

St. Sylvester R. C. Church

68 Ohio Avenue, Medford, NY 11763

www.stsylvesterli.org

(631) 475-4506

A community praying, growing, serving & welcoming in Jesus Christ.

Eucharist:

Saturday 5pm; Sunday 10am.

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday @ 8:30am in the Church. Rosary recitation begins at 8:15am before morning Mass. Holy Days as announced.

Baptisms:

Celebrated on pre-determined dates. *Prior to making plans*, call Parish Center for Baptism dates, for preparation class dates, and important information regarding Godparents.

Reconciliation/Confession :

For those seeking spiritual healing.

Saturday: 4:00 to 4:30 pm in the Sacristy or by appointment 631-475-4506, Ext. 101 or email dsuglia@drvc.org

Confirmation:

In the Fall for the youth of the parish. Adults and young adults can also be confirmed at Pentecost. Please call the Faith Formation Office 631-475-4506, Ext. 118.

Marriage:

Friday @ 3, 4:30, 6pm; Saturday @ 11:00am, 12:30pm, & 2:00pm. Arrangements must be made one year prior to the requested date. Please be aware that all the Sacraments of Initiation should have been celebrated prior to the requested wedding date and Pre-Cana preparation is required. No plans should be made prior to meeting with a priest or deacon.

Anointing of the Sick: & Dying:

For those needing surgery or serious medical treatment and for those in danger of death. According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church #1515, the Sacrament should be received once, unless during an illness the sick person's health worsens, or for subsequent surgeries, or after recovery they begin a new illness. They may then receive it again. Every second Friday of the month @ 8:30am Mass, or call the Rectory at 631-475-0418 any time.

FOR WHOEVER
WISHES TO SAVE HIS
LIFE WILL LOSE IT,
BUT WHOEVER LOSES
HIS LIFE FOR MY
SAKE

will find it.

Matthew 16:25

August 30, 2020 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time Pastoral Leadership Team

Rev. Dennis A. Suglia, Pastor

Deacon Joseph Mystkowski

Deacon George Riegger, Retired

Michael Lofaro, Administrator,
Faith Formation

Frances McMahon, Director,
Faith Formation & Music Ministers

Justin McMahon, Director,
Parish Social Ministry

Lori Zito, Director, Parish Ministries & Events

Office Information

Parish Office: (631) 475-4506, ext 101; Fax (631) 475-1057; email: parishoffice@stsylvesterli.org
Mon., Wed. & Fri. ~ 9am-12pm

Faith Formation Office: (631) 475-4506, ext. 118; email: faithformation@stsylvesterli.org
Please call (631)475-4506, ext. 118 to make an appointment and we will be happy to serve you!

Parish Social Ministry at Clare House: (631) 475-4506, ext. 122; Fax (631) 475-6058
Please call the number above or press the number "5" on the parish phone message for assistance.

Thrift Shop: (631) 475-4506, ext. 124

We Pray

Saturday, August 29, 2020

5:00pm Mangino, Lippis & Santonastasio Families
Jim Kummer
Edward Fink
Frank Maiewski
Luigi & Maria Russo

Sunday, August 30, 2020

7:30am The People of St. Sylvester
9:00am Ginny Handley—*11th Anniversary*
11:00am Peter A. Montemurro—*5th Anniversary*

Monday, August 31, 2020

8:30am The People of St. Sylvester

Tuesday, September 1, 2020

8:30am Ernest Maytan

Thursday, September 3, 2020

8:30am The People of St. Sylvester

Friday, September 4, 2020

8:30am Augustus Suglia

Saturday, September 5, 2020

5:00pm Anthony Lomuto
Steve Wirth
Richard DeChiaro
Eleanor O'Brien
Frank Cayea

Sunday, September 6, 2020

7:30am The People of St. Sylvester
9:00am Kathleen Santamaria
11:00am Daryl Farnsworth



**We remember and pray for those who
have died, especially:**

***Donald Plante, William Dowler II,
Augustus Suglia & Florence Harvey.***

*If you have had a close family member pass away and
would like him or her placed on this list, please send the
name of the deceased with the correct spelling, along with
your name and contact information, to: ecarec-
cia@stsylvesterli.org or call 631-475-4506,*



