

NOTRE DAME OF MT. CARMEL CHURCH

75 Ridgedale Avenue
Cedar Knolls, NJ 07927
973-538-1358

www.ndcarmel.com

Parish Update: August 19, 2025

Guatemala Outreach: Miracles of Generosity

Blessed by gifts of time, talent and treasure of 18 hearts (including our very hard-working pastor, Fr. Vidal), the partnership we hold with the From Houses to Homes organization, and the prayers and abundant generosity of this parish community, the Guatemala Outreach Ministry completed its mission this past week of building three homes for three deserving families in need in one of the poorest areas of Guatemala. As the ministry sorts through captured memories and jots down testimonials to share in days to come, below it offers the "bottom line" fruits of its mission.



House No. 2141 was built for the Raxon Alvarado Family: Rolando (33) & Lucia (24), and their daughter Lesley (2). The home was dedicated in loving memory of servants of our Lord, Anthony and Carolyn Tortorello.



House No. 2142 was built for the Hernandez-Hernandez family: Gilberto (33) & Angelina (35) and their children Marta (14), Maria (13), Santiago (11), Edy (8), Santos (5), Mario (1), and baby #7 due in October. The home was dedicated in honor of the Notre Dame of Mt. Carmel Centennial and the generosity of the hearts who supported our mission.



House No. 2143 was built for the Raxon Puluc Family: Jose (22) & Gloria (22), and their children Selvia (6), Eduardo (3), and baby boy due in October. The home was dedicated in loving memory of Carole Romano and Dolores Arnone.

Dear Parish Family,

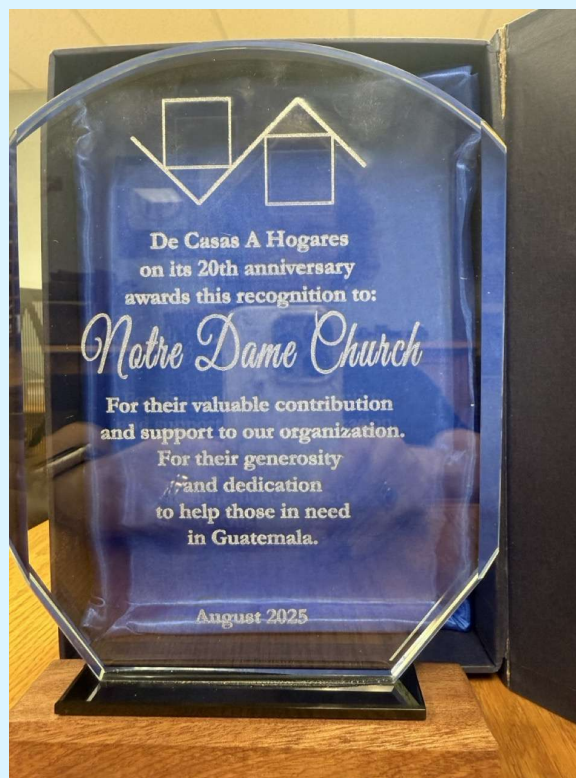
While each of us carries personal stories of how our week-long mission experience touched our hearts and deepened our spiritual journey, we want to share with you how the Lord entered into our shared experience to perform a true miracle of generosity in our midst.

Our original mission was to build three homes. Yet the Lord had far greater blessings in mind:

- *Three families received not only safe shelter but also a set of bunk beds with linens, a stove, and a water filter. Each family was also presented with "housewarming gifts" that included kitchenware, shoes, stools, a small kitchen table, and other essentials.*
- *Food bags were also given to the families and each of the From Houses to Homes workers.*
- *Our ministry was also able to offer an additional \$3,500 for earthquake relief to the village of Santa Maria de Jesús, which was at the epicenter of the recent quake. Many families there lost or suffered severe damage to their homes, and our parish's gift will help bring hope and healing to them.*
- *On Wednesday evening, one of our ministers shared with a sibling over the phone about the week's work and the living circumstances of the families. Moved and inspired, their sibling made a \$2,000 donation toward building another home (which costs \$3,000). Within minutes of sharing this story with the team the next morning, while traveling to the worksite, one of them generously offered the remaining \$1,000 needed to complete that home. And then, within only a few more minutes, four in the group came together and committed \$3,000 for yet another home.*
- *An additional \$500 gift from the relative mentioned above allowed for each family to receive a basin and food supplies.*

All these fruits of generosity were, in many ways, reminiscent of the miracle of the multiplication of loaves and fishes.

