

From the Heart

Published by Sacred Heart Parish • 910 Main Street South • Southbury, CT 06488

A Vigil of Hope

On the first evening of the first day of the brand new year, Sacred Heart Church was the site of a vigil of hope as 200 children, teens, parents and neighbors gathered to send a stunning message of hope to our greater community and to seek solace in the support of the faith family. This poignant service was prompted by the untimely deaths of 8 young people in Southbury and surrounding towns through suicide, drugs or accidents.

Believing strongly that our faith has something to say and something to offer in times of tragic loss, Father Joe organized the vigil. "We use our faith to look

at it and come through it with a sense of hope," said Father Joe.

Inside the church, attendees viewed a short film about grieving and listened to the song "I Can Only Imagine" by contemporary Christian music group *MercyMe*. Following the short inside service each participant was given a luminaria (a brown paper bag with a candle inside) to place on the South Main Street lawn in front of the church, which when all candles were placed would spell out the word HOPE in light. Before placing the candles, Father Joe invited participants to write something on their bag, a name of a person for whom they grieved, a message of hope or a prayer.

A tearful, yet hopeful congregation placed the bags on the lawn and lit their candles, several offering brief definitions of what hope means to them. Many young people voiced the age-old question, "What's it all about; what's the meaning of life?" But many expressed how comforting it is to be part of a larger community, knowing that others share the same questions, but also knowing that as part of a compassionate community we can support one other.

The crowd returned inside to the warmth of the church hall for hot chocolate, cookies and conversation. Outside the symbol of hope blazed for all to see.

The dialogue and healing had begun.

Dolores Matzen

Vol. 19, No. 1
February 2008

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• NOW AVAILABLE •

A complete listing, description, and contact information for all Sacred Heart parish ministries and services is available on the website: sacredheartchurch.info

Or, if you prefer, you can pick up a booklet from the Parish Library or main office with the same detailed information.



"The Church lives in the parish."

Communities of Salt and Light

by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops

The Lord's Prayer (Igor Sikorsky), Part 3a



“**T**hy Kingdom Come, Thy Will Be Done in Earth as it is in Heaven.”

This part of the prayer is interrelated, referring to the same idea as parts 1 and 2. A simple definition of a kingdom is a place or a large body of people among whom the will of a king is being done.

Sikorsky writes in great detail on this part, and it would take too much space to include everything.

The full meaning of “Thy kingdom come,” Sikorsky writes are:

- (a) “We are not yet in the place under discussion;
- (b) In existence in some other place from which it is expected to come.”

When we say God’s will be done on earth we know that while there are some good men living in accord with the will of God, they will always be in the minority. The quality of life on earth will always be a mixture of good and evil. “We must come to the

somewhat gloomy conclusion that the highest achievements to be expected in the future under the most optimistic assumptions will always be a sort of temporary truce, a compromise between good and evil.”

Christ did not condemn St. Thomas when he expressed doubt even when the other ten disciples gave testimony to the risen Lord. The human soul has the right to seek an explanation. Many religions and philosophers have questioned the causes of the suffering of the innocent, especially that of children. Some even say it was started by the original sin of Adam and Eve.

The writer of this thinks “the inner meaning and spirit of the message of Christ, together with at least a small, but truly divine flame in the heart, would inspire and justify a completely different understanding.” We could easily fall into despair if we are looking for an earthly substitute of the kingdom of God. This divine flame or spark is always a source of comfort, courage and understanding; it stresses the reality of the eternal. This makes us understand that God is not far away, not indifferent, but always watching and seeing all. It reveals him as helping and supporting us, not always in a material way, however.

There is “one direct reply and explanation whose thunderous power is well in line with the scale of the question about suffering of the innocent and the triumph of evil. It is in the reply given by Christ in his message and in his acts,” says Sikorsky.

Christ suffered the most mental, and physical agony anyone could

ever suffer in this world, yet he did it voluntarily. Calvary brought a message of the supreme glory of resurrection and rebirth that the world had not known. The true objectives of the ministry of Christ are mostly in the higher, eternal plan of life and not in the present temporary one.

