A close-up photograph of several roses. In the foreground, a large, vibrant yellow rose is in sharp focus, showing its many layers of petals. Behind it, several other roses in shades of yellow and light pink are visible, some slightly out of focus. The background is a soft, warm yellow-green color.

*A
Night
of
Yellow
Roses*

*To
Honor
Father
Jim
Callan*

A Night of Yellow Roses for Fr Jim

Introduction from Fr Jim's Ordination

Thank you

Opening Prayer- Rev Myra

I Am What You See

Great is Thy Faithfulness

1 Caring Connection

2 Fitzhugh Street Sacristans

2 Hochstein Sacristans

3 Hospitality

4 Eucharist Minister

5 Church Staff

Now Behold the Lamb

Holy Ground

6 Buddy Readers

7 Religious Ed

8 Youth Group

9 Young Adult

Bless the Lord with Me

There is a Redeemer

10 Stewardship

11 Tithing

12 PCF

13 Visioning Board

14 Homecoming Advisory Board

15 Personnel

Goodness of God

Here We Are

16 Chiapas

17 Haiti Hope

18 Prison Outreach

19 Grace of God

20 Mental Health

How Precious

It Is Well With My Soul

21 Farmworkers

22 Mother Earth

23 SPARC

24 LGBTQI+

25 Speaking from the Heart

26 Adult Enrichment - SWIFT and Men's group

27 Adopt A Family

Oh Happy Day

The Blessing

28 Across the Miles

29 Music

30 Parishioner Sharing from the Heart

Special Blessing and Closing prayer- Rev Celie

The Our Father- Everyone

Total Praise



A letter Fr Jim wrote for his ordination

Welcome everyone, to this ordination ceremony. I hope that the sacrament being conferred tonight will touch and inspire each of us in some way. We all participate in the Priesthood of Jesus Christ, and for that reason should not consider this a triumph of any personal achievement or virtue on my part. Ordination is a commission to serve, and we all share that mission in one way or another. Hopefully, then, this ceremony will not separate me from you through any material distinction and privileges, honors, and expectations that bankrupt the idea of priestly service. Let this instead be an occasion for the Spirit to awaken in ALL of us (as equals) the desire to serve one another with renewed enthusiasm. Let the Spirit tonight breathe in us the Christian idealism of our youth, so that we may work together to bring the church and the world into a new springtime.

There are many changes we must make in the church and in the world. Sometimes, we need to listen to people like Francis of Assisi, whose feast is traditionally celebrated on the Fourth of October. These are the people who remind us that we are too materialistic and that we have placed our trust in money instead of God. The theme tonight is to seek God above every other concern in life and to let God work out the material comforts we need. All the readings tonight support this theme. We in America have a special obligation not only to detach ourselves from the things we own but to find a dedicated use of them for the poor, the powerless, and the oppressed. The Leaders in the church should be especially sensitive to this need. Instead, however, we are often scandalous consumers of the comforts of life. We priests are too often the first to be served rather than the first to serve others. The feast of St. Francis and the scripture readings were chosen to remind myself and you of the necessity to keep our priorities in tune with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I welcome your challenges to live this way in the years ahead, as I have welcomed your beautiful support in the past. I am, of course, more than grateful for your presence here tonight.



I Am What You See

Great Is Thy Faithfulness





1 Caring Connection

Through your leadership we have learned what the true meaning of Caring is.

We have learned what the true meaning of Connection is.

And We have learned so much from you through your selflessness.

You are the eyes, ears, heart, spirit and soul of the Caring Connection.

You have connected our team with parishioners who need and would accept some Caring.

You are very aware of the needs of the parish and you have a sense for when the Caring Connection teams need to step in.

The gentle touch of your words and prayers during our Caregiver dinners have lifted spirits and soothed the souls.

Father Jim, you are a steady example of Christ living among us.

You are brave, passionate, fun, loving, and considerate.

Your wisdom and love have given us the direction to continue our mission providing encouragement, comfort and support to fellow parishioners.

We will all do our part to carry on your legacy.



2 Fitzhugh Street Sacristans

As we gather to honor and celebrate the life of Fr. Jim, we find ourselves filled with gratitude and love for a man who has been a beacon of hope and faith in our lives. Your spirit is vibrant and your influence on us is indelible. Father, your journey has been one of unwavering devotion, compassion, and service. You have been more than a priest; you have been a guiding light, a source of wisdom, and a true friend to many. Your words have inspired us, your prayers have comforted us, and your actions have shown us the true meaning of love and sacrifice. You have lived out the teachings of Christ with grace and humility. Your ability to listen without judgment and to offer solace in times of sorrow has made a lasting impression on our hearts. We will always remember how you never criticized and were grateful for everything. You taught us to find strength in vulnerability and to embrace the beauty of our shared humanity.

