

## Parish Update: April 29, 2025



### NOTRE DAME OF MT. CARMEL CHURCH

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## Faith in Our Present, Hope for the Future

This past weekend at all Masses, Fr. Vidal announced our ***Faith in Our Present, Hope for the Future*** offertory initiative.



This week, parishioners will receive a brochure mailing that shares our journey of **Faith, Mission, and Hope**. The brochure also includes a financial snapshot that highlights our ongoing budget deficit. **We invite everyone in the parish** to consider their current level of regular offertory giving and to pray and discern about how each can contribute to overcome our financial challenges. Your support is vital as we sustain and grow our ministries, advance our mission, and strengthen the foundation for our future.

**Please complete the Commitment Card enclosed with the brochure mailing and bring it with you to Mass this coming weekend. You may also submit your response online [HERE](#).** If you did not receive the mailing, we have brochures and blank Commitment Cards in the church. The full content of the mailing is also available from our website's [homepage](#).

***\*Important!** If you do not receive a brochure mailing this week, you are likely not registered with our parish. Please contact Cristina Folan at [commsupport@ndcarmel.c](mailto:commsupport@ndcarmel.c) so we can personally welcome you and offer you the opportunity to make Notre Dame of Mt. Carmel your official spiritual home.*

## **Message of Gratitude**

## Thank You



○ adolfschimpf <a...

Yesterday at 10:27 PM

To: ⓘ Cristina Folan

Cristina:

Thank you for a beautiful summary of all the wonderful Easter Celebration activities in our parish during the past week. It was a great review of the faith -in-action that has transpired during this holy time.

Please convey my thanks and appreciation to everyone, starting with our amazing pastor, Father Vidal, and all the beautiful folks who continue to help our Faith stay alive and thrive. You displayed them all so well in your review of Holy Week!

Thank you,

Adolf

It took a village of disciples guided by the Holy Spirit to offer such special Lent, Holy Week, and Easter celebrations. To all who participated in any way, sharing your time, talent, and treasure, please bring Adolf's beautiful message of gratitude to your generous hearts!

**"Lost and Found"**

**By Pranav Kapoor**



*"Before I started my faith journey, I was really lost and distant from God. I went to three Churches trying to seek help and to connect with God before I found Notre Dame of Mount Carmel in Cedar Knolls.*

*I first attended **Alpha** to have a foundation in the Christian faith, and I met amazing and supportive people within the group, including **Jen Quotrup**. When I completed Alpha, I knew I was on the right path, but I wanted to understand my faith better. I decided to take the next step and enroll in the OCIA (Order of Christian Initiation for Adults).*





*The OCIA program provided a rich history of the Catholic beliefs and practices. It also provided a supportive community and spiritual growth toward God. The program directors, **Jim and Claire Matlon**, are absolutely wonderful to learn from, as they have helped me and many others to strengthen our faith.*



*Once I received my sacraments, I felt I was receiving God's grace and also deepening my relationship with him.*



*Thank you, **Laura Balogh**, for supporting me through all the good times and bad. I could not have done this without you.*

*Thank you, as well, to Jim and Claire Matlon, Jen Quotrup, and everyone at Notre Dame of Mount Carmel of Cedar Knolls for supporting me throughout my faith journey.*



*During this journey, I received three things. Deepening my relationship with God, the love of God's grace, and a supportive community. God Bless"*

*-- Pranav Kapoor*

## **The Easter Candle: Did you know?**

During his homily at the Easter Vigil, Fr. Vidal commented that in his priestly ministry, he had never experienced as he did that evening, a congregation being present outdoors for the beginning of the celebration with the fire and the lighting of the Easter Candle. This visibly brought great joy to our pastor's experience!

Many of us might not be aware of why this part of the liturgy is so important or the meaning behind everything surrounding the fire and the Easter Candle.

**Blessing of the Fire** - Outside the church, the priest blesses a new fire. This fire reminds us that **Jesus is the light that shines in the darkness.**





**Marking the Candle** - The priest traces the candle with a **cross**, the **Greek letters Alpha (A) and Omega (Ω)** (symbolizing Christ as the beginning and the end), and the **current year**. He also inserts five grains of incense into the candle in the shape of a cross, symbolizing the five wounds of Christ..



**Lighting the Candle**—The priest lights this candle from the fire, **symbolizing the light of Christ** coming back to life!



**Procession into the church --** The lit candle is carried into the dark church. As he walks, the priest says, “**The Light of Christ,**” and we all answer, “**Thanks be to God!**” Everyone lights their own small candle starting from the Paschal Candle. The dark church slowly fills with light, just like Jesus fills our hearts with hope!



