

March 2026: News, Resources & Upcoming Diocesan Events

This pastoral newsletter includes news, events and resources. For recurring events, please see the individual office newsletter.

Office of Human Life & Dignity

UPCOMING EVENTS

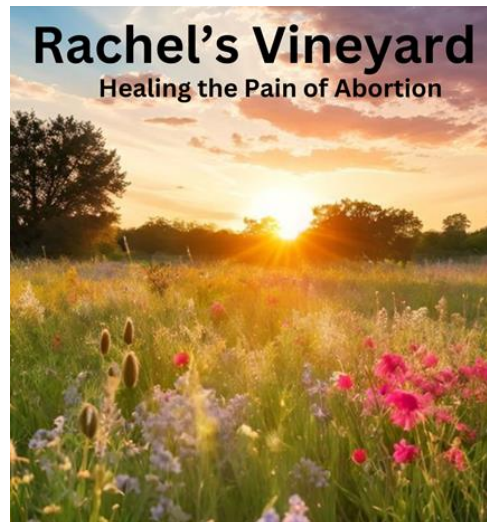
Rachel's Vineyard: Healing Weekend Retreats

Are you struggling from an abortion? This retreat will help you move beyond any guilt, shame, or anger you have. Experience God's mercy and compassion in a safe, confidential, non-judgmental group environment.

April 17-19, 2026
Washington, NJ

To register or learn more, contact LeahSoulFilledByGrace@gmail.com, or call/text (609) 709-3479.

Sponsored by Lifechoices, Inc.
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NEW JERSEY Catholic Mental Health CONFERENCE

SAVE THE DATE
SATURDAY
MAY 2, 2026
 8:30AM - 3:15PM

**From Isolation to Belonging:
 Mental Health and the Catholic Church**
 A statewide gathering to strengthen understanding, compassion, and pastoral support for those facing mental health struggles.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Most Reverend Bishop John P. Delan, Bishop of the Diocese of Phoenix, AZ, will keynote for his leadership in mental health initiatives, his commitment to education and advocacy, and his efforts to integrate mental health support into the fabric of the Catholic Church on a local and global scale.

ADDITIONAL PRESENTERS

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- CLERGY/RELIGIOUS
- PARISH LEADERS
- MINISTRY VOLUNTEERS
- EDUCATORS
- MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS
- AND ALL seeking deeper understanding of mental health and how the Church can respond.

SATURDAY MAY 2, 2026
 ST. JOHN NEUMANN PASTORAL CENTER
 146 METLARS LANE, PISCATAWAY, NJ 08854

NJCONF.COM

Visit njconf.com to sign up for updates and be notified when registration opens.



New Jersey Catholic Mental Health Conference

With 1 in 10 adults in the US and over 1 billion people worldwide affected by mental health issues, everyone from clergy to educators to lay faithful are invited to attend this conference entitled "*From Isolation to Belonging: Mental Health and the Catholic Church*" on Saturday, May 2, 2026, at the St. John Neumann Pastoral Center in Piscataway, NJ. The fee to register is \$40 and is limited to the first 300 registrants. Please visit njconf.com for more information.

Text Link

[Press Release](#)

Resources



ST. GIANNA NOVENA: APRIL 19-27

From April 19-27, thousands of Catholics across the country will unite in prayer for pregnant and parenting moms in need, for whom St. Gianna is a powerful intercessor.

Download the novena or sign up to receive it daily

by email at walkingwithmoms.com/saint-gianna-novena.

Text Link

WORD OF LIFE: MAY 2026

The [May 2026 issue of Word of Life](#) is available in English and Spanish. [Word of Life](#) is a monthly resource for dioceses and parishes that includes monthly special features, intercessions, bulletin quotes, and graphics. Previous editions can be found in [the archive](#), and anyone can [subscribe to receive Word of Life](#) directly by email.

