

Notre Dame of Mt. Carmel Church

PARISH UPDATE

www.ndcarmel.com

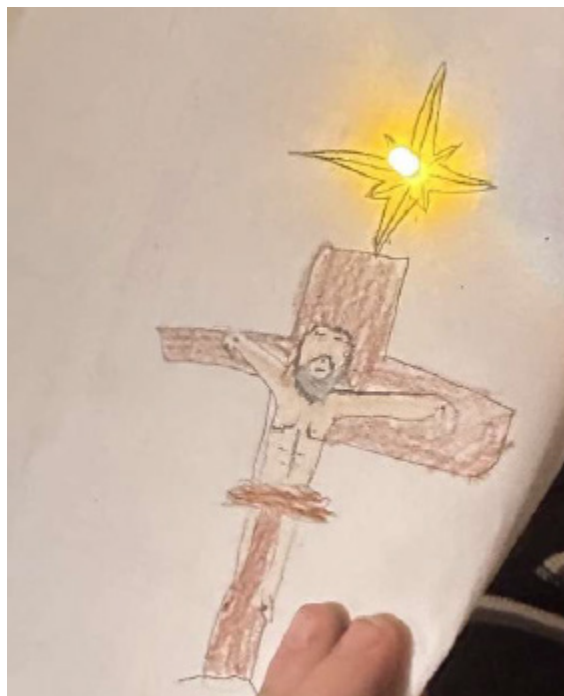


**NOTRE DAME
OF MT. CARMEL CHURCH**

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

www.ndcarmel.com

Parish Update: February 3, 2026





MASS SCHEDULE

Sunday Mass Schedule

Saturday: 5 pm Vigil (*livestreamed on YouTube*)
Sunday: 7:30 am
9:30 am (Family Mass)
11:30 am
6:00 pm (Mass with Contemporary Worship)

Daily Mass Schedule

Mon - Sat: 12:00 pm (*followed by praying
of the Rosary*)
Mon-Fri: 7:30 am LENT ONLY and through
Wednesday of Holy Week.

Upcoming Holy Days

ALL SAINTS, November 1: 12:00 pm
*Obligation lifted this year as Holy Day
falls on a Saturday*

THANKSGIVING, November 27: One Mass at 9:30 am

Confession

Saturday: 12:45 pm to 1:30 pm
(*Except Holy Saturday and when Christmas Eve or
Christmas Day falls on a Saturday*)
By Appointment with the Pastor (*call the parish office
at 973-538-1358*)

Adoration

Thursday: 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm in the Chapel
Friday: 8:00 am - 3:00 pm in the Chapel

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973-538-1358
www.ndcarmel.com
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Notre Dame of Mt. Carmel Staff



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Women's Cornerstone 26: Looking Back

