

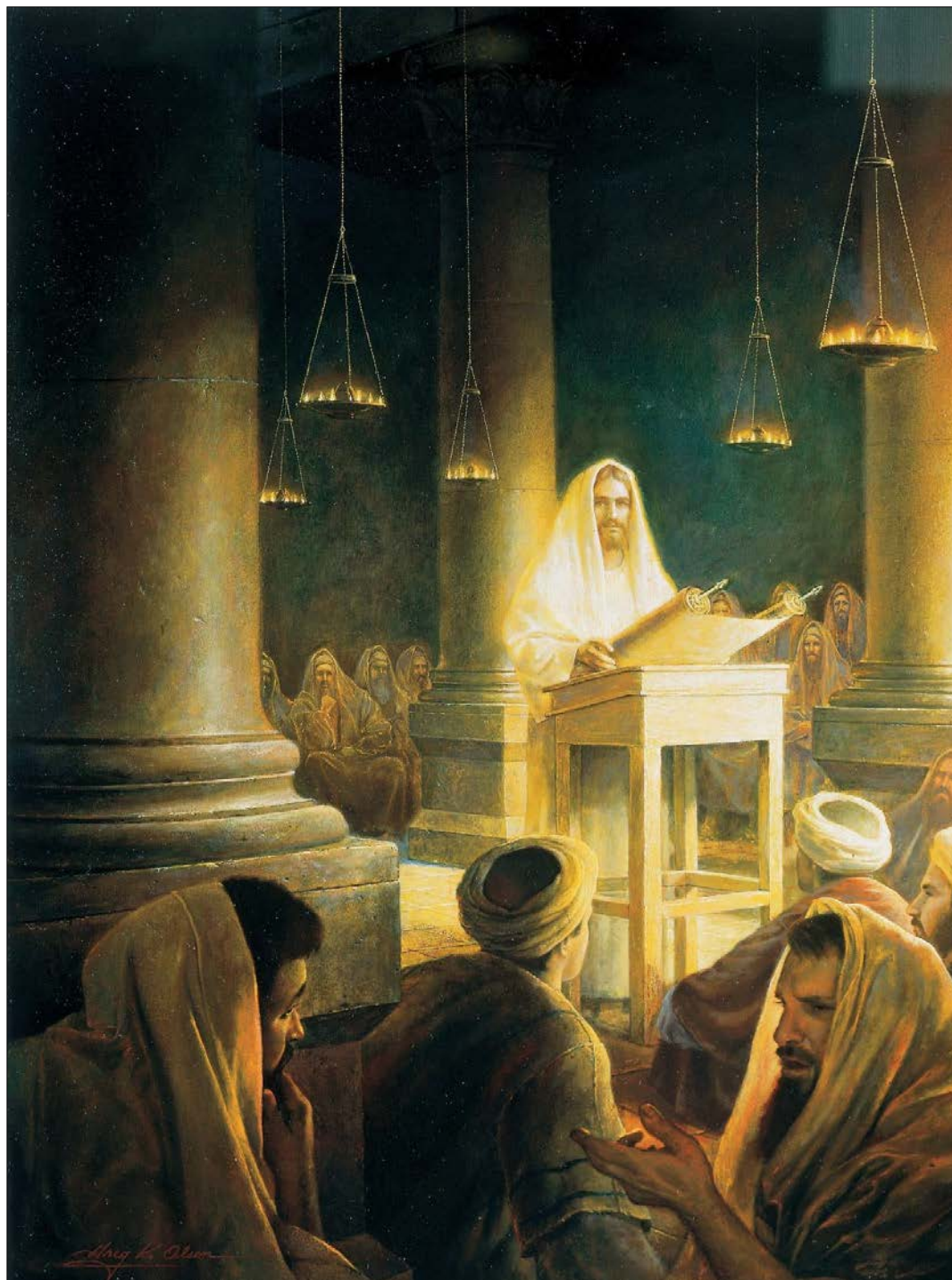


# Saint Mary Parish

St. Mary Roman Catholic Parish  
55 Catoonah Street  
Ridgefield, CT 06877  
Phone: (203) 438-6538  
Fax: (203) 438-4406  
[www.smcr.org](http://www.smcr.org)