We, the Spiritus Christi Fitzhugh sacristans, want you to know how deeply you are loved and cherished. Each of us could share many examples of how you transformed our lives. You have shown us what it means to serve with love. As sacristans, we are privileged to prepare the table of Our Lord over which you have presided countless times during your priesthood. We know how significant offering mass is to you. It is your most important role as a priest. It is how you make Christ present to the community. What an honor it is for us to dress the altar and prepare the elements for the mass. We are blessed to be able to do this holy work. Though we miss your presence, your laughter and your smile, we will strive to honor your legacy by continuing to be part of this community rooted in love, compassion, and faith – just as you have taught us. Thank you, Fr. Jim, for everything. You have been a true shepherd to your flock, and your impact on our lives will resonate for generations to come. May you find peace and comfort at this time, knowing that you have made a difference in so many lives. With love and gratitude, The Spiritus Christi Fitzhugh Sacristans



2 Hochstein Sacristans

A Christmas Gift

Upon this holy Christmas day

I kneel with you to pray

And give to you a gift of heart

That will not waste away.

But it cannot be tied with bows

Or placed beneath your tree.

For it is broader than the sky

And deeper than the sea.

It is the love inside my heart, I give to you today,

To comfort you and share with you, the fortunes of your way.

And if dear heart, you gave the same to please this heart of mine,

We will exchange God's truest gifts to give at Christmas time.

For when all other gifts are gone and you discard your tree,

And all the joys they brought to mind are lost to memory,

The gifts of love that we exchanged, upon this Christmas day,

Will live forever in our hearts to light our life and way.

- Michael Dubina



3 Hospitality

We follow your example of welcoming all to the table. We attempt to reflect Your ability to put everyone at ease with a smile. Providing quiet service of welcome during coffee hour. Thank you for all the times you sat down with a cup of coffee, looked at us with eyes reflecting pure love and listening. Thank you for your welcoming spirit.

Thank you for your warm hugs that reflect your kind spirit. You have taught us how to give these out so freely. Thank you for teaching us the power of a hug, a greeting, a few small words to let others know you see them. We will continue that mission to assure all who come into church feel welcome.

You embody hospitality and we follow your example as we create a ministry driving people to church and feeding the people both parishioners and those who may never come through our church doors.

We work to make sure all can understand your words using American Sign Language and Spanish to share your message with others.



4 Eucharist Ministers

Father Jim, you have always created an atmosphere where everyone, regardless of their background, their past or present, is invited to be a part of the breaking of bread. This sense of belonging is the glue of our spiritual community. Even in the face of controversy you maintained your unwavering belief in the value of all and that no one should be excluded from the Eucharist. Your inclusiveness goes above and beyond as we, the Eucharistic Ministers, have been invited onto the altar to be part of the Consecration. You will always be at the heart of our collective prayer. We are honored to be a part of this ministry; you have taught us that everyone is worthy.

Thank you so much for teaching us by example.



5 Church Staff

Father Jim, on behalf of the staff we want you to know that your absence has left a big hole in our staff circle and in our hearts. Throughout your many years of service, you have been a teacher and a mentor to so many. You never kept your wisdom for yourself, but generously shared it. We miss you and hold deep gratitude for all the ways that you have nurtured each of us over the years.

The work we do is often a heavy lift. Knowing that you were there, leading by example, words, and inspiration was always a source of comfort. You carried the burden with us, teaching us to serve joyfully and never to walk above the people, but with them. Your unconditional love showed us a pathway to live out the gospels. Your Vision and passion helped us to rebuild a church whose light burns brightly in our hearts, today and forever. We will continue to express our love for you by keeping the light of Spiritus Christi alive in our community.

We send our love to you as we carry you in our hearts always.



Now Behold the Lamb

Holy Ground





6 Buddy Readers

Today I am thankful for Father Jim Callan – a true Illuminator. Certain people can walk into a room and just light it up – and you, Father Jim, are one of these Illuminators.

