
Fr. Corey's Epistle

◆ Last week I shared with you a Pro-Life story about **Tim Tebow**. I concluded the story saying that I would make some more comments about Mr. Tebow in this week's bulletin. So here it is. The question has been asked: Does God care who wins a football game, or an Oscar or a World Series? Well, I don't want to disappoint anyone, but, the answer is without question... No. God is not willing a certain team to win in high school or college or professional sports, God does not will a certain dance team to win a competition, nor does he not will that the certain song-styling of a pop artist or an American Idol to go gold or platinum.

God gives each one of us certain talents and blessings and in Scripture, God calls each of us to use those talents for God's greater glory, the betterment of the world and to aid our brothers and sisters. So, when Tim Tebow thanks God after a successful play or a winning game, what Tim is doing is giving credit to God for the blessings that God has given Tim and pointing to God as the source and cause of all our gifts and starting place of all the good in the world. Not only that, but by Tim's reverence for the Almighty and the understanding of "praising God from whom all blessing flow", Tim is preaching not only by word but also by example. Every time someone points to God and thanks God for their 'talents' God is not only glorified but also made more known in our world.

◆ Another issue that is involved in Pro-Life is the death penalty. While the vast majority of U.S. Catholics support capital punishment, Pope John Paul II has declared the Church's near total opposition to the death penalty. In his encyclical "**Evangelium Vitae**" (The Gospel of Life) issued March 25, 1995 after four years of consultations with the world's Roman Catholic bishops, John Paul II wrote that execution is only appropriate "in cases of absolute necessity, in other words, when it would not be possible otherwise to defend society. Today, however, as a result of steady improvement in the organization of the penal system, such cases are very rare, if not practically nonexistent." Until this encyclical, the death penalty was viewed as sometimes permissible as a means of protecting society. The universal catechism--book of rules--for Catholics had affirmed the right of the state to punish criminals with appropriate penalties "not excluding in cases of extreme gravity, the death penalty."

From Para. 56 of *Evangelium Vitae* (The Gospel of Life), an encyclical letter on various threats to human life which Pope John Paul II issued on March 25, 1995:

"This is the context in which to place the problem of the death penalty. On this matter there is a growing tendency, both in the Church and in civil society, to demand that it be applied in a very limited way or even that it be abolished completely. The problem must be viewed in the context of a system of penal justice ever more in line with human dignity and thus, in the end, with God's plan for man and society. The primary purpose of the punishment which society inflicts is "to redress the disorder caused by the offence."(46) Public authority must redress the violation of personal and social rights by imposing on the offender an adequate punishment for the crime, as a condition for the offender to regain the exercise of his or her freedom. In this way authority also fulfills the purpose of defending public order and ensuring people's safety, while at the same time offering the offender an incentive and help to change his or her behaviour and be rehabilitated.(47)

It is clear that, for these purposes to be achieved, the nature and extent of the punishment must be carefully evaluated and decided upon, and ought not go to the extreme of executing the offender except in cases of absolute necessity: in other words, when it would not be possible otherwise to defend society. Today however, as a result of steady improvements in the organization of the penal system, such cases are very rare, if not practically non-existent.

In any event, the principle set forth in the new Catechism of the Catholic Church remains valid: 'If bloodless means are sufficient to defend human lives against an aggressor and to protect public order and the safety of persons, public authority must limit itself to such means, because they better correspond to the concrete conditions of the common good and are more in conformity to the dignity of the human person.'"

Fr. Corey's Epistle

Maintaining the dignity of all human life is what being Pro-Life is all about. So as people who understand that we are made in the Creator's image, we need to be aware that all children are kept safe, that the elderly are cared for, that the physically and mentally challenged are offered respect, that the sick are treated with kindness, that prisoners are treated like humans and that all people are seen to have worth and value. This might be a hard pill to swallow sometimes because of our humanness, but the teachings of Jesus are not always easy to follow. Being a disciple of Jesus is a way of life that calls us in good times and bad.

◆ The Feast of **Saint Blasé** is **Friday, February 3rd**. The traditional blessings of throats will be conducted during the 6:30 and 9:00am Masses, at a prayer service at 4:00pm and at the beginning of the Holy Hour during Nocturnal Adoration at 8:00pm.

