

St. Michael's Parish Food Pantry Celebrates Second Anniversary

The Food Pantry at St. Michael's-Litchfield will be two years old on April 20, the day before Easter. In February, the pantry hit an all-time high with 63 guests, who took home 2,161 lbs. of food to feed 150 people in their families.

Pantry volunteers were delighted to be the recipient of food from a recent drive at Center School in Litchfield when Pre K through-third graders competed to see which class could reach a total of 100 items in celebration of the 100th Day of School. There were nearly 1,200 items to shelve. The Pantry continues to reach out to the community and is pleased to welcome the Litchfield Locker as a

generous donor of ham, bologna and flavored sausage.

St. Michael's welcomes donors and volunteers to join this vital community outreach. Nonperishable food donations can be placed inside the church on the side pews and for fresh foods that require refrigeration, please contact Karen Ackerman at 860-567-9465 or Nancy Moore at 860-387-3742.

The Pantry is open to shoppers at St. Michael's Community House, the cream-colored one story building with red doors across the driveway from the church at 25 South Street, just off the Litchfield green, on the third Saturday of each month from 10:30am to 12:30pm.

Local Restaurant Serves Litchfield Area Business Association Members at Wisdom House

Ollie's Pizza Of Litchfield owner Dimitri Karouta (left), also the owner of Rowley Grill and Tap in Winsted, catered ten pizzas for the February 19 meeting of the Litchfield Area Business Associates (LABA) held at Wisdom House Retreat and Conference Center in Litchfield. The pizzas that were fully enjoyed by the LABA members included cheese, onions and peppers, pepperoni and gluten-free. The LABA networking organization meets the third Tuesday of each month and Karouta catered the pizzas for the February meeting of 50 members. The 2019 meetings will be held each month at Wisdom House Retreat and Conference Center at 229



East Litchfield Road in Litchfield. Photographed (left to right) with Mr. Karouta were Wisdom House Retreat and Conference Center Executive Director Deborah Kelly, Michele Eiger with Wisdom House Retreat and Conference Center, and LABA President Paul McLaughlin, Jr., executive vice president and chief operating officer of Litchfield Bancorp in Litchfield. Ollie's Pizza is located at 19 West Street in Litchfield and is open seven days each week for lunch and dinners from 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Ollie's Pizza also offers take-out, delivery and catering services. For information visit www.olliespizza.com or call 860-361-9400.

Saint Patrick



By N. Karrick, Litchfield, CT

Saint Patrick was believed to have been born in Britannia of Christian parents. His grandfather was a pastor and his father was a deacon in the church.

His birth name was Maewyn Succat. At about 16 years old, he was kidnapped by Irish Raiders and taken to Ireland, and sold into slavery. He was in slavery for six years.

He was taught to be a shepherd by his master, and was left alone in the fields with the sheep on Slemesh Mountain, in Antrim, where he prayed and spoke aloud to God.

God came to Patrick in a dream, saying there was a boat waiting for him. He walked over 200 miles, to where the ship was. He had a hard time persuading the captain to let him on board. He had no money. He returned to his family. They called him *Spirit Man and Holy Boy*.

Patrick went to school to become an apostle of God. In a dream, he was called back to Ireland, where he baptized thousands of pagans. St. Patrick was a fifth century Romano British Christian missionary and a bishop in Ireland. He built missionaries, schools and 700 churches, and is known as the apostle of Ireland and the primary patron saint of Ireland. And only with a mystic faith to convert Ireland to Christianity, abolishing slavery and human sacrifice in the process.

It was the custom, of the Druids to have a large bonfire on Easter Eve, on the Hill of Tara. St. Patrick had his own fire. The king of the Druids came to Patrick's fire with 27 chariots. They became great friends. Patrick was allowed to preach and baptize many people. He was known for using the shamrock as a symbol for the holy trinity.

Saint-Patrick was born 385 AD in Britannia. He died March 17, 461 AD in Saul, Downpatrick and is buried in Down Cathedral, Downpatrick, Northern Ireland. His color is blue, not green.



Monthly Musings *March's Tender Promise* by Jane Bailey

(Originally published in the Litchfield County Times - March 15, 2013)

I look out at the field and realize for the first time in three months that the ground is green. Yes, there's still lingering snow, and mud oozing across the field, but overwhelmingly there's green. Green grass, green tennis courts, and green shoots poking through the garden debris. The sun lingers longer and there are more birds at the feeder. Next week the students who go to the boarding school where we live will be back from their spring break and the sounds of balls—tennis balls, baseballs, softballs—will be filling the afternoon air. Thwomp, crack, pop as bats and rackets connect, releasing the tension of a winter of indoor sports, academics in steam-heated rooms, and too many dorm-bound nights stuck inside by cold or snow.