Who knew that in 1997 - a decade after first meeting you, in Philadelphia - our family would move to Rochester and join Corpus Christi, whose congregation then broke away to create Spiritus Christi Church. And twelve years after Spiritus Christi was formed, I reached out to you and Rev. Mary about starting a new ministry, Buddy Readers, where volunteers would read one-on-one with a child every week.

Your enthusiasm and support kept me going as we struggled to define and implement this new ministry. You are personally responsible for encouraging so many folks to volunteer with us.

What is most wonderful about you, however, is your illuminating spirit, which keeps us moving forward in the right direction. As the author David Brooks explains, all of life's social skills can be boiled down to "one foundational skill: the ability to understand what another person is going through . . . to see someone else deeply and make them feel seen."

That's what Illuminators do – they see others deeply and make them feel seen. You, Father Jim, have seen each of us Buddy Reader volunteers deeply and made us feel seen for fourteen years now. And because you have seen each of us deeply and made each of us feel seen, we have been able to do the same with our little buddies.

Today I want to thank you, Father Jim, for being an Illuminator to me, to the Buddy

Reader volunteers, and, through your example, to our little buddies. Please know that nothing has a bigger impact on our lives – and the lives of the children we serve - than this!



7 Religious Ed

Tonight, we are grateful to reflect on what Fr Jim has meant to The Religious Education program, and our deep gratitude and love for

him. These are words the children and teachers used to describe Father Jim:

Very nice, kind and warm hearted, thoughtful, brilliant, grateful, SO funny, positive, and inclusive. He has shown love to ALL children just like Jesus who always said: "let the children come to me." He welcomed our children with open arms and his huge smile. He has always helped others and cared for those who were sick, sad or lonely.

The children at Spiritus have always felt Fr Jim's true love for them and had the best example of who Jesus was right in front of them to learn from. Father Jim believes our children are the changemakers and puts so much priority on them. He always knew how important they were and how each child had a gift to share with the world. We

even got to experience many years of Fr. Jim playing the role of Jesus at Our Last Supper reenactment for First Communion class and our children could fully grasp and learn from his deep wisdom. Fr. Jim has helped our children to become the best versions of themselves including not just the children in our program now, but

generations of children before and after will continue to be inspired and live their lives with the BEST example of all. Fr Jim has always shown kindness and love. We will carry that with us as we go out in the world to bring that love to others.

Fr. Jim will always be a glowing light that guides and lights up our program. As we move forward, we will continue to put the same passion, joy and spirituality Fr Jim carried to teach the children about God's love and how to love others. He lived that way, and so can we.

We love you Father Jim, forever.



8 Youth group

Fr Jim Through your selflessness, passion and loving heart you have created a tremendous impact on the youth of your church. You welcomed everyone with a warm smile and an open heart regardless of identity. You have always supported the youth group in our endeavors to spread joy, love, and positivity. Throughout your priesthood you have inspired us with your powerful homilies. From our promoted inclusivity, reinforced respect and encouraged the young community to perform good deeds! Your spirit, holiness and deep heart will forever leave an imprint on our church and its youth. WE LOVE YOU!



9 Young Adult

It is fitting we are having the night of Yellow Roses during the Thursday Night Mass because this service is one of the main veins of Young Adult Ministry here at Spiritus. Fr. Jim originally offered Thursday Night Mass as an alternative to traditional Mass. People would come up, and sit around the steps of the altar for the entire Mass. Can you believe that?

Many young people came to the Mass, and some even fell in love and got married! Rev. Mary said she would come with her husband Jim, and their two-year-old, and at the first Mass she had a woman lawyer on one side of her and a homeless man on the other.

It has been Fr. Jim's commitment to creating such inclusive spaces that has drawn folks across all generations to come together at Spiritus. He has created an intergenerational church; where we all benefit from each other's unique perspectives and lived experience.

Some of Spiritus' current young adults have been lucky enough to have been baptized here. Others stumbled into Spiritus and couldn't believe what they found. All of us were welcomed by that special guy, Fr. Jim.

And now I will pass it to Suzanne to share some of the ways your love has shaped our hearts and the way we live in the world. Love you Fr. Jim.

Words to describe Father Jim: genuine, kind, authentic, nurturing, loving, accepting, and passionate. He lived his life as an example and has impacted each of our lives in so many positive ways. His legacy lives on in us and the hard work of attempting to see God's light in everyone that we meet. We will continue his work to fight for what's right and just in the world and live out the words he so beautifully preached and acted on. We love you, Father Jim.



