Welcome!... to the summer edition of Belong, the newsletter of the Concord-Carlisle Catholic Collaborative. There is no better time of year than now to put a little wind into the sails of forming your faith more. If you have been keeping true to spending some exclusive time with the Lord each day, then keep up the good work. If your attention to growing your faith has been side-tracked or simply ignored, then the warm glow of summer and the general slow-down of things is going to give you the best opportunity to ease back into it.

There are outstanding faith formation resources available to all of us through our collaborative. Resources that exist to help us do what we are supposed to do. That being, become better Catholics Christians. Resources like our collaborative's library located at Saint Irene Parish. It is outstanding and has everything we need for Catholic faith-based reading material. We have recently been offered free access to FORMED which offers Catholic digital media from the best Apostolates and ministries out there, like Word on Fire, Real Life Catholic, The St. Paul Center, Augustine Institute and Ascension.

There are resources like the Living Faith booklets that are available at each parish. Simple daily reflections that can help enhance our understanding of scripture and our prayer lives. These are just a few of the resources at our fingertips.

It is up to us to do the basics like attend the Mass, receive the Eucharist, and take time in our lives to better understand our faith, the Church and how Jesus is and wants to be involved in the daily bustle as well as milestones of our lives.

If you need to get things moving and don't know where to start, here is a basic three part plan: Pray, Read, Watch. Every day, Pray for at least ten minutes, even if you don't really know how. You need to start somewhere. Might I suggest the Prayer Process, read for at least 10 minutes from a great book (check out page 9 for suggestions), watch a series or documentary on FORMED for at least 10 minutes. The most important of the three is prayer, so if anything else, pray.

That is the easiest and probably most effective way to really start forming your faith more if it has been a while. If you employ this simple plan, making prayer the first act and priority. You will be on your way to where you want to be, or should want to be.

Have a great Summer!

- Kevin Donnelly
In the moments since I was ordained and able to reflect on all that has happened since Cardinal Sean ordained me a priest on May 21st, I have been repeatedly struck by the fact that when Jesus stood on the shore of the Sea of Galilee and called SS. Peter, Andrew, James, and John to become “fishers of men,” that is, to become priests, He had all priests in mind at that moment, including me. This fills me with awe and gratitude.

That gratitude has continued to well up in me over the last week or so since I arrived here to begin my assignment in Concord and Carlisle. All of you have been so welcoming to me, and I am truly grateful for that. During my time at St John’s Seminary, whenever I was about to take an exam, I would always ask the Lord to help me to retain any information not so that I would do well on the exam, but so that I would be able to better help the people to whom He would send me. In those moments and others like it, I found myself praying for you all while not yet knowing who it was exactly I was praying for.

The Lord, who knows all things, knows in my coming to Concord and Carlisle, I am to help in His mission of leading you to Heaven, to be the saints God so desires us to become. The mission entrusted to Cardinal Sean for the archdiocese and to Fr. Frank for this parish collaborative, is the same mission I have been called to assist them in fulfilling. So, in echoing this same desire of Christ, I wish Heaven for you all, for you to become the saints God desires and calls you to become.

I look forward to our time together, however long it is, to be with you all as you continue on the way to Heaven. I am grateful to God that He has given me to you in my first assignment as His priest. Please know of my prayers for you in the days, weeks, months, and years ahead.

God bless!
Fr. Nick Stano
Join the Concord-Carlisle Catholic Collaborative for

2022 Vacation Bible School

Go off-road for a Monumental adventure through the colorful canyons and sunbaked trails of the southwest. By exploring God's awesomeness, kids form a rock-solid faith for the road ahead.

WHERE:    St. Irene Parish

WHEN:     August 15-18th 9:00 am-12 noon

COST:   $75.00 per child. $225.00 family max. Scholarships available.

To register email jnavarronorton@cc-catholic.org.
Interested volunteers email jsilvaanchondo@gmail.com
VBS welcomes campers age 4-10 and volunteers 11 and up
ENVIRONMENTAL MINISTRY

The Concord Carlisle Catholic Collaborative has recently formed the Environmental Ministry. This ministry was formed to respond to the call from Pope Francis for all Catholics to take action to protect the environment as well as mitigate its adverse effects on poor communities throughout the globe. The initial volunteers have met on several occasions, led by Fr. Bill and have determined the initial projects we will pursue. There are three: participation and support of Laudato Si’, “state-of-the-art recycling” and support of an annual project to provide water for a community in need somewhere in the world.

