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## Fr. Corey's Comments

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*Some of you may have heard of the difficult year my family has had. About 7 years ago, my then 66-year-old mother Frances was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. That was the official diagnosis, but to be honest, we had seen signs and heard signals that something wasn't quite right for some time.*

*Let me tell you a little about the folks. Both Ma and Dad were born in Bridgeport to big families. My mother was the youngest of 8, and her parents died before she was 16. Though the youngest she became the mother figure for the family. Dropping out of school after 9<sup>th</sup> grade, Ma had her hands full with the cooking, cleaning and enduring 4 alcoholic brothers. My mother's thing was cleaning. She loved to clean, do laundry, cleaning windows and sidewalks, and this didn't end with my family; this work extended to other family members, friends and neighbors. Though a petite woman she certainly would never be called dainty.*

*Growing up we lived in a 2-story house with 4 rooms in each apartment. Grandpa lived upstairs and Ma, Dad, my sister Donna and I lived downstairs with Buddy the beagle on one of the busiest streets in inner city Bridgeport. Every month my mother would move the furniture around in the "parlor" and 2 bedrooms by herself, wash the windows, and clean my grandfather's apartment. She never learned to drive, and since my father was a firefighter, she was the boss most of the time.*

*Dad often had to work the night shift, and Ma insisted that we eat together as a family. So, dinner, at least three days a week, was at 3:30pm so my father could eat and get to work on time. (No wonder why late night snacks are still my favorite thing.... I know, I know, it is not good to eat at night.)*

*Ma was a dynamo. She always had tons of energy, never was idle and never wanted to go on vacation. Home is where she wanted to be. She had a couple of vices, though... bingo was her favorite, playing tons of cards, playing cards with the family, and later on going to the casinos. Lottery tickets were a daily pastime. Church every week. Helping any relative, friend or neighbor in the hospital, sick, or down on their luck was the mission of both of my parents. Ma took in laundry from everyone, and her creases and seams were always perfect. A funny story about laundry: when I was in the seminary, a friend of mine came to my parent's house to spend a few days. We got home from the movies after midnight. My friend went into his room and jumped into bed. We were out of the house at 8am the next day. The miracle... his clothes from the night before were mysteriously washed, pressed and hanging in the closet when he got up. Yep, the laundry elf had worked her magic sometime in the night.*

*If I had to use one word to describe my parents, that word would be GENEROUS. I have never seen such selfless, giving people. At a party Ma was the last person to sit down, and the first person to clean up. That was her thing; she did it well and loved doing it. I would say it was almost a ministry, and she was happy to share it with anyone.*

*Well, the repeating of stories happened in 2000. She began asking questions over and over, and forgetting the simplest of things was a common occurrence. We talked about it but thought her hearing was going. She refused to go to the doctor, and things slowly got worse. Finally, she did go to the doctor, and we got the diagnosis. Ma was always very stubborn. She stuck to her guns and always made a decision as to what was right, and she could not be budged. Pills and medication were not her thing. We would crush up her meds and hide them in her food and drink but especially her nightly ice cream. Often she would spit them out or hide them, and a new behavior of aggression started. Never in front of her children or grandchildren but only in front of my father did the aggression occur.*

*We convinced Ma to go to adult day care at the Baldwin Center in Stratford. She loved it, and they were wonderful to her. Dad could also get a break. We urged him to get someone to come in to help, but he refused. He could take care of it. You could see the frustration and feel his tension, but he too is stubborn, and "I will take care of her" was his mantra.*

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## *Fr. Corey's Comments (Cont'd.)*

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*We all knew things were getting worse. Ma couldn't remember her great granddaughter's name, no more cooking or ironing, and I knew things were bad when I saw cobwebs in the bathroom. Ma would never have let that happen and would have been totally embarrassed. In early January I got a call from my sister that Ma was "flipping out", crying inconsolably, swearing, screaming and lashing out. They brought her to Bridgeport Hospital. The diagnosis was that she had an infection and because she could not communicate it, she reacted in this manner. It happened again two weeks later.*

