

# A Look Inside St. Mary's Parish Community Connection

SPRING 2007

## Fr. Martin Connor: *The Quiet Side of St. Mary's Priestly Dynamic Duo*

Throughout history there have been many dynamic duos—Huntley & Brinkley, Starsky & Hutch, Batman & Robin, Penn & Teller, to name a few. St. Mary's rectory has its own dynamic duo in the team of Fr. Chris Hickey and Fr. Martin Connor. It is an unusual pairing in that the pastor, Fr. Chris is the younger of the two, but no one can dispute that it's a formula that works well here.

As with any great team, it works well thanks to the great chemistry between the two individuals. Fr. Chris' outgoing nature is balanced by the seemingly unflappable presence of Fr. Connor. When asked about how it is to work and live with Fr. Connor, Fr. Chris answers, "In spite of any joking that we do with each other, we live and work very well together as two good friends. It's a very happy rectory because of him. Truthfully, what a joy it is to live with him!"

Fr. Connor has been assigned as Parochial Vicar to St. Mary of the Sacred Heart parish since shortly after Fr. Chris arrived as our new pastor almost three years ago. Fr. Connor requested this assignment after having spent 27 years as a Spiritual Director at St. John's Seminary in Brighton. When he arrived here, Fr. Connor was not a stranger to many of us at St.

Mary's though. He has enjoyed a long relationship with the parish dating back to 1964 when his first stint as a priest fresh out of the seminary was here in Hanover. He spent five years here serving with then pastor, Fr. Callahan.

After his time at St. Mary's, Fr. Connor was next assigned to St. Charles in Woburn, where after four years of service there he was asked to come to work at the seminary. To prepare for his post at the seminary, Fr. Connor spent three years in Rome at the Gregorian University doing graduate work. He returned from Rome after having received a Licentiate in Theology, which Father explains is a degree earned that falls somewhere between a Master's and a doctorate, i.e., essentially it involved all the work for a doctorate degree except for the dissertation.

Fr. Connor's work as Spiritual Director at the seminary consisted of running retreat and conference programs for the seminarians as well as teaching courses in Spiritual Theology. Of the 27 years as Spiritual Director Fr. Connor tells us that he "loved the seminary work." Back when Fr. Connor started as Spiritual Director, there were about 250 seminarians enrolled at St. John's. It was at St. John's



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## A Message from Fr. Chris



As you read this, our Lenten journey is coming to an end and we anticipate the great joy of the holiest days of the year in the Sacred Triduum. I thank everyone involved in producing this newsletter which has

become a great source of information for the happenings of St. Mary's.

In this addition, you will read of the many events here in our parish both spiritual and social. Please mark your calendar to be with us when you are able. Why not invite a friend to feel the love and spirit that is St Mary's parish family.

Enjoy with great interest the article about Father Connor!

In the priesthood, it is a common sentiment that a happy rectory makes for joy-filled Masses. I'm sure you will be interested in the Father Connor article that expresses how lucky he feels to live with yours truly. I have lived with me for many years and I know how lucky he feels.

Seriously, Father Connor and I enjoy a wonderful working relationship and very loving friendship, which we hope, helps us to serve you here at St. Mary's. We pray together to strengthen one another as we conclude our Lenten Journey and look to the joy of Easter in the risen Lord.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Fr. Chris". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Father Chris

## Fr. Martin Connor [→ contributed from page 1](#)

Seminary that Fr. Connor first met Fr. Chris who was enrolled there as a seminarian and who stood out in his own inimitable way.

Several times over the years, Fr. Connor's work took him beyond the bounds of the seminary and beyond the bounds of the Archdiocese of Boston. Memorable for him were the times he brought groups of seminarians to South America to see how the Catholic Church operated there. There were five trips in all to the South American continent—three to Peru, and one each to Ecuador and Bolivia. He also led a retreat to the island of Guam.

During his 27 years of working and teaching at the seminary, Fr. Connor continued his relationship with our parish in Hanover by coming every Sunday to help out with the saying of Mass. This was how many of St. Mary's parishioners came to know and love him. He also helped out at other parishes too, such as St. John's in North Cambridge and St. John's in Quincy where for many years he would spend the better part of July and August.

Fr. Connor's roots are in Boston, having grown up with an older brother and a younger sister in St. Ambrose parish located in the Fields Corner section of Dorchester. His early school years were spent at St. Ambrose Grammar School. From there he went to Cathedral High School where after graduation he entered St. John's Seminary in Brighton. At that time training for the priesthood involved eight years of study—four years of college and four in Theology school.

As Parochial Vicar here at St. Mary's, Fr. Connor's time is filled with sacramental duties such as saying Mass, hearing confessions, bringing the Eucharist to homebound parishioners, and administering to the sick. Our priests at St. Mary's are on-call at South Shore Hospital two days each month, which is a mission that is shared with about a dozen other parishes on the South Shore. Fr. Connor also makes hospital visits at the specific request of parishioners as well. Besides his sacramental duties, Fr. Connor is available to meet with people when making arrangements with the parish such as for weddings, etc. He has done some one-on-one instruction with people wishing to join the Catholic Church, which is in addition to his being Spiritual Leader to the parish's RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) program.