Laudato Si

In 2015, Pope Francis published an encyclical entitled Laudato Si’. This is a very lengthy work but in essence it was a call to action to Catholics throughout the world to take steps to protect the environment and also to assist the poor communities around the world in coping with the adverse consequences of climate change which disproportionately impact them. Last year the Vatican created an action platform for Laudato Si’ online seeking grass roots participation from individuals, parishes, dioceses, religious congregations and educational institutions. This new platform defines a seven-year effort to gradually expand participation. All are encouraged and welcome to participate at any level with which they are comfortable. Our ministry, with the support of Fr. Frank and Fr. Bill, will join this action platform on behalf of the Collaborative and will actively participate by publishing our plans and progress so that others may learn from what we do. We will also monitor the platform to learn from the contributions of others. In time we hope to expand this effort to include the advocacy of Laudato Si’ among other parishes in the Archdiocese of Boston.
Recycling

Our second project is to expand and enhance the recycling efforts within our community, both with regard to the operation of our collaborative but equally important to encourage parishioners to expand their own household recycling activity. There has recently been misinformation leading some to believe that the benefits of recycling are not real. This is absolutely not the case as all local communities benefit from recycling in several ways: by reducing solid waste going to landfills and incinerators and also by receiving substantial revenue from recycled materials. Of equal importance are new recyclable categories of which many are not aware.

Recently both Concord and Carlisle have introduced recycling of food scraps, textiles and mattresses. Food scraps account for 30% of solid waste and when sent to landfills take years to degrade, generating substantial greenhouse gas emissions due to the lack of oxygen. Both towns provide places to drop-off of food scraps which are then properly composted by a third party. For several years both Concord and Carlisle have had bins available, provided by Baystate Textiles, to be used for recycling textiles. The school systems receive $100/ton in revenue and also save about $100 in tipping & transportation. Baystate accepts all textiles (clothes in any condition, shoes, linens, fabrics, stuffed animals, etc). It picks up the materials, sorts them, donates items in usable condition to communities in need, and recycles the remainder. Usable clothing may also be donated to St Vincent De Paul which maintains a bin at St. Irene's. We encourage all families in our collaborative to recommit to recycling and include these new categories.

Water Projects

Our third project is a response to the Laudato Si’ objective to respond to the needs of the poor. Climate change has a significantly larger impact on the poor who are less able to mitigate its adverse consequences. Hundreds of millions of people throughout the world
do not have access to clean water resulting in poor health and reduced life expectancy. Our ministry will conduct an annual effort to support a specific water project intended to provide clean water to a community in need in a sustainable manner. We will select and support a partner to work with us to meet these needs.

**PLEASE JOIN US!**

Our ministry is seeking participation from all. Both adult and youth members of our community.

We hope you will participate in and support our efforts and also welcome those who are interested to join our ministry.

**Click here for more information or to participate**
You are invited to join the upcoming sessions of Walking with Purpose, a women’s Catholic bible study.

Sessions will be held on Wednesdays, beginning September 21.

In-Person & Online

Click Here to Learn More
The St. Irene's Women's Club was once again able to resume indoor group activities after a two-year hiatus.

On April 30th, the Italian Night Dinner took place in the church hall which was decorated in an Italian motif. 66 people attended. The dinner included antipasto, spaghetti with meatballs and sausage, and homemade desserts provided by the members. A raffle, with gifts donated by club members, took place during the dinner. It was very successful.

On Saturday, May 5th, a Trash to Treasures sale took place on the church driveway raising funds for the Club's operations and charitable work. Items that did not sell were donated to Lazarus House in Lawrence for their second-hand shop.

The annual banquet, the first one since 2019, held as a thank you to the club members for their work during the year, took place at Rufina's Restaurant in Chelmsford on May 19th. 19 people attended including Father Bill and a fun time was had by all.

The Club hosted a Rosary on May 26th in the Mary grotto. Pizza provided by the club was served after the rosary.