◆ Though the **Season of Lent** is still about a month away I want to let you know about what will be happening here at St. Mary's Parish:

- A daily 5:30pm Mass
- Stations of the Cross on Friday evenings at 7:00pm
- A Parish Mission on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday Evenings, February 26, 27, & 28 (including morning presentations at the 9:00am Masses)
- A Pro-Life presentation by Sister Mary Concepta, S.V. of the Pro-Life Outreach from the Diocese on March 14 at 7pm
- An Anointing of the Sick Mass on February 11 at 10am
- A Prayer & Fasting Group on Saturday mornings at 8:30am in the Children's Room led by Deacon John
- A Faith Formation Series with Deacon Joe
- A six part series called "Discovering the Vatican"
- Confessions every Tuesday from 7:00 – 9:00 pm
- Extra Confession during Holy Week

We hope to make this Lent as spiritually fruitful as possible.

◆ Interested in seeing incense at its best? Go to YOUTUBE and visit **CEREMONIA DEL BOTAFUMEIRO EN SANTIAGO** or Santiago de Compostela Cathedral. Wow! Pope Benedict was there last year. You should see the look on his face.

◆ If you have had trouble with the phones at the Rectory, I must apologize and tell you we are currently fixing the problem. During the snowstorm in October of this past year, the power went out and the phones went dead. When the power came back on the phone system didn't. Loosing voice mail messages, phones not ringing, not being able to change announcements, the list goes on. We have had the company out three times trying to fix the problems, but they have not been successful. A new system will be put in at the end of January.

◆ I encourage all to attend the **St. Mary School Snowflake Gala**, their 18th Annual Dinner Dance & Auction on February 11th at the Amber Room from 6:30 – 11:30pm. Please come, support our School and have a great night with family and friends.

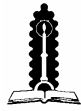
PARISH HAPPENINGS



DOROTHY DAY VOLUNTEERS
WED., Feb. 1st: Our turn to Cook.

NOCTURNAL ADORATION will be on
FRI., Feb. 3rd, from **8:00pm to 8:00am.**

All ages are invited to join us for *the first hour of Adoration from 8:00-9:00pm* in the Church for **ONE HOUR WITH HIM**, an hour of music, community prayer, and silent prayer. Bring your friends, parents, children, siblings for this beautiful hour spending time in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament.



Join us in praying the **CHAPLET OF THE TWO HEARTS OF JESUS AND MARY** immediately following 9am Mass on **Friday, Feb. 3rd**.

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Bible Study **“Come Discover the Book of Psalms”** Our Bible Study is taking. If you would like to join us for an in-depth look at the Book of Psalms contact **Rick Lawlor at 203-470-8084 or email at rlawlor22@comcast.net.** Classes will be on most Tuesday evenings, 7:00 pm in the Parish Hall.



ST. MARY'S MEN'S MINISTRY meets on most Saturday mornings **from 6:30-8:00am in the Parish Hall.** Come join us for excellent fellowship and great discussions along with coffee, bagels and donuts!



BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP provides a prayerful experience of mutual support and comfort for those who are confronting the loss of a loved one. Our next meeting will be on **SAT. FEB. 18th from 10:30-noon** in the Parish House. If you will be attending for the first time, please call the **Rectory (203 744-5777)** to confirm.

FLANAGAN'S WAKE, the hilarious interactive Irish wake that has been running in Chicago for 16 smash years, will be here on **Sat., March 10 in the School Gym!** Cost is \$35 per person which includes show, set-up and dessert (**BYOB!**)! So grab a group of your friends, book a table and enjoy this Cabaret-style audience interactive evening as you are transported to the Emerald Isle to grieve as only the Irish can. Make checks payable to “**St. Mary Church**”. Call the parish office for more info.

Sign up for our parish Men's Retreat at Holy Family Retreat House in West Hartford from **Fri., March 2nd – Sun., March 4th**. Enjoy some time to think about what really matters, like your relationships with your family, friends and God. Call Nick Santarelli (203-470-7102) for more info.

YOUTH GROUP

The first **MANDATORY MEETING** for this year's **Mission Trip/Retreat** is on **Sun., January 29th at 6:30pm in the Parish Hall.** All teens going on the trip **must be there** and parents are also encouraged to attend. Call Kate Fitz with any questions at (203)744-5777 or (203)733-6424.

PARENT INFO & VOLUNTEER MEETINGS: **Fri., Feb. 10th from 7-8pm** for Junior Youth Group (6-8th graders) and **Sun., Feb. 12th from 6:30-7:30pm** for Senior Youth Group (High School). All parents and those who wish to volunteer are encouraged to attend to talk about the schedules and various needs of our Youth Ministry! Contact Fr. Jeff at fathercuture@gmail.com.

