

# Cathedral Chronicle

Winter 2017-18

Wishing you a blessed holiday season!

## The Cathedral Parish Welcomes Father LeFort

*Father David LeFort, the new Administrator of the Cathedral and Vicar General of the Diocese*

by Dale King

Last July the Cathedral Parish had the pleasure of welcoming Father David LeFort as the new Administrator of the Cathedral and Vicar General of the Diocese. Both appointments were made by Bishop Scharfenberger and were effective July 1st. Father LeFort will wear many hats as he serves the parish and diocese. He is also an adjunct professor at Siena College and he serves on the Presbyteral Council as "Advisor to the Bishop." He succeeds Father Michael Farano as Administrator of the Cathedral.

Father LeFort comes to the Cathedral parish with many years of experience as a pastor. For the ten years prior to coming to the Cathedral, Father served as Pastor at St. Mary's Church in Clinton Heights. He cites these years as wonderful years where he enjoyed the warmth and friendliness of his parishioners. In 2002, prior to becoming pastor at St. Mary's Church, Father became the pastor at both St. Ann's in Fort Ann and Our Lady of Hope in Whitehall. Each parish had two worship sites for a total of four worship sites with a Sunday Mass for him to celebrate. During the five years that he served these two parishes Father traveled a total of eighty-two miles round trip each Sunday. His very first assignment came in 1999 when he had just finished seminary and Bishop Hubbard assigned him to Our Lady of the Assumption Church in Latham where he served three years as the associate pastor.

Father is both professionally and personally home grown to the Diocese of Albany. He was raised, along with his two sisters and brother, on a farm in Ballston Lake. This is where he learned to ride a tractor and the virtue of rising early in the morning. In his teenage years Father worked at his family's home parish of the Immaculate Conception Church in Glenville doing yard work and plowing snow. After graduating from Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake High School he gained a degree in Criminal Justice at SUNY Canton.



Father next worked for Kodak in the Philadelphia area for a year and a half. It was during this time period that Father prayed long and hard to discern his calling to the priesthood. When he realized that he did have a calling he came home to the Albany Diocese and discussed it with Bishop Hubbard. After that he began his preparation for the priesthood. The first step was to gain a degree in philosophy from Nazareth College in Rochester.

In 1993, not long after graduating from Nazareth College, Father left for Rome to study at the North American College in Rome. He studied in Rome for six years, gaining a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sacred Theology and a Licentiate in Moral Theology. In the summer before his final year in Rome Father was ordained to the priesthood at our Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.

Father LeFort has a positive point of view and an obvious sense of humor. He likes creative thinking, including new ways of doing things and new things to do. He doesn't like to hear that the way it's always been done is the only way it can be done. There is also a contemplative side to him that gives serious thought and consideration to the events of the parish and diocese. Father admits that he's still learning about the life of the Cathedral Parish but we can expect him to quickly become a vital part of the life of the parish.

### HELP US RE-FIND OUR HISTORY!

As part of ensuring that our image collection is as complete as possible, we are seeking photographs of the Cathedral's confessionals. If you have any photographs of the confessionals that you would allow the History and Heritage Program to scan and save, please contact the Cathedral Office at 518-463-4447 or [ecathedr@nycap.rr.com](mailto:ecathedr@nycap.rr.com) so we can make arrangements. We will be glad to share the scans with you—so you will also have an electronic version of your photos.

*The purpose of the Cathedral parish newsletter is to help carry out the mission of our beloved house of prayer and worship through a quarterly publication that includes personal glimpses of the faith journeys of those individuals who comprise the parish family. Unlike the scope of the weekly bulletin, which sometimes includes information about events that relate to programs outside the Cathedral, this newsletter focuses on events within the Cathedral parish.*





## The Cathedral's New Parochial Vicar

*Welcome Father John Tallman as the new Parochial Vicar*

*by Mary Wong*

In August of this year, the Cathedral Parish welcomed Father John Tallman as the new Parochial Vicar. According to the Church's Code of Canon Law, a Parochial Vicar is responsible for assisting the pastor with the pastoral care of the parish. Father Tallman introduced himself to us personally at his first Masses, but we would like to take this opportunity to share more about him as he continues his ministry here at the Cathedral.

