



# *The* ANGELUS

News of the Life of GRACE CHURCH

## Over 150 Years in the Heart of White Plains


### Dear Grace Church Family

The summer season is officially here as of June 21 – even though most of us probably consider Memorial Day the unofficial start of summer. Summer is the time for fun and relaxation - a time to enjoy the long days of sunlight and to spend time with family and friends. I know that some people don't like summer because of the heat and humidity, but many of us do look forward to longer days, more light and lots of outdoor activities. What do you think of when you think of summer? Barbecues, Picnics, Warm weather, Gardens...

While you're basking in the summer sun, relaxing on your porch or in a park, you might also look for some of the beautiful Bible verses that refer to summer. For example: "This is what the Lord God showed me: behold, a basket of summer fruit" (Amos 8:1)

The Sundays of June through November in our liturgical calendar are numbered as the Sundays after Pentecost. This is also called "ordinary time." The English phrase "ordinary time" translates the Latin term "tempus per annum" (literally "time through the year"). The liturgical color is green – the color of life, the color of hope. We walk and worship together without either the ecstasy of the mountaintop or the sorrow of the valley, offering to each other and to our community a quiet and trusting companionship. This is also the season of preparation for new ministry at Grace/La Gracia.

We just finished celebrating a wonderful Mother's Day breakfast on May 14 organized by the Men of Grace which had a very good attendance. While I write this letter, today is Father's Day and once again the ECW did a remarkable job organizing the Father's Day Breakfast. Looking ahead we have the visitation of the Right Reverend Matthew F. Heyd, Bishop Coadjutor, which will take place on July 16 at 11:00 AM; the service will be followed by a lunch where both Grace and La Gracia will come together as one church. I encourage all parishioners to be present and take part in this special visitation.



Furthermore, in August La Gracia will hold its annual retreat and in September we will have the Home Coming Barbecue at the Rectory. Additionally, on November 18 & 19 the English Congregation will hold their Retreat and more to come...

I believe that Grace/La Gracia will continue to have a vital ministry here in Westchester County. As we finally get to enjoy summer, a period of recreation, please ponder and pray for Grace Church, so that we can be open to the way God might re-create and renew our ministries and our life together. So, as we venture forward into summer, I pray that you will enjoy the outdoors, enjoy the extended daylight, the breeze; and yes, speak to God in your very own way.

Rev. Adolfo Moronta+  
Priest in Charge

### **SUMMER SCHEDULE**

#### **JULY**

One Summer Service only in English at 9:30 a.m.

Stewardship Theme Selected by Stewardship Committee Chair  
And Priest in Charge

Tuesday, July 4<sup>th</sup>  
Sunday, July 16<sup>th</sup>  
Tuesday, July 25<sup>th</sup>  
Sunday, July 30<sup>th</sup>

Fourth of July – Office Closed  
Visitation by Bishop Matthew Heyd  
Vestry Meeting  
La Gracia Committee Meeting

#### **AUGUST**

Retreat for La Gracia

Sunday, August 27<sup>th</sup>

Priest in Charge Birthday

#### **SEPTEMBER**

Monday, September 4<sup>th</sup>  
Sunday, September 10<sup>th</sup>  
Sunday, September 17<sup>th</sup>  
Sunday, September 24<sup>th</sup>  
Tuesday, September 26<sup>th</sup>

Labor Day - Office Closed  
Regular Fall services begin – 2 English services at 8 & 10  
Home Coming Barbecue at Rectory  
La Gracia Committee Meeting  
Vestry Meeting

## **WHAT A DAY!**

Saturday 20 May 2023

### **CONSECRATION OF THE NEW BISHOP COADJUTOR**

By Irene Alves



**BISHOP MICHAEL FOSTER HEYD**

It was a cloudy day with a forecast of rain but there was an air of excitement as we rode to the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine for the ordination and consecration of Matthew Foster Heyd as the Bishop Coadjutor and chief Pastor of the Episcopal Diocese of New York.

We (Sandy, Eileen, Brenda and I), met at Grace Church at 8:30 am and immediately left on our journey. We arrived at the cathedral at 9:00 am, the weather now a misty rain. As we entered the cathedral there were greeters directing all to the security area to have our bags checked.

