



THE Heartbeat



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE METUCHEN DIOCESE CHAPTER, KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

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*The officers of the
Metuchen Diocese
Chapter wish you a
Merry and Blessed
Christmas*

CHAPTER EVENTS

DATE	DAY	TIME	ACTIVITY	LOCATION
Jan. 2022				
Jan. 22, 2022		12 noon	State Council Memorial Mass in honor of PSD Vinnie Tavormina	St. Cecelia Church Monmouth Junction, NJ
Jan. 27, 2022	Thursday	8:00 PM	General Meeting Bishop will be in attendance.	South Amboy Council #426 308 4 th St. South Amboy

CHAPTER 4 CHANGES NAME

A motion was made and seconded during the General Chapter meeting on October 28, 2021 held at Middlesex Council # 857 in Woodbridge to change the name of New Jersey Chapter 4 to the **Metuchen Diocese Chapter**.

Discussion centered around the need to dispel the notion that Chapter 4 was representative of the Fourth Degree of the Order. Many brothers

told of instances where they found themselves having to explain that New Jersey Chapter represented Third Degree Councils in the Diocese of Metuchen.

Brother Charles Orelfinger (Middlesex Council #857) spoke about the inception of the name Chapter 4 which occurred several decades ago at this same Middlesex Council. At that time, it was decided to select Chapter 4 as a name representative of

the four counties of the newly created Metuchen Diocese.

The subsequent voting on the motion to change the name to the Metuchen Diocese Chapter was passed unanimously.

The Chapter's website has been revised accordingly and is available at the new URL of metuchenchapter.com. Two additional pages have been added to the revised website: an *Inspire* page dedicated to the new Inspire Family Life Center and a

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Columbus page depicting the Order's view of the life of Christopher Columbus with a link to the video of Columbus' life produced by the Supreme Council.

MEMORIAL MASS 2021

The Chapter's Annual Memorial Mass for 2021 was celebrated on Thursday, November 18, 2021 at St.

Matthias Church in Somerset. Chapter 4's **Chaplain, Fr. Bill Smith**, was the celebrant and **Msgr. Seamus Brennan** of St. Matthias was the con-celebrant.

The Mass was dedicated to the 143 brothers from the 62 councils in the Metuchen Diocese who have passed since last year's Memorial Mass. The names of the departed brothers were read by **SK Joseph Charmello** during the celebration of the Mass. The names of the departed are also displayed on the Chapter's website.

There were about 30 people present at the Mass.

CONGRATULATIONS TO FATHER WILLIAM SMITH



On November 14 our chaplain, **Father Bill Smith**, celebrated his 40th anniversary as a priest by a celebratory Mass

and reception given him by the parishioners at St. Anthony of Padua Church in Port Reading.

The following article appeared in the Catholic Spirit issue of May 20, 2021.

"I absolutely love being a priest," said Father William J. Smith. "The most rewarding part of being a priest is celebrating Mass."

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"One thing I want people to know is that God loves them without question

and that when they ask for forgiveness, he forgives them unconditionally. That is my most important responsibility after celebrating the Mass," he said.

Born in Perth Amboy to John and Theresa Smith, Father Smith was raised in Spotswood, where he attended Immaculate Conception School, then public high school, where he first considered religious life, but after graduation chose to go to work. Wanting more from life, he enrolled in Middlesex County College, Edison, and in his second year there decided to pursue the priesthood. After he earned an associate's degree in liberal arts, Father Smith entered St. Mary Seminary and University, Baltimore, where he earned a bachelor's degree in liberal arts, and a master of divinity degree.

Father Smith was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop John C. Reiss Nov. 14, 1981, at St. Mary's Cathedral, Trenton. He celebrated his first Mass at Immaculate Conception Church, Spotswood. Four days after he was ordained, the Diocese of Metuchen was established and he learned he would be serving in it. Noting that the new diocese was in his home area, he said he was pleased to be one of its first priests.

Father Smith's first assignment was as parochial vicar at then-St. Peter the Apostle Parish, now St. Peter the Apostle University and Community Parish, New Brunswick. He then served as parochial vicar at St. Ambrose Parish, Old Bridge; Mary, Mother of God Parish, Hillsborough; and St. Matthias Parish, Somerset. In 1990, Bishop Edward T. Hughes named him pastor of Our Lady of Hungary Parish, Perth Amboy. Seven years later, he was named pastor at St. Jude Parish, Blairstown.

Father Smith was installed as the ninth pastor of St. Anthony of Padua Parish in 2005. When the Diocese of

Metuchen merged St. Anthony's and Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in 2012, Father Smith became pastor of the new parish with two worship sites.

In October 2018, Father Smith realized his dream to establish a food pantry at St. Anthony of Padua. "We knew there was a need, but we didn't have any space," Father Smith said. "When space opened up on the parish property, we were able to open our doors and are currently serving 30 to 35 families a month."