Save the date: The Youth Group will have a **Can & Bottle** drive the week-end of **Feb. 11th!** Please save your recycling until then! Details to follow.

SCHOOL NEWS

ST. MARY SCHOOL REGISTRATION for Preschool through 8th Grade will be held at our **OPEN HOUSE** on **Sun., Jan. 29th from 11am – 1pm.** We will also be holding registration on **Mon., Feb. 6th from 9:00 a.m. – 11 a.m., 12 p.m. – 1:30 p.m., and 6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.** If there is a cancellation due to inclement weather on either the 29th or the 6th, there will be an additional registration held on **Wed., Feb. 8th from 9:00 a.m. – 11 a.m.** For more info visit our website at www.stmarybethelct.org or call the School at 203-744-2922.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK begins this Sunday and runs through Friday. Please see the listing in the bulletin for all this week's events.

To conclude Catholic Schools Week events, there will be a **FAMILY APPRECIATION PASTA DINNER** in the School Gym on **Fri., Feb. 3rd from 5:30 – 8:00pm.** Menu of ziti, meatballs, sauce, salad and bread provided by Bethel's own La Zingara Restaurant as well as dessert and beverages will be served. Prices are \$8.00 for adults, \$6.00 for seniors, and \$5.00 for children 5-12. (Parents and children; family maximum of \$30.00). Please join us! All are welcome.

All parishioners are invited to attend St. Mary's **SNOWFLAKE GALA** on **Feb. 11th at the Amber Room Colonnade.** Join us for a great evening out including hors d'oeuvres, salad, choice of entrée, dessert, 5 hours of open beer & wine bar, great items and deals in a silent and live auction, music & dancing at an award-winning premier venue. Tickets are \$85 per person, and can now be purchased online at www.stmarybethelct.org. For more information please contact Kathleen DeMarco at 203-917-4077 or kathleendemarco@comcast.net. Join us for a great evening out with friends and the St. Mary's community!



**St. Mary School
Open House/Registration
Sunday, January 29th
11am – 1pm**

- Pre K through Grade 8
- Fostering Catholic Faith and Values
- Academic Excellence
- Nurturing Family Atmosphere

Meet our committed and caring family of teachers, parents and student ambassadors as you tour and find out more about St. Mary School. Check out our website www.stmarybethelct.org for more details.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

The next regular meeting will be on **Mon., Feb.13 at 8:15pm** in the Parish Hall. We will say the Rosary before at 7:45pm in the Church.

Since most people are unable to make a pilgrimage to Fatima, we have started the **Apostolate of Mary, the Pilgrim Virgin**. The ritual is simple. Every Saturday, the Knights will deliver a statue of **Our Blessed Mother** to a home, where it is enthroned in a place of honor and the rosary is prayed by those in attendance. After the rosary is prayed, the men depart. Daily, the host family (and those the family invites) then prays the Rosary until the following Saturday, where it will be taken to another home. If you would like the statue to visit your home for a week, contact the Knights at bethelKofC@yahoo.com or call Bob Nelson at 748-6797.

ESSAY CONTEST: All Catholic students in public, private and parochial schools grades 8,9,10,11 and 12 are invited to participate in the 2012 Knights of Columbus Essay Contest. Students are encouraged to write a 500 to 750 word essay on the theme of: "The Responsibility of the Catholic Citizen In a Free Society" Essays are due in by February 10, 2012 to be considered in the Pavia Council (Bethel, CT) K of C contest. Winning essays will be entered into the K of C Connecticut contest with that winner moving onto the International Contest. Prizes will be awarded to the winners at each level. More information may be found on the Pavia Council K of C web site: <http://pavia48.tripod.com/> or contact Nick Santarelli at 203-470-7102

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education Office hours
Tuesday – Thursday, 9:30am – 2:00pm.

AROUND THE DIOCESE

CURSILLO is designed for Catholics who desire to strengthen their faith, who want to be closer to Christ, and who want to bring Christ to those around them. For more about Cursillo and their three day weekends, call Mary Guertin at 790-6645 or mguertin.home@gmail.com

The DANBURY EMMAUS is having a retreat for anyone currently in high school from **Feb. 24-26** at the **Seton-Newman Center** in Danbury. It will be a weekend that you will never forget. Come and deepen your relationship with God or get to know Him for the first time while making friendships that will last a lifetime. We promise you won't be disappointed! Call Kristin Nauheimer (512-5285), Allie Kallberg (730-2069) or Andrew Bellamy (797-9884).

