

MORE GOOD NEWS

Festival
veterans
yearn for new
blood

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THIS ISSUE IS A GIFT OF LB SECURITY & INVESTIGATIONS



Try making your attitude one of intense gratitude

These summer days offer many things to be grateful for – weather outings and festivals as well as friends and families having some time to be with each other; add a few road trips and maybe your feet in the sand at a beach.

We're thankful for gardens filled with flowers and good things that end up on the table to eat. Gratitude in summertime is a holy and helpful attitude to practice.

A Duke University researcher says, "If thankfulness were a drug, it would be the world's best-selling product with its health benefits for every major human organ system."

Actually, gratitude, in recognizing our need for it and our need to express it, is the basis of so much good virtue.

Think about it. The most loving persons you know are people who are grateful about life and everything. So often, the most holy people we know are the people who are most thankful even for the little things.

Many times, the most miserable and sad people are those who seem to never show gratitude for much at all, only wanting more rather than giving thanks for what they already have.

When it comes to caring and serving others, if not rooted in an attitude of gratitude, even our care for the other person might become only self-serving. We end up carrying their

cross but sending them the bill.

There is so much for which to thank God and our Catholic faith: children having made First Communion, babies baptized and loving couples anointing their marriages before the altar in church. Then there are so many volunteers who take part in parish life and worship, way beyond just being at Mass on the weekend, and so much real work by many to make a parish festival a success admired by the wider community.

But gratitude takes effort and practice; it doesn't come easy for many people with problems, stress and the hurts they carry.

A tragedy left a family with a void nothing could fill. Their little boy chased a puppy into the street and lost his life when a car raced by.

The boy's older sister saw the accident and she was encased in sadness and a cold emptiness for years — no joy and no reason to be thankful for much in life.

Later, as a young mother herself, she discovered that in the Bible the words grace and joy come from the Greek word "chairō," the word for thanksgiving. She then decided to write out her thanks for 1,000 gifts she already had — job, family, changing seasons, etc. And so her new-found joy and gratefulness began to flow freely.

Driving around we all have read bumper stickers on the back of cars or trucks; some are clever ... some can't be repeated here.

But I saw a wonderful bumper sticker that challenged my own attitude of gratitude. It simply said in bold letters, "**Too blessed to complain.**"



FATHER JIM

PARISH MINISTRIES

Over the next several issues of "More Good News," we will list information on several parish ministries. If you are interested in any of the following, call the parish office at 735-1482.

Religious education

Religious education teachers volunteer to share their faith with children and adults. Classes are from September through April in the Scalabrini Center. Classes are taught by volunteer high school students and adults. There is a diocesan training program for new catechists (teachers). Each catechist is expected to complete the Safe Environment Program with the diocese and have a background check done.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

RCIA is a process that welcomes adults and children older than age 7 into the Catholic church. Persons wishing to complete their sacramental initiation would be welcomed into this process. Members of the parish are catechists for these adults. We invite you to participate as a candidate for initiation, catechist or sponsor.

Youth ministry

We offer service opportunities in the large community for grades 7-10 through our Faith Formation program, as well as the opportunity to raise funds for those in need.

Bereavement visitation

Volunteers convey sympathy to family members of the deceased. A Mass card from the parish and a single rose is brought to the home. This committee also is responsible for the annual Mass in November for family members and friends who have lost someone during the previous year.

PARISH WEBSITE: THE LATEST INFORMATION

Visit www.mountcarmelblessedsacrament.com for the latest parish news and announcements. There's even a

mobile version for your smart phone. You can donate online and check out our social media sites and more.