Bless the Lord with Me

There is a Redeemer





10 Stewardship

Our Stewardship Committee helps to oversee the finances of Spiritus Christi and our outreach programs. Fr. Jim has challenged us and modeled for us how to manage church resources for our ministries, while always keeping compassion for the poor at the center of our work. Also, entrusting parishioners to carry out this essential role is part of his vision for a church that relies upon gifts of our members to help guide and lead. Thank you for your inspiration and your example. We love you, Fr. Jim.



11 Tithing

When Fr. Jim eulogizes someone, he usually starts with the words “a beautiful thing happened on”.. and he cites the day the person was born. Well, a beautiful thing happened on March 23, 1976 at Corpus Christi Church-Fr. James Brady Callan was assigned there as assistant pastor.

and on July 5, 1977, he was named administrator. Another beautiful event occurred in the Spring

of 1978 when Fr. Jim inspired the parish to tithe 10% of their weekly collection to the poor. Since Corpus Christi was a poor parish, actually a dying parish, and the weekly collection was about \$450, it was a risky and radical idea!

But that is the Fr. Jim we know and love....he took a leap of faith and put the parish totally in God's hands. He believed giving back was the only way the parish could survive and thrive. It was the first check (and still is) that was written each week and placed in the tithing account. God and the poor get the first fruits of our labor, not the leftovers.

A few years later, the parish voted to increase it to 12%; knowing that our generosity to the poor was a reflection of God's unconditional love and the fact that we had a growing, loving community. When we became Spiritus Christi, Fr. Jim once again risked, and trusted Jesus as our pastor and inspired the parish to raise our tithe to 15%, even though we were venturing into the unknown.

Until recently, Fr. Jim oversaw the tithing committee, and it was a blessing to have his loving support and encouragement at each meeting. He helped us discern which nominated organizations would benefit from our tithe; he said a resounding yes to 99.9% of them. Each year we have tithed to organizations that serve poor women, men and children from the Monroe County area, surrounding counties as well as from everywhere in the US, Central and South America and as far away as Africa. These are organizations that feed, clothe and house the

needy, prepare people for employment, educate about nutrition, empower women, stabilize neighborhoods, care for orphans, support those formerly incarcerated, provide clean water, serve those struggling w addictions, welcome immigrants, and many others to lengthy to mention. The thank you's we receive are of extravagant gratitude and some tell us our contribution has literally allowed them to survive another year. Little could Fr. Jim imagine, when he signed that first tithing check, the ripple effect it would have.

“The Kingdom of God is like a mustard seed, the smallest of seeds, yet when it grows, it becomes the largest of plants and becomes a tree so that the birds of air can perch on its branches.”

As we begin our 47th year of tithing, we have tithed over \$4,000,000-that is our endowment. safe, not in financial investments, but in the Kingdom of God. Thank you, Jim, for planting the seeds!! I hope you know how much we love you!



12 PCF

Father Jim, since you started at Corpus Christi, your priority was to welcome all and assure that all had a voice. You dismantled the parish council, opting instead to create a forum for shared governance with the whole church. In this radical new blend of leadership and community, you chose to sit in the circle with everyone else. The parishioners were given the opportunity to facilitate and guide the parish in a shared decision-making process. Now, so many years later, we stand here in solidarity with you, as the latest in a long line of Parish Community Forum facilitators. On behalf of those who preceded us as PCF facilitators, we thank you for your vision of community and for the honor of helping you transform our church into the people's home. We will continue to carry your vision forward in the years to come and assure future PCF facilitators continue to fulfill your dream of an all-inclusive church."



13 Visioning Board

Dear Father Jim-

The impact you have had on the Spiritus Visioning Board is almost impossible to describe. The Church was born as a result of your steadfast commitment to including women on the altar, marriage equality, and Communion for all. As the parish has blossomed, you have guided us to remain steadfast to our values of joyfully serving the poor and doing all we can to foster justice and peace. You are a marvelous teacher and leader, gently guiding as we grapple with challenging issues and assuring that we lead through the lens of love and compassion. And you are also a wonderful friend, taking time to ask about the ups and downs of our lives and really listening to the answers. Those of us who have had the privilege of serving on the Visioning Board now or in the past have been blessed by the opportunity to work closely with you. With your example ever before us, we are deeply and firmly committed to ensuring that our Church continues to follow Jesus' radical message of unconditional and inclusive love for all for many years to come. We recognize how committed you are to breaking down the barriers entrenched within the Catholic Church that have barred many from Jesus' love and teachings. It is this commitment that has enabled our Visioning Board to serve our faith community with justice, hope and love in the forefront of our minds and hearts. May your legacy continue to flourish and grow, with deep love and gratitude for all you have given us. We love you so very much.