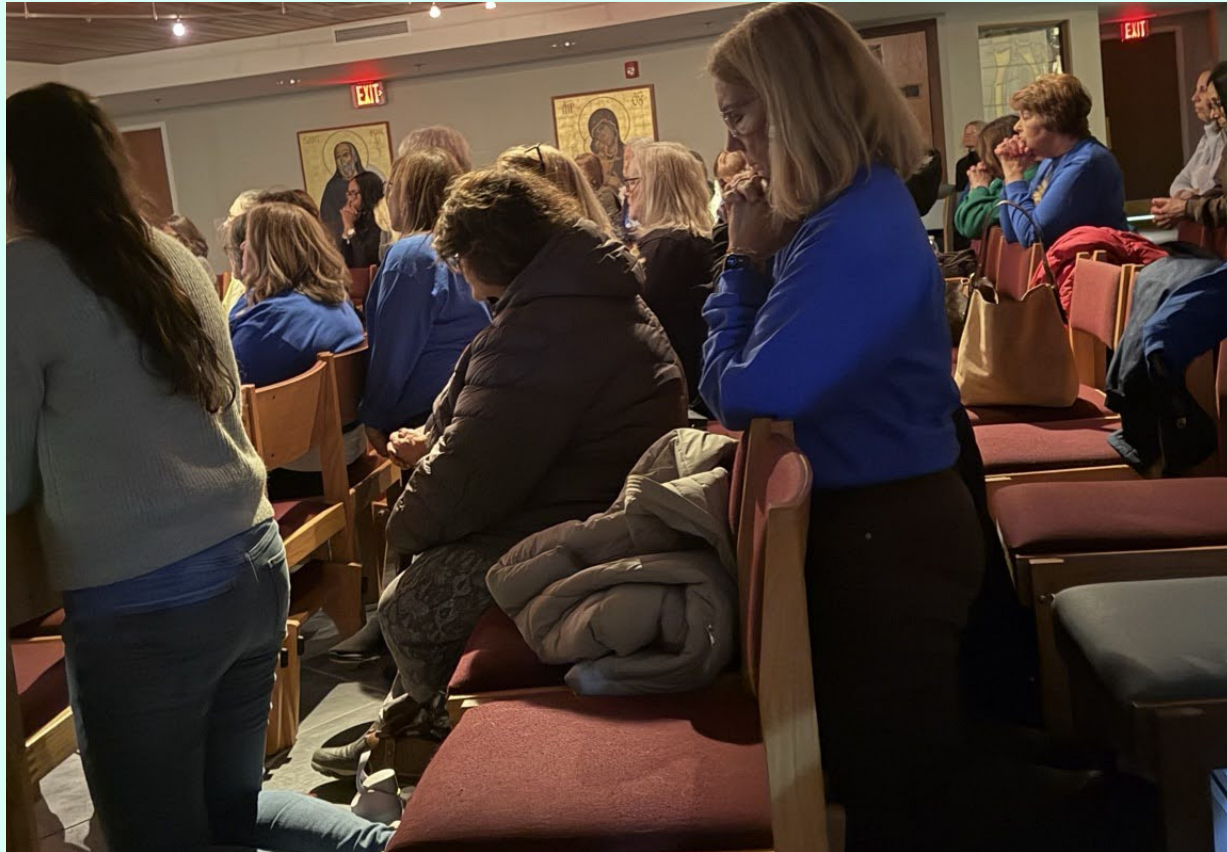


"We praise you, Lord, and we thank you, Jesus, for touching all of the beautiful hearts that came to our women's cornerstone retreat last weekend! All 32 candidates, 24 team members, the healing prayer ministry, office staff, and former cornerstone sisters - all came together to serve You, serve each other, and feel Your Presence and glorious Holy Spirit. Lord, You continue to bring us all closer to You and transform us to be more like You each and every day!"



Thank you, team members, and everyone, for all your hard work and for coming together to create such a loving environment for our new cornerstone sisters.

Candidates, thank you so much for signing up and trusting the process. We are all

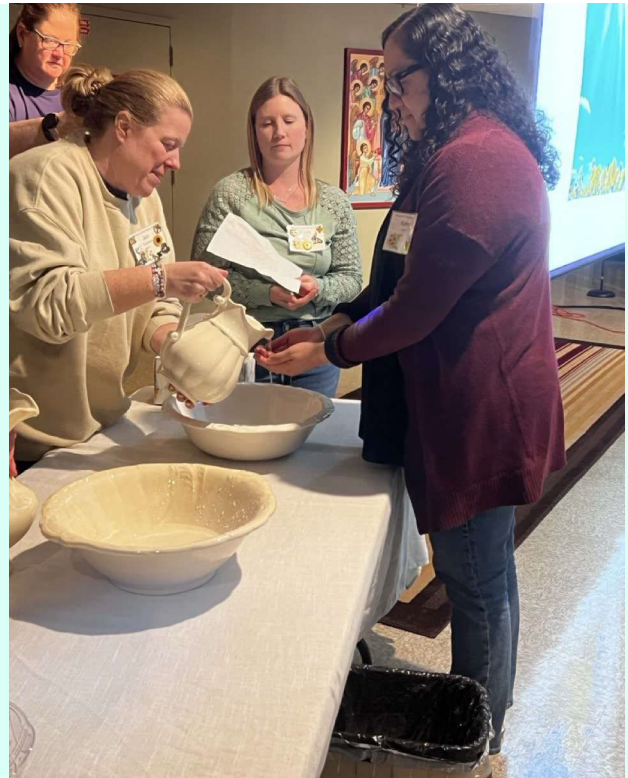


“It is time to bear fruit, to flourish, and to carry out the mission I have entrusted to you.”

