bette Festa *In memory of Joseph Festa*

Brent J. Fitteron
Brian & Cecilia Fitzgerald
Ray Forlano
Robert & Fran Fornabia *In memory of Jessica Ann Fornabia*
Peter Fraboni
John P. Sr. & Louise Frank
Diego Galeano
Grazia Galimi
Joseph & Patricia Galvin
Robert & Cynthia Gardella
William & Susan Gardella *In memory of Kathryn & Thomas McGuire*
Shirley Geitz
Christina George
Richard & Diane George
Patrick & Annmarie Geraghty
Sal & Nancy Giglio
Thomas & Tamara Godeski
Fabiola Goldbaum
Nathalia Gonzalez
Licinius & Julia-Berta Gonzalez
John & Teresa Granata
Anthony & Geraldine Grasso
Gregory & Renata Gryglewski
Derek & Kara Hann *In memory of Anthony & Angela Pirrone*
William & Karen Hanssler
Pamela McDonough-Harrick
Joan Howard *In memory of Victor & Theresa Howard*
Dr. Edward & Jo-Anne Hughes
Judith A. Hungaski
Scott & Marti Ingerman
Thomas & Ranolf Jankovic
John & Eleanor Kanzler
Judy Kniffen *In memory of Peter Kniffen*
David & Dawn Kosvitch
Richard Jr. & Josephine LaBella
Kenneth & Kathleen Lalime
Mildred O. Lalime
Vincenzo & Anna Maria Lavecchia
In memory of Marmo & Lavecchia Families

Marianne Lawther
 David & Gail Legere
 Jean & Victoire Legerme
 Angelina Lentz
 Mauricio & Elizabeth Leon
 Christopher & Leighanne Lewis
 Harriet Lewis
 Frank & Concetta Localzo *In memory of Stephen Schwartz*
 Michael Lodato
 Rodger Lord
 Alfonso & Giovanna LoSardo
 Marc Michel & June Louis
 Amy Luciana
 Marie A. Luczkowski *In memory of Ed Luczkowski*
 Christopher & Carolyn Lyon
 Drs. John W. & Ellen Mahon
 Frances Mangone
 Michael Marino
 Robert & Jeanne McAndrew
 Dr. Patrick & Virginia McAuliffe
 Marie McBennett *In memory of John McBennett*
 Jean McDonough
 Jerry & Ann McGuire
 Sr. Mary Ann McPartland, CND
 Lucy McShane
 Jerome & Muriel Meehan
 Mark & Deborah Melanson
 Elsie L. Menicucci
 Robert & Marylee Mercurio
 Josephine Mercurio
 Sandra Mitchell *In memory of W. M. Mitchell*
 Tony & Dorothy Mobilia
 Dominick & Rosa Modugno *In memory of Carmelo Modugno*
 Domenick & Antoniette Monteleone
 Michael & Jessica Mooney
 The Morales Family
 Rosa Morgera
 John F. Jr. & Adrienne Moriarty
 Melissa Munoz *In memory of Monsalve & Avendano families*
 Kevin Murphy
 Jean Nichols
 James & Ponsawan O'Brien
 Alfred & Elizabeth Ochoa
 Daniel F. O'Connor *In memory of Thomas F. O'Connor*
 Muriel O'Connor
 Brendan & Marilyn O'Malley
 Abad & Sonia Ospina
 Anne E. Otto
 David & Lena Owens
 Andre & Simone Pare
 James Patchen
 Mickey Pennacchio
 Arthur C. Jr. & Kimberly Petrone
 JoAnn Piacentini *In memory of the Piacentini Family*
 Theodore & Olga Pineda
 Jeanne Pinto *In memory of Claudia Aloise*
 Daniel & Terry Pote
 Joann Puglia
 Joseph & Dorothy Puglia
 William & Claudette Quadrini
 Richard & Susan Ramsey
 Sharon Reilly
 Deacon Paul & Barbara Reilly
 Carnes & Armelle Rene
 Edgar Reyes & Hannia Orozco
 Francesco & Gina Rinaldi *In memory of Rinaldi and Modugno families*
 Robin Risolo-Casey
 Theodore Ristau
 Bruce & Jane Riznyk
 Eric J. Riznyk
 Vincenza Rizzuti
 Kenneth & Karen Roberts
 Ana Lucia Robledo
 Dr. David & Julie Romeo
 Robert Rugar *In memory of Helen Rugar & Walter Rugar Sr.*
 Katherine Sabia
 Joseph S. Salvo
 Mercedes Sanchez
 Joseph & Lorraine Santo
 Lily & Carmencita Santos
 Stacey L. Scarso
 Christopher & Deborah Schreiner
 Vincent Jr. & Maria Scicchitano
 Louis & Katherine Seeley
 Nicholas T. Selepes
 Pasquale & Josephine Sgarlata
 John & Mary Skrensky
 Peter & Victoria Small
 Bud & Mary Smith
 Kathi Sonntag *In memory of John & Dorothy Sonntag*
 Isabella Solano *In memory of Lorenzo Solano*
 Joseph & Patricia St. Amand
 Keith & Deborah Stadler
 James & Patricia Stapleton
 Robert & Francine Steeger
 Gregory & Meghan Stewart
 Steve Stockman
 Thomas & Linda Swallow
 Michael & Erin Szarpa
 Richard Jr. & Lisa Taggart
 Ralph & Mary Taliercio
 Walter & Alicia Talledo
 Clark F. Sr. & Cheryl Tallman
 Flora M. Tavella
 Joseph D. Tavella *In memory of Aline Tavella*
 Richard & Kathleen Tavella *In memory of Philip & Antoinette Tavella*
 Francoise Telo *In memory of Steven Telo*
 Matilda Tomaselli
 Elena Tosti
 Carl & Merita Toussaint
 MaryAnne Tripodi *In memory of Ruth & Rocco Tripodi*
 Evette Ubinas
 Mohan & Julie Vanam
 Mary Viscusi *In memory of Pat Viscusi*
 John & Sharon Vuoso
 Beverly & Samuel Ward *In memory of James A. Russell*
 James & Dana Walsh
 Keith & Felice Werwin
 Mary Ellen Yacura
 Frank & Berenice Zullo *In memory of Frank and Regina Zullo*