We quickly found our seats and then sat marveling at the grandeur and magnificence of this majestic space. For those of us who had been here before, the absence of the beautiful tapestries, destroyed in a fire, made a big difference. There were already a large number of people seated, all in anticipation of the procession which would signal the beginning of the service. This cavernous space began to fill up with people and parishioners from all over the diocese and the country. We began excitedly talking to each other and the people next to us as our anticipation grew.

At 10:30 am preludial music and the processions began. The flags and banners of the various churches in the diocese were carried in by their representatives (our banner was carried by Linda Harmon and Lauren Reid). There were various groups representing different areas of ministry. Fr. Moronta and Canon Conrado were Marshals. What an impressive sight! We stand as Fanfare for the Common Man by Aaron Copeland is played and the Bronze Doors open. The Chief Consecrator & Presider, the Most Reverend Michael B. Curry and the nine Co-Consecrating Bishops enter and process to the high Altar. What an impressive sight!

The acclamation and collect for purity is proclaimed by presiding Bishop Curry. Thus began the ordination and consecration of Michael Foster Heyd as Bishop Coadjutor of the Diocese of New York. The service was spectacular with all the traditions and pageantry of the Episcopal Church in full display. Large TV Megatons were strategically placed at different intervals so all could see the proceedings.

As we received the final blessing at dismissal, we looked at each other and felt the air of a new beginning. I am so glad we made the trip and felt highly favored for being able to do so.

## **CHRISTIAN EDUCATION UPDATE**

By George O'Hanlon

The Grace Church Youth Education program concluded its year on a high note, with two enjoyable events. On June 10<sup>th</sup>, we participated in what we hope will be the first annual Church Bazaar. Our high school students sold food and drinks and helped with publicity for this important event. On June 11<sup>th</sup>, we held our annual Graduate and Youth Education recognition event during the 10am service. More information on this delightful event appears in a separate Angelus article.

Our Youth Education program covers grades from pre-K through high school. Erika Santos teaches our pre-K, K and first through third graders; Ingrid Richards and Tiffany Woodberry teach our 4<sup>th</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> graders; George O'Hanlon teaches our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders in a class called Rite 13; and Marisol Ortega and Lauren Reid teach our high schoolers. Our pre-K, K, primary and Rite 13 classes meet at 10am each Sunday (except on holiday weekends and except on the third Sunday of each month). Our objective is to provide Christian education in an age-appropriate way, so that our students both learn the key Christian concepts and stories, and also learn the importance of performing community service.

Our early Spring highlight involved reviving our annual Easter Egg hunt. Both our Grace Church and La Gracia students participated in this search around the Church grounds on Easter Sunday. Our high schoolers had carefully filled the plastic Easter eggs with treats the Sunday before. This preparation enabled our pre-K, K and primary grade students to joyfully scour the Grace Church grounds for the hidden eggs on Easter Sunday. Our students really seemed to enjoy the hunt and the resulting treats; and the teachers and older students very much enjoyed watching the spirited hunt!

Our Youth Education program is on summer vacation for the summer but will return in the fall with our annual blessing of the book bags to be followed by the resumption of our classes. Please note that we are always looking for more students. If you are a parent who may be interested in having your children participate in our Youth Education program -- or have a friend who may be interested in having their child participate -- please reach out to our Youth Education director, George O'Hanlon, at [ohanlongeorgeT42@gmail.com](mailto:ohanlongeorgeT42@gmail.com); or 914 525 4381. All inquiries are welcome.





# GRACE / LA GRACIA CHURCH

## 200<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

*Honoring Our Past,  
Celebrating Our Present  
Embracing Our Future*

In September 2024, Grace/LaGracia will celebrate the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Grace Church. Established in 1824, the church has a rich and powerful history that needs to be remembered and celebrated.

The 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee is presently in formation and will be meeting periodically over the next few weeks to develop ways to bring the history of the church to life during the next year by providing information, various programs and events, culminating in a beautiful and memorable ceremonial celebration in September, 2024.

This endeavor will be designed to include all members of the church who we hope will bring their time and talents to make this a successful and enjoyable year.

This is an exciting “work in progress” and we need all “hands on deck” to prepare for our main celebration, so.... watch this space and learn where you can get involved in this process.