"These are the words God has been whispering to me in recent days, and attending the Cornerstone retreat last weekend confirmed that the time has come to begin bearing fruit. I had the wonderful opportunity to attend a Cornerstone retreat for the first time. During those 24 hours, I was able to set aside my daily obligations and the noise of the outside world so I could focus on the gifts God had for me. From the very beginning, at registration, I could feel God's warm welcome through the wonderful women who greeted me with such joy and love. The theme of my table was "joy," and that's exactly what I needed the most.



Sometimes we lose joy when we get distracted by our daily activities, so it's important to spend time with God so He can restore what our routines take away. I had the opportunity to share with a wonderful group of women who shared a little of their stories with me and allowed me to share a little of mine with them. The stories of each of the brave women who spoke during the retreat were reminders of how much God loves me and accompanies me in every moment of my life. Their stories gave me the opportunity to see my own journey with God through theirs. It was a chance to thank God for the unconditional love He has for each of His children.



I was reminded of how powerful faith and prayer are, and to remember that even though it may seem at times like nothing changes and that dawn will never come, God is always watching over us, giving us what we need at every moment, whether it's the strength to keep going, the hope not to give up, or the sunshine after a long storm.

God had many gifts for me, and I feel blessed to have received His invitation through the person who invited me. Today I feel joyful, and I am certain that it is time to bloom where God has planted me." Karen Fajardo (Parish Bookkeeper)



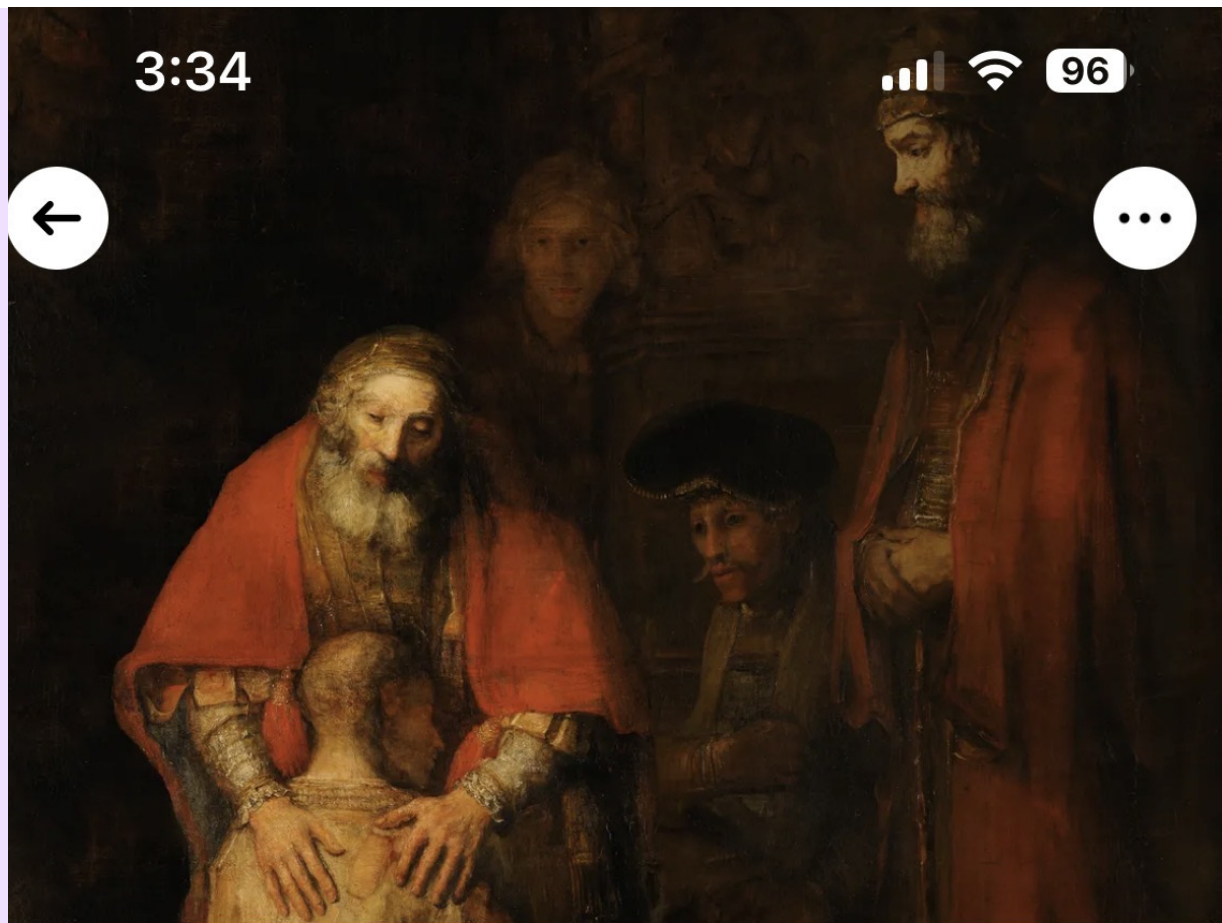
*Click below for our [Closing] 5 pm Vigil
Mass reel:*