January 23, 2022

A Warm & Welcoming Family of Catholic Faith



*He has  
anointed me to  
bring glad  
tidings to the  
poor...  
proclaim liberty  
to captives and  
recovery of  
sight to the  
blind, to  
let the  
oppressed go  
free and to  
proclaim a year  
acceptable  
to the Lord....*

Luke 4:14-21



## The Power of Prayer

The coronavirus pandemic led to thousands of deaths, overrun mortuaries, untold suffering, burnt-out hospital staff, economic hardship, and psychological distress. It also gave millions a time to renew their faith, or come back to it. But is prayer a reliable tonic? Yes. Is there scientific data to back it up? Yes.

One leading researcher, Dr. Herbert Benson of Harvard Medical School, holds that prayer and general stress management can reduce doctor visits by up to 50 percent. Most patients would agree. In a national survey, it was revealed that 35 percent of respondents used prayer for health concerns; 75 percent of these prayed for wellness, and 22 percent prayed for specific medical conditions. Perhaps most important, 69 percent of those who prayed for specific medical conditions found prayer very helpful. With data like this, it makes moot the convictions of skeptics: what matters is that “Hail Marys” work.

Many of the skeptics, of course, eschew any evidence that does not comport with their view of reality. Dr. Jeff Levin, an epidemiologist and former medical school professor, contends that the “resistance and hostility that some scientists and physicians show to this topic stem, I believe, from an unwillingness to consider explanations that undermine a strictly materialistic worldview.”

Perhaps the most controversial aspect of prayer and better well-being is whether praying for others actually has beneficial consequences. As it turns out, what is called “absent prayer,” or “intercessory prayer,” does yield positive outcomes. When people are asked to pray for a specific person, whom they do not know, but who is suffering from an illness, and the recipient of prayer has no knowledge that this is happening, most of these “double blind” studies show that patients who are prayed for improve better than those patients with the same condition but who did not have anyone pray for them.

One of the earliest and most prominent studies ever done on the health effects of intercessory prayer was conducted by Dr. Randolph C. Byrd in 1988. In a study of 393 people admitted to the coronary care unit at San Francisco General Hospital, the patients were divided into two groups.

Half the group was selected for intercessory prayer by devout Christians, and the other half received no such treatment; the patients were randomly assigned and neither the patients nor the health staff had a clue which was the experiential group and which was the control group. The former fared significantly better than the latter.

Two explanations are possible: praying for others works, or the results were due to chance. However, the odds that this was due to chance were one in 10,000. Those who did the praying were all devout Catholics and Protestants. Dr. Byrd concluded that these findings “suggest intercessory prayer to the Judeo-Christian God had a beneficial therapeutic effect in patients admitted to a CCU [coronary care unit].”

In a similar study done in 1999 of nearly 1,000 patients in the CCU at St. Luke’s Hospital in Kansas City, it was found that those who were unwittingly prayed for fared better than those who got conventional care alone. In 1998, similar conclusions were reached with AIDS patients in a study published in the *Western Journal of Medicine*: those who were prayed for did better than their non-prayed for counterparts.

Numerous scientific studies have found that prayer lowers depression and suicide rates. It even lowers blood pressure.

There was a big study published in 2006 of 1,800 patients that did not confirm what these other studies found. It was led by Dr. Benson so it cannot be dismissed. The patients were broken up into three groups: two were prayed for and the third was not. Half the patients were told they were being prayed for, and half were told they might receive prayers. This time the researchers found no difference between the various groups.

In 2007, however, a new study published by a professor from Arizona State University found the prayer had positive effects. It is an important study because it was a comprehensive analysis of 17 major studies on the effects of intercessory prayer.

The author, David R. Hodge, explained its significance. “This study enables us to look at the big picture. When the effects of prayer are averaged across all 17 studies, controlling for differences in sample size, a net positive effect for the prayer group is produced.”

In other words, most studies done on the efficacy of intercessory prayer show the power of prayer—it works.