Thank you

*Delores Scott Brathwaite, Chair*

*Present Committee Members: Hillary Fleming, Co-Chair; Daisy Calderon, Co-Chair (LaGracia); Irene Alves, Nate Hogan, Barbara Biles, Eileen McLean, George O’Hanlon, Melanie Jackson and Linda Harmon*



## **GRACE CHURCH MOTHERS DAY BREAKFAST**

### **HOSTED BY THE MEN OF GRACE CHURCH**



A Mother's Day tradition has been revived! On Mother's Day, 2023, the Men of Grace hosted a sit-down breakfast for 63 ladies from Grace Church, and their families, likely exceeding 100 attendees over the course of the event. The ten tables in the Parish Hall were festooned with brightly colored tablecloths and intricate Origami decorations, courtesy of the Mizumotos, who spent hours carefully folding each Origami decoration.



The Men of Grace cooked and served a classic breakfast of scrambled eggs, sausage, breakfast potatoes, bacon, pancakes, fruit, muffins and pastries, as well as a variety of drinks.





The ladies enjoyed convivial conversation and a delightful hot breakfast prior to the 10am service. Our event brought together our regular group of Grace Church Parishoners, some new attendees, and some alumna who we had not seen for some time.



All ladies were joyfully welcomed into the Parish Hall with a carnation, to honor each woman's mother. Mother's Day should be a joyful day for all of us. Hopefully this sit-down breakfast for the Ladies of Grace Church added some joy to each attendee's day.

### **LA GRACIA MOTHER'S DAY BRUNCH**





## **EPISCOPALIANS INTERACT WITH THE NEWS OF THE DAY**

By Mary Baker

If you believe, as I do, that an informed and active public is essential for the well-being of our democracy, then it might seem that reading the daily news or listening to it on the television is only the beginning of the process. “Fake news” is readily available on many platforms that we encounter. Knowing the news is not enough! We need to know the TRUTH of the news! As Episcopalians, it is also essential that our spiritual values and faith are seen as an essential ingredient in our news consumption. Where can we go to encounter our news of the day in conjunction with our spiritual values and beliefs??

The Episcopal Church has established an important church office in Washington, D.C., for this very purpose. This Office of Government Relations is authorized to take all the policies that have been voted affirmatively by the Episcopal Church in its conventions and work for the furtherance of those policies within the framework of the United States Congress. This group leads the charge for working with our Senators and Representatives to push for the passing of those bills which reflect our Episcopalian values as established by the votes of our own Conventions.

One important and valuable way that I have found to stay informed on what is going on in the news, is by joining the Weekly Policy Network Call every Thursday from 1 to 1:30. This half-hour call gives much appreciated background on national and international news of the day and how our Episcopal Church views this news.

Another important part of this is that they send out many Action Alerts that individuals can send to their own congressional representatives, letting them know their vote is important to us.

It is very easy to join this weekly call. After you have registered, each week on Thursday morning, you are sent by email the link to join the discussion.

If you think this might add to your appreciation of the news, simply access The Office of Government Relations website for information about registering for the weekly call. Or you can call: 202-547-7300.

Their website gives this mandate: “Speak out for those who cannot speak. Speak out, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy.





### **Let the Summer (Reading) Begin!**

Summer has arrived! This summer, the Book Club will take an adventure of a different kind. Instead of focusing exclusively on our usual summer selection to discuss when our meetings resume in the fall, we've decided to try a new approach this year. We will read a portion of **The Love Songs of W.E.B. Du Bois** by Honorée Fanonne Jeffers, our summer selection, along with individual selections of our own choosing. When we meet in the fall, in addition to discussing our group selection, each member will share their thoughts about the book they personally chose.

Not only will we have the chance to share our views of **Love Songs**, but also explore other interesting tales and topics through the eyes and voices of our fellow Book Club members. Join us in sharing your own exciting summer reads. Who knows where these virtual journeys may take us!

If you're having trouble making your own summer selection, consider one of the Book Club's past top picks such as the Bonnie Kistler's attention-grabbing thriller **The Cage**; the historical novel **The Personal Librarian** by Marie Benedict and Victoria Murray focused on the African-American woman who hid her identity to become the influential personal librarian of J.P. Morgan; Michelle Obama's engaging personal life story, **Becoming**; Kazuo Ishiguro's unique take on love through the friendship of a teenager and her android friend in **Klara and the Sun**; Isabel Wilkerson's powerful exploration of a persistent Caste system in the U.S.; Amor Towles' story of how being under house arrest leads an aristocrat to a more purposeful life in **A Gentleman of Moscow**; or reflect on the liberating new ways of thinking about ourselves and each other offered by Ibram X. Kendi in **How to Be an Antiracist**.