*Click below for testimonials at Closing
Mass:*



Hallow: Getting Ready for Lent!

As a parish partnered with Hallow, our parish page is a place where we can take part in prayer challenges like Pray40, share and respond to prayer intentions, and connect more deeply with one another in faith. This Lent, let's commit to walking together — supporting one another in prayer, growing closer to Christ, and entering more fully into the grace of the season. **[Click HERE for details and to join today!](#)**



Lent Pray40: The Return

Families!! Please note that the Kids' Lent Challenge will be available on our parish page as well, and will also begin on Ash Wednesday. This will be a wonderful opportunity for families with children to journey through Lent together in an engaging and exciting way, helping kids grow in prayer alongside the rest of our parish community.

Please don't forget about our special Hallow Partnership event this Sunday, Feb. 8th, held in the Upper Room at 10:45 (following our 9:30 am Mass and just preceding the 11:30 am Mass.



WHY WE PRAY: Encounter, Transformation & Mission!

Grab a cup of coffee in the Gathering Space and join us in the Upper Room as we reflect on why we pray, what truly happens when we gather in prayer, and how prayer draws us into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and to a deeper transformation—of hearts, families, and entire parish communities.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8TH
10:45 - 11:15 AM

IN OUR UPPER ROOM

TOGETHER WE WILL:

- Reflect on the presence of Jesus in our parish community
- Hear a personal testimony of how prayer shapes daily life and vocation
- Pray together using content on Hallow
- Discover what is possible through a parish partnership rooted in prayer
- Be invited into a shared commitment through the Pray40 Challenge



This ½ hour session will be facilitated by **Deacon John Davis** on behalf of Hallow. Deacon John will also speak briefly at our Sunday Masses and will be available after Mass for assistance with the app or just to chat!

We hope you will join us!

Brought to you by our partnership with Hallow App!



Confirmation Level 1: Wonder Session

By Laura Balogh, Director, Family Faith Formation

This past Sunday, February 1, about 40 Confirmation Level 1 parents and children gathered for their third In-Church sacramental formation session. Families in the first year of their child's Confirmation preparation participate in the Pathways

Wonder program, which focuses on Jesus' parables from the Gospels. A parable is a short story that conveys a profound spiritual truth, engages listeners, and reveals the nature of the Kingdom of God.



In the *Wonder* resources, families encounter the power of storytelling through ten parables, engaging their imaginations, hands-on activities, and meaningful conversations. After completing assignments at home, the parents and children are invited to In-Church sessions together throughout the faith year. There they pray, share insights about what they have learned, the moral behind each parable, and how to apply Jesus' teaching to their daily lives. The goal is to increase understanding that the parables' messages remain as relevant today as when Jesus first preached them two Millenia ago.





This is especially important for our families, since in year 2 of their formation, our Confirmation candidates will need to perform community and spiritual service to demonstrate their commitment to the faith and to see it in action in the world. The sacrament of Confirmation, once received, will then equip the children to live out their lifelong baptismal call to be missionary disciples in Christ.