Father Tallman was born in Troy, NY and raised in Watervliet. Growing up, he attended both St. Bridget's and St. Patrick's grade schools and went on to Catholic Central High School in Troy. It was at St. Patrick's parish that Father Tallman met Father William Hayden, who made a lasting impression upon him and eventually led him to decide to enter into the seminary.

As a high school student at Catholic Central, Father Tallman also pursued another career opportunity to become a funeral director. "When I was sixteen I needed to find a job to earn some money and not be so dependent upon my parents. I had an interest in the funeral business and inquired at one of the local funeral homes if they needed any help. "I was hired by Parker Brothers Funeral Home in Watervliet standing at the door during calling hours, driving and going on funerals and washing and maintaining the funeral cars." Father Tallman's parents owned an automotive garage and body shop in Watervliet, but he had decided to pursue other interests where he could interact with people more frequently.

After graduating from Catholic Central, Father Tallman went on to Hudson Valley Community College in Troy, where in 1978 he earned an associate's degree in mortuary science. He then joined Parker Brothers Funeral Home as a full-time funeral director. He credits his seven years associated with the funeral home as great training for the priesthood. He learned how to console those who lost a loved one and the compassion to deal with people at their most vulnerable. What really sticks out in his mind is that "everyone, rich or poor, was treated the same at Parker Brothers." In his spare time, Father Tallman still practices as a funeral director teaching students from Hudson Valley the art of embalming.

After Father Tallman decided to enter the seminary at the age of twenty-three, he completed his undergraduate degree in philosophy at St. John Fisher College in Rochester, NY and then attended St. Mary's Seminary and University in Baltimore, Maryland. He earned both a bachelor's degree in theology and a master's degree in divinity. He was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Howard Hubbard here at the Cathedral on August 6, 1988.

After ordination, Father Tallman was assigned to Our Lady of the Assumption Church in Latham, NY as the associate pastor. He remained there until he was assigned as the priest-chaplain to St. Peter's Hospital in 1993, remaining at the hospital until 2016 ending a twenty-four year career of ministry to the sick and dying. "Hospital ministry is very powerful and very rewarding," said Fr. Tallman. "It is a ministry focused on the patients and their families at the most vulnerable time in their lives. It is truly a privilege to be with someone when he or she is coming to the end of their life. You may not find out just what you did for a family until years later when someone will thank you for being with them when their loved one died."

In 1999, in addition to his hospital responsibilities, Father Tallman was appointed as chaplain to the Albany Fire Department. For the past ten years, he has also been appointed to the Troy, Watervliet, Cohoes as well as the Albany International Airport Fire Departments. He tries to get to most of the fires in the city because he coordinates the Red Cross' efforts to find shelter for people who have been displaced by a fire. He is also chaplain the New York State Professional Firefighters Association and sits on the Board of the New York State Funeral Director's Tribute Foundation.

Father Tallman is very happy to be at the Cathedral, where he will continue his ministry to his fire department families as well as his ministry to the Cathedral parishioners. Our parish is happy to welcome him to the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception where we can benefit from his many talents, compassion, and love to preach the Gospel message.

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MINISTRY HERE AT  
THE CATHEDRAL.

## Adron Butler

### *Rest in Peace Our Shining Knight*

*by Richard Capullo*

The sun glowed on the day the life of Adron Butler was celebrated during a viewing and funeral service held at the Cathedral. Among the attendees honoring the gentle Knight were his fellow Knights of Columbus, college Fraternity brothers and parish friends.

A most remarkable man, Adron's devotion to God was embedded in his soul since birth. He once referred to himself as a "cradle Catholic." His tireless efforts to perform God's work began as an Altar Boy in Savannah, Georgia and ended at the age of 83 as an active 4th degree member of the Knights of Columbus. He was the founder and editor of the Cathedral Chronicle.

Adron once explained to me "Faith and church are important to me. Down through the years I could see God's hand and I could see that without that, I would be lost like a ship without a rudder." Adron's guiding principle throughout life came from James 2:14-26; "faith without works is dead." And so, "works" he did starting with the aforementioned service as an altar boy and multiple stints as a Parish Council member, Eucharistic minister, lector, usher and a former member of the parish Finance Committee.