CLERGY WHO HAVE SERVED AT ST. PHILIP

Rev. Robert F. Albert
 Rev. Michael A. Boccaccio (*Pastor, 1988 – Present*)
 Rev. Walter E. Bozek
 Rev. Laurence R. Bronkiewicz
 Rev. Msgr. Francis A. Campagnone
 Rev. Charles T. Carr
 Deacon Frank J. Chiappetta
 Rev. Leonard M. Conlon (*Pastor, 1964 – 1975*)
 Rev. Robert J. Crofut
 Rev. Sudhir V. DSouza
 Rev. Roy N. Henderson
 Rev. Joseph J. Kohut
 Rev. Stanley N. Koziol
 Rev. William J. Loughlin
 Deacon John W. Mahon
 Rev. Albert W. McGoldrick
 Rev. Francis J. Medynski
 Rev. Martin J. O'Connor (*Pastor, 1975 – 1988*)
 Rev. Albert G. Pinciario III
 Deacon Paul J. Reilly
 Rev. Xavier F. Renda
 Rev. Alfred E. Russo
 Rev. Joseph E. Russo
 Rev. Francis E. Virgulak
 Rev. David A. Yocis

VISITING CLERGY 2014

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 Rev. Michael A. Fahey, SJ
 Rev. Andrew J. Garavel, SJ
 Rev. Msgr. William A. Genuario
 Rev. Mark P. Scalese, SJ