For the future, Fr. Connor would like to institute some new programs in the parish geared toward religious education for adults. We as parishioners would benefit greatly from the tapping of this rich source of theological

knowledge that we have here in Fr. Connor. In addition to the knowledge and wisdom that he has amassed through his formal training over these many years, Fr. Connor is an avid reader who can recommend a book on religious topics past and present.

In his spare time, besides picking up a good book, Fr. Connor likes to visit with his brother and sister and their families. He has always been involved in the lives of his nieces and nephews, and now continues with his grand nieces and grand nephews. Last year Fr. Connor traveled to Rome on a tour accompanied by some parishioners from St. Mary's. The trip was a success and Fr. Connor says that he has had requests to do another trip, so stay tuned for more on that.

“...we live and work very well together as two good friends. It's a very happy rectory because of him.”

— Fr. Chris Hickey

Maybe it is the luck of the Irish that has brought Fr. Chris Hickey and Fr. Martin Connor together here in our midst. For Fr. Chris' perspective of their coming together here, he tells us “How exciting it is that Fr. Connor is able to be in the parish where he began his ministry some 40 years ago. And how wonderfully we work together so that I am able to work with the young folks and Fr. Connor is able to oversee so much of the other ministries here in our parish.” Fr. Connor answers with his point of view of Fr. Chris with the words, “We get along well. He has tons of energy which is nice to see. (It's great) to see the response of the young people to him. There's a good core of teens in this parish that take advantage of the program. They come from other places too as well.”

As a final thought Fr. Connor shares his feelings about being back at St. Mary's: “I think Hanover is a great town. It was like coming home when I came back here. I still knew a lot of people. There are a lot of new people. It's a young, vibrant parish. People are very loyal here in the parish. They are very generous with their time and their talents. I think a lot of people get involved in the parish that other people don't even know about. I think it's a wonderful community, both our church and the town itself. There's a nice relationship here between the churches here in Hanover, too. I enjoy it very much.” What more can we say? The feeling's mutual, of course!

## Some facts about St. John's Seminary

St. John's Seminary opened on  
September 22, 1884

First class: 32 seminarians (1884)

Current enrollment: 42 seminarians  
preparing for the priesthood

Dioceses currently represented at  
St. John's Seminary: Boston; Manchester,  
NH; Portland, ME; Burlington, VT;  
Fall River, MA; Springfield, MA

Countries represented by seminarians  
enrolled in St. John's Seminary: 14

\* From a February 2, 2007 press release about Cardinal O'Malley's appointment of a new rector. For the full text of the release, visit <http://www.rcab.org/News/releases/2007/statement070202-2.html>

# Frequently Asked Questions About Holy Week and Easter

## Why do we distribute palms on Palm Sunday?

The palms recall the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem before his passion and death. Crowds lined the road welcoming Jesus to the city, and laid branches from the trees or reeds on the road before Jesus.

In the first part of the liturgy on Passion (Palm) Sunday we commemorate and reenact Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. Palms are blessed and given to those present to carry in procession.

Some of the palms blessed on Passion Sunday will later be burned to provide ashes for use in the Ash Wednesday liturgy the following year.

## Why do we cover the cross and statues during Holy Week?

At one time we covered all the statues in church and, most of all, the crucifix. One reason for this tradition is that, in the past, the cross was often jeweled, and you wouldn't display the cross of the resurrection during the Lenten liturgical season. As the centuries wore on, we began to cover the cross during Holy Week in order to unveil the crucified Jesus on Good Friday, rather than to cover the Easter cross of the resurrection.

## What are the three days of the Triduum?

The conclusion of Holy Week (which starts on Passion Sunday) is called the Easter Triduum. Triduum is an interval of three days that are devoted to special prayer and observance. The Easter Triduum begins Thursday of Holy Week, called Holy Thursday. This is the day of the Last Supper, when Christ had his last meal with his

disciples and instituted the priesthood, and the Eucharist or Holy Communion as a sacrament.

Holy Friday or Good Friday is devoted to the remembrance of the trial, crucifixion and suffering, death, and burial of Jesus. We come forward in procession to venerate the cross.

Holy Saturday is the seventh day of the week, the day Jesus rested in the tomb. In the first three Gospel accounts this was the Jewish Sabbath, a day of rest.

The Easter Vigil consists of much solemnity. The church is darkened, a new fire is lit and used to light the Pascal Candle, from which those attending light their own candles, bringing light into the darkness. The black cloth is removed from the religious figures, the altar is adorned with white lilies, holy water is blessed for baptisms and other rites during the year. The Alleluia is once again sung at the news that Christ has risen from the dead.