Dina Carella

(Part 3b will be in the next issue)



From the Heart

Managing Editor: Katherine Pavone
Editors: Dolores Matzen, Deb McGrath
Production Editor: Jean Brickey

Communications Committee Members:
Barry Bonetti, Dina Carella, Dennis McLaughlin, Irma Rilling, Rich Stephens, Ernie Swanberg, Debra Tansey, Diane Tomas, George Vachris,

Distribution: Deborah Bonetti, Chris Doran, Pat Joy, Jim Kowalski, Madeline Murphy, Molly O’Meara, Domenic Narducci, Josephine Narducci, Dee Nazelrod, Patricia Philbin, Kelly Richardson, Lina Savard, Liv Shiya, Magdalene Shuster, Jean Stone

Layout: Selena Carella
Photos: Jean Brickey

New members, ideas and Ask Father questions are welcome throughout the year. Please contact the rectory or Katherine Pavone at 264-6599.

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Last year a book entitled *God is Not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything*, by Christopher Hitchens, was published. In this provocative book, the author makes a case for atheism. Several other books on that topic have been published recently, as well. This cultural phenomenon calls our attention to two questions that we believers can take for granted: Does God exist? Is it beneficial to be religious, that is, a member of an organized religion?

Obviously we not only believe that God does exist, but we are aware of God in our lives. We each have a personal relationship with God that we call "faith." We find our experience of God to be supported and affirmed by what we read in the Sacred Scriptures and by what we find in the life, worship and teaching of the Church. Being a Catholic helps me to believe and helps me to keep my lifelong journey of faith healthy and mature until that moment when I "see" God face to face. My personal experience of God is a "mystery" in the truest sense of that term. Notice how difficult it is to try to explain your experience of God and why you believe to others in words and terms that help them understand.

When a person becomes aware that he or she believes in God he most likely seeks out a community of others who believe in similar (but not identical) ways. That community or church or religion reminds us that God is bigger than all of us, is beyond the comprehension of all of us, but that others have had a similar experience in their lives. The term "religion" literally means to "build bridges," to "make connections" between life and faith, between what I believe and what is going on in my life. People join particular religions because that religion helps them to believe better. It passes on a "tradition" (not a "custom") that they believe God has revealed and the rituals believers down through the ages have found beneficial for living their faith. In Catholicism we find the Sacred Scriptures, the rituals of our faith—such as the sacraments and the history, and development of the wisdom of the community of the Church, to be helpful for us as we try to live our faith in 2008.

No religion is perfect because it is made up of humans. At times in history or in our personal lives the Church may not have been as helpful and reflective of the life, love and compassion of Jesus/God as it should have been. But since the days of Jesus, believers have gathered together, supported each other in faith and together opened their lives to God. This community has helped them

believe with greater health, maturity and integrity. Christianity in all its many forms has always been a communal religion. In other words it has never been just a matter of "me and Je-

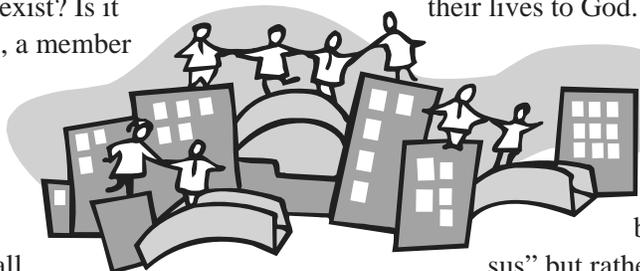
sus" but rather "us and Jesus." Christians from earliest days (read the Acts of the Apostles) have always gathered together to follow the two imperatives that Jesus gave: "Do this (Eucharist) in remembrance of me," and "Love one another as I have loved you."

People who belong to organized religions like the Catholic Church find that it is helpful in several ways:

- It helps them believe by recognizing that others believe like them.
- It reminds them of the things that really matter.
- It encourages them to live better lives, to be the best they can be.
- It encourages them to be concerned about their brothers and sisters. Studies show that people who belong to organized religions are the most generous in giving to charities.
- It gives them something to believe in.
- It reminds them that they are loved unconditionally (something that is difficult for most of us to really believe).
- It gives them reason to hope.
- It offers guidance in making difficult life decisions.