We should expect scientists to rigorously assess the data from all studies, regardless of what the subject is. That is their job. But we should also expect them to be open-minded enough to say that some findings cannot be easily explained. With a little prayer, maybe they can figure it out. [www.catholicleague.org](http://www.catholicleague.org)



## MASS INTENTIONS

**Monday January 24th**

**St. Francis de Sales**

7:00 am Andrew Nirrengarten  
12:00 pm Jacqueline Casamento

**Tuesday January 25th**

**Conversion of St. Paul**

7:00 am Rev. Andrew Nirrengarten  
12:00 pm Priska Voerg

**Wednesday January 26th**

**Ss. Timothy & Titus**

7:00 am Anne Doty  
12:00 pm Daniel McKee

**Thursday January 27th**

**St. Angela Merici**

7:00 am Kathleen M. Trench  
12:00 pm Daniela Michilli

**Friday January 28th**

**St. Thomas Aquinas**

7:00 am Anne Doty  
12:00 pm Kathleen Howard

**Saturday January 29th**

**Mem. of Blessed Virgin Mary**

8:00 am John Hyland  
4:30 pm Elsie Craig

**Sunday January 30th**

**4th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

7:30 am Hank Vossinkle  
9:00 am St. Mary Parishioners (Living)  
10:30 am Jadwiga Kopacz  
12:00 pm Christopher Owen Campbell  
5:00 pm Ann L. O'Bryan



## Online Giving

*Please continue to support our Parish with Online Giving. Go to our website to sign up. Call the Parish office if you would like assistance.* Offertory can be mailed to St. Mary Parish, 55 Catoonah St, Ridgefield, CT 06877 or dropped off at Mass. ☺

## Prayers for the Sick



Go to [www.smcr.org](http://www.smcr.org) to make a prayer request and to see those on the prayer list.

## RESPECT LIFE COMMITTEE



## BAPTISMS

We welcome to the Family of God and our Parish Family **Luca Michael Whitworth** who was baptized in our Church last weekend.



## PRE-BAPTISM CLASS



Pre-Baptism instruction is required for parents who have not had any within five years and wish to have their child baptized. Our next class will be held on Wednesday, **March 9th** from 7:30-8:30pm on ZOOM. Please call our Parish Office to register.

*Dear Parishioners:*

*Cross Catholic Outreach wishes to thank you for the welcome you extended to Fr. Rev. Robert N. Sherry on his recent visit to your parish. On behalf of the poorest of the poor, we thank you for having shared in their lives. May our Lord continue to bless all of you for your love and support.*

**He who is kind to the poor, lends to the Lord, and the Lord will reward him for what he has done.**

**– Proverbs 19:17**

## MEALS ON WHEELS

Do you know someone homebound, ill, disabled or recovering from surgery?

Contact Meals on Wheels of Ridgefield at [mealsonwheelsofridegfield.org](http://mealsonwheelsofridegfield.org) or 203-438-8788 to learn about their delicious, low cost program to help those unable to cook for themselves.



### IMMACULATE HIGH SCHOOL ANNUAL GALA

IHS presents "Together Again on Broadway" on Saturday, March 26, from 6-11:00pm. Amber Room Colonnade, 1 Stacey Road, Danbury, CT  
For more information, please visit [www.immaculatehs.org/gala](http://www.immaculatehs.org/gala) or (203)744-1510 x158.

**NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE**  
**1-800-273-8255, [suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org)**

## FAITH FORMATION CORNER

### The Holy Spirit and the Scriptures



The Holy Spirit was at work in the whole process of the formation of the Scriptures. This is why, even though many people across different times and places contributed to the writing, we believe that the Scriptures are divinely inspired. But the Holy Spirit's work does not come to an end with the writing of the text. The Holy Spirit, who dwells in us by virtue of our baptism, is also at work in us as we listen to the text. Therefore, through the Spirit's inspiration, the words of Scripture can become a living Word of the Lord to us here and now.

[Associationofcatholicpriests.ie](http://Associationofcatholicpriests.ie)



## YOUTH & FAMILY

**9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders—get yourself over to the Hall at St Mary's Sunday nights** for a low-key youth gathering including pizza, games, prayer and discussion with Fr Brendan. Friends are welcome, Catholic or not. There's no fee, and no registration required. Learn more about why Church matters, what it is to be Catholic, and specifically in this 4 week series—**"Who is God?"**

**Next gatherings: January 30 and Feb 20...and then every week starting in March!**

**\*\*If you plan to attend, or would like to be put on the reminder list to stay in the loop about all things high school, email us at [oyf@smcr.org](mailto:oyf@smcr.org)\*\***

Check your email box or call the Youth & Family office for the latest, as details can change.