*The work of From Houses to Homes, now celebrating its 20th anniversary, has been life-changing—not only for the families who receive the homes but also for the volunteers who serve in partnership with them. Notre Dame is honored to be a part of their journey. Since 2014, **33** homes have been built on behalf of our parish. In gratitude, From Houses to Homes honored our parish family with a beautiful plaque, presented to Fr. Vidal on Friday, before our departure.*



As we celebrate our Centennial, we are reminded of a profound truth: every person who has ever become part of this ministry was, at some point, “new” to Notre Dame of Mt. Carmel. Without condition or prerequisite, each stepped into this spiritual home and, through the power of the Holy Spirit and all that one can encounter here at Notre Dame, found the inspiration, will, and means to make a difference in the lives of others. From its very first day until now, our parish has been—and continues to be—a place of miracles.

Notre Dame is a parish worth sustaining and nurturing. As long as we do our part, the Lord will continue to multiply our offerings and work miracles through us.

With deepest gratitude,

Praise & Worship Night

“Our Faithful God, Our Living Hope: Celebrating the Jubilee Year of Hope”

Contemporary Worship Director Louis Castano and the Contemporary Worship Ensemble are excited to bring to our parish community an hour of beautiful praise and worship music **this Thursday, beginning at 7 pm**, as we continue to honor and celebrate the Jubilee Year of Hope. Come and encounter Hope, Peace, and offer Thanksgiving to our Lord in our sacred space, where you can join in the beautiful sung praises or sit back and reflect on how the Lord seeks to encounter you during that particular hour.

JOIN US FOR AN HOUR OF

PRAISE & Worship



*Led by our
Contemporary Worship Ensemble*

THURSDAY, AUG. 21, 2025, 7:15 - 8:15 PM

NOTRE DAME OF MT. CARMEL CHURCH
75 Ridgedale Ave., Cedar Knolls, NJ
www.ndcarmel.com

As you consider joining us this Thursday, here are some of the graces that come with being part of this form of communal praise and worship:

Spiritual Benefits: Strengthens Faith; Deepens Intimacy with God; Renews Mind and Heart. **Emotional Benefits:** Brings Joy and Peace; Reduces Anxiety and Fear; Fosters Gratitude. **Relational Benefits:** Unites Believers; Fosters Accountability; Demonstrates Love and Devotion. **Physical Benefits:** Reduces Stress and Tension; Promotes Healing. **Come, Taste & See...**

***How knowing your charism can
radically change your life***

An excerpt from a feature by Aletea

CALLED & GIFTED WORKSHOP



"The Catechism of the Catholic Church also explains charisms by describing them as "a wonderfully rich grace for the apostolic vitality and for the holiness of the entire Body of Christ, provided they really are genuine gifts of the Holy Spirit and are used in full conformity with authentic promptings of this same Spirit, that is, in keeping with charity, the true measure of all charisms" (CCC 800).

Charisms are not always immediately evident and at times differ from a person's natural talents. Discernment is key to discovering a person's charism(s) and requires both internal and external validation. For example, a charism is often found when a person experiences interior peace when engaged in an activity related to the charism. Also, the Holy Spirit usually works through other people to validate a person's charism, encouraging them to pursue it, even when that person does not know they are actively trying to discover their charism.

*One of the most helpful tools to discern your particular charism is through the "Called and Gifted" workshop offered by the St. Catherine of Siena Institute. However a person discerns their charism, it can be one of the most life-changing events. **Confident in the gifts God has given them, a person who knows their charism is ready and equipped to be a disciple of Jesus Christ and serve their particular mission in the body of Christ. Charisms recognize the uniqueness of each individual and how we are all different and can assist in our own way in the evangelization of the world."***

Space is limited at our November workshop! Register today!