There may be other benefits of being a religious person. But suffice it to say that I do not agree with Hitchens' proposition. Do you?

Father Joe



A Family of Faith

As most of us can appreciate, our liturgies are regularly enhanced by music. But few know much about that little lady hidden behind the organ and piano on Sundays and special liturgies, or of her family's contributions to many of Sacred Heart's ministries.

Patty Richards has been our faith community's Director of Music for the past seven years. She and her family, husband Tim, and daughters, Jenna and Chelsea moved to Southbury 15 years ago. Patty grew up in Iowa where she had played piano from the age of seven, and organ for her local parish from the sixth grade through high school. She later continued her musical pursuits in entertainment where she met her future husband, Tim, who moved to Iowa after a job transfer and shared her interest in music. Today, Tim is a manufacturer of musical instruments.

Patty's vocation is music, so she dedicates herself to researching the many styles of religious music. She regularly collaborates with Father Joe so that she can match the music to each specific liturgy and homily message. Her collaborative efforts with Janet Conte, Director of the Adult Choir, have resulted in bringing Sacred Heart such regular spiritual treasures as Lessons and Carols for the last five Advent seasons and Faith Reflections for the past three Palm Sundays. Both are very moving faith-filled and musically enriched presentations, to which this author can personally attest.

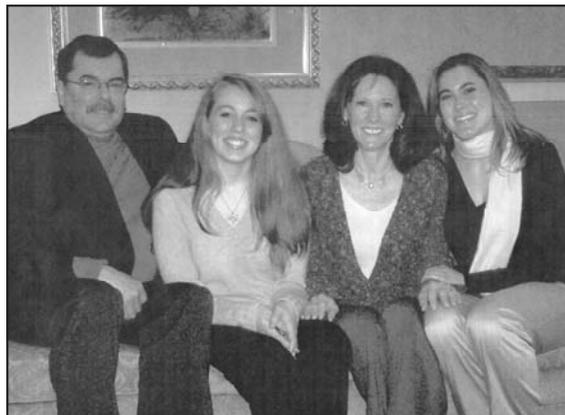
Patty also directs the Resurrection Choir, which she considers a "very important ministry" in support

of grieving families. She believes that music helps those grieving a loss "when there are no words" that can adequately equate to music's touch.

Tim, who relishes in the "music that's always throughout the house," is very supportive of his family and their many ministries to the Sacred Heart faith community. One way in which this non-Catholic personally supports Sacred Heart is by recording and reproducing the CDs from the Advent, Easter and other music liturgies, gratis, for sale to our parishioners, helping to support our music ministry. That he is justifiably proud of Patty and his daughters is very evident in his constant praise and encouragement in their many contributions to our parish.

Following in her parents' musical footsteps, Jenna, even before Patty took over our music directorship, joined our Children's Choir. Naturally, the Youth and Adult Choir followed over the years.

Probably as a result of her award in a "speech competition" in the Miss Connecticut Pre-Teen contest, Jenna found it a natural extension and another "way to be involved" in her faith by becoming a reader, a ministry she has continued for ten years! Jenna has also been involved in our G.I.F.T. program, been a catechist and a member of the parish council, all before graduating college. After she gets her degree in her chosen field of dental hygiene, she plans to participate in mission trips using her skills to help those in need. She sees



The Richards family gathered together to share with us their faith journey at Sacred Heart.

all this as a way of "giving back."

Chelsea overcame her fear of public speaking in large part due to encouragement from Jenna's positive experience in that ministry and has become a reader herself.

No stranger to ministerial contributions to our parish, Chelsea has also been a cross bearer, altar server, a member of the Youth Choir, and participated in her first mission trip last year to help those in need in nearby New York. Along with other high school students from all over the country, with whom she formed close bonds over the week, she found this experience to be very rewarding and "eye-opening" in her ministering to "strangers."

Patty "feels fulfilled" in the work she does with the Youth Choir, which she personally re-energized in 2006 and which has now grown to over thirty members. She also relishes her role as a member of the G.I.F.T. Core Committee responsible for all of its musical content. She "loves everything she does" as part of the faith community at Sacred

Fundraiser Grand Prize Awarded



Father Joe stands with Adele Turk, Sacred Heart's grand prize winner of the 2008 Jaguar.