***The Bread and Wine
used at this weekend's liturgy
in loving memory of
Ginny Handley
are the gifts of
Grandchildren, Kaitlin & Colin***

HELP PROTECT OUR CHILDREN

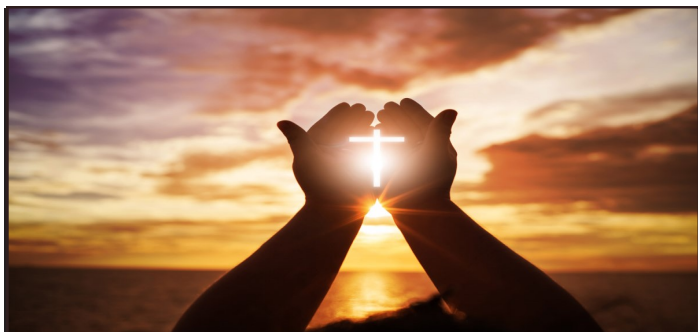
TO REPORT SEXUAL ABUSE involving diocesan personnel, priests, deacons, teachers, employees or volunteers at schools or churches in the Diocese of Rockville Centre, please call our confidential hotline number at 1-516-594-9063 and speak with Mary McMahon, LCSW, Director.

IF YOU SUSPECT a child or vulnerable adult is being—or has been abused, call the New York State Hotline phone number: 1-800-342-3720

If you suspect someone is in immediate danger, call 911.

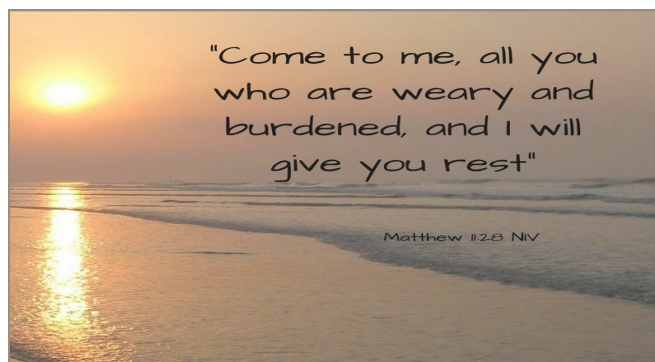
Visit our website at: www.stsylvesterli.org

We Pray



Please pray for all who are sick,
especially . . .

**Melanie Schmadtke, John McGarvey,
Grace Stephens, Nicholas Grizopoulos,
Mark LaGatta, Faith LaGatta, David
Raynor, Terri Weinstein and Christina
Chebuske, Josephine Chebat and Lisa
Gallaudet.**



With Sincere Thanks

On behalf of my family, a great debt of gratitude is extended upon the passing of my Father, Augustus, on August 19, 2020.

We thank you for your prayers, cards and warm words of condolence during this difficult time. Please be assured of my continued prayers for you.

Yours in Christ,

**Rev. Dennis A. Suglia
Pastor**



Please pray for world peace and
all public servants
including the following who are
serving on active duty:

**Captain Meghan Munisteri, D.O., Army
Captain Maurice "Joe" Grosso, Air Force
1st Lieutenant Hannah Grosso, Army
1st Lieutenant Michael Dustin, Army
1st Lieutenant Michael Hawkins, Army
Petty Officer 2nd Class Elena Greck, Navy
Lieutenant Nicoli Carlson, Navy
Captain Holly Grosso Carlson, Army
Captain Peter Duff, Army
Ensign Brett Reilly, Navy**

*If you have a family member who is
currently serving on active duty in the
military and would like his or her name added to
this prayer list, please call
631-475-4506 Ext. 101 or email
ecareccia@stsylvesterli.org Please notify
the same of any change in status.
Thank you.*

Romans 12:12

***Rejoice in hope, endure in affliction,
persevere in prayer.***



PARISH INFORMATION

As we continue to navigate through this challenging time, we are pleased to be able to say that things are beginning to open up here at the parish, although in a limited way. We are happy to communicate the following:

WEEKEND MASSES ARE CELEBRATED AT 5PM ON SATURDAYS AND 10AM ON SUNDAYS. You must register to attend these Masses weekly through our parish website beginning each Wednesday morning at 9am. The program will stop accepting reservations on Friday at 3pm (or sooner if it reaches a maximum of 80 people for that particular Mass). **** PLEASE NOTE NEW REGISTRATION DAYS AND TIMES!** Ushers will check your registrations at the door before entering the church and will seat you. The pews in the church are marked off to maintain social distancing.