Ten years ago, Adron was inspired to start a parish newspaper that would help bring the parish community together with stories of its people, history and events. His passion and dedication to the publication of the Cathedral Chronicle was unrelenting. As editor, he transformed the publication from a modest 4-page newsletter to a glossy high quality quarterly news magazine loaded with articles and photos of interest to his readers.

Adron was an active member of the local branch of his college fraternity, Alpha Phi Alpha, which sponsored many programs to motivate youths to advance their

education. Perhaps his proudest moment came when at the age of 76, he applied for membership and was accepted into the Knights of Columbus where his charitable work continued. It wasn't until the last year of his life that a debilitating illness side-lined him halting his "works" for his love of God.

Adron was a devoted husband to his wife, Cora Alphonso-Butler, who is also active in the parish as a member of the Cathedral Choir. He leaves behind three sons, four step-children and 12 grandchildren.

We, the staff of the Chronicle, are very proud to have worked with Adron on the Cathedral Chronicle over the last 10 years. His dedication and commitment were inspirational. May he rest in peace in the house of the Lord.



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CHRONICLE.

## New Cathedral Website – Dazzling!

by Richard Capullo



NO WORDS CAN DESCRIBE IT BETTER THAN HAVING OUR READERS CONNECT TO THE SITE TO SEE FOR THEMSELVES.

If you have not visited the Cathedral website recently, you must see it. You will be in for a pleasant surprise. The site has been updated with the latest technology. The site went live mid-September this year.

Enjoy a 3D virtual tour of the Cathedral as it pans the inside of the historic building. You can view areas of the church that are unseen by the general public. Gaze at close-ups of sites to distant to view clearly with the naked eye such as the details within the stained-glass windows. The virtual tour was produced by the architects of the restoration, Mesick, Cohen Wilson and Baker.

Rich Pagano, proprietor of Print Connections created and maintains the website for the diocese. He shot the photos of the church. The new site took Rich two months to complete. Rich explained that the goal of revamping the website was to show the Cathedral in all its beauty. It was designed to be interactive where visitors to the site can click buttons to zoom in and out for close-ups of the inside. Watch the slide show. Take a virtual tour of the Cathedral. Aerial views provide breath-taking shots. See a gorgeous night view of the flood-lighted Cathedral. Learn about the Cathedral's Music program. Search for upcoming events. Travel back in time as you view the history and artifacts of the Cathedral. Bring up the Sunday bulletin including past issues. Check the Mass schedule and look for upcoming functions such as Marriage Jubilee or live performances. As Rich

Pagano explained "it lets people get 'into' the Church to see its beauty." Rich said "at the time, the old website was the jewel in technology. We are keeping up with the latest technology and new contemporary features.

As you can see, I can go on and on describing the features of the new website. No words can describe it better than having our readers connect to the site to see for themselves. **Go to: [www.cathedralic.com](http://www.cathedralic.com)** and enjoy the experience.

*Note: Other projects Rich Pagano does for the diocese and parish include: Bishop's Appeal materials, Sunday Bulletin and ads in the Evangelist. If you are interested in his work, he can be reached at 518-489-3692 or email at: [rich@printconnections.com](mailto:rich@printconnections.com)*



## Renovation of the Sacristy

*by Mary Wong*

***One thing I ask from the Lord,***

***This only do I seek:***

***That I may dwell in the House of the Lord***

***All the days of my Life***

***Ps 27:4***

This excerpt from Psalm 27 is quoted on the first plaque on the wall of the Jefferson St. sacristy of our Cathedral. The three sacristies on the main floor: the Jefferson St. sacristy, the Madison Ave. sacristy, and the Bishop's sacristy underwent an extensive repair and restoration building project that began in 2015. The newly-restored sacristies were dedicated in the second of the two wall plaques to: "the Very Reverend. William H. Pape, tenth Rector of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, in Recognition of His Commitment to the Restoration and Preservation of the Cathedral, December 23, 2016."