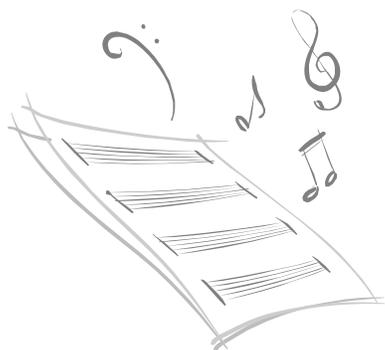
Other prizes included a Sony 40 inch LCD HD TV, a Woodbury Pewter 4-piece coffee service and two \$250 gift certificates.

More than \$30,000 dollars was raised, which will go toward paying down the \$1.3 million mortgage principle.

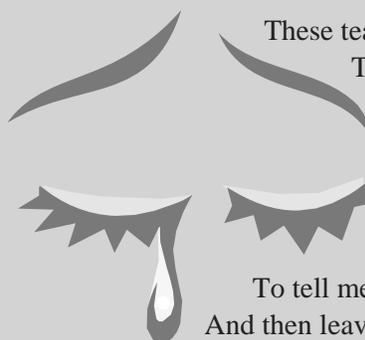
Heart, feeling that the results have exceeded her dreams, especially in her work with the Adult choir and thanks God everyday for all the blessings he gives to her family.

The Richards family has more than demonstrated their sustained dedication to the true spirit of ministry. Sacred Heart would certainly be wanting without this faith-filled, giving family.

Rich Stephens



Selfish Tears



These tears I shed are selfish tears.

These tears are shed for me:

For words not said, for things not done,
For our days that will not be.

Who called your name so urgently

That you couldn't stop a while

To tell me you were going,
And then leave me with a smile.

I've been told you're well and happy now,

And I'm sure you will agree,

You do not need my selfish tears.

I shed these tears for me.

Irma Rilling

SPOTLIGHT ON YOUTH

Caution: Renovation in Progress

When most of us hear the word “renovate” the first thing that comes to mind is our home or other buildings. On that level, it was the perfect theme for the Youth Group’s trip to the Group Workcamp in Hoosick Falls, NY last July to help the residents there with painting, scraping, hammering and building. On a spiritual level, the experience was to renovate hearts and minds.

Hoosick Falls is a very different place from Southbury. It is a rural community. In fact there were cows in the pastures next to the school where we stayed. It is also an economically depressed area. Driving up and down the roads, the evidence of struggling businesses and families was everywhere. For many of our kids, it was their first time face to face with people in need. In order to meet the challenge of entering people’s homes and helping with repairs, they had to come to grips with some realities about their own lives.

Group Workcamp involves engagement with three different groups. The first is the parish youth group. Although preparation meetings are held before camp, it is impossible to prepare someone for the reality of living in close quarters for a week. The girls and their chaperones slept in one classroom on air mattresses, the boys in another. We attended evening programs together and shared in evening devotions. We talked about ourselves and talked through our experiences.

I was deeply impressed by the insight of the kids. One young woman said, “I never realized how fortunate I was until I came here.” In reply another said, “Yeah, these residents (the people of the Hoosick Falls community) have it tough.”



The first woman replied, “No, I was talking about the other people on my crew.”

The second interactive group is the crew team made up of six or seven kids and adults from different churches—always a mix of different Christian denominations. The crew has pre-organized roles so that everyone knows what to do. While each crew has a work plan and a site coach, things don’t always go perfectly and sometimes the team has to trouble shoot and improvise. How well they do this speaks to both the personalities of the team members and the dynamic within the group.

Some groups work better than others. Different kids have different motivations for going. In my case, the great accomplishment of one boy who clearly did not want to be there was the reluctant admission, “I’m not sorry I came.” In another group, growth in one of the areas that is not a part of the official agenda was the admission by a kid who said, “I never liked Catholics before I came here. But I never knew any Catholics. Now that I know you, I changed my mind.”