## Why does the Easter Vigil Mass start so late?

It is possible that the Jewish observance of the lighting of the lamps on the eve of the Sabbath influenced the Christian liturgy.

As the Vigil begins, the church is in darkness. The people usually gather outside of the church. A fire is struck. From this fire the Paschal candle is lit. The people hold candles, lighting them from the Paschal candle, then process into the church, led by the "pillar of fire," recalling the people of Israel's sojourn in the wilderness.

The Easter Proclamation is given, usually chanted. This is the Exultet, "Rejoice now, all heavenly

choirs of angels, and celebrate the divine mysteries with exultation; and for the victory... ” Then comes a series of readings from the Old Testament, focusing on the themes of creation, water, and deliverance.

Following ancient tradition, the Easter Vigil is also a time for baptizing those new to the faith (whether infants or adults), and receiving candidates into full communion.

### Why are there so many readings during the Easter Vigil?

The traditional nine Scripture readings from the Old Testament recount the unfolding of God’s creation of a people in the Exodus, and a promise of restoration. This emphasizes the continuity of the church with the Old Testament’s witness to God, and also helps define the nature of the church and its mission in the world, thoroughly grounding it in the ongoing work of God in history. Each pastor may choose the number of readings (3-9), although the reading from Exodus 14 is always included.



## Holy Week Calendar



### April 5 Holy Thursday

**7:15 pm**  
Mass of the Lord’s Supper, followed by Adoration

### April 6 Good Friday

**3:00 pm**  
Living Way of the Cross  
**7:15 pm**  
Liturgy of the Lord’s Passion

### April 7 Holy Saturday

**8:30 pm**  
Easter Vigil Mass  
Please gather at **8:15 pm** for Service of Light  
*(Vigil fulfills Sunday obligation)*

### April 8 Easter Sunday

Masses  
**7:00 am**  
**8:15 am**  
**9:30 am**  
**11:30 am**  
LifeTeen  
**6:00 pm**

# A Cautionary Tale

There was a painter named who was very interested in making a penny where he could, so he often thinned down his paint to make it go a wee bit further.

As it happened, he got away with this for some time, but eventually the local parish decided to do a big restoration job on their church.

The painter put in a bid, and, because his price was so low, he got the job.


So he set about erecting the scaffolding and setting up the planks, and buying the paint and, yes, I am sorry to say, thinning it down with turpentine.

Well, the painter was up on the scaffolding, painting away, the job nearly completed, when suddenly there was a horrendous clap of thunder, the sky opened, and the rain poured down washing the thinned paint from all over the church and knocking the painter clear off the scaffold to land on the lawn, surrounded by telltale puddles of the thinned and useless paint.

The painter was no fool. He knew this was a judgment from the Almighty. So he got down on his knees and cried, “Oh, God, forgive me; what should I do?”

And from the thunder, a mighty voice spoke...

“Repaint! Repaint! And thin no more!”



## Mass Schedule

<b>Weekend Masses</b>	
Saturday	4:00 pm
Sunday	7:30 am 9:30 am Family Liturgy 11:30 am 6:00 pm LifeTeen

<b>Weekday Masses</b>	
Monday-Friday	7:30 am
Saturday	9:00 am
Tuesday	7:15 pm

<b>Confessions</b>	
Saturday	3:00 – 3:45 pm

## Save the Date!

St. Mary's annual Gala is scheduled for Saturday night, April 28th. This event has proven to be an enjoyable evening for all. Make plans to attend! Contact the parish office at (781) 826-4303 for more information.



## Mass and Parish Information on the Web

Log on to [www.stmaryshanover.com](http://www.stmaryshanover.com) for up-to-date information on Mass schedules and parish activities.

## Lifeteen Hanover: *a place to make friends, hang out, and be you*

*by Colleen Zuzevich*

When I used to think of church, I think of when I was little. I thought it was boring. My favorite part of the Mass was when the Priest read the announcements because that meant that it was almost over. Mass was never really something I thought about. As a family we'd wake up get ready and go to church. Once I got older, we stopped going to church every Sunday, we really only went on holidays.

In the summer of my sophomore year, I was introduced to Life Teen Hanover (LTH). When I first came, I didn't really know what to expect. I just thought it was going to be a normal Mass, but only teens were going to be there. Oh, how wrong I was! I'll never forget the first time I saw Father Chris walk out in his green what ever that thing is. He asked if anyone was new, so I raised my hand. He told me to stand up and say my name and where I was from. I stood up and said "I'm Colleen from Carver." At that moment, I felt like I belonged there.

LTH isn't only about going to church and believing in God, it's a place to make friends, hang out and be you. LTH has given me so much, and there are so many good things to say about it. The most important thing to me is that you always have a place to feel loved, no matter what. The most important thing I was taught at LTH was that if you can wake up every morning look in the mirror and say, "God made me, God doesn't make junk. God loves me, so I love me." As John says every Sunday "I love you, God loves you, PASS IT ON!"

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