However you choose to spend the warmer weeks ahead, enjoy your summer, including your reading adventures. And consider sharing those adventures with the Book Club in the fall.

Interested in joining in our book journeys? Contact Karen Odom at [karenodom@yahoo.com](mailto:karenodom@yahoo.com)

*-- Submitted by Karen Odom*

## GRADUATE RECOGNITION CELEBRATION



On June 10, Grace Church celebrated our annual Sunday School and Graduation recognition day at our 10am service. With great pride we honored high school graduates Jordan Acevedo, Priya Kumar and Vika O'Hanlon. All three of these young ladies have been part of the Grace Church Sunday School program for over a decade, and we were thrilled to be able to recognize their graduation and their completion of our Journey To Adulthood program in our Sunday School. All three look forward to college and then careers. We were also honored to recognize Veronica Hudak, who recently completed her Masters degree in education. Veronica has been an enthusiastic member of our choir since coming to Grace Church over a year ago. Our high school graduates were presented with a gift bag and check from the Episcopal Church Women and the Men of Grace. We will miss our high school graduates, but welcome them back when they return from breaks at school. And we look forward to seeing Veronica singing with the choir when it restarts in the fall.



But our celebration was not limited to our graduates. We also honored our Sunday School students and teachers. Our dedicated and loyal teachers – George O’Hanlon, Marisol Ortega, Lauren Reid, Ingrid Richards, Erika Santos and Tiffany Woodberry -- were recognized for their success in teaching our students over the past year and were likewise presented a gift. We thank this team for their efforts on behalf of our Church and youth. Several members of our youth program attended this event as well, including Emmi Woodberry, Savannah MacLeish, Aadi Kumar Sebastian Lopes, Eve Bradford, Harrison Richards and Vika O’Hanlon. This group represents quite a spectrum in age, from our grade school students to high school seniors, reflecting the scope of our program.



Our graduates and Sunday school members then hosted a delightful coffee hour in the Parish Hall, which included a remarkable and tasty graduation cake. Thanks to our Welcoming Committee for helping to host this enjoyable event. We will look forward to a similarly successful recognition Sunday a year from now!



## INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT THE APOSTLES



The names are listed in four places:

- Matthew 10:2-4
- Mark 3:16-19
- Luke 6:13-16
- Acts 1:13

Of the twelve Apostles:

- Four were fishermen
- One was a publican (tax collector)
- One was a zealot (wanted to overthrow Rome by force)

Two families were partners in the fishing business:

- James and John with Zebedee, their father
- Simon and Andrew

Eleven of the twelve were Galileans. Judas was the only Judean. Not one of the twelve was a “professional” religionist. Peter, James and John composed the “inner circle” of the apostles. Jesus renamed Peter:

- Simon was his natural name.
- His new name was Peter (Greek), Cephas (Aramaic) - both mean “Rock”

Peter

- Was brought to Jesus by his brother, Andrew
- Was a native of Bethsaida
- Had a home in Capernaum
- Partnered with James and John in a fishing business
- His wife accompanied him in his apostolic travels

James

- Was the older brother of John
- Was the first apostle to die. Killed by Herod in AD 44



John

- Is known as “the disciple whom Jesus loved”
- Had a house in Jerusalem
- Employed “hired servants”
- Was a personal acquaintance of the High Priest
- Jesus nicknamed him “Son of Thunder”

Thomas

- Was a twin

Philip

- Brought Nathaniel to Jesus

### **United Thank Offering**

Special thanks to Grace/La Gracia for contributing to the UTO Spring Collection. We collected a total of \$1616.00. We have so much to be thankful for and we thank you all for supporting this vital ministry. However, this ministry of thankfulness does not end with the Spring collection. We are meant to recognize the good things in our lives on a daily manner. Therefore, we are encouraging you all to give prayerful thanks to God for those blessings and continue to place coins in your UTO Boxes which will be made available in the back of the church.

One hundred percent of the money collected goes to mission grants. The grants transform the lives of people all over the world. Your blessings become blessings for others.

We will be collecting boxes, envelopes and checks again during our fall collection. We will keep you informed of those dates. Any late boxes from the spring will be collected at that time also.

Let us continue to be aware of the abundance of God’s blessings. Living a life of gratitude leads to less stress and anxiety and to more contentment and generosity. Give generously!

