



PARISH UPDATE

JULY 12, 2021

Notre Dame of Mt. Carmel

CEDAR KNOLLS, NJ

WWW.NDCARMEL.COM

Please note...

This document is a printout of our weekly Parish Update delivered electronically to our faith community.

Would you like to receive our weekly updates electronically?

Please send an email to commsupport@ndcarmel.com

Notre Dame of Mt. Carmel Feast Day Celebration: This Saturday!



We hope you'll be joining us **this Saturday, July 17, following the 5 PM Vigil Mass**. If you haven't done so already, be sure to **RSVP today:**

**Click here to
RSVP!**

Please visit our website at
www.ndcarmel.com to RSVP!

New here?

*We'd love to connect
with you!*

Please fill out a **Connection Card** available at the table in the Gathering Space (also on our website at www.ndcarmel.com) and someone will reach back to you within a day or two!

Family Faith Formation 2021- 2022!

For families with children entering PreK-4 thru 8th grade and not attending Catholic School, and for families with a child with Special Needs

We invite you to be a part of our Family Faith Formation program for the 2021-2022 ministry year. Please click the button to schedule your parent meeting, an important prerequisite to registration.

**Click here to
schedule
your parent
meeting!**

Please visit our website for link
to register!

Food Rescue: "We couldn't do this without you!"

In the June 28th Parish Update, we asked for a few volunteers to help with the bagging of bread, re-wrapping of sandwiches, and pick-up of bagels.



Before the week was over we had the volunteers needed to continue supporting this "leg" of our ministry.

On Friday, July 2nd we put out a call via Facebook/SignUp Genius for various items needed for the assembly of "Blessing Bags" to be distributed this week by Hope One to those in need in our local area.



By Sunday evening, July 4th, the entire list of items needed had been spoken for!

From the start of COVID shutdown through the present, countless parishioners have been faithfully and regularly dropping off food donations in the van at 16 Ridgedale Ave., or through the Food & Clothing Collection events we've held this past year.



While we may be emerging from COVID, there are still many people without jobs or means to provide for themselves and their families. The time and faithful service of those who are part of the Food Rescue Ministry and the continuing generosity of this parish community are at the heart of this ministry's mission and response to those in need.

Alpha at ND featured in The Beacon!

The Alpha experience here at Notre Dame was recently featured in the diocesan newspaper, The Beacon. The article, ***"Alpha becomes powerful tool for Evangelization at Notre Dame Parish,"*** offered insights into what the journey is all about, its history to-date at Notre Dame, and why it has become such a vital conduit for our renewal and mission of bringing others into deeper relationship with Christ and the Church.

Alpha: Powerful tool for Evangelization

FROM 3

Renovation, a ministry that accompanies parishes seeking renewal, Notre Dame Parish was introduced to the Alpha experience, which has become one of its most powerful evangelization tools. "With prayerful reliance on the Holy Spirit, Alpha has helped strengthen the parish's invitational culture, its outreach to the spiritually disconnected, and its ability to cultivate new leaders. The Alpha model has helped Notre Dame build community and proclaim the kerygma in a friendly, nonjudgmental environment that has wide appeal, including to young adults," said Cristina Polan, Notre Dame's director of communications and evangelization.

Alpha is an 11-week series of weekly sessions, each one featuring a meal, video, and small group discussion. The parish has witnessed several lives changed by the Alpha experience, some in radical ways. For example, in the fall of 2019, a former Catholic turned atheist, having avoided going to church for decades, agreed to take Alpha as a result of his wife's encouragement. He had a transformational experience that produced a profound recon-

nection to his spiritual journey and the life of the Church.

After four fruitful series at the parish, and just as the fifth Alpha series had gotten underway, the pandemic struck and the church had to be closed. The celebration of Masses and small faith-sharing groups transitioned successfully from in-person to a virtual format, but there were concerns about whether a journey like Alpha could be effective in a remote environment.

Surprisingly, the former atheist who had experienced a transformation of heart felt passionate that the virtual approach would work and offered to lead the next journey online. Joined by a co-leader and a supporting team, the first virtual Alpha series was launched in June 2020.

Over the next 12 months of the pandemic, three 11-week Alpha courses were run online. More than 110 participants took the journey, joining from at least nine different states, as well as from Mexico and Argentina. The unintended blessing of the pandemic was that through virtual Alpha, Notre Dame was indeed able to "go out and make disciples of all nations."

Father O'Donovan, who experienced



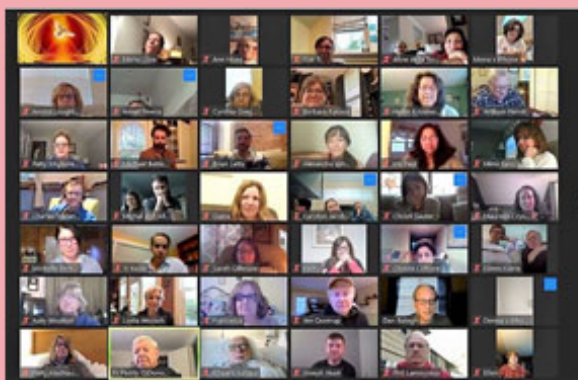
THUMBS UP FOR ALPHA At a small group meeting at Notre Dame of Mount Carmel Parish in Cedar Knolls, young adults give thumbs up to the parish's Alpha experience. Alpha is an 11-week series of weekly sessions, each one featuring a meal, video, and small group discussion, that has become a powerful tool for evangelization for the parish.

Alpha in one of the early in-person series, offered these insights about the program: "Alpha is an evangelizing tool that introduces people to a transforming relationship with Jesus Christ. I see it as a huge blessing to our parish because it also allows the development of leaders who become engaged disciples giving generously of their gifts. Alpha is not just a 'here and now moment,' but rather, does something to the heart that recalls the famous words of St. Augustine: 'My heart is restless until it rests in Thee.' Mysteriously and blessedly, Alpha makes restless hearts rest in the peace of Christ."

Notre Dame's Alpha web page is filled with personal testimonies, both written and filmed, from many who have experienced Alpha at Notre Dame. "One of the greatest fruits of recent offerings is that three participants from the Diocese, including two pastors, have decided to bring Alpha to their own parishes. Through the grace of the Holy Spirit impacting participants in Alpha, the work of the Great Commission will continue to flourish throughout the Diocese of Paterson," said Polan.

[Information: <https://ndcarmel.com/alpha>]

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New Alpha series coming this Fall!
Stay tuned for details. Click [HERE](#) to find out more about this extraordinary experience you won't want to miss!

Please visit our website at
www.ndcarmel.com/alpha

Livestreaming Schedule Update



As we welcome all able to join us for the celebration of Mass in person, our **Livestreaming** schedule will change effective **July 31st/August 1st**:

- **Saturday 5 PM Vigil**
- **12 Noon daily Mass**

What a blessing to continue this online outreach to homebound parishioners, seekers, and those on the margins.

Heartfelt thanks to all, especially our Livestreaming ministry for continuing to share their time and talent in support of this valuable ministry!

UPCOMING

Men's Group

Saturday, July 24, 2021
8 AM - 10 AM in the Resource Rm.

Join us in faith and friendship! We explore a different topic at each meeting and offer the opportunity for sharing and discussion.



Follow us on social media!

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ndcarmel> - Instagram: @ndcedarknolls

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/c/NotreDameofMtCarmel>