One soul renovates another. The kids come for their own spiritual growth and in that process often be-

come a part of another’s “renovation.” In many cases, because the emphasis is on the heart, the heart supersedes the understanding of the mind. This was Jesus’ message—not just for us to know, but also for us to live. And for one week we lived it.

The final interactive group is residents of the homes in which we worked. Many of our residents were elderly and unable to either pay for or do for themselves the repairs needed. Many of them had never asked for help before in their lives. Many of them had never known teens up close and personal. They all took a huge risk in opening their homes, their personal space, to a group of strangers.

My crew worked in the home of an 83-year-old woman. She shared not only her life story, but also words of wisdom from her experience. The kids on the crew admired her and found joy in helping her. Like many of the residents in the area, she felt that the many bad things about young people said by the media were untrue. This statement was echoed over and over again by other residents throughout the area. Our team of 16 kids and 4 adults made Sacred Heart a part of that little pocket of renovation, which happened one week in upstate New York.

This year, a group of 30 kids and 6 adults will be traveling to North Kingstown, RI for Group Workcamp at the end of June. Ten of us are returning and the preparation meetings and fundraising have begun. The theme this year is “Love out Loud.” Judging by the early going, I would say the group has already gotten down the “out loud” part.



However, through the bake-a-thon last November, they also demonstrated that they are ready to put their hands before their hearts. The extraordinary response of the parish allowed the kids to work together to achieve a goal—to meet each other, work as a team, and feel proud of their accomplishment.

The group we send on the mission trip does not just represent Sacred Heart; it brings our parish out into the world to show how we all wish to contribute to the greater good. These are in fact OUR kids whom we as a parish have nurtured through the years. They are our face to a community in need.

And we are all enriched when they return. As the old expression says: “Give and it will come back to you tenfold.” In this sense, we are all “Mission Trippers.”

Eileen Mooney Strange



Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

1 Tim. 4:12

A Walk Around the Lake

Part II

I just had returned home from my four-hour session with my Kairos prisoners and was about to lie down for a well-earned nap when I heard a sigh coming from the edge of my bed.

“I’m tired, my favorite guardian angel. Come back and bother me later.”

“Oh, I bother you? Is that the feeling of the day? There is no rest for the wicked. Rise and shine. It’s time for our afternoon walk around the lake.”

A brief prelude to this narrative may be in order especially for the benefit of those few who may not be familiar with what I believe is a special relationship between my guardian angel (his name is Dennis; what a coincidence!) and myself. With the encouragement of my editor-in-chief, I have been able to continue my narratives both to the delight of the readership (I write this with some modesty) and to Dennis who doesn’t seem to mind as long as he is correctly quoted, wins the arguments and is given all the laugh lines.

“It’s cold out.” I pronounced, beginning our first turn around the lake (in Heritage Village). “Of course you don’t feel cold being an angel and all that.”

“I will ignore your comment, and what do I see here? We haven’t seen this young lady in quite a while.

“Good afternoon.” I said.

“Good afternoon.” Dennis said.

“Stop that!” I said out loud.

The villager laughed softly. “I gather you are not alone.”

As I approached the bench (she was sitting upon the same bench when I first met her several months ago), the lady stood. I presumed to make room for me or us depending upon one’s point of view. In any event I sat down and invited this woman, medium in height, fair complexion with short black hair with red hi-lights, to sit next to me.

“Go easy with the Irish charm. The villager is married.”

“You’re blushing, Dennis! Your angel said something about me, didn’t he?”

“Not exactly, although I have wondered that the fact that I talk out loud to my angel never seemed strange to you.”

“It did in the beginning. I just pretended it didn’t. But now it doesn’t at all. I suppose it is because I have been able to talk to my own angel. You advised me to do that. Remember? Is your angel sitting on the bench too?”

I thought, “Dennis can you talk to her angel? I mean do you see her. I presume the angel is feminine.”

His response, to my surprise, was silence. As I was about to repeat the question, I heard, “My answer would be beyond your comprehension. May I suggest you make another inquiry?” I got the distinct impression that I was ruffling his wing feathers.



(Continued on page 8)

ASK FATHER

Does God permit or create suffering?