Blessings,  
Marie Barrow & Andrea Spencer  
ECW



# Stewardship - July 2023

By Andrea Spencer, Chairman of the Stewardship Committee

**Pledge Statements:** By now everyone should have received their Q1 Statements. The statements for Q2 will be mailed out mid July. The summer holidays are here and many parishioners may be going on vacation so just a gentle reminder to please remember to continue submitting your committed pledges in to the church.

**Parking Coupon Codes for Pledgers:** If you are an existing pledger or a newly pledged member and have forgotten or if you need a parking coupon code, please see any member of the Stewardship Committee for assistance.

## **How To Read Your Pledge Statement:**

Based on some questions we've received, we realized that it might be a good idea to put this in our article for this edition of The Angelus. We hope that this helps answer your questions!

Your pledge statement is automatically created by a software program that we use to enter the information the counting teams submit every week. The Stewardship Committee prints quarterly statements about 2 weeks after the quarter ends, to allow for enough time to record all the donations received.

The statement reflects all contributions you make to the church, not just what you contribute towards your annual pledge. If you've given money for Altar Flowers, or Music, or anything else, as long as you've indicated what it's for, that information is recorded on your statement.

Your statement includes details (date of the contribution, what the contribution is for, the amount of the contribution, and how much is tax deductible).

The statement also includes a summary, which shows the dollar amounts you've given for the entire year as well as what you've given year-to-date (YTD). There is also a total for what you've given for the current quarter and the prior period. Lastly, there is a column called Pledge Balance, which is how much of your pledge hasn't been paid yet.

It's important to remember that donations for Altar Flowers, Music, or anything else is NOT included in your pledge. The way the statement is titled can make this confusing because the last four columns in the Summary say Pledge. However, because we don't make pledges for Altar Flowers, or Music, those are not considered as part of your pledge. If you do make contributions to those things, you will see \$0 for Pledge amounts in those columns.



Here is an example. John received his Q2 Pledge Statement. So far, he has made contributions to Music and Altar Flowers as well as his pledge. So, his summary looks like the below.

Q2 Fund Summary					
Fund Description	Total YTD	Total Pledge	Pledge Gifts		Pledge Balance
			This Period	Prior Period	
Music	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Altar Flowers	\$50.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Pledge Offering	\$4,000.00	\$8,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$4,000.00
	\$4,150.00	\$8,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$4,000.00

If you have any questions about your pledge statement, please reach out to the Stewardship Committee. We are happy to help!

## CALLING ALL BACK-UP SINGERS!



Where would our favorite performers be without their back-up singers! They provide a much-needed addition to the overall enjoyment of the music.

Indeed, our wonderful choir has lead singers, but needs back-up singers as well. And we can only get them from parishioners who step up and agree to fulfill this essential need each Sunday.

The choir is taking a much needed rest for the summer. We will welcome them back in September. Why don't you think about joining them as an all-important back-up singer!

Worship the Lord with gladness  
Come before him with joyful songs.  
Psalm 100:2



## **TRAVELLING THIS SUMMER??**

Summer is the time when we may travel on many vacations and adventures. The whole of life, however, is one major journey.

Be prepared for any vacation or journey in your life by taking along this important daily survival kit. It is sure to protect you in all your travels.

### **Daily Survival Kit**

**TOOTHPICK** - to remind you to pick out the good qualities in others.

Matthew 7:1 Judge not, that you be not judged.

**RUBBER BAND** – to remind you to be flexible. Things might not always go the way you want, but it will work out.

Romans 8:28 We know that in everything God works for the good of those who love him, who are called according to his purpose.

**BAND AID** – to remind you to heal hurt feelings, yours or someone else's.

Colossians 3:12-14 Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience, forbearing one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; - as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.


**PENCIL** – to remind you to list your blessings every day.

Ephesians 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.

**ERASER** – to remind you that everyone makes mistakes and it's okay.

Genesis 50:15-21

When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil which we did to him." So they sent a message to Joseph saying. Your father gave this command before he died, Say to Joseph, Forgive, I pray you, the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you. And now, we pray you, forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, "Behold, we are your servants." But Joseph said to them, "Fear not. For am I in the place of God? As for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, to bring it



about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones.” Thus he reassured them and comforted them

**GLUE** – to remind you to stick with it, and you can accomplish anything.  
Philippians 4:13 I can do all things in him who strengthens me.

**MINT** – to remind you that you are worth a mint.  
John 3:16-17 For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.