14 Homecoming Advisory Board

The Homecoming Advisory Board was formed last year to assist the parish in finding a permanent place we can call home. We open each meeting with a prayer that has become our mission, stating the type of church we want to become.

When we were asked to share a message with Fr Jim about his impact upon our collective lives, it was clear to all of us that OUR prayer was actually HIS prophetic, compassionate, and courageous vision of church which has powerfully resonated within each of us throughout the 50 years of his incredible and transformative ministry. And so, we lovingly offer this prayer back to you, Fr Jim, in deep gratitude for birthing this vision of Church that has empowered us to be the Body of Christ we are today....

Fr. Jim, we thank you for creating a church that is...

A place where diverse gifts, cultures, and identities are named and appreciated.

A place of joining, of becoming, of creating, of learning, and reflecting.

A place where we yearn to serve one another and our neighbors.

A place where no one remains a stranger.

A place of knowing and of being known.

A place of shared joys, tears, and laughter.

A place where forgiveness is easily asked for and granted,

A place where young and old and families of all types are cherished and loved unconditionally.

A place of meaningful conversation, of words not left unsaid.

A place where our stories intertwine with God's story.

A home where roots grow deep, bearing fruit that names, nourishes and sustains others, most especially those on the margins.

Fr. Jim, we thank you for creating a church that is...

a harbor of peace and Grace, from which we find the strength and courage

to journey forward with the Good News that embraces and transforms our community and our world.

And let the Church say...Amen!



15 Personnel

Our Personnel Committee advises Spiritus Christi about human resource issues relating to staff employment, compensation and employee benefits. Fr. Jim, you have challenged us to ensure that all Church and Outreach staff are treated with fairness and equity. Your vision has helped to make Spiritus Christi a wonderful place to work!

Fr. Jim, you also kept an eye out for who might join our pastoral team. Several years ago, during one of our meetings, you mentioned that Rev Celie might be someone who could join the pastoral team, and our committee encouraged you to share that with Rev Myra. Now our parish is blessed to have Rev Celie as a member of the pastoral team because you were alert to the possibility of inclusion of someone from outside of our parish community. And this was not a unique situation, as Rev Mary and her husband Jim joined Corpus Christi about 4 decades ago, coming from California and Rev Myra joined Corpus Christi from St. Bridget's parish. You extended that inclusion to Fr. Enrique who joined Corpus Christi, coming from Mexico. Fr. Jim, you joined all these persons and many others to create Spiritus Christi after we were excluded from the Roman Catholic Church in 1998.

Thank you for your inspiration, your vision and for fostering inclusiveness in our parish. We Love you Fr. Jim! We are proud to be part of your legacy, an inclusive Catholic Church that welcomes all persons.



Goodness of God

Here We Are



16 Chiapas

There's a song that springs to mind when we think about what Father Jim has meant to the Chiapas mission. That song is "Digo Si, Senor" (I say yes, my Lord).

The chorus goes:

I say "Yes," my Lord, in all the good times, through all the bad times.

I say "Yes," my Lord, to every word you speak.

This song resonated because our ministry wouldn't be here, nurturing beautiful relationships if Fr Jim hadn't said YES to visiting Chiapas over 30 years ago with friend, Fr. Enrique Cadena.

And when Fr. Enrique endeavored to accompany more groups of parishioners to Chiapas, Fr. Jim said, YES!

When those groups returned and wanted to start a Mission to help the community, Fr. Jim said, YES!

When that Mission thought of starting a micro-credit system to help families who couldn't open bank accounts, Fr. Jim said, YES!

When mothers asked for help with student expenses and we imagined a scholarship program, Fr. Jim said, YES!

YES! to pilgrimages,

YES! to fiestas,

YES! to colorful banners hung from the rafters for Chiapas Sunday celebrations,

YES! to a giant Lady of Guadalupe in front of the lectern (which only fell over once in all these years),

YES! to processing in with an explosion of flowers,

YES! to pinatas....and empanadas,

YES! to blessing pilgrims every time we departed for Chiapas,

YES! to wearing the sandals and the stole from our families in Chiapas,

YES! to selling coffee to help the indigenous farmers,

YES! to solo singing "Oye nos Señor" (Listen to your people, Lord) for Chiapas Sunday masses - so many of us would just weep at how beautiful that was.