Kurt Schlachter, Cathedral Facilities Manager; Father Farano; the administrator and Geoff Miles, General Construction Manager, made up an informal "construction committee" and pulled together bids in three areas: flooring, electric, and plumbing. The project architect was Laurence Wilson.

The Jefferson Street Sacristy is a spacious room containing free-standing wardrobes. The room is used for vesting and for storing vestments and altar-server robes. There is new carpeting with a fleur-de-lis pattern, the same design used in all three sacristies. The new Victorian-style lighting fixtures also act as a unifying feature in each sacristy.

The Ambulatory, the hallway behind the altar which connects the Jefferson Street Sacristy with the Madison Avenue Sacristy, was also included in the restoration project. It received new wainscoting, vinyl flooring, and storm windows.

"One of our main goals was to make the building more energy-efficient," said Kurt. "To that end, we installed a supplemental heating and ventilation system (air conditioning), which would make the sacristies usable and comfortable spaces throughout the year."

The Madison Avenue Sacristy sports a drop ceiling. The original ceiling is intact above it and can always



be restored during future construction projects. "It was necessary to make a value judgment when deciding what could be done now and what had to wait for the next project." according to Kurt.

One of the highlights in the Madison Ave. sacristy is the new cabinet/sink and counter unit. It was designed for the space by the architect and built by master carpenter Rod Wilson, who also built the vestment wardrobe. The counter has a granite surface, which is repeated on the vesting case across the room.

The Bishop's Sacristy is off the Madison Avenue Sacristy and is the private vesting place for the Bishop. The original pocket doors were restored for privacy, the molding retains the original, carved, flower motifs, and the paint color was matched exactly to the original.

Behind the Bishop's Sacristy, there is new flooring in the newly-painted hallway and two modern bathrooms and a mop closet where one bathroom was before.

Kurt is proud of the now-completed restoration. "What we were aiming for," he said, "is to never have future generations say, 'Now why on earth did they do that?' We wanted everything to make sense and for it to be easy to make more changes as money and time became available."



ONE THING I ASK  
FROM THE LORD,  
THIS ONLY DO I  
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THAT I MAY DWELL  
IN THE HOUSE OF  
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ALL THE DAYS OF MY  
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PS 27:4

## Cathedral Receives Preservation Award

by Brian Buff



Father Pape holds the 2017 Historic Albany Foundation Stewardship Award, presented at the Cathedral.

The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception was honored as the recipient of the Historic Albany Foundation's 2017 Stewardship Award. Historic Albany Foundation created this new award for not-for-profits and similar organizations who have been outstanding stewards of their buildings in the face of challenges. With the often exorbitant costs to operate and maintain religious buildings, the Foundation felt that the continuous efforts of the Albany Diocese and the Cathedral Parish Community merited more recognition than just for the recent "stellar restoration of the sacristies." The Cathedral was additionally honored when it was selected as the venue for the Foundation's Annual Awards Presentations, which drew over 100 guests this past May. For many of the guests, it was their first time in the Cathedral and they came away impressed by the entire building and the hospitality offered by the Cathedral Parish Community.

## Amazon Smiles on Cathedral's Restoration

by Richard Capullo

**Do you ever shop online at Amazon?** If so, then by simply changing the way you access the Amazon shopping site, you may continue the ease of on-line shopping with its competitive pricing while supporting the restoration of your Cathedral.

Amazon's charitable foundation has a website that shoppers can access in which Amazon will donate a portion of the cost your purchase to the Cathedral's restoration fund. Amazon will donate a half of a percent for every dollar you spend. You simply need to use the dedicated site to help your Cathedral raise funds. Simply change your Amazon website address to the following:

**<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/1347444>**

Your Cathedral parish established the Amazon Smile program 1 year ago. At the end of each quarter, Amazon mails a check to the parish based on the dollars spent at the Cathedral's dedicated Amazon Smile site. So far, the parish has received 4 checks as follows:

<b>Oct 1 – Dec 31, 2016</b>	<b>\$28.62</b>
<b>Jan 1 – Mar 31, 2017</b>	<b>\$23.21</b>
<b>April 1 – June 30, 2017</b>	<b>\$22.95</b>
<b>July 1 – Sept 30, 2017</b>	<b>\$14.50</b>

Granted, this may not seem like much. But then, only a few have participated. We are trying to spread the word. Corporate America is offering to help us restore the Cathedral by donating a percentage of sales from anyone who shops at the Cathedral's dedicated site. Why not let them help us? Prices and products at Amazon are the same whether you shop on the corporate site or the foundation site.