BOTH WEEKEND MASSES WILL NOW BE LIVE STREAMED ON YOUTUBE AT 5PM AND 10AM —LINK AVAILABLE FROM OUR WEBSITE. If you click on the Mass and it has already begun, you will have the ability on *YouTube* to rewind the Mass to the beginning while it is in progress. Don't worry if you are unable to rewind — the Mass in its entirety will also be available immediately after its conclusion. Live streaming will allow you to attend Mass at home simultaneously with your fellow parishioners in the church, and with much clearer video and sound than we have been able to offer in the past.

THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION IS OFFERED ON SATURDAYS AT 4PM IN THE CHURCH. Unfortunately due to limited seating, you cannot remain for the 5pm Mass after Reconciliation if you have not reserved a seat ahead of time.

WEEKDAY MORNING MASSES ARE CELEBRATED ON MONDAYS, TUESDAYS, THURSDAYS AND FRIDAYS AT 8:30AM IN THE CHURCH. You do not need to register for these Masses.

THE PARISH OFFICE IS NOW OPEN ON MONDAYS, WEDNESDAYS AND FRIDAYS FROM 9AM TO 12PM TO ASSIST YOU WITH MASS CARDS, ANNOUNCED MASSES, MEMORIALS, SACRAMENT CERTIFICATES, ETC.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO WEAR A MASK AND PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING IN THE CHURCH AS WELL AS IN ALL PARISH BUILDINGS AND AREAS.

Dear Parishioners,

We have been given direction from the Diocese of Rockville Centre to reopen for the public celebration of Mass within State Guidelines. Therefore, St. Sylvester Parish will be having Mass on Saturdays at 5:00PM and Sundays at 10:00AM.

Please note the following important information:

- **At this time, the bishop still dispenses all the faithful from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass and Holy Days of Obligation.**
- **Our Sunday worship will continue to be posted on the website for those who are vulnerable, for those who have a health impairment that would make them more susceptible to serious illness, for those who might not be feeling well, or have a fever, and for those who are caretakers for other people who are vulnerable. If you are in any of these situations, you are encouraged to continue to remain at home and worship online.**
- * **One bathroom will be open for emergency use only! Please use restroom at home!**
- **There is a mandatory online reservation system for all who wish to attend Mass. Please register beginning Wednesdays at 9am by going to www.stsylvesterli.org**
- **Please print out your registration information or have available on your phone as you will be asked to show your registration before entering the church.**
- **Masks or other face coverings must be worn by all participants.**
- **Please arrive 15 minutes before Mass so your reservation may be confirmed and you may be shown to your seat. Capacity at this time is limited to 25%.**
- **Seating will be done according to social distancing guidelines. You will most likely not be sitting in your “usual” seat. Families may sit together at Mass. There is no “saving seats” or asking to be seated in a particular seat.**
- **The Offertory procession and passing of the donation basket will be omitted.**
- **If you wish to make a contribution, there will be a basket on your way out.**
- **The Sign of Peace or other greetings will not be exchanged.**
- **Directions will be given for Communion, which will be distributed after Mass as you are leaving the church. Please follow the directions of the ushers.**
- **No bulletins will be distributed. Please read the bulletin online.**
- **Please go directly to your car, as no congregating is permitted.**
- **We will continue to keep you updated on changes as we move forward.**

This is a work in progress, so as we move forward there may be changes. We appreciate your patience and want you to know that our first priority is that those attending Mass will be safe.

**Yours in Christ,
Fr. Suglia**

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE A "HEAVENLY HELPER"?

Wanted: Parishioners willing to clean God's house.

Qualifications: A desire to give the gift of your time and energy to God, a love of our beautiful church and friendly parishioners, and a belief that cleanliness is truly next to godliness.