The pantry also supplies cleaning items for the needy.

Although he has had many challenges over the years, Father Smith said one of the biggest challenges he is still dealing with is the coronavirus. "Never in all my years as a priest would I have thought we would have had to deal with how we worship together and the limits that are placed upon us. The real challenge is reaching out to people to let them know we are still concerned about them," he explained.

To keep parishioners connected at St. Anthony of Padua, Mass is being offered virtually six days a week, and religious education classes, all parish meetings, the monthly rosary and the weekly holy hour, which was started six years ago for the people and needs of the parish, are all livestreamed.

During his pastorate at St. Jude Parish, Father Smith founded the Knights of Columbus Council, Chapter 4 which he served as chaplain for more than 25 years. He has also served as chaplain of the Don Bosco Knights of Columbus and currently his parish is the host site for the Knights of Columbus and the Columbiettes, a women's auxiliary of wives and daughters of men involved in the Knights of Columbus.

In addition, Father Smith has served as the chaplain for the Perth Amboy Police and Fire Departments and the Port Reading Fire Department.

As for what advice he would give to anyone considering a vocation to the priesthood, he said, "Pray, get a spiritual director and participate in Mass as often as possible.

Daily Mass is so important. I couldn't function well as a priest if I didn't participate in the Mass every day. Every day I also spend time before the Blessed Sacrament in prayer. I need my time with the Lord. It is a very critical part of my life."

— Karen Corpora

Reprinted from The Catholic Spirit, May 20, 2021

INSPIRE FAMILY LIFE CENTER



On September 8, 2021 the newly-opened Inspire Family Life Center located at 51 Mount Bethel Road in Warren opened their doors officially with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.



The center was founded by **Rosanda Grau, Carol Spina** and **Bunny Brinck-Lund** to meet the urgent needs of the thousands of vulnerable women and families living in New Jersey.

The Metuchen Diocese Chapter along with Supreme and the New Jersey State Council donated an Esaote MyLab Five Ultrasound Machine to

the Inspire Family Center in honor of **PSD Vinnie Tavormina**. The ultrasound machine was blessed by **Rev. Sean Kenney**, shown below, on November 17, 2021.



Pictured above are: Carol Spina, Rosanda Grau, Frank Rees, and Bunny Brinck-Lund.



“Faith has an all-encompassing value. It touches every moment and every aspect of a believer’s life: from baptism to our departure from this world, everything is informed by faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus who gives salvation. Justification through faith underlines the priority of the grace that God offers without distinction to those who believe in his Son.”

Pope Francis

WHERE DID MARY REST ON HER WAY TO BETHLEHEM?

Did you know that you can visit the site where Mary is said to have rested

on her way to Bethlehem? Read more here.

Kathisma, also known as the Church of the Seat of Mary, is an ancient site where Mary and Joseph—according to legend—stopped to rest on their way to the City of David. The word “kathisma” is Greek for “seat.”



The Kathisma today

Located in what was the Byzantine Empire, between Jerusalem and Bethlehem, the Kathisma was originally an octagonal church. A wealthy widow named Ikelia built the church in 456 to honor this holy place, which was rediscovered in an archaeological dig in 1992.

At Kathisma, the widow Ikelia supposedly helped begin a new tradition for Candlemas. Forty days after the birth of Jesus on Christmas Day, monks at the Kathisma would lead a procession with white candles to commemorate the Purification of Mary.



Ruins of the Kathisma

You can visit Kathisma on your next pilgrimage to the Holy Land and walk alongside Mary and Joseph on their journey to Bethlehem.

WHAT DOES JESUS' BIRTHPLACE LOOK LIKE?

We often imagine Jesus’ birthplace as a wooden stable, but most scholars believe the structure was actually a stone cave or grotto. You can actually visit this holy site! Learn more here.

Did you know that you can visit the place where Jesus was born?

The Grotto of the Nativity is a cave that is commonly held to be the site of Jesus’ birth. Many early Christians and scholars, including St. Justin Martyr and Origen of Alexandria, affirm this belief.

Christians have traveled to the Grotto of the Nativity since the early days of the Church, when Christianity was still illegal in the Roman Empire. In an attempt to prevent Christians from visiting the site, Roman guards built a pagan shrine over the cave.

After Constantine’s conversion in the early fourth century, however, the shrine was replaced with a Catholic basilica, known today as the Church of the Nativity. The original basilica burned down in 529. Emperor Justinian later rebuilt the structure, which survived the invasions of the Persians in the early 600s.

To reach the Grotto of the Nativity, you must enter the Church of the Nativity and walk downstairs to the grotto. The exact spot where Jesus was born is marked by a silver, fourteen-pointed star. This star has an inscription that says *Hic de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus natus est*, which means “Here Jesus Christ was born to the Virgin Mary.”

On feast days, the cave is lit with forty-eight hanging lamps. The rock wall of the cave is decorated with silver and kissed by thousands of visitors each year.