In addition to the activities outlined above, the Women's Club gave religious bracelets to the young boys and girls of the collaborative who made their 1st Communion in May. Father Bill distributed the bracelets to the children.

Plans are underway for an ice cream social at Kimball's in Carlisle this coming August. We're hoping Father Bill will be able to attend as this would give the members a chance to give him a special good-by from the club.
What you may consider to be a small act of kindness can be God's grace changing someone's life through you.
On Saturday May 14th we had our Capstone Family Ministry Event, The Cow Tour at Great Brook Farm! It can be summed up in 5 words: chickens, ice cream, cows, sheep, and the great outdoors. It started off with a mission to be able to hold and pick up one of the roaming chickens (in case you did not know, chickens are very friendly animals), that mission was accomplished. The ice cream was as fantastic as ever and we all sat and talked together as we enjoyed it. Then, the moment we were waiting for, we all walked around the cow area of the farm. We saw young cows, old cows, and cows who were about to give birth to more cows. Were there more animals than just cows you ask? Yes indeed! There was a sheep pen and we all got to feed them. All of this took place on a beautiful day with budding flowers, the smell of grass and hay, and, with the feel of Spring all around us. A great day at Great Brook Farm it was!” - Fr. Bill Robinson
When you become a Knight of Columbus in the Concord-Carlisle Catholic Collaborative, you are joining other Catholic men who are making their Faith, Families, Community and Parishes stronger.

Learn More Here
10 Ways You Can Love Mother Mary
Fr. Ed Broom, OMV

We often discuss who might be the best athletes, the best artists, the best writers, the best musicians; also, it must be said, there are the best of mothers. By far—and in a class by herself—the Blessed Virgin Mary was, is and always will be the best of all mothers.

This being said, mothers should recognize the fact that Mary is the best of all mothers and contemplate Mary’s words, actions, gestures, looks, intentions and life to become better and better mothers.

For our great consolation Mary is the Mother of God and she is the Mother of the Church, but also Mary is our dearest Mother too! Let us try to please Mary our Mother and as a consequence, the many mothers in the world will make huge strides in becoming better mothers all the days of their lives!

Below we will present ten different ways that we can show Mary, our Mother, our great love for her and without a doubt, through her most powerful intercession, she will attain for us the most choice graces to help us become the saints that we are called to be, and many of us as mothers.

1. Talk to Her
We have to get into the habit of talking to Mary, our dearest Mother, very often. To confide in her, speak to her from our hearts, love her and entrust all of our lives to her is most pleasing.

Continued on next page...
to her, as well as to her Son Jesus, the Son of God and the Son of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Mary is our Model, our Guide, our Friend and our dearest of Mothers. She loves us so much and desires to have frequent conversations with us.

Let us start today! Good friends think about each other and talk frequently! Mary is our Mother, but she is also our friend and confidant.

2. Start Your Day With Mary
Upon waking up every morning, our first action should be that of prayer, and what prayer? Why not start your day by giving yourself totally to Jesus, in all you say, do and think, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary? Give to Jesus through Mary your eyes, your ears, your mind, your heart, your body and even your intentions—in a word, give everything to Jesus through Mother Mary. How important it is to start our day well through the Heart of Mary!

3. Love Her
A Mother never gets tired of hearing her child say: “Mom, I really love you; you are the greatest!” The temptation might be to say the following: “Well she already knows it, why tell her something that she already knows.” True, a good Mother most likely already knows it. However, it should be expressed in words. By saying: “Mom, I really love you”, the heart of the mother will leap with joy. The same must be said about Mary our Mother. In the simplest of words when we say: “Mother Mary, I love you”, then Mary the Mother of God experiences great joy in her most pure and Immaculate Heart. Therefore, during the course of the day we should simply say: “Mother Mary, I love you!”

4. Walk With Her
There is a well-known song in both Spanish and Italian dedicated to Mary related to this topic with the title: Santa Maria del Camino—meaning, “Our Lady of the Way”. Therefore, when we travel, and it can be a short trip or a very long one, we should invite Mother Mary to come along with us. She is a good traveling companion and can protect us from many dangers in our travels, perils both physical and moral. How many accidents, both physical and moral, have surely been prevented by traveling with Mary—Santa Maria del Camino!
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