As we begin to return to the "new normal" of more Masses, sacraments and events being held in the church, it is our goal to put together a team of volunteer ministers who would come in and quickly sanitize the designated pews and other high traffic areas of the church between celebrations to maintain a clean and safe environment for all.



All "Heavenly Helpers" will be trained and supplied with masks, gloves and cleaning supplies. (Angel wings are not included, but our prayers and thanks are!) If you are able to assist by serving in this way, please contact Lori Zito by emailing to lzito@stsylvesterli.org or calling 631-475-4506, ext.115. **Thank you !!**

Revised & Simplified Faith Formation Program 2020-2021 !

Dear Parents/Guardians and Catechists,

We have revised and simplified the St. Sylvester Faith Formation Program so that it will be **more manageable and yet still meaningful** for all involved, Catechists, students, and their families.

As school districts are moving forward with plans for the school year, it has become clear to us that parents and students may be challenged by the newness of what lies ahead. This combined with parents changing work situations has caused us to take another look at the Faith Formation Program we are offering and how we can be more accommodating to all.

If you have already registered your child, we hope this will make life a little easier. If you have not yet registered your child, the hope here is that with this more accommodating schedule, you will now reconsider registering them.

Here is the revised and simplified Faith Formation Program for 2020-2021 Year for Levels 1 through 7!

- ♦ Arrangements will be made for a curbside pickup of the materials (books, calendar, etc.) needed for each of your children so they can work from home.
- ♦ There will be 4 virtual meetings on the Zoom platform, for the year, that we ask students to try their best to attend (with the help of a parent). So, for example, if you registered your child for a Level 5 class on Mondays at 4:30 p.m., your child's class will be held four (4) times virtually on 4 specific Mondays at 4:30 p.m. according to the Level 5 Calendar. If you registered your child for Level 3, 4 or 5 Home Taught the virtual; meetings will be held on Saturdays according to the Home Taught Level 3, 4 or 5 calendars. Level 1 will be Home Taught and have four (4) virtual meetings on specific Saturdays according to the Level 1 calendar.
- ♦ The calendar will not begin until Monday, November 30, 2020 to give everyone time to adjust to the school schedules, etc. and will end in May.
- ♦ Parents with children who have special needs!
Parents, for students who are in the Individualized Faith Formation Program or whose needs would make it difficult to stay focused virtually, we will work directly and individually with you to accommodate your child's needs. Please go ahead and register your child for the next Level in the Individualized Faith Formation Program. If you have questions, please email faithformation@stsylvesterli.org
For more information or if you have questions, please email faithformation@stsylvesterli.org

Blessings,

Fran, Mike and Terese

FAITH FORMATION

Faith Formation Registration 2020-2021 Year Has begun and will continue on-line!

Parents, if you have not yet received an email with important registration information and directions on how to register your child for 2020/2021 Faith Formation year, please email us at faithformation@stsylvesterli.org

Due to COVID 19, this year, registration will take place online.

Our goal is to be sure all who attend Faith Formation are safe and stay healthy. Thank you for your patience!

Adults: We know that formation in faith is ongoing and life-long and therefore St. Sylvester's ministers of RCIA and Adult Confirmation are prepared to walk with you as you deepen your relationship with God, yourself and others. For information please email fmcmahon@stsylvesterli.org



Did you know?

***Our homes are called the School of
Christian Life and the
Domestic Church!***

“Childhood religious awakening which takes place in the family is irreplaceable. Indeed, family catechesis precedes... accompanies and enriches all forms of catechesis.” *General Directory for Catechesis, John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation, Catechesi Tradendae (October 1979): AAS 71 (1979), pp. 1277-1340*

***For more information or questions
please email
faithformation@stsylvesterli.org***

Stewardship

One Family in Mission



Called to Evangelize

Formation

Hospitality

Prayer

Service

Gifts of Treasure

August 23, 2020

Regular ~ \$6,014

Renovation ~ \$150 Solar ~ \$35

Last Year's Collection ~ August 25, 2019

Regular ~ \$7,473

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU
to all those who, in the spirit of stewardship, continue to financially support the parish during this challenging time!!!

Will & Estate Planning

Consider leaving a legacy of faith by remembering our parish in your will or bequest. Saint Sylvester RC Church is a fully compliant charitable organization registered as a 501(3)C non-profit.