PHOTO GALLERIES



BULLETIN

A Community on a Journey of Faith November 21, 2011

ST. MARY OF MT. CARMEL BLESSED SACRAMENT PARISH
 648 Jay St., Utica, NY 13501 • www.mountcarmelblessedsacrament.com
 Facebook: www.facebook.com/mountcarmelblessedsacrament

Worship Services
 Mass: 7:00 AM, 8:30 AM, 10:00 AM, 11:30 AM, 5:00 PM
 Sunday: 8:00 AM, 10:00 AM
 Reconciliation: Saturday 3:00 PM

Parish Office
 648 Jay St., Utica, NY 13501 • 735-1482
 Fax: 735-1482
 Email: parish@mountcarmelblessedsacrament.com
 Website: www.mountcarmelblessedsacrament.com

Parish Council
 President: Fr. James J. O'Connell
 Vice President: Fr. James J. O'Connell
 Secretary: Fr. James J. O'Connell
 Treasurer: Fr. James J. O'Connell
 Members: Fr. James J. O'Connell, Fr. James J. O'Connell

Parish Ministries
 Religious Education: Fr. James J. O'Connell
 RCIA: Fr. James J. O'Connell
 Youth Ministry: Fr. James J. O'Connell
 Bereavement Visitation: Fr. James J. O'Connell
 St. Vincent de Paul: Fr. James J. O'Connell
 St. Elizabeth: Fr. James J. O'Connell
 St. Ann: Fr. James J. O'Connell
 St. Joseph: Fr. James J. O'Connell
 St. Michael: Fr. James J. O'Connell
 St. Raphael: Fr. James J. O'Connell
 St. Thaddeus: Fr. James J. O'Connell
 St. Timothy: Fr. James J. O'Connell
 St. Titus: Fr. James J. O'Connell
 St. Tarcisius: Fr. James J. O'Connell
 St. Zeno: Fr. James J. O'Connell

... AND MORE

- Father Jim's "Wise and Otherwise"
- History of the parish
- Lector, minister, altar server schedules
- Mass schedules
- Parish news
- Ministries
- Event calendar
- Weekly reflection on Sunday's readings
- "More Good News" magazine
- Links to our social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube.

Time to pass festival torch to a new generation



The traditional procession around the church grounds in 2015 became known as the Walk for Mary's Children. Nonperishable food and monetary donations are collected that are given to local food pantries and soup kitchens to assist with increased need for meals while children are not in school.

By FRAN PERRITANO

For Marge Hanrahan, volunteering and helping coordinate the annual Parish Festival in honor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel is a family tradition.

Marge, chairwoman of the Buona Fortuna raffle, has been at it for more than two decades. It's also something she hopes and prays the younger generation will continue.

"My great grandparents worked on the first festival, probably small in scale but nevertheless, important, especially since we honor Our Lady of Mount Carmel," Marge said. "This heritage has been passed down from my grandparents to my parents and now to me. As we become older, it's important to know our heritage and tradition, and be able to pass it down to the younger people of our family.

"Hopefully, the younger people will be able to pass down the torch to their children and remind them of the many years that our beloved Mount Carmel Festival honoring Our

ITALIAN FESTIVAL 2016

Friday, and Saturday, July 15 and 16: 5 to 10 p.m.

Sunday, July 17: Noon to 5 p.m.

ENTERTAINMENT

Friday: 5 to 7 p.m. Frank Cannistra; 8 to 10 p.m. Joe LaPaglia

Saturday: 5 to 7 p.m. Joey Nigro & John Nilson "Ciao"; 8 to 10 p.m. Classified

Sunday: 2 to 4 p.m. La Banda Rosa

Lady has been taking place. This would be my wish and hope for the young people of our parish."

Another veteran is Terry Reale, the person who is responsible for the longest line during the three days of the festival – she coordinates pizza frita.

Terry also believes the only way for the festival to continue its decades-long tradition is

for the younger generation to step up and step in.

"This is the most important of all," she said. "We must keep the tradition going. From the 'secret recipe' for our dough, the handling of the dough machine, the raising, cutting and shaping of the dough and frying, right on down to the sugaring and bagging is a process that's unique to our parish and, hopefully, one we can continue to take great pride in."

Jackie Mancuso Thibault has been working at the festival since she was a kid growing up in the Mancuso family. Her husband, Bill, has been associated with it for 38 years. Though they love what they do, they believe it's time to pass the tradition on to a new generation.