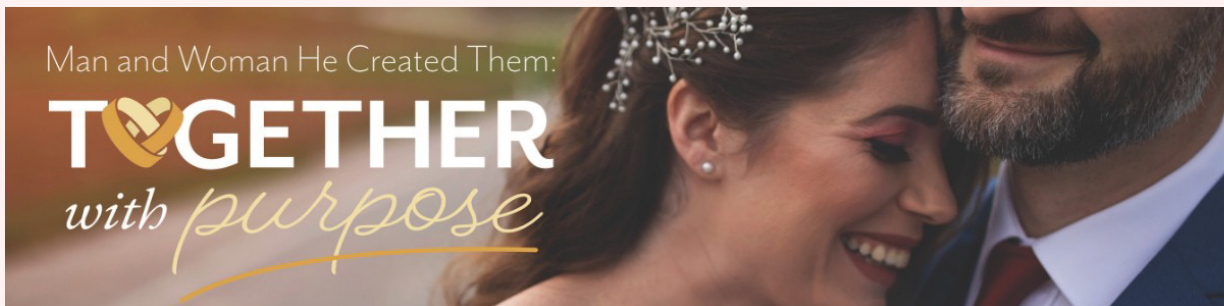
"Our family's experience in the confirmation faith formation session with our 12-year-old son was deeply moving. The focus on parables made our faith feel close to all of us and helped make Jesus' teaching more understandable to him. Having the whole family participate brought those lessons into our everyday conversations, strengthening our bonds and promoting thoughtful moments of reflection. The night ended perfectly with the 6 PM mass, where our son had the privilege of doing the first reading and hearing the beautiful choir voices, which lifted our spirits, leaving us all very grateful." --Erin & James Hettesheimer

Please continue to pray for our Confirmation families as they continue their formation this year!

Man & Woman He Created Them: National Marriage Week 2026

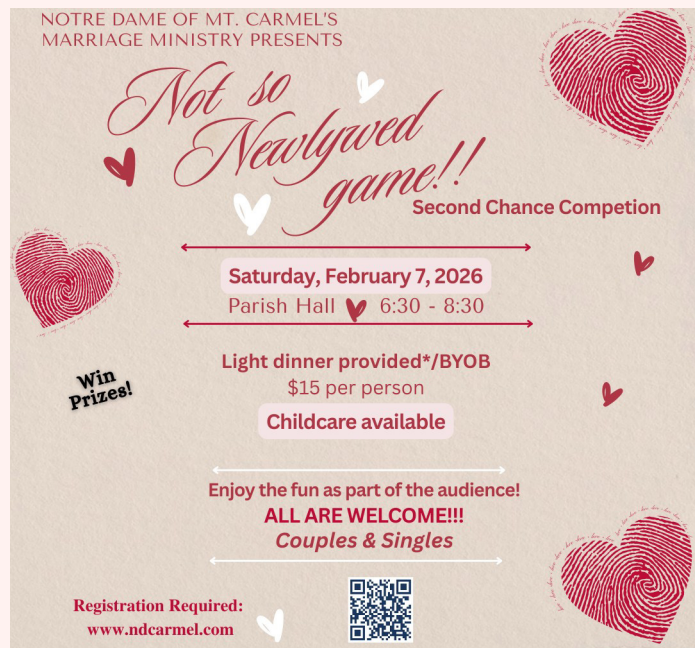
By Debby Kispert

The **Vocations Ministry** and **Marriage Ministry** here at Notre Dame are collaborating to raise awareness of this year's National Marriage Week, celebrated from February 7-14. The theme selected by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops is ***Man & Woman He Created Them: Together With Purpose***. It celebrates the complementary gifts of men and women, enabling them serve each other and their communities.



By serving one another, couples are encouraged to find deeper meaning by serving beyond their marriage and home. Both man and woman bring unique strengths to the relationship. When couples focus on personal and relational growth, they build resilience and fulfillment within the sacrament.