Please contact Father Suglia directly if you have already made provisions for St. Sylvester or if you would like to remember us when you conduct your estate planning.

Thank You and God Bless!

How wonderful it is that
nobody need wait a single
moment before starting to
improve the world.

- Anne Frank

Thick as a Brick or Rock Steady?

One of my favorite people in scripture is the apostle, Peter. Peter loves Jesus, and tries to do the right things, but yet he keeps getting himself into trouble with the Lord. In the beginning of the month we read Matthew's Gospel about Peter walking on the water toward Jesus and then, second guessing his action, nearly drowning. Jesus reaches out his hand to Peter, but chides him saying, "*O you of little faith...*" In today's Gospel, Peter is horrified when Christ speaks about his upcoming death and resurrection, saying "God forbid, Lord!" But instead of Jesus thanking Peter for his love and friendship, He says instead, "*Get behind me, Satan! You are an obstacle to me. You are thinking not as God does, but as human beings do.*" Peter tries so hard and yet gets it all wrong. You can't help but feel sorry for him, because sometimes, like us, he just doesn't get it.

Just last week we heard Jesus tell Peter that he is the rock upon which He will build His church and now, a week later, here we find Peter is in the "doghouse" again. As a faithful steward, I identify with Peter and I am sure you do too. Sometimes, despite our best intentions and efforts, we fail miserably. We listen to our own reasoning instead of God's and come up short, or use our God-given gifts for material, rather than spiritual, gain. The thing we have to remember is that even when Peter got it all wrong, Jesus still loved him. Even when Peter went on to deny the Lord in public three times, Jesus *still* loved him. The good news is that God always forgives us and never stops loving us, even when we disappoint Him. Maybe, especially then...

As humble stewards, let us this week try to identify one part of our lives where we might come up a little short of God's expectations for us as we try to make stewardship a way of life, using our gifts generously and joyfully serving others. Maybe with St. Peter's help, we can become a little more rock than sand.

~ Lori Zito

Parish Social Ministry



Clare House - We are here to help!

We no longer have drop in hours open to the public. If you have an emergency situation that requires assistance please call our intake line. Please leave only one complete message stating your name, number, and primary need: 631-475-4506 x122

Emergency Food Distribution is held weekly on Mondays by appointment only. A full new client intake is required, including documentation of all income and expenses, to access resources at Clare House. A member of our staff will contact you to complete this intake interview over the phone. Documentation should be provided electronically whenever possible.

We regularly post resources to our Twitter feed @clarehouse99

<https://twitter.com/clarehouse99>

We are NOT soliciting physical donations at this time. If you wish to support our mission please consider making a donation through Faith Direct. Click "Make a One-Time Gift Now" and then write "Clare House - PSM" in the Note. Thank you for your support!

<https://membership.faithdirect.net/NY285>



Thrift Shop Reopens

St. Sylvester operates a community thrift shop filled with a variety of goods at extremely affordable prices - often much lower than traditional thrift shops! Hardworking staff and volunteers stock the shelves with a high level of detail. Often the items available are very high quality. Excess clothing which cannot be sold or used is donated to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and furthers their mission to serve the poor. Clare House clients can receive a voucher, based on financial need, to obtain items at no cost.

WE ARE NOT SOLICITING PHYSICAL DONATIONS AT THIS TIME. PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE ITEMS OUTSIDE THE THRIFT SHOP.

CONTACT

631-475-4506 x124

HOURS

Tuesday ~10:00AM - 3:00PM

NOTICE

ALL CUSTOMERS MUST:

- Wait outside until directed to enter
- Wear a mask
- Complete a temp check (under 100 degrees)
- Sanitize hands upon entry
- Maintain social distancing of 6' at all times



AVISO

TODOS LOS CLIENTES DEBEN:

- Espere afuera hasta que se le indique ingresar
- Usar una máscara
- Complete una verificación de temperatura (menos de 100 grados)
- Desinfecte las manos al entrar
- Mantener el distanciamiento social de 6' en todo momento





The Office of FAITH FORMATION DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE

Upcoming Workshop

Basic Virtual Religious Studies Course (2020)

Via Zoom

New Testament

August 17 – August 20, 2020
7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Church

August 24 – August 27, 2020
7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Christology

August 31 – September 3, 2020
7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Building Intercultural Competence for Ministers

Via Zoom

Evening

Oct 12, 19, 26; Nov 2, and 9
7:15 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Mornings

Oct 13, 20, 27; Nov 3, and 10
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

For more information, workshops, or to register online,
please visit drvc-faith.org/event

Retrouvaille Weekend You Can Help Heal Your Marriage

Do you feel alone? Are you frustrated or angry with each other? Do you argue or have you just stopped talking to each other? Does talking about it only make it worse?

