

# Saint Catherine Of Siena Roman Catholic Church



## Our Parish Community

243 Route 164 Preston CT 06365-8726

An update on parish life as suggested by the Parish Council.

SPRING, 2004 ISSUE

### The common theme is "Why It Matters"

This newsletter is an effort to reach out to our parish family, active and in-active, in our hope to make the parish of Saint Catherine of Siena, Preston, a vital part of our parishioners' lives.

We have held several meetings of late, under the auspices of the Parish Council and Finance Council, where the issues of our day have been discussed. As you probably know, when you have twenty people in the room there are usually twenty opinions as to how to work a problem, and even defining what the problem is can be debated. There does seem to be strong agreement that our

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### REACHING OUT WITH FAITH AND HOPE.....

parish has to change to be more welcoming to its members, and that is a primary goal of the parish community. If you've been a part of the Saint Catherine's family in the past but have moved on, consider this your invitation to consider returning to our parish community! Individuals will never agree on every issue, but fair minded communities can reach consensus to keep the best and discard the rest.

Included in this "Spring 2004 Issue" of "Our Parish Community" are brief articles about the current Saint Catherine of Siena parish community. These include articles on the Ladies Guild (Our Lady of Good Coun-

sel), the Knights of Columbus, and our Small Christian Communities and others. The common theme is "Why It Matters". I encourage you to read these articles, and also to look at the new parish website which has a wealth of information on our parish history, its ministries, and links to many sites of interest to the Christian community.

Our purpose, the reason we are reaching out is very simple...we need our parishioners to help make our faith community vibrant so we can be effective in reaching out and serving others in our community. (Parish mission statement)

Bob Payette, Editor

### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **Mass Times:** Saturday Vigil at 5pm, Sundays at 8am and 10am. Tuesday, Thursday and Friday at 9am and Wednesday at 6:30pm. (daily Mass is in the Rectory Meeting Room).
- A **complete calendar**, to include religious education events and classes, is posted to our website. Check it out!
- New central air conditioning, our famous Faucher Pipe Organ with a talented music director & choir (10A.M. Mass) and a country location with its Memorial Prayer Garden and views add to the Saint Catherine's parishioner experience.

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL GUILD	2
KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS	2
SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY	2
BEREAVEMENT MINISTRY	3
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	3
ST.VINCENT DE PAUL	3
Parish Life	4
PASTOR'S NOTE	5

### OUR SUMMER FESTIVAL GROUP IS GEARING UP!

Planning meetings have already been held as we gear up for the 2004 version of the Saint Catherine of Siena Summer Festival. This festival is a major fundraiser for the parish and also a wonderful community "get together". Chairman Dan Ruta is (and it will always be

thus!) looking for volunteers. The GOOD news is we've made it easy to volunteer for ANY job that needs doing in the parish. On the website there is a "Volunteer Needs Form" that lists the parish needs, and a "Feedback form" where you can volunteer right on line



from the comfort of your home. Take a look at the Links Page on our site where you can see a photo album from last year's Festival.

## OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL GUILD

Our Lady Of Good Counsel strives to answer **"Why we Matter"** by being the Hands and Feet of Christ and honoring His Mother Mary with friendship through service.

We strive to address the needs of the parish and community. We raise funds through bake sales, calendar sales, craft making and sales and the solicitation of advertising for our Sunday bulletin. With these funds we purchase sneakers for homeless chil-

dren who are returning to school in the fall, assemble hygiene packets with items collected from the parish and purchased by the Guild, for distribution to Martin House, St. Vincent DePaul Place, TVCCA and Thames River Project. We also support pro-life through Birthright with monetary donations to the pro-life billboard and the donation of baby clothes and items.

We purchase items for St.

Vincent DePaul Place. We take part in the RSVP program of "Santa Anonymous" buying warm boots for school children and we are collecting and distributing clothing.

We purchase items for our rectory and office, and take part in the summer festival.

We participate in the District, Diocesan, and National Council of Catholic Women,

*(Continued on page 4)*



## THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS COUNCIL #6642

As a large crowd starts to gather in front of the rectory on Holy Saturday morning, the air is filled with the sounds of anxious children and the smells of hot coffee and cocoa. It's the beginning of the Annual Easter Egg Hunt sponsored by the local council of The Knights of Columbus.

Can you imagine the various

answers that you would get if you asked **"Why it Matters?"**

The responses may be something like this:

Ask the family that selects and purchases the large amount of prizes and candy for the council and stuffs the hundreds of plastic eggs with candy. They might say, "We do it each year as a family thing."

Ask the knights and other volunteers that get to the rectory grounds early in the frosty morning to set up for the event. They rope off the hunting areas and hide all of those colorful eggs. They set up tables for prizes and refreshments and greet the youngsters as they open all those eggs. They might say; "I love talking to the kids and seeing their faces when they



## SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

Small Christian Communities are made up of 6 to 10 people who meet regularly. They take the time to reflect on Scripture as a focus for their own lives. When they meet, they tell their stories of experiences of God in their lives, and of the connections they have made with the gospel message. They encourage each other to recognize their

giftedness as they minister to their families, their parish, and the wider community.