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MOTHER'S DAY AND FATHER'S DAY FAMILY ACTIVITIES

The parish action guides for [Mother's Day](#) and [Father's Day](#) include recommendations for presenting spiritual bouquets to [Our Blessed Mother \(Spanish\)](#) and [St.](#)

[Joseph \(Spanish\)](#), respectively. The action guides include options for doing these activities as a parish community or by individual families.
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Office of OCIA

Stages of the Catechumenate

The Office of OCIA is pleased to announce that it will be hosting three formation events, beginning on Saturday, September 26. These formation events, which will be held at the Pastoral Center, will provide parish OCIA Directors and Team Members with an in-depth analysis of the various stages of the Catechumenate, beginning with arguably the most important stage, the Pre-Catechumenate, which aims to foster an initial conversion and a personal encounter with Jesus Christ. The second session will be held on Saturday, November 14. The last session, focusing on the final stages of the Catechumenate, including the Period of Mystagogy, is scheduled for Saturday, January 23, 2027. We are also exploring the possibility of offering a Friday night option for those who are unable to attend the Saturday sessions. Dr. Bill Keimig, Director of the Catechetical Institute at Franciscan University of Steubenville, will lead all three sessions. We are also hoping to collaborate with the Association for Catechumenal Ministry (<https://acmocia.org/>) to provide our people with the resources they need to bring people into a closer relationship with Jesus Christ. Of course, if anyone has any questions or concerns, please contact Adam Carlisle, Secretary for Evangelization and Communication, at
Text Link

Contact: For questions pertaining to OCIA, please contact rcia@diometuchen.org

Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministry

NJ Catholic Youth Rally 2026!

SUNDAY, MAY 17TH AT SIX FLAGS GREAT ADVENTURE



SCAN!



Ticket Package: \$70

(Includes: Parking For Your Group, Park Admission, and Meal Plan)

If you have a Six Flags Season Pass you do not need to purchase a package

**Add
Ons:**

Mega Meal Deal Plan: \$20

(Includes: 1 drink, 1 snack, and 1 meal)

All Day Sport Bottle: \$20

(Free refills all day)

NJ Catholic Youth Rally Schedule

9:00am-9:45am: Gates open for Opening Ceremony

9:45am: Opening Ceremony

10:30am-6:00pm: Rides open to enjoy!

5:15pm: Doors open for Holy Mass

6:00pm-7:15pm: Sunday Holy Mass)

8:00pm: Park closes

**Open
To:**

JR. High
High School
Young Adults
Families
and All!

To pick up/print your Tickets:

Option 1: When you sign up (on givesmart.com), please select that you want the Diocese to print your tickets. Then please arrange with the Office of Youth and Young Adults to pick up your tickets at the St. John Neumann Pastoral Center (146 Metlars Lane).

Option 2: When you sign up (on givesmart.com), please select that you want to print your own tickets. The Diocese will put your email address in the ticket system, and you will be emailed all of your tickets for you to print.

*I've tasted and seen, of the sweetest
of Loves
Where my heart becomes free, and my
shame is undone
In Your Presence Lord*



NJ CATHOLIC YOUTH RALLY 2026

NJ Catholic Youth Rally 2026!
Sunday, May 17th at Six Flags Great Adventure.

We invite you to come for a day filled with a dynamic opening ceremony (hosted by the Diocese of Metuchen), many rides, and a concluding Holy Mass!

Please see **sign-up link here:**
<https://fundraise.givesmart.com/form/-4AuPA?vid=1pazyq>

As we await final steps from six flags, please start to consider how many tickets you would like per your youth group/parish/school.

More details about the day can be found on the Diocesan Website at: <https://www.diometuchen.org/youth-rally>

God Bless!



The Rutgers Catholic Experience

April 19, 6PM

Join us for 6PM Student Mass, pizza, and
see what college life is *really* like!

Junior and senior high school students and parents welcome!

94 Somerset St, New Brunswick, NJ The first 10 students to register will receive a Chick-fil-A gift card!



The Rutgers Catholic Experience

The Catholic Center at Rutgers is inviting all High School Juniors and Seniors to join us at the Rutgers Catholic Experience this Sunday, April 19th at 6PM at St. Peter's Church, New Brunswick, NJ.