*On February 6 the director of the Stratford program called me and said we should bring Ma to the hospital and get her evaluated. She was concerned about both my parents and was afraid my father was in trouble. So, the entire family went to Bridgeport Hospital where we waited for 11 hours. Ma was ok until she went into the "inner" room where she had a real breakdown. She was admitted, and they tried for weeks to regulate her meds. After almost two months Ma could not go home but had to be placed in a nursing home. The family was in the hospital every day as much for my father as my mother. The folks on the 8<sup>th</sup> floor at Bridgeport hospital were great to my mother and father. The unit manager, Candace, and the other nurses and techs were Godsend to my mother. The care they gave her was as if she was their mother. We would have loved to have her stay with them.*

*In the meantime tons of stuff was going on. Insurance wouldn't pay for some things, and trying to get her into a nursing home was a nightmare. Some homes wanted \$36,000.00 up front to let her in. (We didn't have that kind of money.) We got a geriatric lawyer and used folks from the Alzheimer's Association to get advice and direction. People from St. Mary Parish were also helpful with advice and direction.*

*Ma has been in St. Joseph Manor in Trumbull for about 5 weeks now. Things change day-to-day and hour-to-hour. She cries a lot, screams sometimes, and sleeps a lot. I am not sure if she always knows me, but she indicates that she still knows my dad. My father has been heroic. He goes to the Nursing home to feed my mother lunch and dinner every day. My sister, her family and I get there 5 or 6 times a week. We know she is safe and getting good care and for this we thank God. Mom is there but not really.*

*The reason I tell you this story is that the things that went on around my mother's illness was a living hell. I love this parish, and I do not want anyone in the parish to go through what my family has gone through. Dave Whitmore, Debbie Burke, Nick Santarelli, and I have come together and put together a program so that you can prepare for your parents future in both sickness and health.*

*A Catholic Caring for the Sick and Dying Seminar will take place on Tuesday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, from 6:30pm - 8:30pm, in the Parish Hall. There is no charge. Please email [dwhitmore@snet.net](mailto:dwhitmore@snet.net) or call 203-470-0909 to pre-register. Deacon Tom Davis and Father Paul Murphy will discuss Catholic moral teaching and some practical advice for Catholics dealing with sick and dying situations.*

*Honestly, we were afraid and unaware of what to do. If we had acted early, a lot of pain would have been spared, and both Ma and Dad would have gotten better care. My situation is no different from anyone else. I want all of you to be prepared, so you only have to deal with illness and not the things that surround it. Our cross is no different than the cross that every family is asked to carry. Please do not be afraid to act even though it may be painful, but in the long run it will bring a sense of calm in the most difficult of times.*

*Our parents cared for us; let us do all we can to help them. Together, let us pray for each other.*

*Another seminar will follow to help each of us prepare for our later years and sudden illness.*

*Thank you for letting me share my story.*

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## A Note from Fr. Corey

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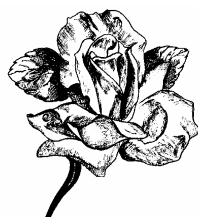
### CONCERNING THE H1N1 FLU (SWINE FLU)


*It has been recommended by the Diocese that the following temporary measures be taken as a precaution during this flu outbreak.*


- *We shall not have the Cup of Precious Blood at Mass.*
- *We encourage all to receive Holy Communion in the hand.*
- *We encourage all not to shake hands during the sign of peace but to verbally wish each other the sign of peace, smile or nod.*
- *We have Purell in the bench for Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist, and they have washed their hands before Mass.*
- *The clergy in the sanctuary also has Purell in case of a cough or sneeze.*
- *If you are ill, please stay home until you are better. There is no sin occurred if you are not feeling well.*
- *As I've said, these measures are only until the flu blows over.*


*Thank you for your cooperation.*


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HAPPY  
MOTHER'S  
DAY



 **REGISTRATION** – Religious Ed is available for children in K-8<sup>th</sup> grade. They **must** attend each year in **Grades 1-8** in order to make their sacraments. If your child entering **Kindergarten or 1<sup>st</sup> grade** is not registered for the Fall, please call **Rel. Ed.** (743-4557).

