



# Branches on the Vine

MARCH 15 - 21, 2025



The new Knights of Columbus Sacred Heart traveling pilgrim icon was on display for veneration before the Jan. 3 Mass at St. Mary Church, part of Blessed Michael McGivney Parish. **Photo by Paul Haring**

## NEW PILGRIM ICON DEPICTS IMAGE OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

Story by Karen A. Avitabile

“The pope observes that we live in a fragmented and divided society, but the heart of Christ is a unifying center. It is the source of truth and goodness that we all need.”

A reproduction image of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus is making its way around the world and may be viewed in parishes in the Archdiocese of Hartford this year.

This reproduction is one of more than 300 icons, each bearing the Apostolic Blessing of Pope Francis. It is the most recent addition to the Knights of Columbus traveling pilgrim icon program. The icons are currently traveling around the world as part of the Knights of Columbus Pilgrim icon program.

The Sacred Heart of Jesus pilgrim icon program was launched by the Knights of Columbus on Jan. 3 at St. Mary Church, part of Blessed Michael McGivney Parish in New Haven. During that prayer service, an icon depicting the most famous image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus -- painted by Pompeo Batoni in 1767 and now venerated in the Church of the Gesù in Rome -- was displayed for veneration. It bears the blessing of Pope Francis through the Papal Almoner.

The Sacred Heart of Jesus pilgrim icon program also coincides with the 350th anniversary of the visions of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque,

a French Catholic nun who gave the Church the Twelve Promises of the Sacred Heart and the First Friday devotions.

In one of the apparitions, Jesus Christ told Alacoque: “Behold this Heart which has so loved men that it has spared nothing, even to exhausting and consuming itself, in order to testify its love.” This quote is central to the Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic devotion. The heart refers to Jesus’ physical heart and his boundless love for mankind.

Pope Clement XIII officially recognized and approved the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in 1765, some 75 years after St. Alacoque’s death. In 1920, St. Margaret Mary Alacoque was canonized by Pope Benedict XV. Today, she is recognized as the patron saint of people who suffer from polio, the loss of a parent and those who devote themselves to the Sacred Heart.

The publication of the fourth encyclical of Pope Francis, *Dilexit Nos* (He Loved Us), is devoted to the Sacred Heart. “In many ways, *Dilexit Nos* can serve as a mission statement for the Knights of Columbus in today’s world,” Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly says.

Archdiocese of Hartford priest and Knights’ founder Blessed Michael J. McGivney was deeply devoted to the Sacred Heart. His family displayed an ornate devotional plaque of the Sacred Heart in their Waterbury home. The plaque is still in the Knights’ possession and is on display in the Blessed Michael McGivney Pilgrimage Center in New Haven.

The Sacred Heart of Jesus is the 20th traveling pilgrim icon venerated through the Knights’ program since its formation in 1979. Our Lady of Guadalupe was the first pilgrim icon. Since then, the program has enabled more than 23 million people to honor Our Lord, Our Lady and the saints.

Parishes in the Archdiocese of Hartford should contact their local Knights of Columbus council to host the icon for veneration and schedule a Sacred Heart holy hour. For more information about the Knights of Columbus pilgrim icon program, visit



# Upcoming Events



## 03/21 - 03/23 WEEKEND RETREAT **WOMEN'S WEEKEND RETREAT: "IN MY LOVE, ABIDE"**

Holy Family Retreat Center, 303 Tunxis Rd,  
West Hartford

Come quiet your mind and nourish your spirit as you learn ways to maintain the sacred connection to God through Christ. Dynamic teaching, home-cooked meals, and uplifting music. \$350. 860-760-9705.



## 03/24 - 04/14 MONDAYS 1PM **SOULCORE**

Church of Saint Ann, Fr. Bennett Hall, 289  
Arch Rd, Avon

Join SoulCore Leader Diana, to nourish body, mind & soul with SoulCore - a prayer experience that combines the prayers of the Rosary with core strengthening, stretching and functional movement. No fitness level or experience required. All are welcome! Visit [www.soulcore.com](http://www.soulcore.com) for more information.

For planning purposes, please email: [familyministrystann@gmail.com](mailto:familyministrystann@gmail.com) if you are planning to attend! NO COST but a free will offering is welcome for those who are able.



## 03/23 SUNDAY 6PM **DANIEL OBERREUTER - LENT PARISH MISSION CONCERT**

St. Joseph Church, 33 Queen St,  
Bristol

Daniel Oberreuter, the lead singer of the Catholic band **The Thirsting**, will be offering a **Come Hold My Son Parish Mission Concert**. He will share his personal testimony and a powerful message on the Rosary, the Eucharist, and Confession.

Daniel has performed at World Youth Day 2016 and at hundreds of churches across the nation. Bring your family and friends to experience this opportunity for evangelization within your community. For more info, visit [comeholdmyson.com](http://comeholdmyson.com).



## 03/24 MONDAY 6PM **24 HOURS EUCHARISTIC ADORATION**

Most Holy Trinity Church, 68 N.  
Colony St, Wallingford

Join Most Holy Trinity Parish in Wallingford for 24 hours of Eucharist Adoration this Lent. Adoration will begin at 6pm on Monday, March 24th and conclude at 6pm on Tuesday, March 25th. Confessions will be heard from 6-7pm on Monday, March 24th and Holy Mass will be celebrated at 8:30am on Tuesday, March 25th for the Solemnity of the Annunciation. All will take place at Most Holy Trinity Church (68 N. Colony St., Wallingford, CT, 06492). For more information, call the Parish Center at 203-269-8791 or visit [www.mhtwallingford.org](http://www.mhtwallingford.org)

## 2025 ARCHBISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL



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