TRUSTEES OF THE PARISH

Robert Devine 1964 - 1986
 John Leonard 1964 - 1974
 Vincent D. Flaherty 1974 - 1999
 John A. Fahey 1986 - 2000
 John "Jay" Devine 1999 - Present
 Elizabeth Broncati 2000 - Present

PARISH STAFF 2014

Rev. Michael A. Boccaccio, Pastor
 Deacon Frank J. Chiappetta
 Jean E. Denaro
 Kali J. DiMarco
 Rev. Sudhir DSouza
 Paul G. Einstman
 Betty Hunter
 Jim Keavney
 Deacon John W. Mahon
 Sr. Mary Ann McPartland, CND
 Maria J. O'Kelly
 Michael A. Pappa
 Claudette Quadrini
 Deacon Paul J. Reilly
 Clyna V. Richardson
 Debbie Stadler
 Alan D. Yoder

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Joan Howard, *Chair*

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Joan Howard
 Fil Musilli
 Alexandra Sandor

History/Book

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 Tony Mobilia

Outreach/Publicity/SPAG

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 Kali DiMarco
 Ed Hughes

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Deacon John Mahon
 Sr. Mary Ann McPartland CND
 MaryAnne Tripodi

Luncheon/Picnic

Lynda Balocca
 Josephine Cunningham
 Angie Lentz
 Mavis Mennino
 Matti Tomaselli
 Clarence Xavier

Contributing writers

Robert J. Sodaro and Ross Kotarski *History of St. Philip*
 Deacon John W. Mahon *Reflections on St. Philip*
 Dorothy Mobilia *Art as Worship*
 Ann McGuire *Ministries*

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Book design Tony Mobilia

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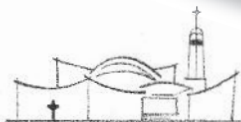
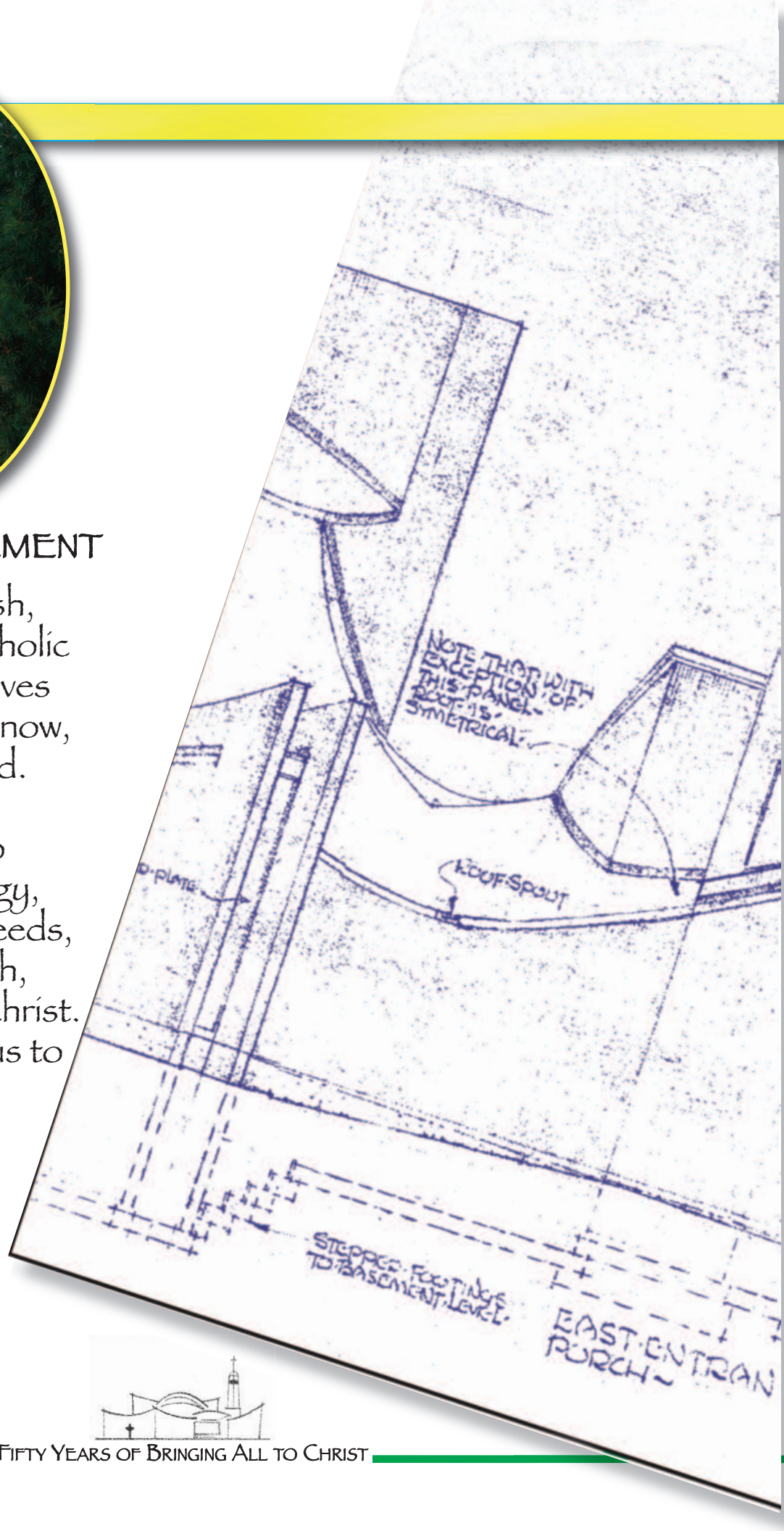