National Marriage Week at Notre Dame will kick off with a fun-filled evening hosted by the Marriage Ministry: the **6th Annual Not-So-Newlywed Game, this Saturday, February 7, at 6:30 pm!** This year, couples who have been contestants in previous events will have a “second chance” to win the game. All parishioners and friends (couples or singles) are warmly welcomed to be part of the audience! Be sure to click the graphic to register for this fun event!



The week-long celebration will continue with a display in the Gathering Space (just outside the Upper Room) featuring **coloring sheets for kids**, a **Marriage Prayer for Couples**, and **inspiring testimonials** (captured on paper) from five couples in the parish about their sacramental journey.

World Marriage Day will be celebrated on February 8. Let's take time, especially on this day, to pray for and lift all married couples on their sacramental journey. To close out the annual celebration, we will have a ***Special Blessing of Marriages and Renewal of Wedding Vows at the 5:00 pm Vigil Mass on Saturday, February 14, 2026.*** What a way to celebrate this year's St. Valentine's Day! Please join us!



Thinking About Warmer Days? Mission Planning will take you there!

Even as we're surrounded by frigid temperatures and snow-covered yards, it's not too early to start thinking about summer—especially when it comes to making our summers fruitful by reaching out to those in need beyond the walls of our state and our country.

We invite you to prayerfully consider these opportunities to experience mission in ways that can transform not only the lives of others but also your own!

Operation Appalachia Info Session: This Wed. Feb. 4, 7 PM



Notre Dame of Mt. Carmel, Cedar Knolls, NJ www.ndcarmel.com

Operation Appalachia July 26 - August 1, 2026

The Operation Appalachia Ministry is a dedicated group of skilled and unskilled adults and youths who spend one week of their own time each summer repairing homes in Preston County, West Virginia.

Are you looking to make a difference, grow in your faith, and serve others in a meaningful way?

Come to our information session!
Wednesday, Feb. 4th, 7 PM
in our Parish Hall.

Learn more about our faith-based service mission trip helping families in West Virginia, and discover how you can be part of an unforgettable experience of service, community, and faith!

You will hear about:

- What Operation Appalachia is and why we go
- What the service trip experience is really like
- How to get involved
- Trip details, expectations, and fundraising

Teens are especially encouraged to attend — bring a friend and come see how God may be calling you to serve.

Members of Operation Appalachia will also be available after all Masses the weekend of January 31 / February 1 in the back of the church to answer questions.

Questions? notredameopap@gmail.com

Guatemala Outreach Info Session: Thurs. Feb. 26, 7 PM



Notre Dame of Mt. Carmel

2026 GUATEMALA OUTREACH Info Session!

Since 2014, our Guatemala Outreach Ministry has built 33 homes for families in need in some of the poorest areas in Guatemala, in partnership with From Houses to Homes.

We are excited to embark on yet another mission to build homes during the 2nd week in August!

Join us for an **Information Session** and learn how in just one week, lives can be changed through this ministry... including yours!