## **Deacons: Beyond the Walls of Our Parish**

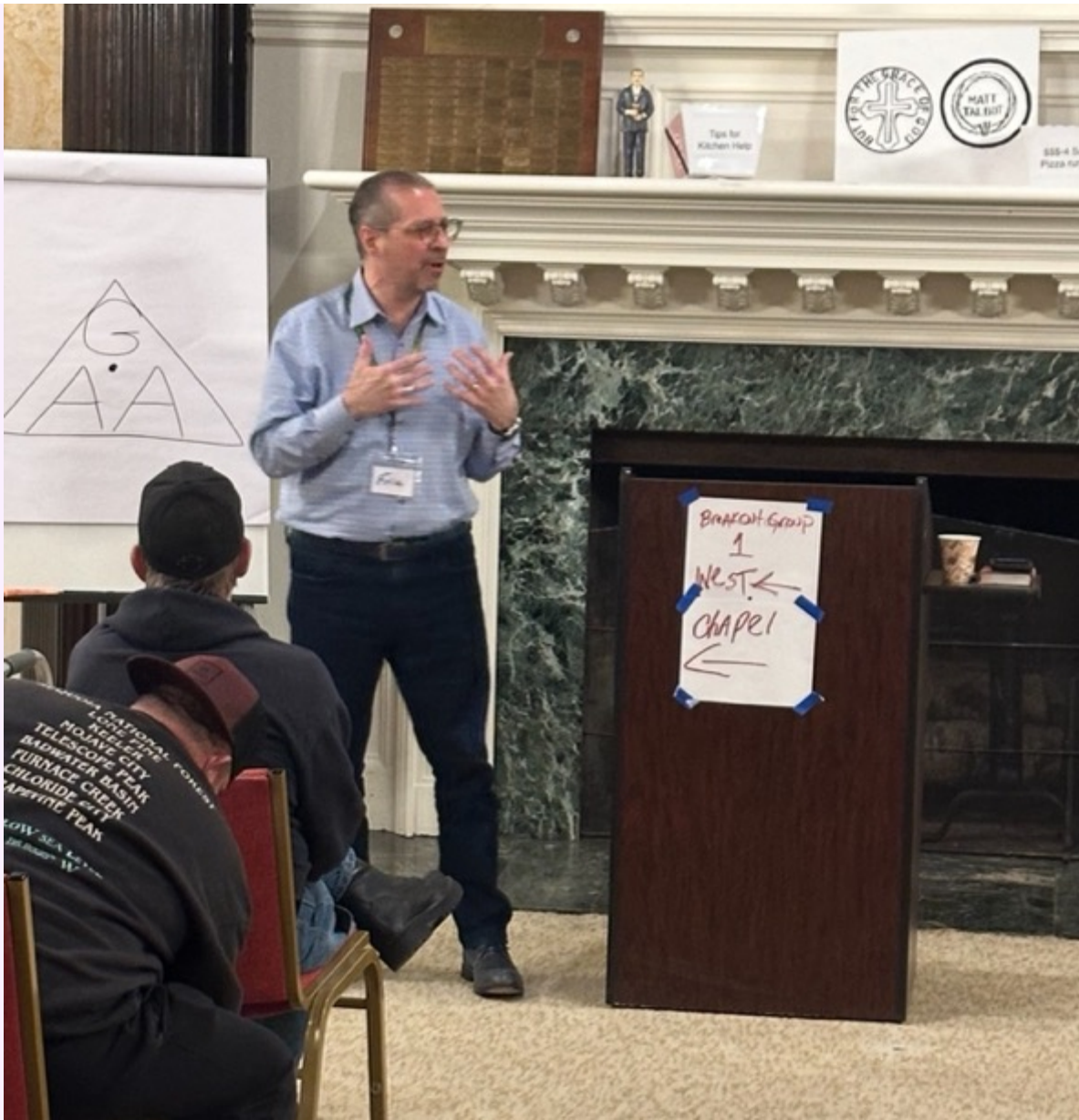
We are blessed to witness our wonderful deacons, **Deacon Joe Harris** and **Deacon Eric Kispert**, serve our parish community with great faith, devotion, and generosity. While we often see them at the altar, supporting the sacramental life of our parish, their ministry extends far beyond the liturgies and our sacred space. They each offer the Lord and His people the unique gifts God has granted them, their personal and professional experiences, and a heart open to the Lord’s call—serving wherever and however God needs them.