Retrouvaille helps couples through difficult times in their marriages. This program has helped thousands of couples worldwide experiencing ALL TYPES of marital difficulties.

For confidential information about the Retrouvaille program, or to register for the upcoming weekend that begins on Friday, September 11, 2020, please call 1-800-470-2230 and you will be connected directly and confidentially to a couple from Long Island/Metro Retrouvaille who can help.

Location:

Immaculate Conception, Huntington, NY
440 West Neck Road
Huntington, NY 11743



RELIGION AND ROCK

Tune into “*Religion and Rock*,” a nationally syndicated, 60 minute, classic rock radio program with Msgr. Jim Vlaun, which airs on Sundays from 7:00am - 8:00am on **WBAB 102.3 FM or 95.3 FM** on Long Island’s East End. Listen on Saturdays at **11:00 PM** on **Sirius Radio, Channel 159**, **The Catholic Channel** and at 11:00 PM on **XM Satellite, Channel 117**.

This Sunday’s theme is
New Beginnings ~ don’t miss it!

To listen online, or receive more information regarding “*Religion and Rock*,” go to **www.ReligionandRock.com** or to “*Religion & Rock*” on **ITUNES**.

“Virtual” Worldwide Marriage Encounter

To support married couples during this time of social distancing, Worldwide Marriage Encounter is sponsoring a virtual marriage experience called ***Restore – Rekindle – Renew***. This Enrichment Experience will meet via Zoom for seven sessions on Monday evenings, September 14 to October 26, from 7-9:30 PM.

Couples will explore their individual personality styles, improve listening and communication skills, understand God’s plan for their marriage, and learn how to keep their relationship a priority. Registration is limited and a \$50 application fee is required.



For more information or to apply, call John & Toni Torio at 718-344-3700, or visit them at **<https://wwmenyli.org/>**



Dear Catholic School Educators,

Like many of you, all of us here at the National Catholic Educational Association have been following the events that have unfolded in Kenosha, Wisconsin - the shooting of Jacob Blake, the protests and tension within the community and the collective reckoning of our nation with the pernicious sin of racism. We are compelled by our call as disciples of Christ to recognize that, when an institutional sin like racism rears its ugly head in numerous ways, we must seek to be as relentless in our advocacy against it as the Father's love is relentless in the pursuit of our hearts.

Our call as disciples also compels us to strive for solidarity, which as St. John Paul II writes, is "a firm and persevering determination to...the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all." Mr. Blake's three children, who saw their father shot in front of their eyes, are equal in their inherent dignity, worth and beauty as the young people who are entrusted to our care in our schools.

Today, we celebrate the feast of St. Monica, whose journey of discipleship was characterized by fervent, lifelong love and devotion to Christ for her son. When we reflect on the litany of sons and daughters victimized by the stain of racism, we must be attuned to the desperate cries and pleas of their mothers, wives, fathers, husbands, sons and daughters crying for mercy and justice. Our vocation, crafted in the image and likeness of Christ the Teacher, calls us to address the sin of racism directly and not turn our gaze away.

We invite you to pray with us - to pray that seeking Christ through the eyes of faith means that our hearts are mended and formed to be "our brother's keeper." We challenge you to pray and use that prayer to act in solidarity in your classrooms, conversations and interactions to break the cycle of dehumanization that allows injustice to manifest. We call on you to draw upon the strength and the love so deeply rooted in your school communities to collectively seek justice, healing and reparation.

St. Monica, patron saint of mothers, pray for us.

Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of the Americas, pray for us.