**ST. MARY BOOK CLUB** – **MAY BOOK:** Rediscovering Catholicism: “*Journeying Toward Our Spiritual North Star*”, by **Matthew Kelly**. Please join **Deacon John** in the **Children’s Room** at **7:30pm**, on **TUES., MAY 26<sup>th</sup>**, for a group discussion. 

 Schedules for **JUNE & JULY** will be out in a couple weeks. If you are unable to serve any weekend during these months, please call **Sheila** (744-5777) so you will not be scheduled for that time. Also, please call if you no longer wish to serve.

Life is a precious gift that should be nurtured and protected. **Birthright** has helped thousands of women in the greater Danbury area since 1972. **Birthright** volunteers help pregnant women in crises find workable solutions that allow them to give birth and face the future with dignity and hope. This weekend, on **Mother’s Day, MAY 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup>**, baby bottles will be distributed after each Mass. Please take one home to fill with coins, currency, or a check. Volunteers from Birthright will be here next weekend, **MAY 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup>**, to collect the returned bottles. 

### STEUBENVILLE EAST 2009

Come to the High School conference, the most dynamic youth event in New England, from **JULY 24-26**. There will be an information night on **TUES., MAY 12<sup>th</sup>**, at **7:00pm**, in the **Parish Hall**. Questions? Please call **Mary Buzak** (790-8489).



**Early Dismissal – FRI. MAY 11<sup>th</sup>**, at **11:15am**, for a **Professional Development Day**.

**REMINDER: FIELD DAY** is early this year, **FRI., MAY 15<sup>th</sup>**, to coincide with the Carnival.



St. Mary's will host its first **5K Road Race & Fun Run** on **SAT., MAY 16<sup>th</sup>**. Registration begins at **7:30am** with the **Fun Run** for children 10 and under at **8:00am**, followed by the **5K** at **8:30am**. For more info, please call **Eve Olson (744-5540)**. Registration forms are available in the vestibule, or you can register online at [www.stmarybethelct.org](http://www.stmarybethelct.org).

**St. Mary School Carnival** will be on our grounds from **WED., MAY 13<sup>th</sup> – SAT. MAY 16<sup>th</sup>**, with new rides and attractions! **Bracelets** will be sold after Mass today. **MAY 9/10. RAFFLE TICKETS** for the Carnival are available for \$1.00 each. We ask each Parish Family to stop by the School to pick up their envelope of tickets. **1<sup>st</sup> Prize: 42" Flat Screen TV; 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize: iPod; 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize: Digital Camera; 4<sup>th</sup> Prize: iPod.**



**Come Sing with the Choir!** The adult choir welcomes singers to become part of our Music Liturgy. If you are interested in joining, please call **Elizabeth (798-0076)** for more information.



Couples celebrating a special wedding anniversary – 25<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup>, 40<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup>, etc. – during the months of January–June are invited to participate in a celebration of their anniversaries with family and friends at **St. Theresa Church**, Trumbull, on **SUN., JUNE 14<sup>th</sup>**, at **3:00pm**. This will consist of a concelebrated Mass with Bishop Lori, the renewal of the marriage vows, and the presentation of certificates. Interested couples should call the **Rector** (744-5777) to register by **JUNE 1<sup>st</sup>**.



