

## Seniors Can Find Purpose Through People and God

By MSGR. WILLIAM HARMS

Mother nature does enjoy keeping us on our toes. We have just experienced one of the warmest Januaries on record. Then February strikes us with the most snow in recorded weather history. What does March have in store for us? The extremes of weather can be telling on most of us. It is most telling on those who experience the weather roller coaster in advance age.

The process of aging can be a severe trial. Even though life is often difficult, many of us try to hold onto it when it begins to slip away. The worst suffering is to feel that one is useless, and putting other people to trouble when one would still like to be of service. This means not asking for a ride to church, the supermarket or the doctor and volunteering to shovel the walk, among other activities.

It is time for humility and for faith that has been purified through lived experience. Old age is not the road to death, but the path to life. Fullness of life at least, and made sacred in Christ forever. But the difficult transformation must be accepted, the passage to that other life, just as the grain of wheat must die in the ground before it produces the ears of corn.

For the elderly, the time may be past in so far as doing for others, but it is now the time for living in God as God lives in us. This is the condition, if the fruit is mature.

### Garwood Knights Plan Mass and Breakfast

**GARWOOD** - Monsignor John M. Walsh Council No. 5437, Garwood Knights of Columbus will hold its annual Communion Mass and Breakfast on Sunday, March 5.

The 8 a.m. mass will be celebrated at the Roman Catholic Church of St. Anne, located at 325 Second Avenue in Garwood. St. Anne's pastor, the Reverend Richard Villanova, will be the guest speaker.

The breakfast will immediately follow at the Knights of Columbus Hall at 37 South Avenue in Garwood (opposite PathMark).

Tickets are \$8 and may be purchased after 4 p.m. on weekdays at the Knights of Columbus Hall. Parking is available behind the hall off of Willow Avenue.

For information, please call the Knights of Columbus at (908) 789-9809 after 4 p.m. Tickets are limited and will not be sold at the door.

### Westfield Homebound Offered Book Delivery

**WESTFIELD** - The Friends of the Westfield Memorial Library has announced its Books On Wheels program for homebound Westfield residents. Books and videos can be delivered every other Friday all year long. Members of the Friends group deliver and pick up the materials.

To qualify for the program, a Westfield resident must be recuperating at home from an illness, or the resident may be homebound.

Clients work with a librarian to select material to suit their needs. Volunteers deliver the materials requested. For delivery, please call Letty Hudak, chairwoman for the program, at (908) 233-6233.

"I'm growing old, Lord, and growing old is hard!

I can't run any longer, I can't even walk fast.

Believe me, your life today can be richer than it was yesterday.

If you can accept growing old."

("New Prayers," Michael Quoist).

Remain united to me, and I will remain united to you. A branch cannot bear fruit by itself, it can do so only if it remains in the vine. In the same way, you cannot bear fruit unless you remain in me.

"I am the vine, and you are the branches. Whoever remains in me, and I in him, will bear much fruit; for you can do nothing without me." (Jn 14: 12-14).

The elderly can often find themselves alone. The feeling may grow every day; alone with their memories, with past sorrows which remain alive in their heart. Unfortunately, the many fulfilled memories have taken flight. Time seems never to go quickly. Time is the same as years ago, but why does it appear to linger? So much time seems to have slipped away. Where did it go? I was able to fill each moment with life.

A crucial element in aging is to celebrate the God in my life. I turn to him each day to assist me. I celebrate him in the friends and family who try to reach out. Even though my beating heart may be tired, I still have life. I share my love with others, often stronger.

Help me Lord to develop a focus that sees you every day in my life. Enable me to share God's love with others in my life. Give me the strength, not to shovel snow, but to celebrate life with those around me.

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*Reverend Monsignor Harms is pastor of St. Helen's Roman Catholic Church, located at 1600 Rahway Avenue in Westfield.*

### 'Aesop's Fables' on Tap At Westfield Library

**WESTFIELD** - On Saturday, February 25, the Tuckers' Tales Puppet Theatre will present "Aesop's Fables" at 10:30 a.m. at the Westfield Memorial Library, located at 550 East Broad Street. Tuckers' Tales will dramatize famous stories such as "The Tortoise and the Hare" and "The Ant and the Grasshopper," while adding unusual twists.

Additionally, the library will present "A Story and a Movie for School-Age Kids: The Iron Giant" on Friday, February 24, at 3:30 p.m. Children from kindergarten through fifth grade will listen to this modern-day adventure about space monsters, an iron giant and a boy. They will then be invited back for the movie at 10:30 a.m. the following Friday, March 3 (a school holiday).

For adults, the Sundance Film Festival will continue with a screening of *The Brothers McMullen* on Tuesday, February 28, at 7 p.m.

TGIF: Bing Crosby will be featured on Friday, March 3, at 1:30 p.m. with a program about the life, times and music of this favorite American crooner.

For more information on these events, please call (908) 789-4090, visit [www.wmlnj.org](http://www.wmlnj.org) or pick up the library's quarterly newsletter.



**SUCCESSFUL DRIVE...** The Westfield Junior Woman's Club concluded its first Children's Clothing Drive by donating 1,400 items to Rich Martell of Cherished Creations and 22 bags of baby blankets and clothing to Mary Jane Roberts of the Muhlenberg Hospital Auxiliary. Pictured, from left to right, are: Back row, Mr. Martell, Vicki Bowen, Beth Hoerle, Heidi Luerssen and Suzannah Plant, and front row, Sheila Pikaart, Keira, Matthew and Nannette Loftus.

