

A Look Inside **St. Mary's Parish** Community

Connection

SUMMER 2006



PHOTO BY GREG TRACY, THE PILOT

Jim McDonough Appointed Chancellor of the Archdiocese

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Archdiocese of Boston on June 5. McDonough succeeds David W. Smith, who retired after 15 years with the archdiocese, for the last five serving as chancellor.

As chancellor, McDonough will serve as the chief financial officer and assistant clerk of the Corporation Sole. The chancellor has responsibility for the financial management of the archdiocese including budget, financial reporting, cash management, investments, risk management, MIS, benefits, human resources, cemeteries, real estate and facilities.

“Jim will work as part of a new leadership team in developing strategic initiatives that will help us restore financial stability and revise the organizational structure of the archdiocese,” said Cardinal O’Malley, announcing the appointment.

“Jim’s strong management and leadership skills, combined with his commitment to the Church, will serve us well as we seek to carry out our mission,” he added.

The cardinal characterized the financial condition of the archdiocese as “dire” at an April 19 press conference held to unveil extensive financial disclosures and a fiscal recovery plan.

McDonough, the fifth lay chancellor in the archdiocese, was previously the CEO of Abington Savings Bank, where he worked for over 26 years. During his time there, the bank became a well-managed institution that was valued by customers and employees. McDonough went from running the bank's retail and lending operations to becoming president and chief operating officer in 1990. Two years later, he became CEO.

Within the local banking community, Jim gained prominence during the 1990s, building the Abington Savings into a nearly \$1 billion institution while holding top posts with the Massachusetts Bankers Association, the industry's main local trade group, which he chaired from 1999 to 2000. Prior to his banking experience, he was a teacher and coach for the Weymouth Public Schools.

McDonough said he looks forward to the opportunity to use his business skills to advance the mission of the Church.

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A Message from Fr. Chris



Dear Parishioners,

It is with great joy that I write to you in the second edition of our parish newsletter. The first edition was very well done and extremely well received by the parish. It was

Tip O'Neil who said, "All politics are local." I say, "All church is local." Father Connor and I love our parish and our ministry to you.

Our summer weekends are filled with weddings, baptisms, funerals, and of course our regular weekend liturgies. The weekdays are filled with community meetings, programming and different prayer and parish events. All of this shows a vibrant parish for which we are so grateful. We would like to thank you for your involvement and support.

I was recently approached by someone who is going to make St. Mary's their parish. They were overwhelmed by the hospitality of the parishioners, saying, "Your spirit is both evident and contagious."

In a special way, we would like to thank all those who make St. Mary's a welcoming and prayerful community that truly enriches each of us.

As St. Mary's continues to grow, Father Connor and I hope to secure a vision for the future and remain appreciative of the many who assist us day to day.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Father Chris

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"I saw it as an opportunity to give back to the Church," he said. "I've been very blessed in my life and have had much good fortune." McDonough said he will be supported in his work by Cardinal O'Malley, parish priests and archdiocesan employees.

"I'm excited to see such a wonderful, talented group of people I'll have to work with — both people who have volunteered their time so willingly and the employees here who have worked under difficult conditions for several years," he said.

"My first goal is to meet and get to know the people that I work with and come to understand what it is they do," he added. "This is a very different operation than a bank but some of the same general principles apply here."

McDonough said he wants to identify the "best practices" in place at parishes across the archdiocese and help other parishes implement them.

"Jim has been a devout supporter of our parish family and we are very excited about his appointment. We couldn't be happier for him. The Archdiocese made an excellent choice."

— Fr. Chris

Asked about the financial status of the archdiocese, McDonough said that he recognizes the financial challenges ahead and has confidence that they will be overcome. McDonough also emphasized that financial transparency is an important part of improving the archdiocese's financial condition.

"Cardinal Seán has made it very clear—and I couldn't agree more—that financial transparency is a part of the fabric of the Archdiocese of Boston," he said.

Save the Date

Please mark your calendar with these important upcoming events.

Saturday, September 9 – Parish Picnic (following 4 pm Mass)

Sunday, September 24 & Sunday, October 1 – Confirmation (6 pm)

Friday, October 20 – Outback Night

Saturday, November 11 – Parish Carnival & Bazaar (10 am)

Mike Callahan: *He'll do anything for you!*

As in many successful organizations, there are those unsung heroes who work diligently without fanfare in the background, but without whom much necessary work would not get done. St. Mary's has one such bedrock personality in Mike Callahan, our self-proclaimed "full-service maintenance man." Mike follows in the footsteps of the many hardworking, dedicated men who have held the position before him here at St. Mary's.