Just two weeks ago, **Deacon Eric** led a retreat at the Loyola Retreat Center, offering participants a meaningful opportunity to encounter God more deeply. As Deacon Eric shares, below, we catch a glimpse of the blessings that flowed from his ministry during that retreat.



***"Relationships: Self, Others, and God*** was the theme of the ***Matt Talbot Retreat*** I led over Palm Sunday weekend. Nearly 100 men in recovery from various forms of addiction gathered at Loyola Jesuit Center for the three-day experience.

*Through a blend of storytelling, the 12-Steps of AA, and my professional and personal experiences, I helped guide the men to a deeper emotional intimacy with themselves and others and a deeper spiritual intimacy with their Higher Power.*

*In addition to offering numerous conferences from the pulpit, I had the privilege of providing individual consultations to 20 men. These men entrusted me with their pain, struggle, and secrets. Some men shared experiences from their pasts that they were going to take to the grave.*





G.A.A. - 90 DAY PIN



*What I know with certainty is that when two individuals open their hearts to one another and allow room for the handiwork of the Spirit, incredible healing can occur. And while I cannot provide sacramental absolution as a deacon, I can be an agent for that emotional and spiritual healing. Through the faith and vulnerability of the men, my willingness to 'lead with my heart', and the grace of the Spirit, much healing took place on the weekend.*



*Every time I lead a retreat, I leave as a different person. My heart is more tender, my mind is more alert, and my faith is deeply enriched. As a result, I become a more loving husband, a more committed deacon, and a more devoted child of God. Know how deeply grateful I am for these experiences. I can't wait until October and my next Matt Talbot retreat with another group of men on Long Island!"*

*Deacon Eric Kispert*

## Deepen your Easter Joy: Via Lucis or The Stations of the Light

The Stations of the Light is a spiritual journey with Christ that takes one through fourteen of the most inspiring events of His post-Resurrection life on earth. In the early Church, this practice was known as the ***Via Lucis, or Way of the Resurrection***. It invites participants to walk along a path of transforming joy by following in the footsteps of the Risen Christ and his friends.



Why practice the Stations of the Light?

1. **It deepens our Easter joy:** It helps us meditate on the victory of Christ over sin and death, and the hope that brings to our lives.
2. **It continues the story:** The Resurrection isn't the end—it's the beginning. These stations walk us through Jesus' appearances to the disciples, the Ascension, and the coming of the Holy Spirit.
3. **It inspires mission:** The Via Lucis reminds us that, like the first disciples, we are called to carry the light of Christ into the world with courage and faith.
4. **It balances our spiritual life:** Just as we meditate on suffering in Lent, the Stations of Light help us focus on **joy, renewal, and the promise of new life** in the Easter season.

*"I discovered the Via Lucis devotion during Easter 2019. My beloved Uncle Bosco had passed away suddenly in March 2019, and by meditating on the beautiful*



## Pray or Learn more about the Stations of Light

[illegible]

*"It's Divine Mercy Sunday."  
"There were children doing their 1st  
Communion."  
"We went to mass with our grandparents  
at St. James, and it was very long!"  
"The first communion banners were  
up! And there was a portrait of Jesus."  
"There are a bunch of flowers."  
"It's communion day!"  
"There are new decorations and some  
first communions."  
"Fr. Paddy is here."  
"I am at St. Virgil's church."*

*"During Lent, we do special things to serve Jesus because he died for us."*

*"Passion of Christ before his crucifixion."*

*"Jesus always forgives us no matter what we think we have done or feel isn't worthy."*

*"Jesus' death was about forgiveness even of our sins."*

*"Peace and understanding are important."*

*"If you do something bad/wrong, you say you're sorry."*

*"Jesus always comes with love and forgiveness."*

*"Jesus Christ has risen."*

*"It was too early to understand."*

*"I am with my Nana and cousin at mass today."*

*There were 2 communions today. They also discussed how we help the community as a parish through missions."*

*"I'm sitting close to my friend."*

*"There was a real lamb outside the church! We had to go 30 minutes earlier to get a seat in church! The kids got a special blessing."*

*"My cousin Olive was with us!"*

*"My classmates celebrated their first communion."*

*"A lot of beautiful flowers on the altar!"*

*"Attended mass at St. Mary's Basilica in Krakow, Poland. The church was very old and beautiful in the center of town."*