## 'Y' Open House to Spotlight Summer Camp Programs

**WESTFIELD** - The Westfield Area "Y" will spotlight its summer camp programs with an open house on Saturday, March 4, from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. at its East Broad Street Family Branch, located at 422 East Broad Street in Westfield. Camp programs for children and teenagers encourage skill building while instilling core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility.

Participants will receive a free camp bag and be entered into a drawing to win a free week of camp. Arts and crafts, games and refreshments will be available, and camp staff members will be on hand to answer questions.

Full-day and half-day camps are available for children ages three to 15. Before and after camp care is offered from 7 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Camps will run from Monday, June 26, through Saturday, August 26.

Individuals may sign up for one week or the whole summer. All camps

have at least one person certified in First Aid/CPR at all times. Financial assistance is available.

Camp programs include: Discovery Day Camp, Explorer Day Camp, Jump Start (Youth Fitness), Cyber Explorer, Outdoor Adventure, Imagineering, Science Exploration, Art Adventures and Fencing Clinic.

The Westfield Area "Y" serves Westfield, Mountainside, Garwood and Cranford. For more information, please call (908) 233-2700 or visit [www.westfieldynj.org](http://www.westfieldynj.org).

### FUMC Shrove Tuesday To Feature Live Jazz

**WESTFIELD** - The First United Methodist Church of Westfield, located at One East Broad Street, will hold its annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper on Tuesday, February 28, between 6:30 and 9 p.m.

All are welcome to attend the event, which will feature live music throughout the evening provided by the Big Apple Jazz Band. Participants are invited to dance.

The menu will include plain and pecan pancakes with flavored whipped cream, plus ham, fruit, juice, coffee, tea and water. The kitchen will close at 8 p.m. to allow everyone to relax and enjoy the music.

The charge is \$5 per person. This event will serve as a fundraiser to support the Education Ministry's Scholarship Fund. For more information, please call (908) 233-4211.



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## International Dinner to Aid Earthquake Relief Efforts

**SCOTCH PLAINS** - The Willow Grove Presbyterian Church in Scotch Plains will hold an International Dinner on Saturday, March 11, from 5 to 8 p.m. to raise money for the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Fund.

This fund helps people caught in life-threatening situations such as war, famine, earthquakes and hurricanes. Funds raised through this event will be specifically directed to aid in earthquake relief efforts in Pakistan/Afghanistan. A recent

earthquake in that part of the world killed more than 87,000 people and left 1.5 million homeless.

All are welcome to attend the dinner, which will feature music from around the world as well as an array of international cuisine such as Italian, Cuban, Swedish, German, Irish, Greek, Scottish, English, West Indian and Polish.

The cost for the dinner is \$12 for adults; \$6 for children under age 12 and free for those under age five. Reservations are requested by Wednesday, March 8.

Individuals wishing to make a reservation, or who cannot attend the dinner but would like to make a donation, are asked to call Barbara Couphos at (908) 322-7892.

The Willow Grove Church is located at 1961 Raritan Road. For more information, please call the church office at (908) 232-5678, e-mail [wilgrv@netzero.com](mailto:wilgrv@netzero.com) or visit [www.scotchplains.com/wgpc](http://www.scotchplains.com/wgpc).

### Dr. Mieres to Address Women's Heart Health

**SCOTCH PLAINS** - Dr. Jennifer Mieres will speak on "Women and Heart Disease - What You Need to Know" this Sunday, February 26, at 10 a.m. at Congregation Beth Israel.

Dr. Mieres is Director of Nuclear Cardiology at North Shore University Hospital and Assistant Professor of Medicine at New York University. She has appeared in three recent documentaries for PBS and was a guest on the "Today" show on February 3.

She is a nationally recognized expert in cardiovascular diseases in women and is former chairwoman of the American Society of Nuclear Cardiology's Task Force on Women and Coronary Artery Disease (2001-2002).

Sponsored by the Sisterhood of Congregation Beth Israel and WomenHeart: the National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease, this program is free and open to the public. "Red Bags of Courage" will be distributed to all who attend.

Congregation Beth Israel is located at 18 Shalom Way in Scotch Plains. Those interested in attending are asked to call the congregation office at (908) 889-1830 or email [jlevy36@comcast.net](mailto:jlevy36@comcast.net).



Dr. Jennifer Mieres

### Youth Choir to Perform With Filochowskis

**WESTFIELD** - On Sunday, February 26, at 4 p.m., members of the St. Helen's Youth Choir along with Patti Gardner, Bill Baton, Pierce Joyce and Rich Civile will perform with violinists Ania, Piotr and Maciej Filochowski from Poland at St. Helen's Roman Catholic Church in Westfield.

The Filochowski family has been living in Cranford in the St. Helen's Adopt-A-Family House that was provided for them so the three young siblings could accept scholarships they were awarded to attend the Juilliard School of Music.

St. Helen's Church is located at 1600 Rahway Avenue. There will be no tickets sold, but free will donations will be accepted at the door. For more information, please call (908) 233-8444, extension no. 13.

### Fresh Air Fund Seeks Area Host Families

**WESTFIELD** - The Fresh Air Fund's Westfield area volunteer leaders are seeking committee members and host families for New York City children for the upcoming summer.

Children, age six to 18, spend two-week vacations with volunteer host families. For more information, please call Laurie Landau at (973) 467-9054. Information on the program also is available online at [www.freshair.org](http://www.freshair.org).

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