**Thursday, Feb. 26th
7 pm.
Resource Library**

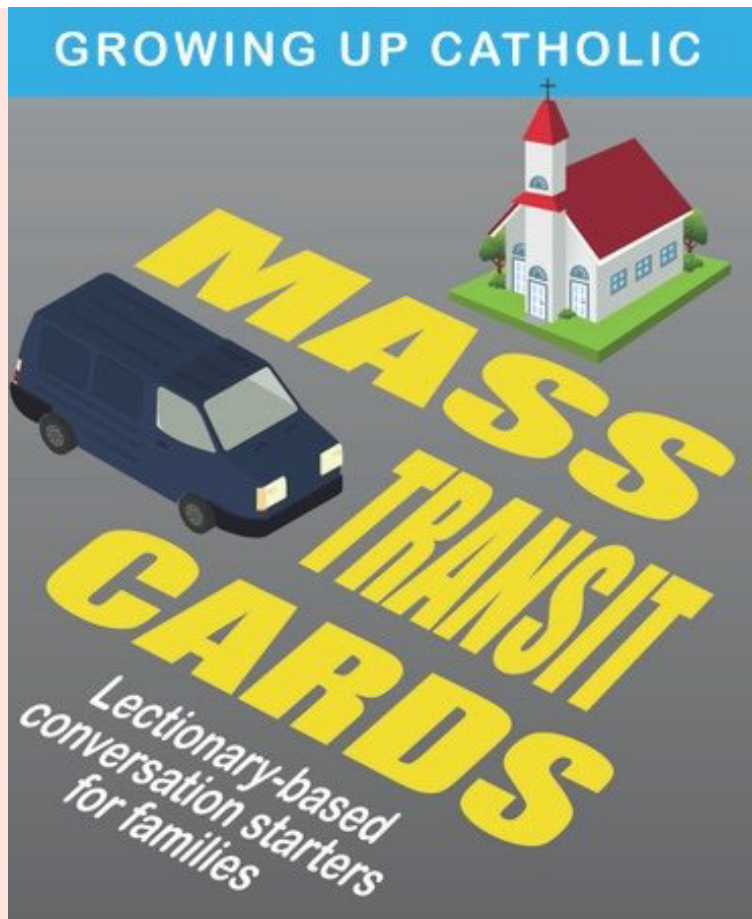
Visit our website at www.ndcarmel.com/guatemala-outreach for more details or contact Ken Folan at kenfolan@gmail.com

Knights of Columbus Happenings By Dennis Fashano, Former Grand Knight

- ❑ The Knights of Columbus collected \$2,500 at the Masses on October 21/22nd, despite the snow. Monies will be going to Birch Haven and Several Sources Shelters.
- ❑ The Knights also held their annual free-throw contest for residents of Hanover Township at OLM Gym on Saturday, January 24. Over 40 children attended. The winners in their age groups from 9–14 will have competed in the district free-throw on February 2.

- Brother Knights are seen below preparing food for the Men's Cornerstone breakfast a couple of weeks ago -- this has been the tradition for several years! Bagels, sausage, and egg casserole were on the menu.





What was one insight the homily gave you?

"It is not always easy to do the right thing. Jesus is always with us."

"God is with us when we are sad. We are never alone. We can be like Jesus and help how he does."

"Deacon Joe went to the place where Jesus gave the Beatitudes to the disciples."

"We learned the Beatitudes. We should try to do the right thing even when it's hard."

"The teachings of God remind us to be loving, kind, trusting and forgiving even when it is hard."

"Always be humble. We are brothers and sisters."

"Be a peacemaker even when it is hard."

"You should be the first to be sorry in a fight."

Was there something special you noticed at Mass today?

"Deacon Joe did the homily. Joyful noise choir."

"No."

"I got to hand in the color a smile."

"My cousins are in the choir."

"They did an excellent job with the readings!"

"My mom was involved with the Women's Cornerstone; all the women were at Mass and sat together."

"The kids choir was special."

"My mom and I gave the offertory gift."

"I handed out the books."

"It was a little less crowded."

"My Mommy brought me to church."

"Joyful noise did a great job!"

"The amount of people in mass despite the frigid weather."

"Start our day with a prayer. God is always with us, we can ask him for courage. We should have kindness and forgiveness, and we should do the right thing even when it's hard."

"The disciples followed Jesus and helped others know God's love. We can follow Jesus by being kind and helping others every day."

"To always forgive."

"We learned about the Sermon on the Mount. Deacon Joe taught us about the Beatitudes."

"I read that Dr. Seuss book."

"You will have to do hard things and endure pain now but it will be worth it when you are in heaven."

"Explaining to the kids what each part of the gospel meant to them to understand."

"We had chorus."

"We did prayers of the faithful."

"A new clock."

"It is bagel day!!!!"

"The church was crowded and there was the childrens choir."

"We came to 5pm because we have baseball in the morning."

"We went to Mass late."

"I sat with a boy and we prayed together."

This Week's Mass & Lamp Intentions

Parishioner Announcements

Memories that Share Our Story...