"I know that I am continuing a tradition that my family has participated in for over 50 years," Jackie said. "It's like a big family reunion that is fun and exciting to see friends and family who are not always around. Our volunteer numbers are shrinking each year. We

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A CONVERSATION WITH ... BOB FONTANA

Spreading a little sunshine

Bob Fontana has been a fixture in our parish for years. He went to school at Mount Carmel, he and his family are lifelong parishioners and he has been a part of the music ministry since the 1980s. But at the "ripe old age" of 53, Bob says it's time for a change. So, for the person that likes to make people smile, he hopes to do that at the "Happiest Place on Earth."

How did you develop a love for music and singing?

I have always loved singing and music. I grew up knowing all the words to every Carpenters song ever made (they were the No. 1 singing group of the '70s). I took guitar lessons but was never very good because I never practiced. I know how to play piano and I own a piano, but once again I never mastered it because of lack of practice. I love singing and took voice lessons over a two-year period, I learned a lot about breathing, diction and phrasing. I joined the choir in 1988. It has been a thrill singing with such a wonderful, warm and devoted group of people. I went to many cantor workshops over the years, which really helped me develop and grow as a cantor.

What are you feeling when you lead the church in song?

I can't really answer that, since it depends on the music and the mood at that time. I am not a performer; I am a human with emotions and feelings. The liturgy team at Mount Carmel is incredible (the best I have ever seen), so they set things into motion with the readings, the decor and, of course, the music. I am a cantor; it is my task to lead the people in the music of the liturgy. I am a leader and I am part of the congregation. What you see is 100 percent genuine. I am not acting or pretending. I get the best and warmest feeling when I make contact with people during the music. I love to see people singing because I am not a soloist, I am just the leader. Making eye contact and seeing smiles and other expressions of emotion, that is so incredible. Sometimes, the words in the music or the expression on a parishioner's face gets me. Sincerity, emotion and connection are all the elements of a good liturgist and liturgy. I think we get that at Mount Carmel.

You and your family are intertwined with the parish. Your father is an usher, your mother a greeter and you are a cantor and attended grammar school here. What does this parish mean to you?

Mount Carmel is home. I graduated from Mount Carmel School 40 years ago (Class of 1976). I was an altar boy for years. So many family celebrations (weddings, funerals, sacraments) have been made at Mount Carmel. I used to attend the early morning Mass as often as I could before the school day started. Aside



Bob Fontana has an optimistic outlook on life and how we all should live: "We need to be a blessing in each other lives. We need to give ourselves to each other, especially those in bad circumstances (health, financial, emotional). The Lord has given each of us gifts; they are not ours to keep. They should be shared."

from the familiar surroundings are the parishioners. I get such a warm feeling from them. I get so much more than I give the church. The church is not the building, it is the people getting together in community prayer, That's what Mount Carmel is, a community. I feel so blessed to be part of such a welcoming and dynamic community. I fear that when I move every other church will pale in comparison to Mount Carmel.

You are a faith-filled individual. Did someone instill that in you or did you learn it on your own?

Funny, I think my mom was the one who really instilled that in me. It's funny because she was a lifelong Methodist until she married my father (a lifelong Catholic). She converted to Catholicism and really embraced and embodied what it is to be a Catholic. As children, she always got us to Mass each Saturday night. She still urges her children and grandchildren to get to church. She instilled in us that God should be a part of our lives every day. She is the most Christian person I know. If a friend

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BOB FONTANA

Age: 53.

Occupation: Health program administrator, New York State Department of Health Division of Hospital and Diagnostic and Treatment Centers.

Education: St Mary's on South Street, St Mary of Mount Carmel, Clinton High School, AAS in business management from Mohawk Valley Community College, BS in accounting and MS in computer science from SUNY.

Family: Father Robert, mother Gail, sister Debra, brother Michael. Cats Max and Winston.

Things you like to do in your spare time: Running, weight lifting, cycling, cooking and baking, spending time with Max and Winston.

Favorite movies: Disney animated musicals.