Mike and his four brothers grew up in St. Brigid's Parish and attended the parish elementary school there. Like many "Southie" and Dorchester natives before him, Mike has migrated south of the city and now resides in Weymouth. In his spare time, Mike likes his share of sports. He played hockey a bit back in the day, and these days enjoys playing golf and rooting for his favorite sports teams.

Mike has been employed by St. Mary's on a full-time basis since late in 2005. Prior to that he worked at St. Mary's for two years part-time. Fr. Chris discovered Mike during his one-year tenure as pastor of St. William's Parish in Dorchester. At St. William's Mike was working as the Director of Facilities, overseeing the upkeep of the church property including the school and all the grounds. Mike had worked at St. William's for 18 years. As to his time with Fr. Chris at St. William's, Mike says, "He's a great guy. We hit it off right from the start."

Mike has been honing his many skills doing this type of work for over 20 years. During most of that time he has worked in a parish setting, beginning at his home parish of

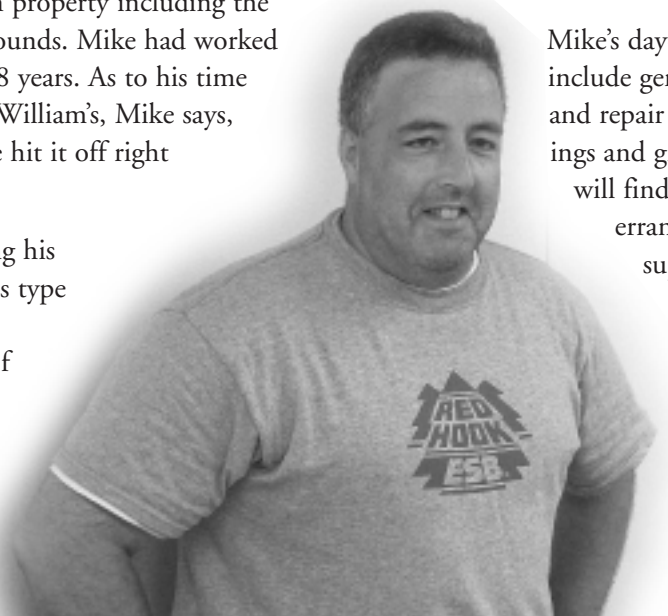
St. Brigid's. Through his determination to save the parishes money, he has picked up a lot of skills along the way. Simply stated, Mike's intent is "Save money wherever you can. That's always in the back of my head."

"I'm extremely happy and lucky. The people are fantastic. St. Mary's is a beautiful parish."

Besides being skilled and resourceful, Mike is very dedicated. Those who encounter him in his work at the Parish say, "He'll do anything for you." Our quintessential handyman is charged with many tasks. As he puts it, his job description "...runs the gamut. I look at my job as 'whatever the parish needs.' There was never a specific job description. I try to be as flexible as I can." His assigned work hours are 8AM to 4:30PM. That will vary sometimes because Mike is true to his stated flexibility and will work late when needed or come in early to meet a service person, etc. He usually works Saturday and takes off Sunday and one day during the week.

Mike's day-to-day tasks include general maintenance and repair of the parish buildings and grounds. Some days will find him running errands or picking up supplies. As with many jobs, he has found himself doing unusual things like taking people to the airport. Probably the most unusual

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A Place of Healing Grace

Following intercessory prayer with guest priest Father Tom DiLorenzo at the February, 2002, monthly healing service at St. Mary's, one of its youngest parishioners, 4-month-old Grace Elliot experienced a wondrous physical healing.

The third child of Jim and Emily Elliot, Grace had been diagnosed with vesicoureteral reflux, a condition in which the urine ducts or ureters were located on the outside of her bladder, rather than inside it. As a result, urine would flow in reverse from the bladder infecting her kidneys and if left untreated, renal scarring would occur. The day of that particular healing service, Jim and Emily had learned during a pre-operative consultation at Children's Hospital that additional complications caused by her condition and young age heightened the risks associated with the surgery.

The couple's faithful prayer life had been supporting Grace from the time Emily had sought God's will on whether to become pregnant again, through the discovery of her

infant's life-threatening illness and the dilemma of high risk surgery. The night of the healing service at St. Mary's Church in February, Grace gurgled in Emily's arms as they passed the Tabernacle where Father Tom laid prostrate on the floor prior to the service. He sat up and asked to hold the baby, immediately asking what was wrong with Grace's bladder, though he knew nothing of the Elliott family or the baby's condition. After singing and praying as he rocked the baby in his arms, he told Emily that Grace had already been healed and made her promise to have the baby retested before surgery.