*You are invited to*

*St. Mary School's  
45th Anniversary and Blue Ribbon Award  
Celebration Mass*

*St. Mary Church  
Sunday, June 7, 2009, at 8:30am*

*Immediately followed by a  
Communion Breakfast at*

*Three Oaks at Capellaro's Grove  
42 Vail Road, Bethel, Connecticut  
Guest Speaker: Mary Ronan*

*\$20 per Adult/\$10 per Child  
No charge for children 5 and under*

*Seating for the breakfast is limited to the  
first 200 responses.*

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*Family Name:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Phone Number:* \_\_\_\_\_

*# of Adults* \_\_\_\_ x \$20 = \$ \_\_\_\_

*# of Children* \_\_\_\_ x \$10 = \$ \_\_\_\_

*# of Children 5 & under* \_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_ 0.00

*Total* ..... = \$ \_\_\_\_

*Please send check payable to St. Mary School to:*

*St. Mary School, 24 Dodgingtown Rd., Bethel,  
CT 06801 (attn: Kathleen DeMarco)*

*Space is limited, so make your reservations early.*

*Please call Kathleen DeMarco @ 270-3597 with  
any questions you may have.*

**MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK**

<b>MON., MAY 11</b>	6:30	+	Gino Lucon – Mr. & Mrs. G. McAleavey
	9:00	+	Manuel Goncalves – Family
<b>TUES, MAY 12</b>	6:30	+	Carmina Gryskiewicz – Ken & Cindy Roberts & Family
	9:00	+	Clement Ballantoni – Clementina & Carmella Smundi
<b>WED., MAY 13</b>	6:30	+	Raymond Considine (5 <sup>th</sup> Anniv.) – Daughter
	9:00	+	Richard Cottrell – Irene & Al Gzyms
<b>THU., MAY 14</b>	6:30	+	Marilyn Walsh – Grace O’Rourke
	9:00	+	Nina Novinonte – Caraluzzi Family
<b>FRI., MAY 15</b>	6:30	+	Tony Soegaard – St. Mary School Faculty & Staff
	9:00	+	John P. Rubino – Rick & Christine Lawlor
<b>SAT., MAY 16</b>	8:00	+	Bing Yee – Dan & Helen Yee
	5:30	+	Suzanne Dorman – Family
<b>SUN., MAY 17</b>	7:00		Janice DiPietro ( <i>Health &amp; Blessings</i> ) – Terri Rotella
	8:30	+	Alice Hensen – St. Mary School Faculty & Staff
	10:00	+	Elizabeth Deak – Anziana Family
	11:30	+	Albert J. Aguzzi – Gloria & Sal Testa
	5:30	+	Andrew Scalero ( <i>Birthday</i> ) – Wife



**GOAL:    \$15,000**

**COLLECTION:    \$14,222**

*If you, or a family member, are planning a stay at Danbury Hospital,  
please inform the Rectory so a member of the clergy may visit.*

**PARISH OFFICE (744-5777)**  
**Sheila Kurjiaka: *Bulletin Editor***  
**Kate Fitzgerald: *Secretary***  
**Paul Orsino: *Property Manager***  
**Jane Shannon: *Cemetery Administrator***

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (743-4557)**  
**Mary Ferri: *Director***  
**Peggy Gavin: *Secretary***  
**Dennis Nauheimer (RCIA): 794-9488**

**MUSIC MINISTRY**  
**Mike Macelletti: *Music Director***  
**Elizabeth Barnes: *Choir Director***  
**Debbie Caraluzzi: *Contemp. Group Director***

**ST. MARY SCHOOL (744-2922)**  
**Sister Anne McCarthy: *Principal***  
**Linda Curry: *Secretary***

**MASS SCHEDULE**  
**Monday – Friday: 6:30 & 9:00am**  
**Saturday: 8:00am & 5:30pm**  
**Sunday: 7:00, 8:30, 10:00, 11:30am & 5:30pm**

**CONFESSION SCHEDULE**  
**Saturday: 4:00 - 5:00pm.**

**BAPTISMS: *Every Sunday at 1:00pm.***  
**(Call the Rectory to Schedule.)**

**PRE-BAPTISM CLASSES: *Twice a Month.***  
**(Call the Rectory to Schedule.)**

**ARRANGEMENT FOR MARRIAGE:**  
***Couples must meet with a parish clergyman at least six (6) months before the marriage is to be celebrate.***