



Branches on the Vine

MAY 24 - 30, 2025



PHOTO BY JOE PISANI
As a child growing up in India, Father Ajeesh Ouseph learned how to make rosaries.

OUR LADY'S ROSARY MAKERS

- Story by Joe Pisani

When Ajeesh Ouseph was a boy growing up in India, his family would gather before dinner to sing religious songs, read the Bible and pray the rosary. His mother's devotion to Mother Mary had a strong influence on him. "From childhood, she used to pray the rosary, and she told me to carry it with me all the time," he says. "It is insurance that Mary is with you."

He has prayed the rosary every day since he was a boy and believes his devotion to the Blessed Mother and the influence of his parents led him to the seminary and his love of making rosaries, a skill he learned from a family in his hometown.

He still recalls when 54 seminarians would kneel in the grotto before the statue of Our Lady of Lourdes, praying together for Mary's guidance and protection.

Ordained on Jan. 5, 2018, in the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church in India, Father Ouseph came to the Archdiocese of Hartford in 2023. Today, he serves as parochial vicar of St. Elizabeth of the Trinity Parish, with churches in North Haven, and St. Ambrose Parish, with churches in Northford and North Branford.

"I introduced the rosary and explained its importance and told 'them (the participants)' it's a spiritual weapon that gives us Mother Mary's protection," Father Ouseph says. "Then, I showed them step-by-step how to make one."

When he celebrated his first daily Mass at St. Barnabas Church in North Haven, about 15 to 20 women stayed afterward to pray the rosary; so, he joined them. This gave him the idea to share his love of the rosary with parishioners and teach them how to make their own handcrafted rosaries from materials that came from his native India.

"We shared our intentions and prayed," he recalls. "Then, one day the thought came to me, 'Why don't I teach them how to make a rosary?'" When Father Ouseph later returned to his hometown in Konni, India, he purchased the necessary materials to make rosary beads -- including wooden beads and pieces of cord.

However, due to the weight restrictions on his flights, he was only able to transport half of the rosary materials. He also had to leave behind some food his mother made him.

Last autumn, the priest held two rosary-making classes at St. Barnabas Church Hall, attracting some 65 people. "As we made the rosaries, we listened to a Gregorian chant, and I explained that making the rosary is not a craft project but a spiritual activity," he adds.

Last year, Father Ouseph made 100 rosaries and was able to sell them for \$5 apiece at one of the church's Christmas bazaar. The revenue benefitted the parish. He gave away a few remaining rosaries as gifts.

Since coming to the United States and getting his first car, Father Ouseph says he always keeps a strand of rosary beads in the vehicle. Before driving, he says a "Hail Mary" to seek Our Lady's protection on the road.

Rosary-making classes are held regularly for parishioners of St. Elizabeth of the Trinity Parish and St. Ambrose Parish. For more information and to sign up, call parish offices at **203.239.5378** or **203.484.0403**.

For class dates later this year, visit stelizabethofthetrinity.org or nbcatholics.org.



Upcoming Events



05/31 SATURDAY 9AM - 2PM

ST. ANN FLEA MARKET

St. Ann Church, Fr. Bennett Hall,
289 Arch Rd, Avon

Discover hidden treasures at the St. Ann's Flea Market. From vintage finds to unique crafts there will be something for everyone. All proceeds go to support Two Hearts Pregnancy Care Center, which recently moved into a new building, have additional expenses and needs financial help to provide much-needed prenatal and postnatal help to their young mothers.



05/30-06/1 WEEKEND 6PM

IN MY LOVE, ABIDE: WOMEN'S RETREAT

Holy Family Passionist Retreat Center,
303 Tunxis Rd, West Hartford

Jesus calls us to remain in love as the branches remain with the vine for life and sustenance. We know that Jesus prayed often and taught his disciples to do the same. Pope Francis has named this year a "Year of Prayer." He described it as "a year dedicated to rediscovering the great value and absolute need for prayer in one's personal life, in the life of the Church, and in the world." Since prayer is a means of holding that connection between humanity and God, we invite you to come and explore the depths of a life of prayer and learn ways to maintain the sacred connection to God through Christ, the true vine. Conferences and workshops will be offered along with the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Celebration of the Eucharist.

The retreat begins with a buffet dinner from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. on Friday evening and concludes Sunday with the celebration of Mass at 10:45 a.m., followed by a hot brunch at noon. Families of retreatants are most welcome to attend the Sunday Mass and brunch at no extra charge.

Visit www.holyfamilyretreat.org/calendar/women06 to reserve your spot.



06/7 SATURDAY 9:30AM - 3PM

PENTECOST RETREAT DAY

Sacred Heart on the Lake Retreat Center,
194 Candlewood Hill Rd, Higganum

This Retreat Day is open to all men and women of Faith. On the Eve of PENTECOST SUNDAY we will spend time in Prayer like the 12 Apostles, Mary and the other Disciples awaiting the Coming of the Holy Spirit. We will pray with the 7 Gifts and the 12 Fruits of the Holy Spirit that they might penetrate us so deeply that the Holy Spirit, once again, might set us & the world on Fire with Jesus' Spirit of Love, Power and Might.

Presenter- Sr. Lany Jo Smith, ASCJ- Donation asked \$35.- Includes a Continental Breakfast and a Full Lunch.

To register online go to sacredheartonthelake.org or call Sr. Lany Jo at 203-606-9102.



06/18 WEDNESDAY 10AM

4TH ANNUAL GOLF CLASSIC

Country Club of Farmington
806 Farmington Ave, Farmington

Our Lady of Knock Parish will be hosting the 4th Annual Golf Classic, great time to be had by all! Great prizes, fun competitions, exciting raffle prizes and great silent auction items! If you are interested in joining us on June 18th, register by heading over to our website ourladyofknock.org/golf.

10:00 AM - Registration/check-in (free range availability)

11:00 AM - Lunch served

12:00 PM - Shotgun start (scramble format)

5:00 PM (after a full day of fantastic golfing) - Cocktails (cash bar) with dinner to follow at 5:30 PM

2025 ARCHBISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL

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Total Goal: \$10M

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