**CANDY KISS** – to remind you that everyone needs tender loving care, or a kiss or a hug everyday.  
John 4: 5-8 So Jesus came to a city of Samaria called Sychar, near to the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Jacob’s well was there, and so Jesus, wearied as he was with his journey, sat down beside the well, It was about the sixth hour. There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her. Give me a drink.

**TEA BAG** – to remind you to relax daily and go over your list of blessings.  
1 Thessalonians 5:18 Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

**CANDLE** – to remind you to share Jesus Christ with others.  
Matthew 5:16 Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in Heaven.

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## **SIGN SEEN ON A CHURCH**

Prevent truth decay.  
Brush up on the Bible.



## ECW Hosts the Father's Day Breakfast



The ECW hosted a sit-down breakfast in honor of Fathers on June 18 in the Parish Hall. The event was open to all parishioners. Last year's breakfast was a "grab-and-go" affair. It was nice to return to sitting down together and enjoying a meal. The menu included scrambled eggs, pancakes, waffles, hash browns, onion rings, bacon, turkey sausage, fruit, muffins coffee, tea, and juice. Parishioners were treated to restaurant style dining as they ordered their meals from a menu and had them brought to the table by ECW members and church volunteers. Thank you to ECW and all who participated.

Melanie Jackson



## LA GRACIA CELEBRATES FATHERS DAY



Celebrating Father's Day is essential for several reasons. Not only does it acknowledge the vital role fathers play in their families and communities, but it also provides an opportunity for spiritual growth and connection. That is why every year La Gracia has a wonderful Father's Day celebration which includes lunch for the whole congregation, gifts for all the fathers and singing competitions and raffles.





## SUCCESSFUL CHURCH BAZAAR



Dear Grace Church Family,

Saturday, June 10<sup>th</sup> was a blessed day for our fundraising Bazaar. The good and sunny weather brought out a constant stream of people coming to browse and buy. It started at 10:00 AM and lasted till about 4:00 PM.

But the biggest blessing was the hard work and great spirit of so many people here at Grace/La Gracia. So many people helped in many ways. There were donations of all kinds of goods. Some things were popular and sold well. Then there were those who helped organize and set up in preparation for the Bazaar and, of course, the approximately 32 volunteers who were selling all day long.



All of this resulted in not only a very successful Bazaar, but also showed our commitment to this church and to each other as a community of faith. In total the church was able to raise from the Bazaar a total of \$4,000.00.





We hope that the success of this Bazaar can lead to another annual tradition that celebrates our spirit of unity, fellowship and one church working together. Special thanks to Camille Worrell for organizing and putting together this activity. Her dedication, along with the help of many volunteers, made this event successful.

Father Adolfo+

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# Lifting Up Westchester

## 2023 Student Essay Contest



The topic for this year's Lifting Up Westchester youth contest is "Mental Health and Homelessness" and it is one that presents challenges for all of us. And yet this topic was met head-on by 8<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> graders in ways that show a maturity of thought well beyond what we would expect of such young people. It is well worth our time to read what these students think about this timely and important topic. Reading their thoughts should also give us a wonderful sense of hope about the future that will eventually be in their hands.

Mental health influences how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Family illness, job loss, divorce, not doing well in school, being bullied, hunger, poor housing and becoming unhoused are just some of the things that can trigger mental health issues. This can result in emotions such as anxiety, depression, or loneliness. We have all certainly gone through the last pandemic years that have impacted all of us in ways that influence our mental health, and the most vulnerable among us may not have been able to survive.

As the CEO of LUW, Anahaita Kotval, has said: "Students shared deeply personal stories about their own challenges with mental health. But as they researched the underlying causes of homelessness, they learned that mental health issues are not the primary cause of individuals becoming homeless. With this knowledge, many of them suggested ways to help end the stigmas attached to both mental health and homelessness so that we can all work toward a better future for everyone."

This LUW Westchester essay contest is an annual contest that was established in 2017 in memory of Beth Massey Rubens, a 40-year resident of Scarsdale and lifelong teacher, tutor, and mentor who had a love for language arts. It is open each year to all students attending school in Westchester in the 7<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grades with winners in the four categories of 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades, and English as a Second Language. A panel of 49 judges select the ultimate winners and cash prizes are awarded.

The winners of this year's Lifting Up Westchester youth essay contest have been announced. As in past years, over the coming year, the Angelus will be publishing the first-place winning essays in each of the four categories.