Today my own tensions of winter boredom snapped as I pried open the back door and resurrected the deck with broom, Windex, and paper towels. Cleaning the table and chairs, sweeping the seed kernels, and refitting the bird feeder on its metal hangers gave me joy that a new spring is here once again. New seed brought Cardinals, Tufted Titmice, and Chickadees, as well as sneaky squirrels, quite happy to see their food once again.

What is it about green that refreshes my soul? Is it because it's "God's Color," as Mom always said? Is it the hint of leprechaun? St. Patrick's Day and the wearin' of the green, even for those of us not Irish, brings the wink of a smile that life doesn't have to be so serious; that we can dance a jig, toast with some ale, and know that things aren't so bad if we face them together.

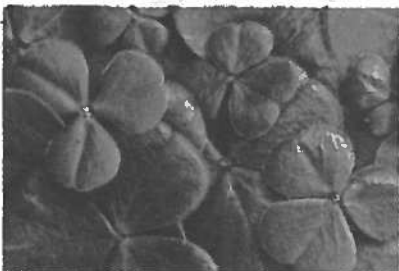
And then there's Mom curled up in her fetal ball, living for her three meals a day. Waiting to be changed, and rolled; dependent on her caretaker Dimple and my sister, as her other daughters dutifully arrive in Florida every few months to check in, though keeping a safe

distance from the reality that Mom has retreated into a netherworld—the twilight between life and death; living, but not really living any kind of a life. Dying, but not yet leaving. Just suspended day-to-day by the care of Dimple so willing to change and wipe and feed and preen.

Mom hangs in the balance between two worlds, the here and now and the there and hereafter. The birds hang in the balance of the feeder as it swings on its hanger, dependent on the seed being dumped in day by day. My own balance is caught off guard by the delicate tug of winter's discontent lingering in my bones reminding me of daily failures or regrets. Blessedly, just as I'm over the edge with all that I'm not, the green of March opens my sensibilities to possibilities ahead. There's hope in tomorrow. Hope for being a better grandmother than I was mother. Hope for being a better old wife than young wife. Hope for being a truer friend now than I was as a new friend. March simply brings hope.

What a happy thought as the march of hope begins again; hope of new babies and hope of redemption. Is that why Lent lingers in March, to remind us that redemption is nigh? The oozing mud of life threatens to suck us in, but the green, grass soaks it all up for us; and people like Dimple perform the daily miracles that keep life in balance for people like Mom and me—people who need to be balanced. That's what March is all about. It's the balance-beam month; a pivot from winter to spring. My soul awakens to the melting snow, the green carpet, the roaring brook, and the hope of tomorrow. Now the clocks spring forward like leprechauns jumping over the stones of life, leaving tomorrow filled with the sunshine of new chances, and new opportunities. Quite simply: a new season.

Jane Bailey is a freelance writer who lives in Litchfield. She is a retired educator who enjoys writing creative nonfiction that explores matters of the heart.



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New Hartford - \$139,900 4/5 BR, 2 bath Colonial Farmhouse. Entry parlor with HW floors and open floor plan. Living room flows through archway to sitting room/library. Spacious kitchen with seasonal views of Ski Sundown. Master bedroom suite is a great place to retreat after a long day. Small yard allows for more recreation time, instead of endless hours mowing. Walk to town center for restaurants or shopping. Rights to Standcliff Cove and partial deeded ownership of the brook in back of the house come with this gem. Price reflects work needed. Great condo alternative. Call Sue at 203-631-5382 for a showing.

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SATURDAY, MARCH 16: Gardening program, "What Do Peas and Beans Have in Common?" with Master Gardener George McCleary, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., second floor Community Room. Free. Sponsored by Friends of the Thomaston Public Library. Registration requested.

SATURDAY, MARCH 16: The Kerry Boys, 1 p.m., main floor of library. Free. Sponsored by Friends of the Thomaston Public Library. First come, first seated.

THURSDAY, MARCH 21: Lecture, "Culture, Politics & Fake News: Is the United Nations the Answer?" by Dr. Robert J. Petrusch, a board member of the United Nations Association of Connecticut, 6:30 p.m., second floor Community Room. Free. Registration requested.

THURSDAY, MARCH 28: Performance and discussion, "SOMEONE Must Wash the Dishes: An Anti-Suffrage Satire!" featuring Michele LaRue, 6:30 p.m., second floor Community Room. Free. Co-sponsored by the Friends of the Thomaston Public Library and the Thomaston Woman's Club. Registration requested.