**Saint Mary School**  
RIDGEFIELD

Work Hard. Be Kind. Smile. This is the student version of the Saint Mary School mission statement, and is heard every day at the end of morning prayers and announcements. It is visible on the walls of our classrooms and in the behaviors of our students and staff. It is what makes SMS such a special community.

To register, for more information about SMS, or to set up a tour, please contact Anna O'Rourke at 203-438-7288 or visit [www.smsridgefield.org](http://www.smsridgefield.org).



### PRAY TO OUR MOTHER

Whether we are a child asking for help in school or a sick or elderly person at the hour of our death, Mary hears our prayers, and intercedes for us.

**BIRTHRIGHT:** It is the right of every pregnant woman to give birth and the right of every child to be born. We need volunteers! 1-800-550-4900. Training provided. Spanish helpul.



## ST. MARY PARISH MEN'S MINISTRY

### Are you looking to recapture the joy of our faith?

Community is so important, especially during these isolating times. Consider trying the St. Mary Men's Ministry, a group of joy-filled men who gather at 6:30AM every Saturday for breakfast and faith discussions about the everyday lives of men. Zoom is an option as well, although it's better in person! Experience a more rewarding prayer life and support of faith-filled brothers.

Why do we get up so early each Saturday? We enjoy each other's company and strongly benefit from the time together and time with God in prayer. Come and see how it can energize you for the week ahead. More info @ STMMM.ORG.



## MARQUETTE COUNCIL OF THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

We offer Catholic men and their families an opportunity to explore their faith and share God's love through service to our priests, parish and community.

Join 2 million Knights around the world as you share your time & talents. Learn more at [www.KOFC.org](http://www.KOFC.org) or contact Phil Del Giudice, Grand Knight, at [Compass\\_grp@yahoo.com](mailto:Compass_grp@yahoo.com).

## PILGRIM VIRGIN

Jesus Christ, the Son of God is born! Let us honor his Mother Mary for giving us her son, our Lord and Savior. Spending time with our Blessed Mother in prayer can help to deepen our relationship with God and bring us closer to her son Jesus. Pray the rosary daily. To arrange for a visit from the Pilgrim Virgin of Fatima contact Elma Stoveken 203-894-1341 or [jstoveken@comcast.net](mailto:jstoveken@comcast.net).



## EUCHARISTIC ADORATION

**ADORATION CHAPEL**  
**OPEN DAILY -10:00 AM- 4:00 PM**  
**Saint Mary School Building**



Do you have a friend, neighbor, co-worker, or relative who has been

struggling with the loss of a loved one, loneliness, cancer, a layoff, relocation, divorce, a spiritual crisis, recuperation, single parenthood, or any of countless other life challenges? Our Stephen Ministers can provide them with the focused care, encouragement, and support they need to make it through the crisis. If you know of someone hurting, talk to our Stephen Ministry Leader, Jack Hughes – [jack2cruise@gmail.com](mailto:jack2cruise@gmail.com); he will connect you with one of our Stephen Ministry ministers who are ready to provide focused, confidential, one-to-one Christian care. They help bring the healing power of Christ's love.

## MASS SCHEDULE

### Saturday

8:00 AM, 4:30 PM Vigil Mass  
(Church)

### Sunday

7:30 AM, 9:00 AM, Noon, 5 PM  
(Church)  
10:30 AM  
(Hall)

### WEEKDAY MASSES

7:00 AM & Noon  
Monday- Friday  
Church

### Holy Days of Obligation

Check website

\*Easter and Christmas have special schedules

### Our Mission:

**LIVE** the gift of our faith, **ENRICH** our understanding of that gift, and **PRACTICE** our faith in compassionate service.