Join us for 6PM Student Mass, pizza, and see what college life is *really* like!

RSVP using this link by Friday, April 17th.

First 10 to RSVP get FREE Chick-Fil-A gift cards!

Whether or not you're coming to Rutgers, this night will be a great opportunity to have your questions answered about what life in college is like! More details in the flyer below.

Hope to see you there!



Jay Donofrio
Director, Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry
(732)-243-4576
jdonofrio@diometuchen.org

Office of Multi-Cultural Ministries



Sr. Miriam Perez, SSC
Coordinator for Multicultural Ministries
732-529-7933
mperez@diometuchen.org

Office of Family Life



Do you or a loved one experience Same-Sex Attraction?
Support is available from the Courage/EnCourage ministry.

Courage is for Catholic men and women who desire to live chaste lives following the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.

EnCourage is for loved ones of those who experience Same-Sex Attraction.

Courage Contact:
732-562-2476
couragecnj@gmail.com

EnCourage Hotline:
609-642-6935
All Calls are Strictly Confidential

Visit www.courageRC.org



DIOCESE OF
METUCHEN

SURVIVING DIVORCE

“Respect needs to be shown especially for the sufferings of those who have unjustly endured separation, divorce or abandonment” - Pope Francis

FOR MEN AND WOMEN SEEKING HEALING FROM SEPARATION OR DIVORCE

8 WEEK PROGRAM, WEDNESDAYS, 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM

April 15 - June 3, 2026

at the St. John Neumann Pastoral Center
146 Metlars Lane, Piscataway, NJ 08854

This program, while based on the teachings of the Catholic Church, is open to anyone who needs comfort, counsel and clarity after a divorce.

“Surviving Divorce” is an 8 week program, featuring a thirty-minute video session each week, which covers the topics of: shock, denial, anger, grief, guilt, forgiveness, money, children, the courts, the ex-spouse, annulment, dating, sexuality, spirituality, re-marriage or staying single, and much more.

**For information or to register
contact: Rachelle Hanna at
rachelle.hanna@gmail.com**

**Deadline to register
April 13, 2026**

*limited to 12 participants
Pre-registration by phone is required
Cost \$25 (for book)*

The Surviving Divorce program is sponsored by the Diocese of Metuchen's Office of Family Life

Thursday Afternoons

In-Person Series

**April 23rd, 30th, May 7th, 14th, 28th
June 11 & June 18, 2026**

At the Archdiocesan Center in Newark, NJ

1:00PM to 4:00PM

Topics include:

- Overview and current theories of Loss, Grief, and Mourning
- Grief in special circumstances & assessing the need for referral
- Importance of Bereavement Ministry for the parish
- Accompanying those on the peripheries, especially those feeling lost and alone
- Counseling skills: How to listen and ask questions that facilitate healing
- How to start & facilitate a parish based Bereavement Support Group



ARCHDIOCESE
of NEWARK



Family Life Ministry



SCAN ME

Bereavement Ministry Support Training Spring Course

Are you interested in facilitating a bereavement ministry at your parish?

Training will be provided through the Archdiocese of Newark beginning April 23rd to June 18th on Thursdays (No class on May 21st and June 4th), from 1pm to 4pm at the Archdiocesan Center in Newark, NJ. This is a 20-hour class and participants can obtain 2 CEU's through Seton Hall University for attending.

Registration: <https://archdioceseofnewark.regfox.com/bereavement-facilitator-training-in-person-ceu-course>

The Catholic Parent

Parents are invited to a new group which will meet 2 Fridays a month at 6:30 p.m. on Zoom beginning on September 26th. Meetings will include watching a brief video on a topic particular to Catholic parenting and discussing as a group. Topics will include desiring holiness for your child, child temperaments, family culture, strong marriage, and being an effective witness, among others. The group is intended for those with children in the home and new parents are particularly welcome as developmental stages will be discussed! If interested, please contact Cristina at cdaverso@diometuchen.org.