Family Mass





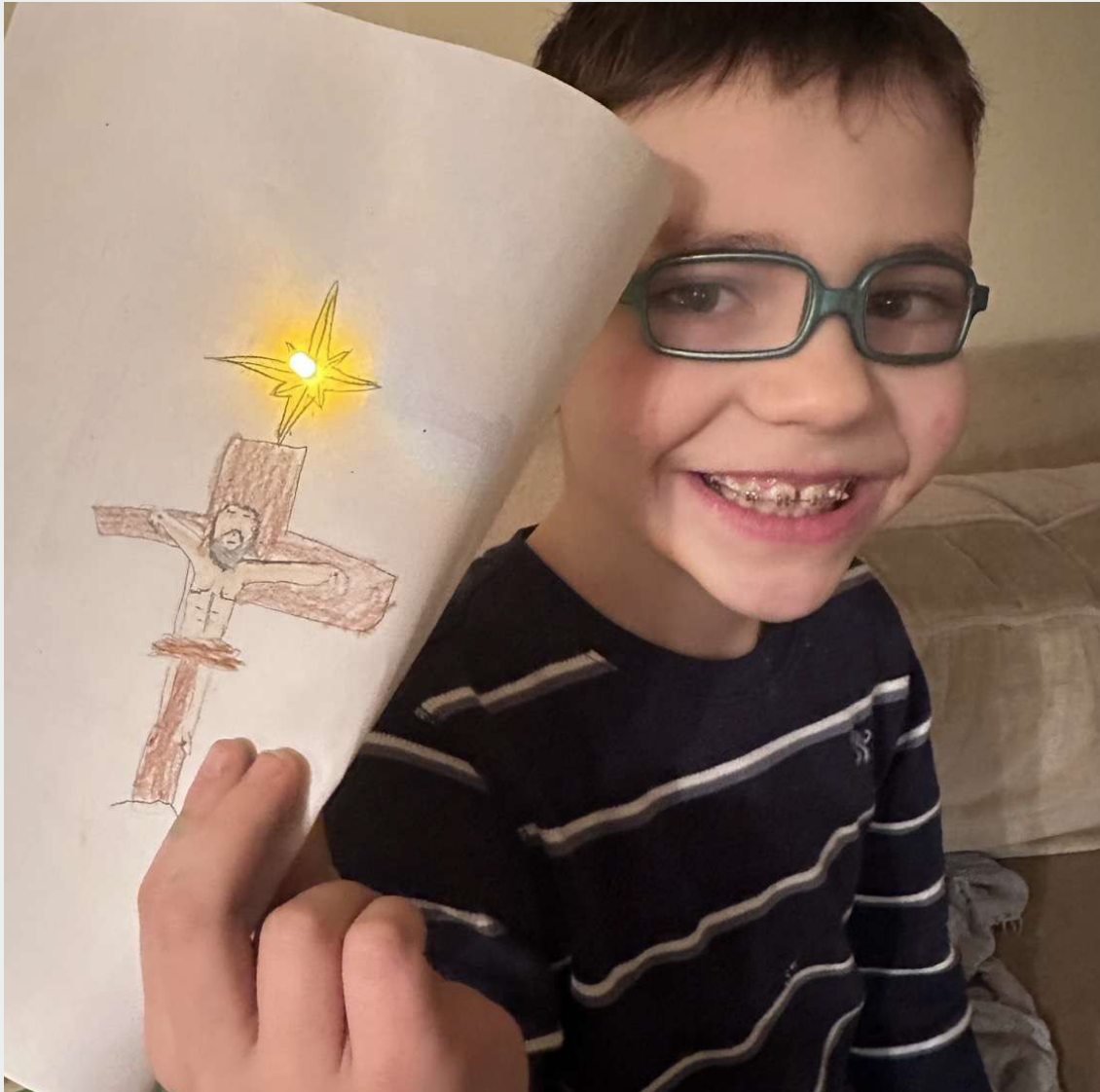
6 PM Mass with Contemporary Worship



6 PM Mass with Contemporary Worship

A Final Thought...

In young Braeden's (public) school, students were asked to use copper wire and a battery to create a "closed circuit." They were then asked to draw a picture (any picture at all) that would line up with a light bulb. When addressing his finished project of Jesus on the Cross, Braeden responded, ***"Because I am Catholic and Jesus is the Light of the World."***



***Where is Jesus asking us to shine His Light—
especially when it takes courage to share our
faith?***