Despite the odds, a sudden opening occurred in the radiology schedule prior to the surgical date. Grace was tested, and it was confirmed that her tubes were visibly relocated and her kidney and bladder were in perfect working order. The operation was cancelled and the surgeon was impressed by Father Tom's "intuition" about the timing of the baby's "spontaneous resolution." Asked about this when he was told the good news, Father Tom, who also has a renowned healing ministry and daily radio show replied, "The Lord must have said it. He must have given me a 'word of knowledge.'"

For fifteen years, St. Mary's parish has been faithfully hosting a monthly healing service. While the church was being enlarged in 1991, a parishioner felt moved during prayer by the words, "This will become a place of healing." In response, a new healing ministry was organized by the members of St. Mary's prayer group to serve the needs of the parish and the community.

The numbers of people drawn to the services has continued to grow over time and attendance can range between 300 and 700 people. The healing services typically begin by celebration of the Eucharist and they are presided over by various guest priests involved with healing



The Elliot children

ministries. Numerous healings have been reported and proclaimed by those who have encountered Jesus during these gatherings and have experienced spiritual, emotional or physical restoration. These healings cannot be easily explained. People with great faith and people without faith have experienced healing after attending healing services here. They remain part of the mystery of our loving God.

Father Edward McDonough, whose Healing and Restoration Ministry is known worldwide, has presided at many healing services at St. Mary's. He teaches, "Healings are a sign that God's promises are true, and that Jesus is with us allowing us to share in the victory of His life, death and resurrection. At the same time, God answers our prayer according to His loving plan." For this reason, not everyone who seeks a physical healing will be healed.

While people who have attended St. Mary's healing services have reported astonishing physical healings, Barbara Tobin, who schedules the visiting priests, emphasizes that people are drawn to the services for many reasons. "Sometimes people having relationship problems or struggling with addictions come. Others feel perfectly fine and just want a chance to experience God's grace and blessing." She finds that many first time participants are amazed at what is going on and never expected to find this in a Catholic Church, never mind right here in their own parish.

Steve Renner, a 30-year-old parishioner, agrees. "I had drifted away from the church for several years. Then one night a few years ago, I was driving by St. Mary's, saw all the cars and something led me to stop and go in. I witnessed a healing, a miracle. A person was able to put down crutches and to walk again. After that, I kept coming to the healing services and I began returning to Mass on Sundays. When I am

there, I feel calmer. The Holy Spirit makes your spirit feel more full."

Barbara Tobin hopes that more parishes begin to hold healing services, because she feels that it is one approach, among others, that helps to build a community of faith. She notes, "Life Teen masses are another vibrant example of people uniting to pray together and for each other. No matter what age we are, our ultimate goal is to know the loving presence and gentle touch of Jesus and His Holy Spirit."

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and that Jesus is with us allowing us
to share in the victory of His life, death
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God answers our prayer according to His loving plan."**

— Father Edward McDonough

St. Mary's is indeed a place of healing grace and a blessed church! ■



A Busy Parish

Spring and Summer have been busy times here at St. Mary's.

- > **On April Fools Day, an energetic crowd enjoyed our first "comedy night."** Over 200 people were entertained by several of Boston's funniest comics, while raising money for the parish.
- > **In late April, our second annual St. Mary's Gala & Auction** was another rousing success. Parishioners gathered to celebrate and bid on an amazing array of auction items. As usual, dinner with Fr. Chris was among the hottest items.
- > **June saw our first ever St. Mary's Golf Tournament**, held at the Plymouth Country Club. Over 120 golfers braved the heat and humidity to challenge the hills and fairways, all in good fun and for a good cause, St. Mary's LifeTeen program and the Appalachian Service Project.
- > **In July, over 80 members of LifeTeen, their core members and adult chaperones traveled to Oak Ridge, Tennessee** to spend a week working to assist underprivileged residents. (Look for a full report in an upcoming issue of the newsletter).
- > **The last week of July** saw our fifth annual Vacation Bible School, which was once again "sold out." More than 125 children spent the week learning, playing and sharing during the week.

If you have not had a chance to participate in any of these or the many other spiritual and social opportunities here at St. Mary's, now is a great time to get involved. We'll be looking for you soon!