Small Christian Communities have been meeting in St. Catherine of Siena parish since 1995. If you would like to find out more about this opportunity of belonging, formation in faith and prayer, and service, contact Bob or

Mary Ann O'Neil, or Morris or Jean Fishbone.

Mary Ann O'Neil



## BEREAVEMENT MINISTRY

The Bereavement Ministry of St. Catherine of Siena was formed in 1995 by a group of parishioners who have dedicated themselves to assisting members of our parish family that have lost a loved one through death. Although we cannot take away the pain of those who grieve, we can use the wisdom that God has given us to make a difference. We gather with our pastor at the wake service to assist in the prayer service and have

created a guide to assist the family with the funeral liturgy planning. Following the burial service we provide a reception in Siena Hall or assist in the family's home.

The reception is what families seem to appreciate the most. We serve finger sandwiches, baked goods and beverages that are provided not only by the ministry members, but by many other parishioners who have offered to bake or make

sandwiches when needed. If a family wishes to have catered food, we will also assist with serving that as well.

"You have been a lifesaver--I don't know what we would have done without you" is most often told to us as a family prepares to leave from the reception. The reception gives the grieving an opportunity to be with family and friends, share refreshment and fellowship without the

worry of how they are going to accomplish this themselves. Although we hope that this is the "least" active ministry here at St. Catherine's we are here to "Comfort those who Mourn".

Mary Lou Parkhurst



## PARISH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Why does Religious Education matter for adults and children? What exactly is its importance and purpose? The purpose of Religious Education is to nourish the children and adults of the parish, by helping them grow in faith, live in faith and act in faith, to celebrate and ritualize our

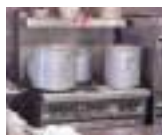


faith. It is a **lifelong process** of conversion. Since the process begins at birth, it is very important for parents to understand that children are not born with faith, they are born into a faith environment. As parents they are the most important people in the faith growing process of their children. They are and continue to be the most important catechist in their child's

life. Our children will have faith if we have faith and are faithful. It is our purpose not only as parents but also as trained catechists to help make the children and adult's faith, become living, conscious and active through the light of Religious Education Instruction. Because this is a **lifelong process**, throughout the year adults are also offered opportunities to enrich their faith life. The word catechesis comes from the Greek verb that means to "echo" – the emphasis is on transmission of God's word to invite people to a continued life of personal faith growth.

Nancy J. Mignault, Director of Faith Formation

## ST. VINCENT DE PAUL PLACE



For over twenty five years St. Vincent de Paul Place has been fulfilling its mission in its Soup Kitchen, Food Pantry and through its Direct Aid Program. Six days a week the kitchen serves 80 to 110 persons breakfast and a main meal at noon, and the dining

room serves as a drop-in center for the poor and homeless from 8:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M Monday through Saturday. We matter as we distribute from 350 to 400 food bags per month to needy families and individuals from our food pantry. When funds permit we assist persons in emergency situations with prescriptions, transportation to

appointments and fees for drug treatment programs, rent and utilities. The soup kitchen matters in peoples daily lives as we advocate for justice for those broken and marginalized in society. *(above information interpolated from the St. Vincent de Paul Mission Statement)*

St. Vincent de Paul Place is a Community Ministry of the Diocese of Norwich, partially funded by the Annual

Bishop's Appeal and support from grants, gifts, donations, and volunteer help. Volunteers are needed Monday through Saturday to help prepare the noon meal and also to pick up bread at Big Y on Wednesday and Thursday mornings. Anyone interested please call Sr. Maryanne or Betty at (860) 889-7374. Submitted by Editor Bob Payette

Spring 2004 Our parish community

(Continued from page 2) Ladies Guild



serving on the boards; attending the Diocesan and National Conventions and keeping our local counsel informed of many broad issues. We contribute to the national "Water for Life" program which provides clean water in third world countries, and the diocesan literacy program ("books to dream"), collecting over 800 books last year.

On the spiritual side we have an annual dedicated Mass to honor Mary and pray for our deceased members. We take part in the annual district program "An Evening with Mary" listening to speakers on the life of Mary and reciting the rosary.

In answer to today's busy schedules, we have gone from monthly meetings to only four per year, accomplishing much through a telephone chain. We welcome all the women of our parish and would love to

hear what service project you have a passion for. Visit us at the parish website or call 886-5350 for information.

Our Lady of Good Counsel Guild is a wonderful way to share our God given gifts through volunteerism and to be an example to our children on Why It Matters.

Joan Hartung



**For More Information.**

The new Parish website has additional information, or links to it, on many of the ministries and committees in this newsletter. It includes Parish staff bio's, Parish bulletins going back to September of 2003, Parish Registration and volunteer needs forms and news of local and diocesan interest. There are also numerous links that include everything from meditations and prayers for Lent and Easter to Virtual Retreats and most everything in between to include OnceCatholic.org for those who have left the faith for whatever reason. You could spend hours exploring and finding answers to the questions you might have about your faith and your place in our Parish community.