## OTHER SACRAMENTS

### Confessions

Monday - Friday  
11:30 AM  
Wednesday  
6:00 - 7:00 PM  
Saturday  
3:00 - 4:00 PM  
(Church)

### Baptism

Celebrated each Sunday  
(except holiday weekends)

*New parents must attend a pre-baptism class. Call Parish office to schedule both*

### Marriage

Call Parish Office at least 9 months prior to wedding

### Anointing of Sick

Call Parish Office to make arrangements

*In case of serious illness or death in the family, call Parish Office immediately.*

### CEMETERY

203-438-3606

### ADORATION

Joanne Brown

203-438-6538

## Pastor: Msgr. Kevin T. Royal

[MsgrRoyal@smcr.org](mailto:MsgrRoyal@smcr.org)

Parochial Vicar: Rev. Brendan Blawie, [frblawie@smcr.org](mailto:frblawie@smcr.org)

Deacon: Rick Lawlor, [dnlawlor@diobpt.org](mailto:dnlawlor@diobpt.org), 203-470-8084

Deacon: Robert Salvestrini, [salvo95@aol.com](mailto:salvo95@aol.com)

### Parish Office Building Open

Monday - Thursday 10 AM – 2 PM

### Parish Office Hours

Monday–Friday 8AM–4PM

203-438-6538

Parish Receptionist: Kim Macko, [kmacko@smcr.org](mailto:kmacko@smcr.org)

Administrative Assistant: Joanne Brown, [jbrown@smcr.org](mailto:jbrown@smcr.org)

Accountant: Deborah Korniewicz, [dkorniewicz@smcr.org](mailto:dkorniewicz@smcr.org)

Facilities Scheduling: [Jbrown@smcr.org](mailto:Jbrown@smcr.org) & [kmacko@smcr.org](mailto:kmacko@smcr.org)

Communications Manager: Carolyn Haitsch, [chaitsch@smcr.org](mailto:chaitsch@smcr.org)

Director of Music: Darren Motise, 203-438-6539, ext. 300,

[darren@smcr.org](mailto:darren@smcr.org)

Youth & Family:

Pastoral Associate (RE) Laura Danner, [ldanner@smcr.org](mailto:ldanner@smcr.org)

Administrative Coordinator – Pamela Jensen [oyf@smcr.org](mailto:oyf@smcr.org)

St. Mary School: Anna O'Rourke, Principal,

[orourkea@smsridgefield.org](mailto:orourkea@smsridgefield.org)

Find us on FACEBOOK,  
INSTAGRAM, & TWITTER

January 23, 2022

### WATCH

#### THE BIBLE COLLECTION - PAUL THE APOSTLE

The story of Paul's life acts as an incredible witness to God's mercy and love as he went from persecuting the Church to proclaiming it to all the nations! This film brilliantly captures portrays this great missionary saint!



FORMED  
*Now!*

#### FORMED NOW! LETTERS OF ST. PAUL

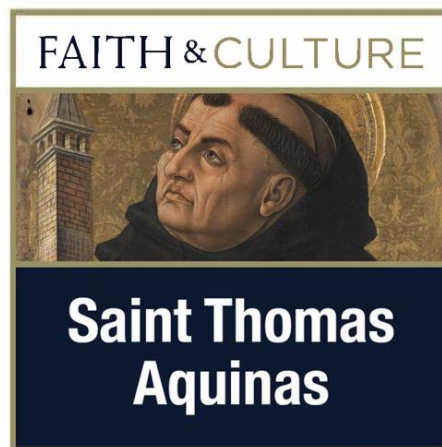
Outside of Jesus, the greatest teacher of the faith was Paul the Apostle. Join Dr. Gray and Dr. Barber as they discuss the great theologian known as the Apostle.

### LEARN

### LISTEN

#### SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS WITH RANDALL SMITH

The Angelic Doctor is often associated with his Summa Theologica among his other great works. Join Drs Christopher Blum and Randall B. Smith as they explore some of the lesser known works of St. Thomas Aquinas.



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To set up your free account visit [formed.org/signup](https://formed.org/signup) and select our parish.