Favorite TV show: "Once Upon A Time."

Favorite music: 1980s pop (Elton John, Billy Joel, Cher, Madonna, Cyndi Lauper, etc.)

Favorite quote: "Every day, be a blessing in someone's life."

She's riding high in saddle

Horses bring Rachel to her 'happy place'

Rachel VanDeusen is a good student and altar server; loves playing sports and watching YouTube videos and enjoys spending time with her friends. But her real passion involves tall, four-legged creatures. Rachel is a lover of horses and really loves to spend time riding them.

How and when did you start riding horses?

I started taking lessons in second grade when I was 7. Since I was very young, I have always had a love for horses. My Dad's friend owns a horse and she was nice enough to let me ride her horse, and now her daughter is my trainer.

Why do you like horses so much?

Horses bring me to a happy place. If I'm having a bad day, seeing of the horses brightens my day. I find horses to be amazing animals and one day I hope to pursue a career which involves horses.

Do you have a favorite horse?

I have a few favorite horses, Pink Floyd and Moe. Pink Floyd was the first horse I learned to ride, but he had to be put down, and Moe is the horse I ride now; although I have to say, all the horses I am around and ride I love.

What kind of music do you listen to and what kind of YouTube videos do you watch?

I will listen to almost any kind of music. My favorite kind of music is pop. A few of my favorite groups are Troye Sivan, Pentatonix and Adele. I watch makeup tutorials, or videos that are just for entertainment.

At school, you're a hard worker and will be taking four advanced courses. Is that a lot of work and do you like doing it?

During the 2016-2017 school year, I will be taking four advanced classes – English honors, AP world history, trigonometry and chemistry. Taking these classes is a lot of work and very time consuming, but I like that I have the ability to advance and it's rewarding to be ahead.

You're an altar server at Mount Carmel / Blessed Sacrament. Why did you want to become a server?

I became an altar server because I liked watching the servers during Mass when I was younger. Once I was old enough I joined and I had a great serving team when I first started, so that was a bonus.

What's your favorite part about serving?

My favorite part is knowing that I am helping the church. It is great that we have Father Cesta as our priest because he's a great guy, kind, funny and good to be around.

What do you like best about our parish?

I love the beauty of our parish; the artwork is



RACHEL VanDEUSEN

Age: 14.

School: Will be a sophomore in the fall at Westmoreland Central.

Family: Mom Sandy, dad Rob, brother Mark and a large extended family.

Things you like to do in your spare time: Be with friends and family, listen to music, watch YouTube videos and horseback ride.

Favorite movie: "Flicka."

Favorite TV show: "Grey's Anatomy."

Favorite musician or entertainer: "Troye Sivan."

Favorite book: "The Fault in Our Stars."

beautiful. All of the paintings and stained glass are amazing to look at.

In the future, how would you like to continue to serve in the parish?

I will continue to volunteer at the parish festival for years to come. I will continue to attend Mass as I get older and maybe will even get married there as I am the fourth generation to attend Mount Carmel / Blessed Sacrament.

Is faith a big part of your life?

Faith is a good part of my life. I have attended the religion classes at Mount Carmel / Blessed Sacrament since first grade and I have always attended Mass with my family. I think about my faith quite frequently.

What would you like people to know about you?

My family and friends are a great part of my life and I cherish the time I spend with them. I work hard on everything I do. My education is very important to me and I think ahead to try to plan my future. I plan to go to college for something in the medical field. I am thinking about radiology or equine therapy. I love to travel and plan to travel all over the world. I like to take pictures so I am able to see all the moments of my life journey.



Mount Carmel in Israel is 1,791 feet above sea level and is northwest of the village of Isfiya. The name, dating back to biblical times, is derived from the Hebrew kerem (“vineyard” or “orchard”) and attests to the mountain’s fertility even in ancient times.

July: The month of Our Lady of Mount Carmel

As with any month in the Christian calendar, July celebrates the holy works of a myriad of saints and revered personalities of the church on any given day.