Yours in Christ,

Kathy Mears
Interim President/CEO

DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE
OFFICE FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

*SOME THOUGHTS ON SENDING YOUR CHILD BACK TO SCHOOL:
BACKPACKS AND COVID-19*

This year is particularly challenging as parents prepare to send children 'back to school.' In previous years, September was heralded as a time of beginnings marked by new school supplies, new sneakers, haircuts, new clothes or uniforms; all in anticipation of that 'First Day of School.' This year will be different. Backpacks brimming with new pencils, notebooks and folders will also contain extra hand sanitizers, masks, tissues. As parents send children to school, there may be an extra 'heart tug' of anxiety and concern fueled by questions related to the pandemic-will my child be safe, protected against the virus? So much is, and has been, out of our control these last months. We have been upended by the virus, so many aspects of our lives have been disrupted. There are no easy answers, no quick fixes, so we rely on 'best practices' as defined by the professionals to keep our children and ourselves safe and healthy.

Some suggestions to make the transition to school easier for you and to empower your child in the process:

1. As the adults we set the emotional tone for our children. Children take their cues from us. If we appear overly anxious, worried, concerned these feelings may be imparted to our children. The last thing we want to do is create more anxiety for our children as they return to school. **Remember**, six months ago children were sitting next to friends in classrooms; eating lunch in the cafeteria while seated with peers; playing on playgrounds. Suddenly, abruptly, school doors were locked, hallways silent, classrooms empty, playgrounds abandoned. Shelter in place became the new norm. Some children will navigate the return to school with ease, relieved to once again be with friends, back to a routine; returning to school seemingly without a care. For others, the disruption of six months ago may be expressed as undercurrent of worry and fear surfacing in statements as: "I'm scared that.....," or 'What if....,' 'How will I know that...' Still other children, particularly those who have experienced loss due to the pandemic, may exhibit behaviors of separation anxiety: clinging to you, crying, even becoming physically ill. As caring adults, emotionally present to our children we listen, support, reassure. We provide the 'emotional holding place' for our child's fears, worries and concerns, and in so doing we allow them to walk through the school doors hopefully more carefree.

~ continued on next page

BACKPACKS AND COVID-19 ~ CONTINUED

2. Routine provides a sense of security and safety-particularly for younger children. This year establish a 'Home From School Routine.' Do you want your child to use hand sanitizer as they come in the door? Remove shoes? Change clothes? Take a shower or bath to 'wash away the day?' What about the backpack? Where will your child place it? Outside the door? Be clear about at the start of the school year and empower your child to be in control of this routine.
3. What will help your child feel confident beginning the school year? Will it be that extra face mask in the backpack? Or a picture of someone special tucked into a pocket of their backpack. Maybe it will be a note from you. Ask your child what may help them feel less worried, scared. Adults carry rosaries and say prayers - what would help your child?
4. Think about problem-solving before the problem occurs. Worry and fear are the breeding ground for monsters to become nightmares. By discussing the what-ifs and developing contingency plans your child will know what to expect. You reduce fear by replacing the unknown with age-appropriate knowledge. Be prepared to answer the question: "What if I don't feel good in school..." with calm reassurance.
5. There was a time when wearing masks was fun.-it was Halloween. Today the narrative is "Heroes wear masks!" Encourage your child to be the hero/heroine by wearing their mask. Include a 'full face selfie" of your child without a mask. This may reduce the impulse to take off the mask to show others 'what they look like."

Finally, support the professionals in our schools. Educators, nurses, guidance counselors, social workers, are all dedicated to serving your child and family in providing a positive academic experience. Remember, they will be the first line responders who are a member of your team. The staff of secretaries, cleaners and maintenance people, they too experience the same concerns and anxieties, thank them for their service and dedication. And don't forget the crossing guards and bus drivers. There are many valuable lessons amidst this pandemic-perhaps the most important....we are all in this together. And together we can all make a difference.

Blessings and good luck!

Call Us Today to Schedule Your Visit!

The
Bristol
ASSISTED LIVING

HOLTSVILLE | 5535 Expressway Drive North
(631) 828.3600 | thebristol.com



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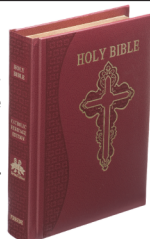
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