



Branches on the Vine

MAY 10 - 16, 2025

GALLERY IN NEW HAVEN FEATURES ARTIFACTS ABOUT PONTIFICATES, INCLUDING POPE FRANCIS

Story by Karen A. Avitabile



The Papal Gallery, inside the Blessed Michael McGivney Pilgrimage Center, includes a permanent exhibit related to popes. At right is a photograph of Pope Francis.

PHOTOS BY AARON JOSEPH



This Papal Chair was used by Pope Francis during the 2016 World Youth Day in Krakow, Poland.



Coins highlighting the pontificate of Pope Francis on display.

The Blessed Michael McGivney Pilgrimage Center in New Haven is welcoming visitors to view a permanent gallery that highlights the relationship between the Knights of Columbus, Pope Francis and other pontificates.

Called the Papal Gallery, the space consists of an array of artwork, archival materials, artifacts, commemorative papal medallions, Vatican correspondence and photographs. These items recount the relationship between the Vatican, popes and the Knights of Columbus during the organization's 143-year history.

In addition, artifacts on display in the Papal Gallery feature items that were presented to the Knights of Columbus during the 12 years of Pope Francis' pontificate.

They include: an apostolic letter, a papal brief, a letter and holy cards to Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly,

and a book published to mark the first anniversary of the pope's "Urbi et Orbi" blessing to Rome and the world in an empty St. Peter's Square as the coronavirus pandemic swept the world.

A large display case houses the Papal Chair used by Pope Francis during the 2016 World Youth Day in Krakow, Poland.

"The Knights of Columbus has enjoyed a close relationship with the Holy See since almost its existence," says Peter Sonski, manager of education and outreach for the Blessed Michael McGivney Pilgrimage Center.

Portraits of all the popes, including Pope Francis who died on April 21, grace the walls inside the Papal Gallery.

Pope Francis played a significant role in advancing the cause of sainthood for Blessed Michael J. McGivney, a parish priest from New Haven who is being considered for sainthood.

In 1882, Blessed McGivney founded the Knights of Columbus to serve the needs of a largely immigrant Catholic community. He died in 1890 of pneumonia when he was 38 years old.

Blessed McGivney moved a step closer to possible sainthood after Pope Francis approved a miracle attributed to his intercession in May 2020. He was beatified on Oct. 31, 2020, at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Hartford.

Located at 1 State St., in New Haven, the Blessed Michael McGivney Pilgrimage Center welcomes visitors Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. There is free admission and parking in the lot beneath the building. For more information, call 203.865.0400 or visit

michaelmcgivneycenter.org.



Upcoming Events



05/15 - 06/12 THURSDAYS 7PM
WHAT DO CATHOLICS BELIEVE AND WHY? A SURVEY OF CATHOLIC BELIEF
 Our Lady of the Assumption Church Hall, 81 Center Rd, Woodbridge

Fr. Glen will lead another session covering the basic understandings of our Catholic faith. It is important that we know what we believe and profess every Sunday! Join us for these special one hour sessions to dive deeper into your faith. Bring your questions too!



05/15 WEDNESDAY 5:30PM - 9PM
A MESSY LIFE IS A HOLY LIFE: COUPLES' EVENING RETREAT
 Holy Family Retreat Center, 303 Tunxis Rd, West Hartford

As Christians, we are called to live a life of holiness. Pope Francis says: "We are all called to be holy by living our lives with love and by bearing witness is everything we do." However, life as a couple can sometimes seem more messy than holy! Perhaps we do not think of ourselves as holy people – we look to others as examples of holiness but not ourselves. How, as a couple, in the midst of our busy, messy lives answer this call to a life of holiness? Pope Francis continues: "This holiness to which the Lord calls you will grow through small gestures."

During our time together, we will explore the small ways in which we bear witness to one another and support each other. This is the path to holiness for couples living in the modern world.

This program will be offered both in-person and online via Zoom. Information on how to access the program on Zoom will be sent to participants in advance.

Offering: \$50 per person (includes dinner and wine & cheese from 5:30 to 6:00 p.m.)



05/30 FRIDAY 7PM
SET-BACK EVENT
 Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church Hall, 2819 Whitney Ave, Hamden

Join us for an evening of cards, community, and fun at the St. Paul VI Parish Set-Back Event! Doors open at 6:00 PM, so come early to get settled and enjoy some refreshments before the games begin at 7:00. No partner is needed—single players are welcome, and everyone has a chance to win great prizes. Admission is \$15 per person. Parking is available near the five-bay garages. Bring your friends, test your luck, and enjoy a lively night out with fellow parishioners and friends!



2025 ARCHBISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL

Scan the QR code to learn how you can make a lasting impact!



Total Goal: \$10M

68.28% as of 4/28/25
 \$6,827,634.58 pledges from
 20,485 generous donors

www.archdioceseofhartford.org/appeal