New Marriage Catechumenate

The Office of Family Life is seeking parishes willing to pilot the new Marriage Catechumenate, as called for by the Vatican Dicastery of Laity, Family and Life. This unique form of marriage preparation involves married couples meeting with and mentoring engaged couples one-on-one. Pastors interested are encouraged to identify married couples within their parishes who could serve as mentors and contact Cristina for details at cdaverso@diometuchen.org. A training for mentors will be planned for the Fall.



Easter Gift

Looking for the perfect Easter gift for your spouse? Why not give each other a Marriage Encounter Weekend. A Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend gives you the time and tools to enrich your marriage, deepen communication, and nourish the spirituality in your marriage. The next Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend will be held **July 17 – 19**.

Please apply ASAP as space is limited.
Phone 1-732-904-9636 for application and information (Tom & Ruth DeFalco).

Visit us at: www.wwme.org for more information.

Cristina D'Averso-Collins, M.T.S., M.S.P.
Director, Office of Family Life
732-562-1990
cdaverso@diometuchen.org



Office of Hispanic Evangelization and Pastoral Ministry

Talk on Natural Family Planning in Spanish

The Office of Hispanic Evangelization invites all Hispanic couples—whether married or planning to marry—to participate in this informational talk, led by Deacon Hernando Patiño of St. Mary Magdalene de Pazzi Parish in Flemington.

Two important topics for our talk:

Topic 1: The Moral and Theological Foundation — Why the Church proposes this path not as a burden, but as a gift for conjugal love?

Topic 2: The Modern Science Supporting Fertility Awareness. Introduction to the Marquette Method and Other Scientific Approaches

We look forward to welcoming you to rediscover that total surrender is possible when faith and science go hand in hand.

Text Link

¿Es posible un amor que lo dé todo?
Una invitación a descubrir la ciencia y la espiritualidad detrás de la Planificación Familiar

ABRIL 29
07 - 09
PM PM
146 METLARS LN,
PISCATAWAY NJ

DIÁCONO
HERNANDO
PATIÑO
MD, NFP, MMT

REGISTRO
INDIVIDUAL \$10
PAREJA \$15

Oficina de Evangelización Hispánica
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Lencoban@diometuchen.org

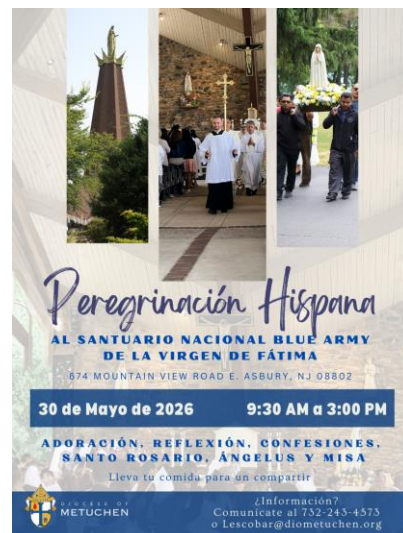
[Register Here](#)

Hispanic Pilgrimage to the Blue Army Shrine

Pilgrimage to the National Blue Army Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima.

Join us on **May 30, 2026 from 9:30 am to 3:00 pm**, at the Blue Army National Shrine. Our annual Hispanic pilgrimage not requires prior registration. Please come to Blue Army Shrine and bring your lunch. For more information please visit diometuchen.org/peregrinacion-hispana or contact us 732-243-4573 or at Lescobar@diometuchen.org

[Click to submit a prayer intention.](#)



Save the date!

Please mark the following dates on your calendar:

- **May 16 from 8:30 am to 2:30 pm**, Pastoral Plan meeting for Hispanic Ministry. All pastoral planners from parishes with Hispanic communities are invited to attend a meeting focused on "Discernment" the second step of our pastoral plan process.
- **September 18, Annual Hispanic Heritage Mass.**