

# Branches on the Vine

NEWS FROM THE ARCHDIOCESE OF HARTFORD

MAY 2 - 8, 2026

## Diaper Drive Brings Compassion, *One Box at a Time*

- Story by Jim Tierney

The idea did not begin in a church hall, but in a town conversation.

While living in West Hartford, Deacon Keith Griffin learned local agencies were quietly collecting diapers for families that could not afford them. When he was ordained to the Permanent Diaconate in June 2023 and assigned to Christ the King Parish in Wethersfield, the thought stayed with him. Why not here?

Christ the King Parish, comprising Church of the Incarnation, Corpus Christi and Sacred Heart, already had a strong social action committee. Parishioners were supporting a health clinic in Honduras and the work of Father Rick Frechette in Haiti. A diaper drive would be practical, immediate and local, Deacon Griffin notes.

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“Diapers are an expensive necessity,” he says. “People shouldn’t have to choose between food and diapers. An average monthly supply costs \$80 to more than \$100. Clean diapers are a basic need for every baby and toddler.”

For families relying on Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, that money must also cover rent, heat, electricity, food and transportation, Deacon Griffin adds. Diapers alone can consume up to 12% of those benefits.

The first diaper drive was held in January 2024, around Three Kings Day. Parishioners responded with open hands. More than 800 diapers were collected. That generosity has continued, twice each year — once in January and again on Mother’s Day weekend. The next Deacon’s Diaper Drive will be held May 9 and 10 at all Masses.

“The main goal for the drive is to lend a helping hand to families,” Deacon Griffin explains. “We deliver diapers to groups to distribute. We don’t know directly how many families we are accommodating. The main goal is to collect as many as possible to help as many as possible.”

Before the May 2024 collection, social action committee member Vin Cannamela contacted Corpus Christi School. Principal Ann Sarpu offered a simple incentive: a dress-down day for students who brought diapers, wipes or ointments. The children came through. Nearly 40% of the items collected each year now come from the school.

On collection day, the students form a bucket brigade, passing boxes hand to hand from the school building to adjacent Corpus Christi Church. It is a small parade of charity — sneakers squeaking, cardboard shifting, children grinning as they carry what many take for granted.

The parish does not distribute directly but delivers the diapers to those who manage the need: the Town of Wethersfield Social Services Department, Maria Reina de la Paz Parish in Hartford, Undercover New England, Hartford Deportation Defense, and Birthright. At the request of partner groups, the drive now also includes disposable undergarments for adults.

Deacon Griffin summarizes the broader community message from Matthew 25:45, when Jesus says that whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.

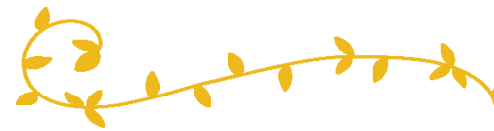
For questions or more information about the diaper drive, email Deacon Griffin at [deaconkeithCTK@gmail.com](mailto:deaconkeithCTK@gmail.com).



Deacon Keith Griffin of Christ the King Parish in Wethersfield organizes biannual diaper drives to support local and area social services. He stands with donations collected from the drive in January. PHOTO BY SHARON REYNOLDS



# Upcoming Events



MAY 8 @ 6PM  
**SEEN: A NIGHT OF HOPE & HEALING**  
The Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, Waterbury

All are welcome for a night of prayer and support for those experiencing infertility or pregnancy/child loss. We will have welcoming remarks, Mass, a reflection, Adoration with Praise and Worship, and a reception to follow with light refreshments, veneration of relics, resources, community, and opportunities to meet with Religious Sisters and Prayer Teams. Registration required. Please reach out to [hello@waterburybasilica.org](mailto:hello@waterburybasilica.org) to RSVP.



MAY 8 @ 6PM  
**WOMEN'S HOLY HOUR & DINNER**  
St. Bridget of Sweden Parish, Cheshire

Are you seeking peace and direction? Join us for an evening dedicated to women's vocational discernment. We'll begin with a Holy Hour featuring beautiful music, prayerful silence, and a reflection. Please stay for a free dinner and community fellowship. Registration required. Email [cdemiany@ascj.us](mailto:cdemiany@ascj.us) to RSVP.