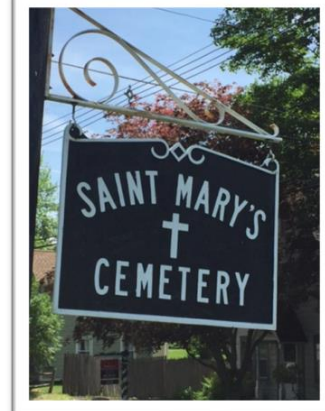
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# Preplanning Peace of Mind

*Take the first step to  
providing peace of mind  
to you and your family.*

## St. Mary Cemetery Space Pre-Purchase



**Why St. Mary Parish Cemetery?  
Our Heritage, our History, our Faith.**



St. Mary Parish, 55 Catoonah Street, Ridgefield, CT 06877 Phone: (203) 438-6538 Fax: (203) 431-2565 [www.smcpr.org](http://www.smcpr.org)  
St. Mary Cemetery, 110 North Street, Ridgefield, CT - Donna Barber, 203-438-3606

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **How do I choose the right type of grave?**

Because it is an important question, many things must be considered:

- Are you planning on burial or cremation?
- Above or below ground?
- What types of memorial do you prefer?
  - A marker set flat on the ground?
  - An upright monument?
- Are you arranging for yourself or your family?
- How much do you want to spend?

Answers to these types of questions will assist you to make the right purchase as graves vary by size, location and price.

### **What is a full burial?**

A full burial is the interment of a dead body in its permanent resting-place.

### **What is a cremation?**

Cremation refers to the act of consuming a body by fire.

### **What are cremains?**

Cremains are the cremated human remains.

### **What is a mausoleum?**

A mausoleum is a tomblike structure or building for the burial of dead bodies.

### **What is a columbarium?**

A columbarium is a structure that contains niches for the placement of cinerary urns, e.g. urns with cremains.

### **What is the size of a grave and how can it be used?**

A grave is approximately three feet three inches wide and ten feet long. It will accommodate one adult full interment and 2 cremains or a maximum of three cremation interments.

### **What is a burial plot?**

A plot is one or more grave or cremation graves as shown on the Cemetery map, which is on file at the Cemetery office.

### **What is a cremation grave – Urn Garden?**

A cremation grave in the Urn Garden is designated for the sole purpose of burial of a single or double cremation.

Visit the St. Mary Parish website [www.smcr.org](http://www.smcr.org) and look under the CEMETERY tab for more information and FAQs. Please email Donna Barber at [dbarber@smcr.org](mailto:dbarber@smcr.org) or call the cemetery office at 203-438-3606 for price quotes and more information on various arrangements.

# WE ARE MADE FOR MORE.

## A Q&A WITH CHRISTOPHER WEST AND MIKE MANGIONE

As parishes and families try to keep up with a fast-moving world where the definition and purpose of our humanity seem to constantly change, an eye-opening and breathtakingly beautiful national touring event called **Made for More: Visions of the Promised Land** is coming to **St. Mary School, 183 High Ridge Avenue, Ridgefield, CT 06877, at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, March 9, 2022.**

"Where do we come from and where are we going? If we don't have compelling answers to these questions, we have no orientation in our lives," says Christopher West, world-renowned teacher of St. John Paul II's liberating vision of human life and love called "Theology of the Body."

The event, led by West and internationally touring folk/Americana musician Mike Mangione, will dive deeply into life's deepest questions and provide both grounding and great hope.

"This is not just a lecture or a talk," insists West. "It's an evening of beauty and reflection that weaves music, video, images and the spoken word into a message of hope that there really is a banquet of love that corresponds to the deepest hunger of our hearts."

West and Mangione recently spoke to the media about some of these clues and much more, including the transformation they hope takes place in those who attend Made for More. **The evening is hosted by St. Mary Parish.**



Christopher West (left) and Mike Mangione.

### What is Made for More? Why is this your focus?

**Christopher West:** We call it Made for More because we yearn for so much more than what the world is telling us. The world understands that we are creatures of hunger and passion, but they lead us to what I call "the fast food gospel," which is the promise of immediate gratification for that hunger. Many people think Christianity, on the other hand, is an invitation to a "starvation diet." No! That's not the Gospel. Christianity is an invitation to an infinite feast of life-giving love, and that's what this event is all about.