Suffering comes in many forms, but it is clearly part of all our lives and of human life in general. It is important, first of all, to distinguish the various types of suffering we experience.

There is suffering caused by people's free choices. For example, someone gets behind the wheel of a car after having been drinking and causes an accident in which someone is killed or injured. That suffering is not caused by God but by the free choice of the one who chose to drink and drive.

There is suffering that is part of the human condition. For example, a person gets cancer or Alzheimer's disease. Some medical people claim that such diseases are caused by the environment, but by and large we do not know why these diseases occur. Something in the makeup of certain people makes them more susceptible. Another example of such suffering is that caused by acts of nature such as a tornado, tsunami or hurricane.

There is suffering caused by accident. For example, I am driving my car and someone coming in the other direction accidentally hits my car and injures me. They did not intend it. It was an accident. Such suffering reminds us of the imperfect nature of human life.

Then there is suffering that can only be called a "mystery" in the best sense of that term. We do not know why such things happen.

Many times I hear people ask why God "did this." It is unfair to blame God for such things when they are actually caused by human choices, by the human condition, by nature or by accident. God is blamed for many things because we still have a belief that God is like a puppeteer, controlling all things and therefore responsible for all things. But God made the human person with free will and the world that God made is good but not perfect.

If suffering is a "given" in life, how should I deal with it? I love the familiar Footprints text and the perspective it offers for us about experiencing suffering. We should ask ourselves, "How is God carrying me now as I experience this suffering?" It is a powerful experience of faith to realize that God is not causing the pain and suffering, but rather that God is with me, supporting me, weeping with me, angry in the face of unjust suffering caused by the evil choices of others, holding me in the face of suffering for which there is no discernable cause and giving me strength. It is the experience of many people of faith that God enables us to grow in the midst of suffering, to get a better perspective on life and to learn how much we need God to get us through our suffering. So many people comment, "I never would have been able to get through that difficult experience if it were not for my faith." How many of us have grown in faith through our experience of suffering!

Father Joe

A Walk Around the Lake

(Continued from page 7)

"I asked Dennis whether he could see your angel. I got a very strange answer. Dennis has always been pretty open in his relationship with me as well as with his bosses. But not this time."

"I asked the same question and she was very vague in answering me. As a matter of fact, she never really did. I think we touched upon something that is not for us to know at

this point in our faith journey."

"I think you're right and yes, Dennis is sitting next to you."

The startled villager laughed.

"That can be somewhat unnerving."

"Tell me about it, but he is a gentleman as I have told you before."

I continued talking, frankly to change the subject, "Lent is coming up fast. Any fresh ideas as to fasting, sacrifice or penance?"

Looking at me, the villager straightened her back and assumed a solemn demeanor saying, "I will use

this Lent as a resanctification of my soul; to strengthen my resolve for social justice; to ask myself what else I can do for the poor, and more important, I will do it; and after Easter, renewed by his resurrection, how much of these resolves, will I be able to make a part of my life. And you?"

"Ah-h-h me too," I mumbled.

"Dennis, you are a disgrace," said my guardian angel. "That's it? You can't add to this woman's resolu-

(Continued on page 11)

(For office use only)

Date Received _____ Check # _____ Amount _____

REGISTRATION FORM 2008-2009

GROWING IN FAITH TOGETHER

(G.I.F.T. PROGRAM)

Sacred Heart Church, 910 Main Street South, Southbury, CT 06488

Registrations requested by June 1, 2008 – Make checks payable to Sacred Heart Church
\$50 Late Fee Applies June 2, 2008-August 15, 2008 (Please print legibly)

Household Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____
No. Street City State Zip Code

Primary Contact: _____ Business Phone: _____ Cell: _____

Secondary Contact: _____ Business Phone: _____ Cell: _____

In case of emergency, contact: _____ Telephone: _____

Does anyone in your household have any special needs of which we should be aware? Yes No

Please describe: _____

Household members who will be participating in the G.I.F.T. Program:

(Please include Last Name if different from above.)

Please indicate **Formation Level as of September, 2008** from one of the following:

- Grades 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11-Adult
- Please indicate if your child is receiving a sacrament. New Students: Copies of Baptism and First Holy Communion certificates are required at registration if performed at another parish.