**CALLED & GIFTED
WORKSHOP AT
NOTRE DAME OF
MT. CARMEL
CHURCH**
75 Ridgedale Ave.
Cedar Knolls, NJ

**Saturday,
November 8, 2025
9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.**
in the Parish Hall

**COST: \$60
(Includes lunch)**

Discover God's call for your life

God is calling you to a unique purpose in life, a work of love that only you can do. Discern your charisms (spiritual gifts) and begin to discern God's call. You have received gifts in Baptism and Confirmation through which God intends His love to reach others. Come and discover these charisms in you!

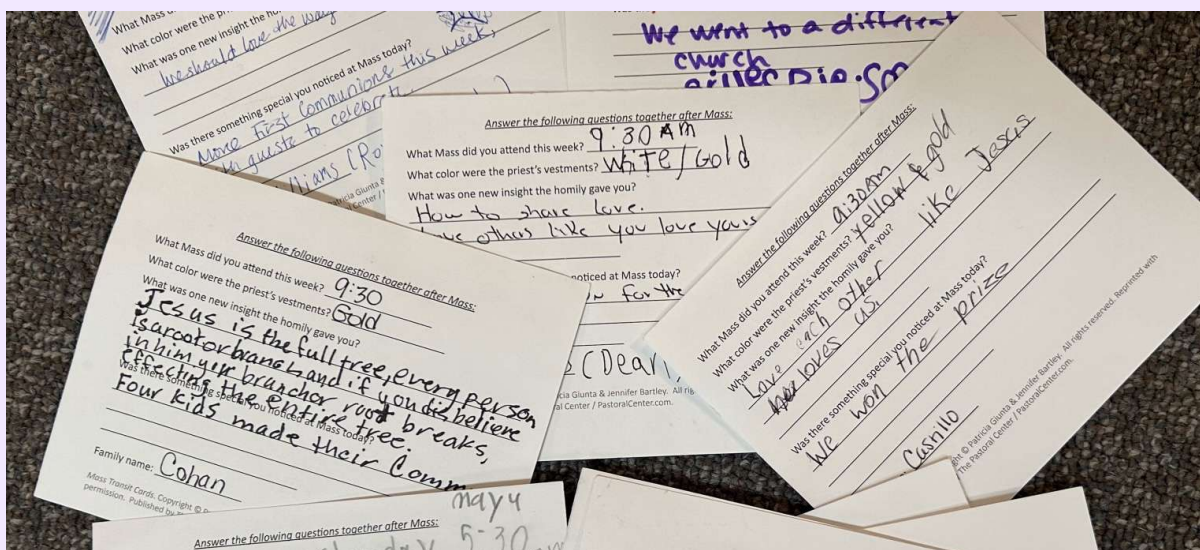
WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

The Call of the Laity
Catholic Spiritual Gifts Inventory Explained
Role of the Holy Spirit
Charisms
Discernment Process
Role of Charisms in Parish, Community and World

When you register for the workshop, you will be emailed instructions on how to go online and take the Catholic Spiritual Gifts Inventory. To get the most benefit from the workshop, please complete the online inventory before you come.

Mass Transit Conversations



What was one new insight the homily gave you?

"Stand strong, be brave, do what Jesus would do."

"Jesus has many homes."

"We have people always on our side, cheering us on and believing in us, guiding us to Jesus."

"We believe in the golden rule: treat everyone like you want to be treated."

Was there something special you noticed at Mass today?

"Mrs. Elko was not here."

"Red flowers."

"There was a little girl praying during children's time, really the family homily."

"Adults in choir."

"There was a man from Bethlehem selling art."

"No."

"All the kids singing."

"Treat everyone the way you want to be treated."
"God is always ready to help us."
"Be patient and persistent in prayer. Because God will answer our prayer in His time."
"We should be storing up treasures in heaven, not on earth."
"Keep trying, never give up."
"Trust with your heart and love everyone."
"Realign yourself with God's will and work on unity vs. division."
"Treat others the way you want to be treated."
"Stand strong and do what Jesus would do."
"We should do what Jesus would do."
"God gives us the strength to do what is right."
"Treat Jesus as a brother. Do what Jesus would want us to do!"

"That he was wearing my favorite color."
"I saw my friend from school!"
"Deacon Joe did the homily."
"Some of my family is back."
"There are a bunch of wooden statues in the gathering space."
"The nice crosses outside!"

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

**Parishioner
Announcements**

Memories that share our story...

Young Adults Ministry!



7:30 am Mass





9:30 am Mass