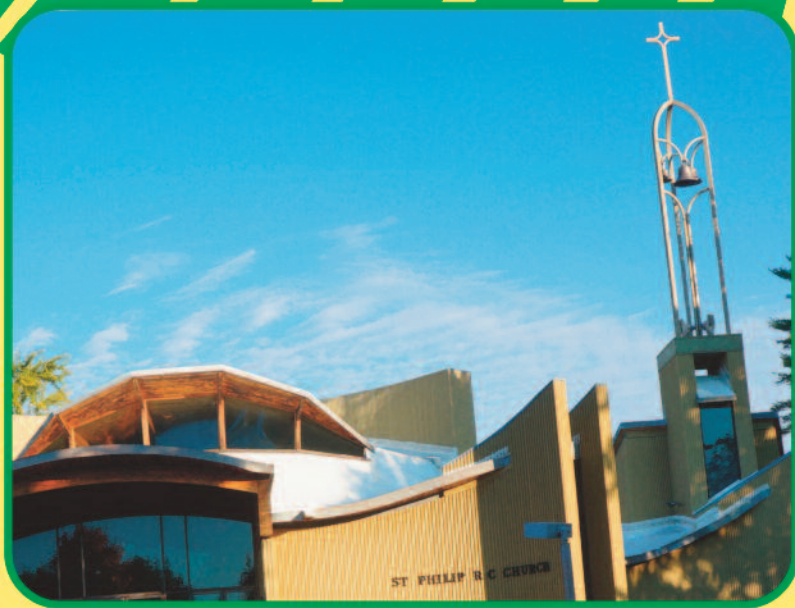


MISSION STATEMENT

St. Philip Parish,
a welcoming Catholic
community, strives
to love, honor, know,
and serve God.

As a family,
we gather to
celebrate liturgy,
perform good deeds,
share our faith,
and bring all to Christ.
St. Philip, lead us to
Jesus.





ANNIVERSARY PRAYER

Lord God, since 1964, you have heard and answered the prayers of our St. Philip community. As we celebrate fifty years of faith, service, and community — bringing all to Christ through the guidance of St. Philip — we ask you, Lord, to bless us by making our parish flourish and by continuing to answer our prayers for many years to come.

St. Philip, pray for us.



FIFTY YEARS OF BRINGING ALL TO CHRIST