*"I sang in the choir. There were lots of people."*

**This Week's Mass  
& Lamp Intentions**

**Parishioner  
Announcements**

## ***Memories that share our story...***

### ***Mom's & Tots***











*5 pm Mass*









*7:30 am Mass*





9:30 am Mass







11:30 am



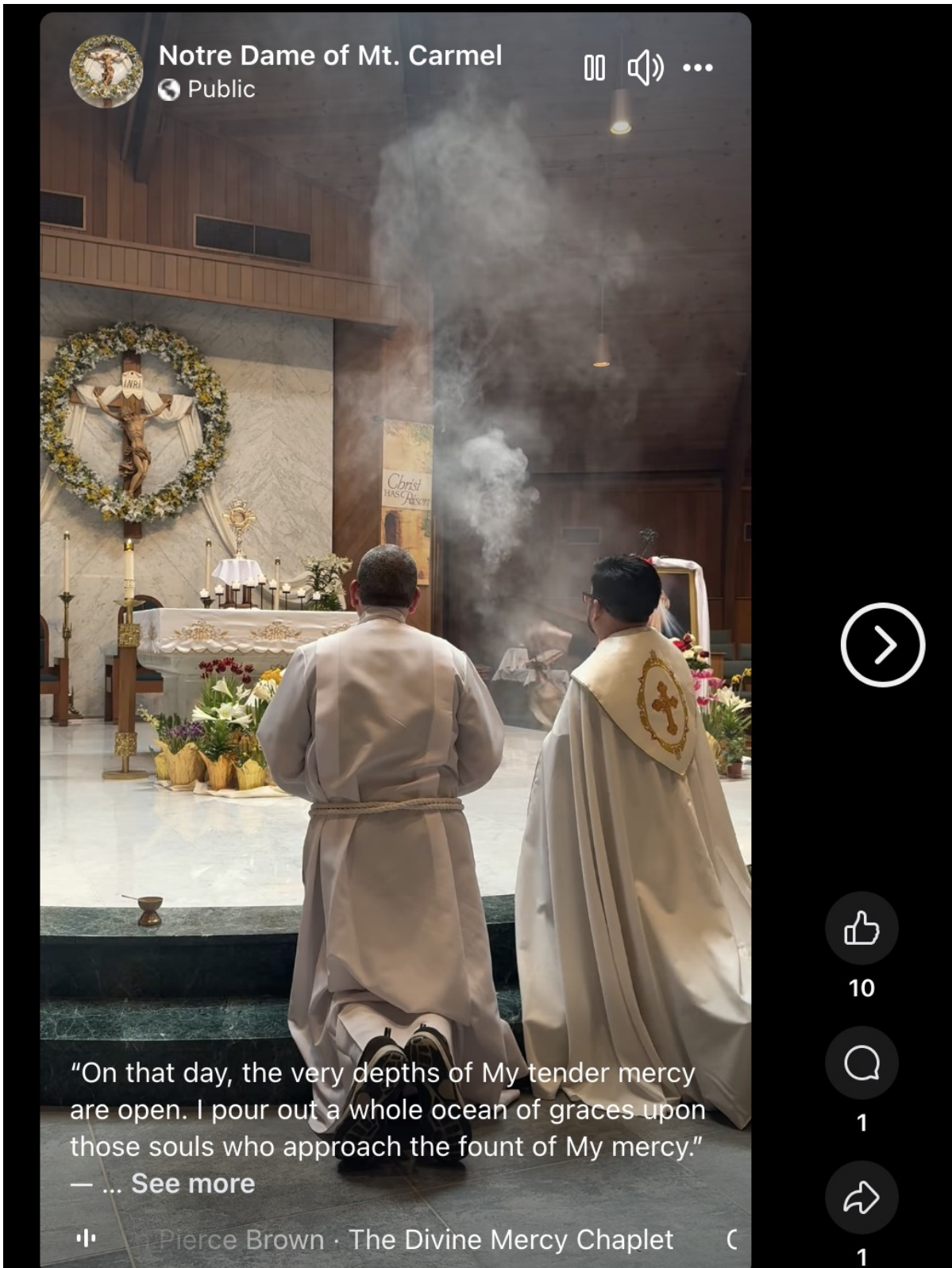








*Divine Mercy Prayer Service (click to view our reel on social media)*



**A final word of CONGRATS!**



Congratulations to **Debby Kispert**, who received her MA in Pastoral Studies with a concentration in Pastoral Counseling from Holy Apostles College & Seminary this past Saturday!



May the Lord, through Debby's hard work, commitment, and dedication, bring great fruitfulness to those she will serve with these added gifts of knowledge and experience!