Name: _____ Grade/Sacrament: _____

Household Registration Fee includes all program materials and 6 meals (not optional)

1. Program Fee: \$70 per household - **\$70.00**

2. Meals: \$30 per person Number per household ___ x \$30 = \$ _____

Program Fee + Meals (\$250.00 maximum) Subtotal = \$ _____

3. Sacramental Fee: \$20/candidate First Reconciliation/Communion
\$20/candidate Confirmation (grade 10) **Sacramental Fee = \$ _____**

4. \$50 Late Fee: applied to registrations received June 2-August 15, 2008 **Late Fee = \$ _____**

Only new resident registrations will be accepted after August 15, 2008

Total = \$ _____

It is the policy of Sacred Heart to welcome all. No one will be denied due to financial constraints. Kindly inform us of any financial needs.

- Please complete both sides -

Session Selection:

Please rank the following sessions in order of preference. We will try to honor all requests for 1st and 2nd choices on a "first come, first served" basis.

Sunday I 4:00 – 6:30 PM _____

Sunday II 1:00 – 3:30 PM _____

Wednesday 5:00 – 7:30 PM _____

Monday 5:00 – 7:30 PM _____

Friday 6:00 – 8:30 PM _____

What gift can you offer to G.I.F.T.?

Volunteer Name(s): _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

FACILITATOR'S AIDE: Will help facilitator during in depth learning for grade-level breakout sessions. All lesson materials are provided.

Formation Level: Grades 1-3 Grades 4-5 Grades 6- 7-8 Grades 9-10

EVENT SET UP/CLEAN UP: Assist on Sundays with setting up /taking down of tables and equipment in the hall and other areas. Trash removal to dumpsters etc... _____ Set Up _____ Take Down

MUSIC: Qualified musicians to assist with openings/closings.

_____ Song Leader

_____ Keyboard Player

_____ Guitarist

MEALS: _____ Planning Coordinator: Responsible for planning and ordering meals for each GIFT event and coordinate volunteers

_____ Asst. Planning Coordinator: Assist Coordinator in staffing/scheduling

_____ Kitchen Help/Serving/Clean Up

OFFICE: _____ Home Packet Assembly (Meets one weekday morning one week before GIFT Sessions)

_____ Posters/Banners/Artwork

_____ Copy Staff

_____ PowerPoint Presentations

_____ Sewing/Craft/Woodworking/etc...(specify)

DRAMA TEAM:

_____ Coordinator: Work with design and core teams to find/create plays, act out Gospel stories and organize presentations. May not be required for all events.

_____ Actor

_____ Stage/Props

_____ Sound

TECHNICAL TEAM:

_____ Coordinator: Work with design and core teams to determine necessary equipment and coordinate volunteers to cover setup, use, and break down.

_____ Equipment Support

_____ PowerPoint Presentation Support

_____ Video/Picture Taking

Group Art Project : _____ Assist with designing and creating a large group project.

- Please complete both sides -

G.I.F.T. 2008-2009

Session Dates “Professing Our Faith”

Please join us in this important mission of passing on our faith.

September 2008 “We believe in God”

Sunday I, September 7	4:00pm-6:30pm
Monday, September 8	5:00pm-7:30pm
Wednesday, September 10	5:00pm-7:30pm
Friday, September 12	6:00pm-8:30pm
Sunday II, September 14	1:00pm-3:30pm

October 2008 “We believe in Jesus Christ”

Sunday I, October 12	4:00pm-6:30pm
Monday, October 13	5:00pm-7:30pm
Wednesday, October 15	5:00pm-7:30pm
Friday, October 17	6:00pm-8:30pm
Sunday II, October 19	1:00pm-3:30pm

November 2008 “We believe in the Holy Spirit”

Sunday I, November 9	4:00pm-6:30pm
Monday, November 10	5:00pm-7:30pm
Wednesday, November 12	5:00pm-7:30pm
Friday, November 14	6:00pm-8:30pm
Sunday II, November 16	1:00pm-3:30pm

January 2009 “We believe in Jesus’ Death and Resurrection”