"Going My Way" a Blast from the Past

Growing up Irish and Catholic in Boston assures you of several shared life experiences. Among them is a guarantee that, at some point in your formative years, you will have been treated to a large family gathering that ended long after midnight with all of your aunts and uncles singing "the old songs." The singing may have been off-key, the volume too loud and the words a bit slurred, but everybody had a grand time. As a youngster, you were secretly thrilled to be allowed to take part in such a "grown up" party.

All of those old feelings came flooding back to me when I sit down to watch "Going My Way," Father Chris Hickey's weekly talk and variety show on the Boston Catholic Television cable network (channel 56 on your local cable dial). As the garrulous host of the program, Father Chris turns on his Irish charm (as well as his beautiful tenor voice) in hosting a different fellow priest each week.

Do you remember being astounded the first time you saw a priest in "civilian" clothes? It was simply assumed that priests were the original men in black, with no other life than that of the church. Father Chris tries to dispel this myth by bringing out the talents and interests of his guests, and by sharing his varied gifts. It is a half hour of funny and poignant stories, jokes and memories.

And music, always music. Father Chris and his guest inevitably make their way to the piano to provide us with wonderful renditions of old Irish favorites and selections from the "Great American Songbook."

Close your eyes and you'd think you were back in your parents' overcrowded living room, perched on the arm of the sofa, listening to your favorite uncle lead the family in "one more song." Warm memories indeed. ■



PHOTOS: CATHOLICTV.ORG

Mike Callahan > continued from page 3

work that he has done was to travel as a chaperone with St. Mary's LifeTeen group to World Youth Day in Germany last summer. Even there his troubleshooting talents were put to good use when he found himself called upon to fix badges and rig poles for banners.

From his many years working in parishes, it almost goes without saying that Mike "loves the parish life." Although, if you asked him in his formative years if he would have foreseen himself as working in a parish, his answer would have been, "Never." When asked about St. Mary's in Hanover in particular, he tells us: "I'm extremely happy and lucky. The people are fantastic. St. Mary's is a beautiful parish." Mike truly enjoys being part of the family here and it appears that the feeling is mutual.

It is evident when talking to this all-round good guy that family is important to him. He has learned the value of keeping things in perspective after his family went through the ordeal of being there for each other when one of his nieces had a serious illness. To sum up, Mike's philosophy in life is "Just be. Don't take the highs too high or the lows too low. Try to be even keel. Try to see the big picture."

Fr. Chris summed up his thoughts on why Mike is such an asset to St. Mary's by telling us, "It was with great sadness that I had to let Mike Callahan go after 18 years of service to St. William's of Dorchester (when it was closed and became part of Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta parish). A very good side effect of this was that Mike was able to bring all his years of caring for a church here to St. Mary's. I feel very fortunate to have someone here who cares so deeply about his role as caretaker of the parish property." ■

Lifeteen Hanover: So Much More Than a Youth Group

by Chris Murray

If you were to ask me what the biggest thing in my life has been this past year, I'd tell you "Life Teen." I wouldn't even have to think about it. Not only has this program brought great joy into my life, it has shaped me into the person I am today, and it continues to shape me into the man I will become.

Back in November of 2004, when I first came to Life Teen, I was an atheist, I didn't have many friends, and there were several things about myself and my life that I wanted to change. I originally started coming because it was fun and it was something to do with my Sunday nights. But I kept coming because I fell in love. In love with Life Teen, with my new friends, the CORE members, and, for the first time ever, I was beginning to fall in love with Jesus Christ. For the first time in my life, I felt really happy with the way things were going.

Over the past year and a half my faith has grown tremendously. I've had my struggles. But Life Teen retreats, World Youth Day in Germany, and the countless other Life Teen events that I've participated in have all helped to strengthen the relationships I have with Christ and my peers.

Life Teen has given so much to my life. I owe to it many of my closest friends, my relationship with Jesus and my faith in God, and perhaps even my life's calling. I currently plan on majoring in either theology or youth ministry when I go to college in the hopes that I may one day be a youth minister.

No matter what I end up doing with my life, I profoundly believe that my experiences with Life Teen will have a long lasting effect on my life. Life Teen Hanover is so much more than a youth group, it's an amazing program that truly changes the lives of those touched by it.

Your Brother in Christ,

Chris

St. Mary's LifeTeen Mass is celebrated at 6 pm every Sunday night. "Pizza & Prayer" is held in the LifeHouse every Monday at 6:30 pm. Please contact our Youth Minister, John Barata, or Assistant Youth Minister, Pete McNulty, for more information, or visit www.lifeteenhanover.com.

COMING UP! Look for "The Edge" for sixth and seventh graders, coming this Fall.

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