# The Obstacle to Progress

By Le Wang, Edgemont Senior High School

9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade winning essay

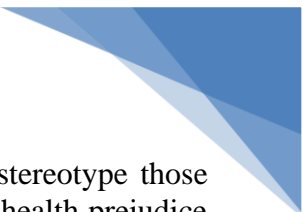
The media has shown us there are a few categories of homeless people, whether it be the drunk man, the drug addict, or the criminal. All three have one thing in common; they're always shown as dirty, lazy, and dangerous.

But where do these views and stigmas stem from? Typically, fear and inadequate understanding of others cause a negative association with certain groups of people. This also leads to generalized or inaccurate depictions in media, which only serves to enforce certain prejudices or stereotypes. Society's stigma of displaced people is no exception. Homeless populations have been painted as unclean, criminal, lazy, individuals who deserve their situation, when often the situation is more nuanced and complicated. For instance, nobody deserves to be impoverished, as in many cases, events out of their control can push individuals or households into the streets. There is a myriad of factors that can cause homelessness, including lack of accessible housing, causing individuals or entire households out of a home; domestic violence, as many survivors lose their residence when escaping an abusive relationship; racial inequality, as minorities make up a disproportionate amount of the homeless populations due to systemic socio-economic inequality; mental health, as those with mental illnesses and without proper healthcare increases the risk of homelessness. When these people are stripped of a residence, they lose the right to many basic human necessities. For example, lack of access to proper healthcare, bathroom facilities, and employment opportunities are common issues. This often means that displaced people aren't able to take care of their physical and mental health or resort to crime just to survive.

Similarly, another example of stigma is how those with mental illnesses are viewed. People may characterize them as unreliable, potentially dangerous, or crazy, similar to how people view homeless people. Due to these overlaps in prejudice, society has begun to associate homelessness with mental illness.

It is very important to note that having a mental illness does not guarantee homelessness and vice versa. Though being homeless and having issues with mental health are linked, as one can influence the other. For example, being homeless can influence and exacerbate mental illness, as the social isolation, stigma of being homeless, lack of stability and poverty can all factor into stress or depression. Similarly, a mental illness may make it difficult to complete tasks necessary to maintain an income or housing, making it more likely for them to become homeless.

The risk of mental illness that the homeless experience is especially dire for young children, as according to SAMHSA, as losing your home can cause trauma for everyone, regardless of age. But, when young children experience this trauma, there's only a short period to address it, or else it'll detriment their development, causing problems when they become adults.



But there are significant barriers to solving these issues, as the way we as a society stereotype those struggling only serves to marginalize an already struggling group. For example, mental health prejudice prevents many from seeking help, as they're scared of being labeled "psychotic" or "crazy".

Similarly, the stereotypes we hold towards homeless people go beyond language and perception; these stereotypes are reflected in the justice system, the healthcare system, and public infrastructure that create barriers for displaced populations. Moreover, discrimination isn't limited to policies, as many homeless people may be the target of physical and verbal acts. In fact, according to a study done by the U.S. Department of Justice in 2010 indicates that compared to the 2% of the general population that has experienced violence from policemen, that number goes up to 49% for homeless individuals. What's worse is that these individuals are often too afraid to report these incidents, for fear of being arrested. It's evident that stigma only serves to further exclusion, as many homeless people may keep their economic and housing circumstances private, which discourages them from seeking services or aid.

As Mother Theresa once said, "We think sometimes that poverty is only being hungry, naked, and homeless. The poverty of being unwanted, unloved, and uncared for is the greatest. We must start in our own homes to remedy this kind of poverty". It's crucial that the way we think about mental health, homelessness, and how they affect each other needs to be changed to ensure progress with both issues. The best way to start with changing society's opinion as a whole is starting with "our own homes", or yourself. The best way to combat stereotypes is through education and research, and to learn all the distinctions and nuances. For instance, before sitting down and researching homelessness, I was unaware of how complex the issues harming them were. But, through learning more about the topic, I have begun to think of mental health and lack of housing as intertwined problems. Helping displaced people requires changing your perceptions, and helping them long-term. This is also why organizations, such as Lifting Up Westchester must provide aid to those without residence. Lifting Up Westchester is providing long-term aid, lifting those in need, which will help alleviate financial, safety, and mental health issues. Through supporting those in need, Lifting Up Westchester is not only able to support individuals, but uplift their families and our community as well.