MAY 9 @ 9AM - 2PM  
**DAY WITH MARY | RETREAT**  
Precious Blood Parish, St. Agnes Church, Milford

Join us for a Marian Eucharistic Day Retreat with the Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate. Day will include: Holy Mass, Confession, Conferment of the Miraculous Medal, Fatima Video, Benediction, Marian Procession, Conferment of the Brown Scapular, Recitation of the Rosary and talks by Franciscans. Inclement weather, check status [www.daywithmarywest.org](http://www.daywithmarywest.org) Retreat is FREE, bring a snack!



MAY 10 @ 10AM **Adults \$50**  
**MOTHER'S DAY BRUNCH**  
Holy Family Passionist Retreat Center, West Hartford

**Children 4-12, \$15 | Children under 4, Free**  
Come celebrate Mother's Day with a special Mass for mothers and families, and then enjoy a delicious gourmet brunch prepared by our chef. Visit [www.holyfamilyretreat.org/calendar](http://www.holyfamilyretreat.org/calendar).



MAY 13 @ 7:30PM  
**CANDLELIGHT ROSARY PROCESSION**  
Our Lady Queen of the Apostles Parish, St. Mary Church, Derby

Join us in celebrating the Feast of Our Lady of Fatima! We will gather in front of the church to start the procession. The rosary will take place indoors if it rains. Coffee and cupcakes social to follow!



MAY 13 @ 5:30PM - 9PM **\$50**  
**COUPLES' EVENING RETREAT**  
Holy Family Passionist Retreat Center, West Hartford

Please join us as we explore the beautiful concept of marriage as a spiritual friendship. How is marriage a Trinitarian-like expression of love, with Christ at the center? How can deep, intentional listening with "the ear of the heart" cultivate a marriage rooted in spiritual friendship? Offered both in-person and online via Zoom. Includes dinner with wine and cheese. Visit [www.holyfamilyretreat.org/calendar](http://www.holyfamilyretreat.org/calendar).



MAY 15 - 17 @ 6PM **\$300**  
**MEN'S RECOVERY RETREAT**  
Holy Family Passionist Retreat Center, West Hartford

We invite men in recovery into a peaceful atmosphere where you can rest, renew your spiritual life, and deepen your sobriety. Hear an inspiring lecture, catch up on some rest, and care for yourself as we care for you in mind, body, and spirit. The retreat begins on Friday with a buffet dinner from 6-7:30PM and concludes on Sunday around 11AM. Scholarships are available. Call Marty V. at **860-250-6246** for information.



MAY 21 @ 9:30AM - 3PM **\$12**  
**NEW DAY SEMINAR FOR THE BEREAVED**  
Sacred Heart on the Lake Retreat Center, Higganum

This seminar helps those who have lost a loved one with the tasks of grieving. The cost of the book is \$12.00. Reservations required. Call Sr. Patricia Cigrand **203-606-4830** or email [cigrandpatricia@gmail.com](mailto:cigrandpatricia@gmail.com). A free will offering will be welcomed.

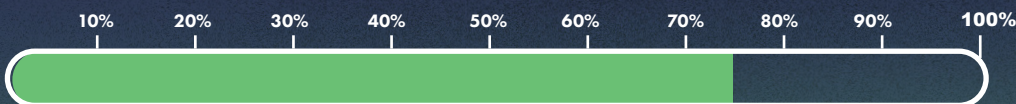


JUNE 12 - 13 @ 8PM  
**ALL NIGHT VIGIL**  
St. Joseph Church, Winsted

Vigil begins at 8PM with opportunity for Confession until 8:45PM. Mass in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus at 9PM. Each hour throughout the night will have some structured prayer time as well as time for quiet reflection. Vigil concludes with 8AM Mass in honor of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Coffee and water will be available throughout the night. Homemade Bread will be shared after the 8AM Mass in honor of St. Anthony's Feast Day, June 13.

## 2026 ARCHBISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL

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



Total Goal: \$10M 74.14% as of 4/20/26

\$7,414,029.49 in pledges from 20,522 generous donors



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**ONE**

[www.archdioceseofhartford.org/appeal](http://www.archdioceseofhartford.org/appeal)