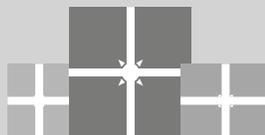
Sunday I, January 4	4:00pm-6:30pm
Monday, January 5	5:00pm-7:30pm
Wednesday, January 7	5:00pm-7:30pm
Friday, January 9	6:00pm-8:30pm
Sunday II, January 11	1:00pm-3:30pm

February 2009 “We believe in the Church”

Sunday I, February 1	4:00pm-6:30pm
Monday, February 2	5:00pm-7:30pm
Wednesday, February 4	5:00pm-7:30pm
Friday, February 6	6:00pm-8:30pm
Sunday II, February 8	1:00pm-3:30pm

March 2009 “We believe in the Communion of Saints”

Sunday I, March 15	4:00pm-6:30pm
Monday, March 16	5:00pm-7:30pm
Wednesday, March 18	5:00pm-7:30pm
Friday, March 20	6:00pm-8:30pm
Sunday II, March 22	1:00pm-3:30pm



A Walk Around the Lake

(Continued from page 8)

tions? You and I are going to have some serious walks about the lake.” By the sound of his declaration, this conversation had come to an end

I stood, and so did the villager. As we began to transverse the walkway returning to our respective homes, I said, “I hope to add to your list.” O.K. dear reader, my male ego forced me to add the seven words.

“Well I did have some help from her,” laughed the villager.

I smiled. “So the guardian of your soul is female?”

“And yours is male!” came a defiant retort.

“Oh for heavens sake! You know there is no gender. I don’t object to your sexism to make the concept in having me around you, well...easier. But let’s not lose the reason why I am here. I am your religious leader, your heavenly pastor if you must give me a title; I am the one while reminding you of your freedom of choice, I bellow in your ear, WWJD (What would Jesus do)!”

“Nice to hear you are still with me, Dennis.”

And then came the inevitable sigh, which means, “I hope my long suffering is worth it, my Lord.”

Blessfully,
my life goes on.

*Dennis
McLaughlin*



All Are Invited



Growing In Faith Together (G.I.F.T.) will center its 2008-2009 year of learning on The Creed.

In a very particular way we will examine what our profession of faith means in six learning sessions. Each will focus the learning on what, why, and how “We believe In God,” “We believe In Jesus Christ,” “We believe in the Holy Spirit,” “We believe in Jesus’ Death and Resurrection”, “We believe in the Church,” and “We believe in the Communion of Saints”.

Faith Formation at Sacred Heart involves three prongs of learning:

- Our 6 G.I.F.T. Sessions
- Weekly Liturgical participation within the life and worship of our parish, including Liturgy of the Word for Children.
- The Home Packet (a household resource that extends the topic and provides real life applications).

The Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist, and Confirmation require additional preparation.

Our G.I.F.T. program begins in the first grade, and continues through all stages of life. We invite older adults within our parish community to join us in our learning sessions, as we have found the wealth of their lived faith life enriching to all age groups. Those who have participated, reported favorable experiences of learning and community building.

Session Details

We offer six (2 ½ hour) learning sessions each year (September- March). You may pick one of five times and days to attend during the course of a G.I.F.T. week.

Each learning session:

- Begins with a meal designed to bring the community together for a mutually enjoyable, shared experience, that sets up the learning with a light table task.
- Includes an all-ages opening experience of prayer, song, and introduction to the topic.
- Includes an in-depth age-level break out that delves into the learning topic at a more age appropriate life experiential level.
- Culminates with a closing exercise that integrates and applies the learning to the each persons lived faith life. Coffee and dessert are served at the end of each session.

Registration begins now and runs until June 1, 2008. Between June 1 and August 15, a late charge of \$50 will be applied. No registrations will be accepted after August 15, 2008 (except for new residents of Southbury).

Fill out the enclosed registration (page 9 and 10) and mail or drop off at the Faith Formation Office.

If you have questions, please call the Faith Formation Office at 264-5065, Monday – Thursday 9 am-4:30 pm.



From the Heart

Sacred Heart Parish
910 Main Street South
Southbury, CT 06488

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