For our parish, the most important celebration this month is that of Our Lady of Mount Carmel on July 16. Other than patroness of our parish, St. Mary of Mount Carmel is patroness of the Carmelite order, two countries (Chile and Bolivia) and several cities in Latin America, the Philippines and Italy. She is sought for protection from harm and dangerous situations, as well as deliverance from Purgatory.

The Carmelites have a history that goes back to the 13th century. At that time, several laymen were living as hermits near the well of the prophet Elijah (see the Book of Kings in the Bible) on Mount Carmel in the Holy Land. In the area of their cells was a chapel dedicated to the Holy Mother.

They eventually began to leave their immediate area as mendicant friars, begging for alms near and far. It was St. Albert, patriarch of Jerusalem, who finally organized the group,

giving them the Rule of St. Albert, “a formula for living which expressed their own eremitical ideals . . . and reflected the spirit of the so-called pilgrimage to the Holy Land and of the early community of Jerusalem.”

The Carmelite rule subsequently was approved by the Vatican (1226, 1229, 1245, and 1247 – four times). The multiple amendments to the rule were needed as the members immigrated to the west to escape persecution. In 1291, their home in the Holy Land was destroyed.

The focus of the Carmelite Order takes its cue from Elijah’s life of contemplation and holy devotion. The First Order is composed of friars. The Second Order is composed of nuns, who are cloistered. The Third Order is composed of lay people who live in the world, can marry and express their devotion through prayer and apostolates.

By the 17th century, the Carmelites had reached their height. They came into conflict within the church with other orders, especially the Jesuits who questioned their origins and the source of their scapular. A sign of Carmelite devotion, the scapular was said to first have been given by the Virgin Mary to St. Simon Stock, an early prior general of the order. It was believed that he/she who died wearing the scapular would be saved.

Though we tend to associate the scapular

with the feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel today, the original feast had no such associations. Pope Pius II placed it alongside the rosary in Marian devotion.

The contestation has not been dropped over the years, however. In fact, during Vatican II, the matter was brought up again. The Carmelites refer to the scapular in this fashion: “The scapular symbolizes the special dedication of Carmelites to Mary and expresses our trust in her motherly protection, as well as the desire to emulate her commitment to Christ and to others.”

St. Teresa of Avila was a Carmelite nun and is one of the “Doctors of the Church.” She wrote extensively on prayer as “the royal road to heaven on which everyone is invited to travel.”

She delineates three types of prayer: vocal prayer – those set with words; mental prayer – an attentive awareness of the God whom we are addressing; and contemplative prayer – a type of prayer we cannot achieve on our own but rather by disposing ourselves to be open to the Spirit’s activity in us. She believed that the greatest fruit of prayer is in doing good works of love toward others.

Whether one wears a scapular or not, we all can mark this special time in our parish calendar through prayer and good deeds as a sign of our devotion.



A.J. VALENTINI

FESTIVAL

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who volunteer are always looking to welcome anyone who is willing to learn and experience the excitement of our festival. If we do not have new and younger volunteers to find their niche for the weekend, who knows how long we can go on.”

Though it seems that way, the festival just doesn't happen overnight. Planning begins for the following year nearly immediately after the festival ends. Serious preparation by the Festival Committee of about 15 to 20 volunteers starts a few months before opening night.

And unlike the thousands of people who enjoy the good food, rides and games, these hard-working people sometimes don't get to do the same. But there is great satisfaction nonetheless.

Bill Thibault, who is the sound and music coordinator and also helps with setup and take-down, said he's "satisfied that I helped my parish with a great fundraiser."

He does, however, get a chance to be a "normal" person during the festivities.

"During the entertainment breaks, I wander about conversing with friends and eating great food," he said.

Stephen Geary is in charge of keeping the beer flowing at the festival. He's been at it for nine years. Despite the long hours, it does have its rewards.



Marge Hanrahan, left, and Janice Felitto in the Buona Fortuna booth in 2015.