**Mike Mangione:** It's a presentation meant to meet you where you are and bring you to a place of communion. It is the culmination of Christopher's 25 years in this work, my 15 in music and our friendship. It is a conversation through sight and sound about how God

reveals himself through creation and how our desires are meant to draw us closer to Him. It is a special and unique opportunity coming to your area.

It is my focus because it addresses the question of what it means to be human, Christian, Catholic right at a crucial moment in our history. We really need to look at these questions before we lose ourselves and slip into a stale state of indifference as a culture.

### How is it different from other Catholic presentations?

**MM:** It is broad and relevant to all types of people. "Catholic talks" tend to be more on a specific element of the Catholic tradition/faith. This talk will be focused on the human heart no matter where it has been before. This presentation uses sight, sound, video, music, and images to reveal, teach and enable us to experience something communally as a group.

**CW:** Catholicism is a sensual religion – meaning, we experience the divine in and through our bodies, through our senses. And this event is designed to engage your senses, to wake them up and enable a new way of seeing, of hearing, of experiencing the world.

### Mike, what is your role in the event? What are you trying to convey through your music?

**MM:** I am a co-creator as well as the musician for the event. My goal is to facilitate an experience that is communal between presenters, recipients and the Holy Spirit. I call it the Holy Campfire experience ... where we can all gather around and discuss the deepest mysteries of what it means to be human and be part of the human mystery. It is sometimes easier to achieve this with music because, like most art forms, it is often felt first and understood later. My aim is to create an event that brings the audience into the experience rather than just simply watching a talk.

### Christopher, what are you trying to convey through your presentation?

**CW:** We're taking people on a journey through some particular words of Christ. We start with: "They look but do not see." So we've been trained to look at the world, but not see it; to look at the human body, for instance, but not see it. All of creation has a message, and Jesus says, "Come and become one who sees." He's in the business of giving sight to the blind.

The great battle between lightness and darkness is particularly intense in the world today. The meaning of our humanity is being eclipsed. The goal of this event is really to help turn the lights on for people, so they can see the mystery of God revealed through all of creation, and especially through our own humanity, our own bodies as male and female. Through that "coming to see," our eyes are opened in stunning new ways to God's plan for creation and for our own lives.

### Mike, what is the "dance" between your music and Christopher's presentation?

**MM:** There are places music can go that the spoken word cannot. There is so much happening at once: lyrics, melody, instrumentation etc. All of these things can combine into a potent force that can pierce the heart. Sometimes the spoken word can tease out very clear ideas in a way that music never can. Combined, if done correctly, you can create a full head and heart experience. We try to create an experience where Christopher sets up a thought or a vision and then the music helps to prayerfully reflect upon it.

### Is Made for More just for adults and parents? Or can youth attend?

**MM:** Made For More is for everyone who is ready to ponder the questions "Who am I, what am I, and where am I going?" This event is for married, single, celibate, Catholic, non-Catholic, devout, skeptic, youth and ... experienced.

### Why is art and beauty essential to the event?

**CW:** Art is the language of the heart and the heart is wired for beauty, but, sadly, a lot of us are anesthetized in the modern world. "Anesthetized" actually means "numb to beauty." We want to wake people up to beauty, and through that, help people get in touch with their deepest yearnings. That's where we discover the great mystery we are all part of.

### How can Made for More transform a parish? How can it help the priest and parish leadership?

**MM:** Made for More can tenderize the hearts and dig the furrows for the Holy Spirit to drop seeds and cultivate. We provide post-event resources that help those seeds take root and potentially grow into something beautiful and life-giving. Any seeds dropped in the right conditions can provide an abundant harvest.

### What would you like attendees to come away feeling?

**MM:** Empathy, affirmation and hope.

**CW:** That they're not crazy to yearn for more than what this world offers. They're not crazy to want to be loved and affirmed as they are, behind the masks, warts and all. They're not crazy to imagine a world where every tear is wiped from the eye and every cry of the heart is answered. It's called "the promised land," and we want to give people a vision of it.

**FOR MORE**  
VISIONS OF THE PROMISED LAND

Wednesday, March 9, 2022 7 p.m.

**St. Mary School**

183 High Ridge Avenue  
Ridgefield, CT 06877

**Tickets: \$25 available at:**

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