OFF THE STREETS: Needs basic household items for homeless persons moving into a small room. Basic things such as kitchen utensils, pots/pans/dressers/beds/tables/chairs etc. Bring such items to the United Methodist Church parking lot (across from the Bethel Municipal Center) on **Saturday, Feb. 4 from 10:00 – noon.**

The BETHEL TOASTMASTERS CLUB'S next meeting is scheduled for **Monday, Feb. 6th at 7 PM.** For more information please call Sharon Closius at 203-798-9822 or Pat Wilson-Perkins at 203-797-1967.

The members of the **BETHEL WOMAN'S CLUB** want to thank the parishioners of St. Mary for supporting their 5th annual community drive "**Support our Veterans.**" The total collected was over \$4,700 in merchandise and monetary donations that were delivered to Rocky Hill Veterans Home & Hospital, and the Vet House, a home for the homeless veterans in Danbury. The generosity of the parishioners helped make this drive a success! **THANK YOU!!!** Check out the Bethel Women's club Facebook page to see photos of these events!

THOMAS MERTON CENTER in Bridgeport needs peanut butter and jelly for their guests. To help, please drop off at the Merton Center, 43 Madison Avenue, between 8 a.m.-3 p.m., or call Mark Grasso at 203-367-9036.

MORNING GLORY in Danbury is in need of juice and pancake mix. For more information and to make a donation, please contact Sierra Pepi at: 203-748-0848, ext. 229.

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK

SAT., JANUARY 28	5:30	+	Jane Ochs – Andi & Marie Trotta
SUN., JANUARY 29	7:00	+	Robert Cerra – Enrico & Francesca Bonacci
	8:30	+	Loretta Keough – Family
	10:00	+	Nicolina Perry – Jeffrey & Stephanie LaCava
	11:30	+	Anna & Edward McAuley -- Family
	5:30		The Yastremski Family (<i>Health & Blessings</i>) – The Paris Family
MON., JANUARY 30	6:30	+	Marc Moavero (<i>1st Anniv.</i>) – Parents & Siblings
	9:00	+	Sister Madonna – Lynn & Roger Dexter & Family
TUES., JANUARY 31	6:30	+	Julie Martinez – Mary & George McWeeny
	9:00	+	Robert Carlo (<i>3rd Anniv.</i>) – Family
WED., FEBRUARY 1	6:30	+	Ronald Barwig – Family
	9:00	+	James Henry – John & Linda Curry
THU., FEBRUARY 2	6:30	+	John J. Morrisroe – St. Mary School Faculty & Staff
	9:00	+	Derry Kenning – Wife
FRI., FEBRUARY 3	6:30	+	Anthony Gottlick – Joe & Pat Jackson
	9:00	+	Rose Anziano – Leon & Stephanie Anziano
SAT., FEBRUARY 4	8:00	+	Alice Kozlowski – Kitty & Charlie Grant
	5:30	+	Rod Dexter – The Paris & Mancusi Families
SUN., FEBRUARY 5	7:00	+	Charles McCollam – Family
	8:30	+	Elizabeth Johnson – Daughter Karin DeShan & Family
	10:00	+	Ed Mills – The Bartlotta & Contorno Families
	11:30	+	Marion & Vincent Spina – Family
	5:30	+	Arthur Scofield – Lynn & Roger Dexter



WELCOME TO THOSE WHO WERE NEWLY BAPTIZED

Rafal-Francis Bronowicz

Collection: \$14,066.00

PARISH OFFICE (744-5777)

Kate Fitzgerald: *Parish Secretary/Bulletin Ed.*
Pat Jackson: *Parish Secretary*
Paul Orsino: *Property Manager*

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (743-4557)

Mary Ferri: *Director*
Peggy Gavin: *Secretary*
Dennis Nauheimer (RCIA): 794-9488
(Call if interested in becoming a Catholic or completing your initiation as a Catholic with Confirmation and/or Eucharist.)

MUSIC MINISTRY

Michael Ferrari: *Music Director*
Elizabeth Barnes: *Choir Director*

ST. MARY SCHOOL (744-2922)

Sister Anne McCarthy: *Principal*

MASS SCHEDULE

Monday – Friday: 6:30 & 9:00am
Saturday: 8:00am & 5:30pm (*Vigil Mass*)
Sunday: 7:00, 8:30, 10:00, 11:30am & 5:30pm

CONFESSION SCHEDULE

Saturday: 4:00 - 5:00pm.

BAPTISMS: *Every Sunday at 12:45pm.*
(Call the Rectory to Schedule.)

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

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