"I enjoy seeing old friends," he said. "I enjoy being part of the regulars that come back year after year and put the festival together. When the festival is going on I usually don't think about eating until late and food is running out for the night. I rarely get to hear the live music playing. Aside from that, I enjoy Saturday night the most. That is the night all of my siblings, in-laws, nieces and nephews that can make it show up."

MaryAnn (Mimi) Leone said she does find time to enjoy herself despite working in the café where she's responsible for ordering pas-

tries, setting up, decorating, recruiting volunteers, serving, being the cashier, boxing donated cookies and cleanup.

She's also concerned about the festival's future if younger people don't step up.

"As time goes on, the current event planners will no longer be able to continue due to aging and health issues," she said. "We need younger parishioners to start learning the ropes along with achieving a rewarding experience of giving. If this does not happen, the festival, which is a beautiful Italian tradition in Utica, may cease to exist within the next 10 years."

BOB FONTANA

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needs something, like a ride to the hospital for a cancer treatment or some special prayer, she gets it done. She is really the best example of a Catholic and Christian that I know. I try to follow her example.

At one time you considered becoming a priest and spent the summer of 1975 at St. Charles Seminary on Staten Island. Was it a hard decision to turn away from that choice?

Yes and no. I really wanted to serve, and I believed for several years that my calling was to become a priest. I am confident that I would have been a very good priest. God spoke to my heart and told me that I could serve the church in other ways. I loved music and had a strong faith. Entering the music ministry ended up being my calling. I really feel that God gave me the guidance. In looking back, I think the right path was followed. I have been blessed to touch so many lives through music at Mount Carmel, Masonic Home, the Vatican (2012 pilgrimage) and other venues.

Sadly for the parish, you plan to retire and move to Orlando. How did that decision come about?

I am not really retiring. I am leaving New York state service. Thirty years as a government employee is a long time. I am looking forward to the start of a new journey. For as long as I can remember, I have planned on set-

ting down in the Orlando area. From the time we were children, my parents took us to Florida every other year for vacations. I have a passion for Disney and I hope to work for that company in guest relations (God willing). I love people, I love smiles, I love happy faces, so Disney seems like the place I should be. There are no guarantees, but that's my dream. I would love the opportunity to make people happy. I also am active (running, cycling, hiking), so New York winters are stifling; just another reason to make the move.

Is it a tough choice, leaving the place and parish where you grew up and worshipped?

Leaving Mount Carmel is probably one of the most difficult things about the move. However, I really hope to take the parish with me. I want to cantor at a church in the Orlando area. I feel I still have a lot to offer a church. Hope everyone here keeps me in their thoughts and prayers.

What will you miss most?

I will miss family and friends the most. They know where I live and I am only a two-hour flight away. Maybe some of my family will eventually follow me down to Florida; we will see. I hope to cantor at Mount Carmel when I come to visit in New York.

What's the best advice anyone gave to you?

I grew up obese and did not have many friends. I suffered a lot of verbal and physical abuse from people who could not accept me. That really impacted me and has taken me many years to work through the scars to my self-esteem. I remember coming home after school in tears wondering why people could not accept me for who I was. I had a good heart full of love, yet for many, my exterior seemed to be all that mattered. I lamented in having few friends. I will never forget the words my mom said to me one night as I sat in solace. She said, "Don't worry. It's not about having a lot of friends; it's about having some really good friends." To this day, that is at the core of who I am.

What's the best advice you can give to someone?

I am a firm believer in being a sincere follower of Christ. We need to live as He wants. We need to be a blessing in each other lives. We need to give ourselves to each other, especially those in bad circumstances (health, financial, emotional). The Lord has given each of us gifts; they are not ours to keep. They should be shared. We all need to be the best that we can be. The definition of a person's success is not about how much money they earn, but about the impact they make in the lives of others. Jesus took up the cross for us; we should now take up that cross for others. "Love one another as I have loved you."



'Do this in memory of me'



Fourteen children received their First Holy Communion on Sunday, May 1. These images were captured by Adam Brockway Photography. See more of Brockway's photos at www.mountcarmelblessedsacrament.com and www.adambrockwayphoto.com.