Go to: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/1347444>. Use the same password that you would use for the corporate site. If you are going to shop at Amazon anyway, please use the parish's dedicated site. Give the address to your adult children and relatives. Show them how to access the site. Shopping and donating at the same time with the same dollar; what a deal. Please join us in raising funds to help with restoration and upkeep of our beautiful Cathedral.

THE CATHEDRAL OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION WAS HONORED AS THE RECIPIENT OF THE HISTORIC ALBANY FOUNDATION'S 2017 STEWARDSHIP AWARD.

## Historical Collection Tells the Story of the Cathedral's Heritage

*Cathedral Parish Community celebrates New York State History Month*

*by Brian Buff*

This past November, the Cathedral Parish Community celebrated New York State History Month and recognized the role that the Diocese of Albany, our Cathedral, and people of the parish have played in the history of the Empire State.

Building on the great success of the historical exhibit that ran in November 2016 at the Cathedral, the recent exhibit, *From the Collection*, featured a variety of artifacts, images and documents from the Cathedral's historical and archival collections—including artifacts dating back to the actual construction of the Cathedral from 1848–52.

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THE RECTORY.

A number of the objects chosen for display were “rediscovered” in the final stages of the restoration of the sacristies and during recent work at the Rectory. One such artifact is Bishop Thomas Cusack's top hat. Bishop Cusack, whose tenure in office was the shortest in the history of the Diocese (1915 – 1918), He was known for zeal and simplicity in bringing the faith to the people. During Lent, he conducted “Question Box Hour” from the pulpit of the Cathedral and the building would be filled to capacity. In our times, a top hat seems very formal, but it was considered proper head gear for important non-liturgical occasions.

The exhibit also looked at two other stories: the first was the life of Cathedral altar boy Parker F. Dunn, who gave his life in the defense of liberty in World War I and was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. Visitors also received a look at “what lies beneath”—a display on the many artifacts uncovered in the undercroft of the Cathedral.

*From the Collection* was designed and curated by volunteers of the Cathedral's History & Heritage Program.



*Bishop Cusack's Top Hat, c. 1915 and the displays of From the Collection.*



## Food Pantry Volunteers Heed the Words of Christ

*by Richard Capullo*

We need look no further than our Cathedral's Social Services ministry to witness Jesus's teachings in action. 39 volunteers along with its Director, Sister Margaret Mary Hohl, D.C., provide comfort, guidance and provisions for the most vulnerable in our community.

A review of the August 2017 monthly statistics illustrates a typical month of service to others by the volunteers at our Food Pantry:

- Children served (ages infant – 17 years old) – 342
- Adults served (18 – 64) – 598
- Elderly served (age 65+) - 71
- Households served (Food Pantry Only) – 400

In continuous operation since 1971, the Cathedral parish's social service program was established by the late Reverend Jack Jones (Rector 1960 – 1994). Over the last nine years, the program has been guided by the indefatigable Sr. Margaret Mary Hohl. If running a Social Services Department were in itself not challenging, consider that Sister had to run the operation while relocating the Food Pantry twice. For years, the food pantry operated out of the basement and first floor of the rectory. The renovation and restructuring of the rectory necessitated the first relocation to the abandoned Cathedral Academy on Park Ave. Later, the downsizing and relocation of Bishop Maginn High School to the Cathedral Academy building forced the Pantry to move a second time to the basement of the neighboring convent building at 93 Park Ave, home to retired nuns. Throughout the disruption, the remarkable and dedicated volunteers persevered and kept their "guests" fed and clothed.

Volunteers are the heart and soul of the Food Pantry. Their dedication and efforts cannot be overstated. A volunteer is assigned to work one day per weekday from 10 a.m. to 12 noon. Tasks may include stocking shelves and/or guiding "clients" in the selection of food items.



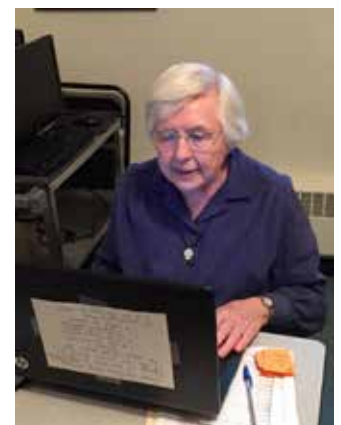
A "real-world" experience is available to the students of Bishop Maginn High School. Students are given the opportunity during their free periods to volunteer at the food pantry. They assist guests, stock shelves and do whatever tasks are needed. On land beside their school, they grow vegetables – tomatoes, squash, eggplant, hot peppers for distribution at the food pantry.

New volunteers are always welcomed and needed. The experience of assisting others in need is an actionable way of doing God's work. Consider volunteering. Call Sister Margaret Mary and ask her how you might assist in helping others. Contact Sister at 518-390-3655.



Students from Bishop Maginn High School regularly volunteer at the Food Pantry

"FOR I WAS HUNGRY  
AND YOU GAVE  
ME FOOD, I WAS  
THIRSTY AND YOU  
GAVE ME DRINK, I  
WAS A STRANGER  
AND YOU WELCOMED  
ME" MATTHEW 25:35.



Sister Margaret Mary,  
Our Director of Social Services



## A New Opportunity for Bishop Maginn Students

by Barbara Palumbo



September is always an exciting month as students, teachers, school administrators, and parents get back to the business of a new school year and the post-summer routine. Everyone gets a fresh start, and students at our neighboring Bishop Maginn High School will be given brand new academic opportunities. Beginning this school year, Bishop Maginn High School is offering its students a learning model called "Customized Learning Accelerates Student Success" (CLASS), consisting of three components: graduate high school with college credits; choose from courses not typically offered at high schools in the region, and participate in internship programs. Taking college courses in high school requires discipline, and Bishop Maginn students enrolled in the college courses have the advantage of learning the importance of time-management skills and good study habits, both of which can be problematic for college freshmen not having had the experience of college-level courses in high school.

To achieve the first component of CLASS, Bishop Maginn High School, the only private, non-boarding, college-preparatory, co-educational, 9-12 high school in the Capital District, has formed a partnership with Maria College, to provide students in grades 10 through 12 the opportunity to get a head start on college by earning credits without leaving their own campus. Dr. John Kowal, VP for Academic Affairs at Maria College, in cooperation with college faculty, selected the course offerings for the first semester of the school year: Anatomy and Physiology I, taught by Professor Scott Homer, and Statistics, taught by Professor Barbara Ruslander. (These courses are listed respectively in the Maria College catalog as BIO 209 - 4 credits, and MAT 200 - 3 credits.)

Bishop Maginn Principal Christopher Signor and Maria College President Thomas Gamble agree that the partnership will not only provide the high school students with a competitive edge by earning college credits in high school, but will motivate them to pursue post-secondary education.

In an earlier Times Union article, President Gamble noted "The shared Catholic faith-based missions of our two institutions also lays a rich foundation for students to pursue careers where they can give back and help others in need. Our collaboration is a commitment to empowering students through education and preparing students for meaningful work and life."

Bishop Maginn High School, administered by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany, welcomes students from all religious and ethnic backgrounds. College-prep, global learning opportunities in health care, government, and the arts are offered in small classes allowing for individual attention.

## The Cathedral's St. Vincent de Paul Society Conference

by Barbara Palumbo

"I was a stranger and you welcomed me." These words from Matthew 25:35 opened the worldwide Vincentian Family Jubilee Year celebrating the 400th anniversary of the Vincentian charism of service on behalf of the poor.

Vincentian charism refers to the teachings of St. Vincent de Paul, the 17th century priest who, along with St. Louise de Marillac, established the Company of the Daughters of Charity in Paris in 1633. (The first foundation made by Vincent de Paul was for lay women in 1617.)

About 200 years after St. Vincent de Paul founded the Congregation of the Mission, Daughters of Charity, Confraternities of Charity, and Ladies of Charity, Frédéric Ozanam, a young law student at the Sorbonne in Paris, France, was challenged to demonstrate what he and his fellow Catholic students were personally doing to help the poor. Just a few weeks later, on his 20th birthday, Ozanam and six of his peers formed the first "Conference of Charity" and The Society of St. Vincent de Paul was born—not by St. Vincent himself, but by his inspiration. This group of seven men financed their works of charity out of their own pockets and from contributions of friends. Sister Rosalie Rendu, called by God to enter the Daughters of Charity, took vows to serve God and the poor, and spent over 50 years living out those vows. She opened a free clinic, a pharmacy, a school, an orphanage, a childcare center, a home for the elderly and a youth club for young workers. She helped Frederic Ozanam and his friends; she insisted that they visit the poor in their homes and provide them with needed aid and assistance. From Sister Rosalie, the young men learned what was truly needed to serve the poor.

While historians are not certain about some details, there is no doubt that the Society of St. Vincent de Paul was established in St. Louis, Missouri at the Basilica of St. Louis, in 1845. The Society spread like wildfire, and by 1853, just one year after our Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception opened its doors to the public the Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SVDP) conference was established, and is one of the oldest conferences in the country.

Fast forward to the year 2017: here at the Cathedral, we still have an active conference with nine members. Dennis Feeney, a 4th generation SVDP member is the President, and our conference members include Joan and Joe Shea, Mary Neylan, Joey and Connie Duhamel, Gabrielle Ettles, Sister Margaret Mary, and Gus Franze. There is a need for more members to carry on the work of SVDP, so if you feel called to this ministry and want to see if it is a good fit for you, you may contact Dennis Feeney at 518-452-3710 ext. 3, or any of the aforementioned members, to attend one of the monthly meetings held at the convent on Park Avenue, which houses the food pantry, for a deeper look into what we do here on a local level.

The Cathedral conference of SVDP is but one piece in a larger network of lay people called to serve the poor, recognizing that we are all God's people, regardless of creed, ethnic or social background, health, gender, political opinions, or lifestyle. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul has both National and International Councils with more than 750,000 active members in 142 countries and on five continents where they "welcome the stranger" in their midst.

## New Pastoral Advisory Council Members

Last June the Cathedral Parish's Pastoral Advisory Council held a discernment meeting in the Cathedral's rectory. The purpose of the meeting was to discern new members to the Pastoral Advisory Council. The new members were to be discerned from parishioners that were nominated to the Council by their fellow parishioners through ballots that were placed in the pews on previous Sundays. This year three new members needed to be discerned to replace members whose three year terms on the Council had come to an end. In addition two more members needed to be discerned to replace those members who were not able to complete their terms on the Council. The meeting was attended by those nominated to be discerned and current Council members.

Discernment is a prayerful and deliberative method of selection where those involved give serious thought and prayer to the selection and then come together with a final choice. This year, as in past years, Sister Eleanor Guerin, RSM of St. Vincent de Paul Church in Albany was brought in to lead the discernment process. The group, with Sister Eleanor guiding, worked through the process from late morning to mid- afternoon before reaching a final decision as to new members for the Council. Not all of the nominees could be selected but they were part of the discernment process.

Joyce Grogan, Dale King, and Claude Rounds were discerned to fill the full three year terms. Tom Kileen and Carol Baechler were discerned to fill the two and one year terms

*by Dale King*

created by former Council members that were unable to complete their terms. At an earlier meeting of the Council Gerry Johnson was discerned as chair of the Council. Maureen Gross and Ben Mastaitis agreed to remain as vice-chair and secretary.

The Cathedral Parish's Pastoral Advisory Council serves as an advisory council to the Pastor. Parish members should get to know their Council members. Let the Council members know your thoughts and concerns about the parish. We should all pull together and we are all here to serve.

## Cathedral Chronicle Committee

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**Consultant:** *Reverend William H. Pape*

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