Visit at:

<http://saintcatherineofsienapreston.org>

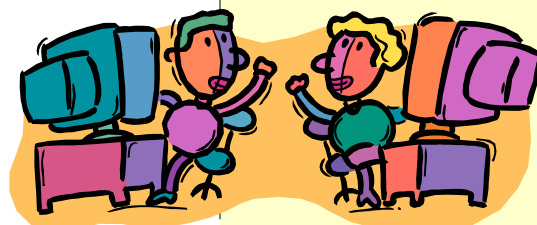
**PARISH LIFE COMMITTEE**

Our Parish Life Committee is a group of volunteers who plan social events for our Parish. We're always looking for more people for our committee and ideas for bringing the parish together. In the past we have had ham and bean suppers, spaghetti dinners and also pot-luck suppers.

At the present time we are planning a family picnic to be held on May 23rd after the 10 am Mass. We have a "starting" committee which met on March 9th, and will reconvene on March 29th as we work out the logistics for the picnic. We know the Parish will be supplying the hot dogs and hamburgers, lemonade, condiments and paper products and there will be games for

our young people. Further information on this Parish picnic will be publicized on the Parish website and in our Church Bulletin as the information becomes available. All you have to do for now is block off May 23rd on your calendar and plan on coming!

*Jean Ann Bushnell*



(continued from page 2, Knights of Columbus)

seeing their faces when they win prizes."

Ask the Easter Bunny that greets everyone as they arrive. The bunny's reply might be, "I love talking with families as they arrive and hearing the children's hopes of winning a large prize or getting lots of candy. I love the expressions on their faces as they receive a brightly colored balloon."

Ask the parents and grandpar-

ents. Their reply might be something like this, "It's quality family time" or "It's a family tradition."

Ask the youngsters, their response might be, "I love to come as a family to hunt for the colored eggs and get great prizes and lots of candy."

The Knights believe that there is a common word that would be said or felt by all. That word would most likely be "family". Whether its parents or grandparents bringing the children or

grandchildren, the parish family coming together for the fun, or the Knights of Columbus family coming together to put on the event, it's a great, warm feeling of family that brings us together.

Family is paramount in the Knights of Columbus. In fact, it's almost like one big family - husbands, wives, children, widows, widowers, college students and religious. All K of C programs allow for families to work together, involving everyone to aid their church, the community

and one another.

What does this one event, sponsored by the knights, mean to you and how would you respond to "Why it Matters?"

Raymond J. Sobanski  
Financial Secretary



### PASTOR'S NOTE

It appears quite clear that this edition of Spring 2004 parish update offers a variety of activities for our parish community. It is my hope that the parishioners will realize, by reading this edition, that the vitality of our faith community matters a great deal. As pastor of Saint Catherine of Siena, I appreciate the fact that the role of the parish as the focal point is not only the dignity of sacramental life but also of

Catholic formation and education, of charitable and social activity. It is our collective responsibility to renew parish life in the image of the Church herself as a communion benefiting from the complementary gifts and charisms of all her members. This matters to me because the vitality of the parish depends on merging the gifts of its members into a unity which manifests the communion of

each one and of all together with God through Christ and constantly renewed by the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Father George J. Richards, Jr.  
Pastor

### Newsletter Feedback

Please fill out this feedback form which will assist the Parish Council in determining a course of action on future newsletters. You can drop them in the collection basket, or mail to: *Parish Newsletter Editor, 196 Branch Hill Road, Preston, CT. 06365*

- |   | PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR ANSWER |    |
|---|---------------------------|----|
|   | Yes                       | No |
| 1. Did you enjoy reading this newsletter, and did it have any value to you?   |                           |    |
| 2. Should the Parish Council publish a newsletter in this format on a regular basis?  |                           |    |
| 3. Have you visited the Parish website at <a href="http://saintcatherineofsienapreston.org">http://saintcatherineofsienapreston.org</a> ? |                           |    |

Your comments...we really would like to hear from you!

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Your Name: (optional)

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**SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA  
ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH**

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!

[HTTP://](http://)

[SAINTCATHERINEOFSIENAPRESTON.ORG/](http://saintcatherineofsienapreston.org/)

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## Parish Mission Statement

The Parish Community of Saint Catherine of Siena seeks to continue the mission of Christ in the world by proclaiming and celebrating the good news of Jesus Christ in our midst.

- We gather together as a Eucharistic community in love and service for one another.
- We, as a community of believers are enriched through Scripture and the Sacraments enabling us to live the Word of God in our Daily lives.
- We pray, in the name of Jesus Christ, for God's guidance so that we may be effective in reaching out and serving others in our community.

In fulfilling this mission, we, the members of St. Catherine of Siena parish will grow in our spiritual relationship with God and one another.



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To: