

# Cathedral Chronicle

Winter 2020



**WE HOPE  
THE RECENT  
HOLIDAYS  
BROUGHT  
YOU AND  
YOUR LOVED  
ONES MANY  
BLESSINGS.**

## A Message from the Rector

*From Our Rector, the Very Reverend David R. LeFort*



Dear Sisters and Brothers,

At the start of a new year, we offer you this latest issue of the Cathedral Chronicle with news from our Cathedral Parish Community.

I hope the recent holidays brought you and your loved ones many blessings.

Throughout the Advent Season, our longing for the Savior reminded us how to be a people of Hope. Our first, primal question of the season might have been, “dare we hope?” But as we progressed, we could see witness of the eternal promise of the Father and we could know him to be eternally trustworthy.

In the Christmas season with the mystery of the Incarnation of God in our midst, our hope is clearly not in vain! We are a people who have the Lord Himself as one with us! And he comes to save us, to demonstrate His great gift of love—eternal love for each and every one of us. Our Hope now turns to rejoicing and offering glory and praise to our God!

A blessed year ahead to all of you and those you love,

*Father David LeFort*

### In this Issue...

Re-Igniting Our Faith .....	Page 2
Meet Our New Organist.....	Page 3
Gift to Social Services Program.....	Page 4
Marian Prayer Group .....	Page 5
Confessional Booth Dedicated .....	Page 6
New PAC Members .....	Page 7
From the Collection .....	Page 7
Blessing of the Animals .....	Page 8

*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.*





## Re-Igniting Our Faith

*By Dale King*

In 2017 the Diocese of Albany under the leadership of Bishop Scharfenberger initiated the Re-Igniting Our Faith campaign. The campaign is designed to revitalize our Catholic faith and at the same time give the Diocese and the Parishes the financial means to achieve that revitalization. Funds raised during the campaign will be used for new initiatives to further faith formation in each of the 126 Parishes in the Diocese. The new initiatives for each Parish will be determined by the Parish and the Parish's own fund raising efforts will provide the financial means to make these initiatives a reality. This campaign differs from the Bishop's Appeal in that the Bishop's Appeal funds the Diocese's current operating expenses for programs to benefit all in our 14 county diocese, but not new initiatives tailored to specifically meet the needs of the individual Parish.

Under the administration and guidance of the Diocese each individual Parish was to conduct its own campaign to raise funds to finance its own initiatives and also to fund additional Diocesan needs. The combined fund raising goal of all Parishes totaled \$45 million. Of this amount, 30% (\$13.5 million) is intended for Diocesan initiatives. These Diocesan initiatives include funding for priestly faith formation, meeting the needs of our retired clergy, and investing in our future. Both the number of retired clergy and the number of aspirants to the priesthood are growing in number and incurring increasing costs to the Diocese. The Bishop's Appeal is no longer adequate to meet the growing financial needs of these two groups and it does not contribute to the pension needs of retired clergy. Investing in our future would include additional funding for youth and young adult ministries, programs for evangelization, and programs to further develop Catholic education.

The Cathedral Parish's Re-Igniting Our Faith campaign began in the Spring of 2019. The first step in the campaign, before trying to reach our fund raising goal of \$333,257, was to establish what the Parish needed if we were to re-ignite our Catholic faith. Our Rector, Father LeFort, met with members of the Parish to work through his thinking and to gain insight from Parishioners. This included two receptions in the Cathedral in early June where Parishioners met, learned of the campaign, and discussed Parish needs. The result was a list of four

initiatives designed to meet the needs of the Parish and its Parishioners. The list includes erecting a sign outside the Cathedral's north tower to let the community know who we are and to welcome them to join with us as part of a faith community. Secondly, we want to fund a street ministry to expand our outreach efforts to the Cathedral's surrounding neighborhoods and to coordinate the already existing efforts of the Cathedral Food Pantry and the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Thirdly, we want to re-purpose and renovate the Cathedral Convent to provide space for the "St. Isaac Jogues House of Formation and Pre-Seminary" where men can begin their formation for diocesan priesthood and possibly partner with the Parish in different ministries that benefit both the men in their formation and members of the Parish. Lastly, we want to acquire a traditional confessional that will offer penitents greater privacy and reverence for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

The Cathedral Parish's Re-Igniting Our Faith campaign continued throughout the summer of 2019. The Parishioners showed their generosity and support for the Parish and the campaign was a remarkable success. By the third week in July the Parish had raised \$345,551 or 104% of its goal and by mid August the Parish had raised 115% of its goal. The Parish is allowed to keep 80% of amounts raised between 100% and 120% of its goal instead of 70% so there was an added bonus to this success, but there was more to come. In October, Father LeFort was able to announce that the Parish had raised 122% of its goal and that the additional amount over 120% would go entirely to the Parish.

As Parishioners of the Cathedral Parish we can be grateful to our fellow Parishioners for the generosity and support they showed to our Cathedral. We now have the financial means to meet our greater goal of re-igniting our faith. The new confessional is already in place and we can expect a new sign by the summer of 2020. St. Isaac Jogues House of Formation and Pre-Seminary is now the home to men aspiring to the priesthood and working to form their priestly faith. We can look forward to a future where we may be able to re-ignite our faith in many other ways as well.

## Pablo C. Gorin, D.M.A. Welcome to Our New Organist and Associate Director of Music *By Richard Capullo*



In the early 1800's at the time of the Argentinian revolution, a chapel was built at a military camp so that soldiers could pray the rosary. Later, that small rural colonial settlement became Rosario. Today, Rosario is the 3rd most populous city in Argentina. Rosario lies on the bend of the Parana River 186 miles northwest of the capital Buenos Aires. The city boasts the largest seaport in the country. Rosario is the city where our new Organist and Associate Director of Music, Pablo Gorin, was born and raised.

"I had a beautiful childhood in the 80's", said Pablo. "Rosario was a "wonderful, beautiful city." Pablo's paternal grandfather was from Ukraine and grandmother from Poland. Pablo's maternal great-grandfather fought for Germany during WWI and during the conflict escaped by hiding in a boat bound for Spain and there boarded a ship to Argentina. As a child, Pablo often visited his maternal grandfather who owned a house in the Argentinian countryside. "My grandfather built the house and a swimming pool and a garden. We had Lemon trees and a Vineyard. I loved being surrounded by nature. It was located 30 miles outside Rosario.

Pablo's early education was at the Catholic School of Lithuania. He attended St. Casimir Church. "Casimir" he explained, "was a noble Prince from a wealthy family. He was very humble and chose to live a life of poverty." One of the earliest influences on Pablo's life was an American priest, Father Jose, who was assigned to St. Casimir Church. Pablo was impressed at how Fr. Jose was a hands-on priest who could easily have delegated chores to others, but instead, dug in and worked such as cleaning up debris on the church grounds following a storm. "He was a very humble and holy man. He was adored by everyone. He lived the life he preached," said Pablo.

The love of music came to Pablo in an unusual way. "I was born with a 60% hearing deficiency", he said. "The doctor said that if I take up a discipline like music, it would help

improve my hearing. My mother searched for a music teacher. The first one was a Witch. She would scream at me and slap my hands if I made a mistake on the keyboard. I would cry. My mother switched teachers. She found a new one, a young, sweet girl," said Pablo. "Later I went to the Scarafia Conservatory of Rosario and made great progress in a short time." A few years after he started piano lessons, Pablo's hearing was restored 100%. For years, Pablo practiced on a small electronic keyboard. One day, his parents decided to spend their entire savings to purchase for him "the best musical instrument which they found in a piano store in Rosario. This instrument was a German-made upright piano of an incredible sound. It was a beautiful piano" said Pablo. "Sadly, it was left behind in Argentina when we relocated to the U.S."

Pablo's interest in music took a major upswing when he first heard classical music. "My mother bought me cassettes which came with magazines of famous composers like Beethoven and Bach. Each week a new cassette and magazine would arrive. I had no idea what this music was about. I was 8 years old," he said. One day, a recording of works by Chopin arrived, played by the great Russian pianist Shura Cherkassky. "I fell in love with it. I was 12 then. It was a love that never went away," he said.

Pablo, with his mother and brother immigrated to NYC in 1989 where his father had been employed in the leather industry. It was a difficult adjustment for Pablo and his brother; they were not prepared for the cultural and emotional change. Also, the leather industry was declining in America as companies were moving to China. The family returned to Argentina a year later. In 1994, the family immigrated once again to the United States and lived in South Florida.

In 2010, Pablo moved to Iowa to study the organ. If his childhood piano teacher who slapped his hands and made him cry could only see him now; he earned a bachelor's

degree in Piano Performance from the University of Miami; a Master of Music in piano performance from Florida International University; Master of Arts in Organ Performance and Doctor of Musical Arts in Organ Performance and Pedagogy from the University of Iowa. Pablo received the Stanley Award for Graduate Research which is awarded to outstanding University of Iowa students. It enables them to pursue research and learning activities in international studies. Pablo chose to use his award to pursue studies in Basel, Switzerland.

While working as an organist in Illinois, Pablo's organ professor at the University of Iowa, Dr. Gregory Hand, alerted him of an advertisement for the position of Organist and Associate Director of Music at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Albany, N.Y. "When I read the description of the job, I was really hoping that I would get it. A few weeks later, Dr. Gurley called me and invited me to interview in person in Albany for the position. I had a wonderful interview, and I was thrilled when he offered me the appointment.

When asked about his impressions of the Cathedral and his new position, he responded "I am in awe every time I go in there (Cathedral). Its beautiful. There is something about it. I feel a beautiful presence every time I go in. I am so happy to be working in such a fantastic music program. Brian has so much knowledge. It is inspiring to work for him. I love the city of Albany."

Today, Pablo explains his love of music in graphic detail: "Music and the Organ to me is like breathing. When I am not at the Organ, I feel like something is missing. I must sit at the organ for an hour each day and practice. It keeps me sane."

The parish community welcomes Dr. Pablo Gorin and wishes him all the best. Thank you, Dr. Gurley, for working so diligently to find such a distinguished and amicable gentleman to join our Cathedral family.

## Statewide Association's Social Responsibility Initiative Helps Cathedral Community



ESSAE EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR  
VANESSA LACLAIR  
SHOWS SOME OF THE  
DONATED HYGIENE  
KITS TO CATHEDRAL  
SOCIAL SERVICES  
DIRECTOR MARK  
CIAVARDONI.

This past June, Cathedral Social Services received a generous donation of 500 Personal Hygiene Kits from the Empire State Society of Association Executives (ESSAE), a statewide professional association representing those engaged in the leadership and management of voluntary professional and trade organizations.

ESSAE was holding its Annual Conference and Expo at the Albany Capital Center. As part of these proceedings, the association wanted to be socially engaged—hoping to make an impact on the neighborhood where the event was being held. Conference organizers, fully supported by the association's supplier partners such as hotels and convention and visitor bureaus, decided to create personal hygiene kits to help those less fortunate in the community.

ESSAE partners donated personal-size bars of soap, toothpaste, tooth brushes, dental floss and antibacterial wipes that were assembled in zip lock bags by conference attendees, exhibitors, and volunteers. Cathedral parishioner Brian Buff, a member of ESSAE, asked that Cathedral Social Services be the beneficiary of this community outreach effort especially as the Cathedral can be seen directly from the Capital Center. Immediately following the conference, Buff and ESSAE Executive Director Vanessa LaClair delivered the kits to the Cathedral.

"We have so many generous industry partners, association and meeting professionals who participate in our annual conference. What better way to support and make a meaningful impact on the local community than to join together during an industry event and create something that helps the Cathedral make a difference in the lives of those in need," said ESSAE Executive Director Vanessa LaClair, CAE, CMP.

Cathedral Social Services Director Mark Ciavardoni was grateful for the donation. "Cathedral Social Services/Food Pantry plays a very important role in helping thousands of individuals and families in our area. We are regularly being asked for toiletries. Receiving the hygiene kits from ESSAE provided a meaningful and additional resource to support those we serve. A large part of our funding and a significant amount of our inventory comes from individual donations; and donations from generous organizations such as ESSAE. We are deeply appreciative of the generous support that enables us to fulfill our mission of service to those in need."

### Did you know?

Parishioners who wish to donate toiletries and personal hygiene items can place them in the green collection baskets located at the entrances of the Cathedral or drop them off to Cathedral Social Services during regular business hours.

## Marian Prayer Group

*By Mary Wong*

When Walt Gartner, a parishioner at St. Mary's Church in Nassau and a regular daily mass-goer at the Cathedral, was asked why he decided to start a prayer group devoted to Our Blessed Mother and the rosary he mentioned the name of the church, The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, and its dedication to our Blessed Mother. "I've led prayer groups for many years, so I looked at this group as an opportunity to do something in response to Mary's ongoing call to pray, pray, pray. Mary calls us to pray the rosary for peace and conversion in the world and for the Church. Those of us in the prayer group are obedient to Mary's call."

Walt's attitude has always been if it's something the Lord wants, it will happen. If not it won't. So one Saturday and Sunday last spring, with permission from Cathedral Rector Fr. David Le Fort, Walt came to all the masses and announced the formation of a new Marian Prayer Group.

"There's no doubt the rosary is a most powerful prayer," he says. He tells the story of Bishop Oliver Dashe Doeme of Nigeria. One day while the Bishop was praying the rosary before the Blessed Sacrament, asking for help dealing with the Islamist extremist group Boko Haram, the Lord appeared to Bishop Dashe. In the vision, Jesus didn't say anything but extended a sword toward the Bishop. Bishop Dashe reached out for it and, as he received it, the sword turned into a rosary. The Bishop told his people that prayer, particularly the rosary, is what will deliver them from the claws of this demon.

Walt acknowledges that the Blessed Mother is humility and the rosary is a humble weapon. "You don't have to be a sophisticated theologian to use this powerful prayer against the forces of evil. We emphasize simplicity in our prayer group."

On average, half a dozen people gather at the Cathedral every other Thursday at 7pm. They meet in the Bishop's Chapel in the sacristy. The group begins by setting an intention for that evening's prayer. In an email before a recent meeting Walt wrote, "At our last gathering, we discussed the possibility of asking the Lord to spare one soul from the fires of hell because of his love and our request." The idea was based on a similar request by St. Faustina, a Polish Roman

Catholic nun and mystic, to Jesus during one of her visions in which the Lord appeared to her. "Jesus," she prayed, "I beg You, by the inconceivable power of Your mercy, that all the souls who will die today escape the fire of hell, even if they have been the greatest sinners..."

After they set their general intention, anyone who wishes may mention their own intentions. After the rosary, there is time for reflection and sharing often on the current message of Our Blessed Mother from Medugorje. Ivan, one of the seers from Medugorje, said that "When a group comes together to pray the beads, it's not just the praying but the community that is so important."

Although there are many divisions and differences among Catholics, Walt believes those struggles are unimportant in the light of this very important prayer of Our Lady's. "Praying the rosary is a positive way to put aside minor differences and listen to the Blessed Mother," he says. "Participation in the Marian prayer group is a chance to experience the simplicity and power of our Mother's prayer. "Try it," Walt smiles, "You might like it!"

For more information contact Walt Gartner, [Theophile@fairpoint.com](mailto:Theophile@fairpoint.com).



## Confessional Booth Dedicated

*By Richard Capullo*



Confessional booths have been absent from the Cathedral for over 40 years. Historically, confessional booths were established in the mid-16th century to increase the anonymity of the penitent and the priest confessor. In more recent times, confessional philosophy favored a face-to-face interaction between penitent and priest. It was during the stewardship of Fr. Jack Jones, that the Cathedral confessional booths were removed.

One of the results of our parish's successful "Re-Igniting Our Faith" campaign was the reintroduction of a 19th-century confessional booth acquired from Belgium (Circa 1860-1870). It's design and structure were first used in the mid-16th century as a removable piece of furniture. It was purchased for \$17,775 plus shipping, and appraised by M.S. Rau Antiques LLC at \$22,500. The booth—with 2 sides for penitents—is located near the Jefferson Street entrance.

In acquiring the new confessional booth, Fr. LeFort expresses his fervent desire: "With our new confessional, my prayer is that more and more of the faithful will seek the remedy for sin: the mercy and love of Jesus Christ in confession."

We hope both parishioners and visitors will appreciate the historical and spiritual significance of the new confessional and will avail themselves of the sacrament of reconciliation.



SCENES FROM THE DEDICATION OF THE NEW CONFESSIONAL.

## New Pastoral Advisory Council Members

By Dale King

The Cathedral's Pastoral Advisory Council (PAC) is an advisory council to the Cathedral's Rector. The council meets with the Rector on the third Tuesday of each month to discuss the affairs and needs of the Parish. It comprises twelve members, each of whom were nominated by the Parishioners and discerned onto the council for three year terms. Each year four Council members leave the Council when their term expires and the Council brings on four new members through a nomination and discernment process established in the Council's by-laws. It may also be necessary bring on new members to replace members who were not able to complete their three year term.

This year the Council began planning for new members at their March and April meetings and were able to begin soliciting nominations for new Council members from Parishioners during the month of May. Each weekend in May nominating forms were placed in the Cathedral pews. Parishioners were asked to enter the names of fellow Parishioners that they thought would make good representatives for the Parish and they were asked to consider entering their own name. This year there were five vacancies on the Council, four vacancies for three year terms and a one year vacancy to replace a member who couldn't complete their term.

The new Council members were chosen from the nominees through a discernment process involving both the nominees and the current

Council members. Discernment is a prayerful process were the group reaches a consensus as to where God is calling us as Council members and which nominees feel they are now being called or not called to serve the Parish as Council members. Discernment requires a freedom from any pre-conceived thinking on the matter at hand so that we can hear where God is calling us in this matter. Nominees may indeed feel called to serve the Parish as Council members at this time or they may feel that this is not the time for them. The consensus, no matter what it may be, should be arrived at with a spirit of freedom and openness.

This year's Discernment was held at a June 8th meeting in the Cathedral Rectory. Sister Eleanor Guerin of St. Vincent de Paul Parish was called in to use her expertise in facilitating the meeting. The group met from late morning to mid afternoon with a break for lunch. Certain of the nominees did not feel called at this time, but enough did that the group was able to reach a consensus as to the five new Council members. Joann Delisle, Jacob James, Veronica Klepacki, and Joe Strodel were discerned for three year terms and Esther Miklic was discerned as a one year replacement. Their new terms were set to begin at the September PAC meeting when the Council comes back after a summer break, but they were free to join the Council at the year end June meeting.

### *From the Cathedral's Historical Collection*

## Zucchetto Worn by Venerable Pope Pius XII c. 1957

This zucchetto and document of authenticity verify that this zucchetto belonged to Venerable Pope Pius XII (r. 1939 – 1958). A zucchetto is a small skullcap worn by clerics of the church. It consists of eight panels sewn together with a stem on top. It was first adopted to keep the tonsured (shaved heads) of clergy warm in damp, cold churches, but it has survived to the present day.

Pius XII was a tall, slender and ascetic man known for his friendly manner. He made a profound impression on the millions who flocked to Rome for the Holy Year of 1950 and the Marian Year of 1954 and on the thousands who attended his innumerable audiences. He was the first pope to become widely known through radio and television. He led the Church during World War II. He died in 1958 and is considered to be a great teacher, a strong leader, a holy man and a prophet who helped lead the church to reform and renewal.

Pope Paul VI, who had collaborated closely with Pius, opened his cause for canonization in 1965.

St. Pope John Paul II declared Pius XII a Servant of God in 1990. In 2009, Pope Benedict XVI declared Pius XII Venerable, the first step toward canonization.

The zucchetto was found in the effects of Bishop Edwin Broderick (1917 – 2006), who served as the eighth Bishop of Albany from 1969 – 1976. Research continues as to how Bishop Broderick acquired the zucchetto. In 1957, the year the zucchetto was bestowed, Broderick had been a priest for 15 years and might had been in Rome in August of that year.



## Blessing of the Animals at the Cathedral - Last October



## Cathedral Chronicle Committee

**Editor:** Dale King

**Contributors:** Dale King, Richard Capullo, Barbara Palumbo and Mary Murphy Wong.

Printed by Modern Press

Special thanks to Tara Thomas of Thomas Media Group for contributing layout design services.