Fr Jim, Mira! -- LOOK at where we are -- and WHO we are - because you said DIGO SI, SENOR.

Gracias, Padre.

Te queremos mucho.



17 Haiti Hope

Father Jim, you are truly a blessing, and we are all grateful.

We believe that you are a modern-day prophet. You are humble and a person gifted with more than ordinary spiritual insight. In 1979, your first trip to Haiti stirred your heart and your soul. We remember as you tearfully spoke of how profoundly your life had been changed and how that experience would affect our parish community as well as Haiti. We learned as a community that we must become interconnected to the world.

We needed to become world citizens. You called us to demonstrate our commitment to the people of Haiti, and so we did! That commitment continues to this day, 28 years later. Through the efforts of our parish community and the leadership of Rosemarie Chierchi, we were able to establish the Ministry of H.O.P.E. our Haitian outreach.

Father Jim, your call to action was heeded - from pennies for donkeys, to dollars for clean water, to pancake breakfasts to support rebuilding the hospital, to concerts for solar energy, to mobile clinics traveling the mountainsides of Borgne. Today, H.O.P.E supports the community driven model for public health for over 85,000 in the commune of Borgne.

Father Jim, your deeply felt vision did come true!! AND we know that the needs and challenges remain great! Your call to action remains a motivating force. Know that we have every intention of continuing to deepen our commitment to the beautiful people of Borgne.

This year we finally achieved making a connection with our local Haitian community. With the help of our new Haitian friends, we created a celebration of Haitian culture that not only raised funds for Borgne but made a solid connection with our local Haitian community!

Father Jim, you would have loved it! It was fantastic. We will continue to be stewards of your commitment to be world citizens.

We love YOU



From the People of Borgne

Father Jim,

You, see?

During my last visit to Rochester, I received your blessing and in the darkest moments the divine light guided my steps on the safe paths. Today, a new page is opening in your life. It is a necessary passage, and I am sure that you have enough spiritual strength to approach it. All of Borgne holds you and will always hold you in the heart. No force can shake the bond that exists between your community and Borgne.

His warm embraces that we shared at each meeting will remain eternally as the mark of our pure and sincere friendship.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Your works give you the right to eternal life.

May the divine light shine on you

And guide you to the eternal home.

With love

Dok Thony





18 Prison Outreach

Fr. Jim, you have been a beacon of hope for so many. Through your unwavering faith and compassion, you have shown all of us at Spiritus Christi Prison Outreach what it truly means to serve. You didn't just preach love and justice—you lived it every day. You walked alongside the most vulnerable, offering not just prayers, but tangible support, dignity, and a sense of belonging. You reminded us that every person, no matter their past, is worthy of grace and a second chance.

You were the heart and soul of the creation of Spiritus Christi Prison Outreach. With your guidance, love, and understanding, you gave Jim Smith the courage to emerge as a leader, and because of that, the ministry has flourished. You've shown us all that God's love knows no bounds. Your impact goes far beyond words; it is seen in the lives you've touched, the hearts you've healed, and the community that continues to grow from your example.

Fr. Jim, you have demonstrated that faith, when truly lived out, is not confined to church walls. It extends to every street corner, every homeless shelter, and every courtroom where people are given a second chance.

We want you to know that the work you started will continue. We are committed to carrying your vision forward, to serving with the same love, dedication, and faith that you have so beautifully demonstrated.

Thank you, Fr. Jim, for your extraordinary service, your kindness, and your unwavering commitment to justice. Your legacy will live on in the work we do every day, in the hearts of those you've touched, and in the lives of those who will continue the mission of justice and compassion you set before us. We promise to carry your vision forward, to continue advocating for the homeless, the marginalized, and the forgotten, because we know that you would want nothing less.

May God's peace surround you in this time of transition, and may you find comfort in the knowledge that you have changed lives, brought hope to the hopeless, and planted seeds of justice that will continue to grow. Thank you.

From all of us at Spiritus Christi Prison Outreach



19 Grace of God

My name is Elly Majors, and I was honored when our director, Mark Bennet asked me to deliver the Yellow Rose tribute to Father Jim, on behalf of the house. I am happy to be joined by residents, staff, volunteers, board members, and alumni of the Grace of God Recovery House. My personal relationship with Fr. Jim started in June of 2005. I was in the depths of some bad addiction-driven behavior and had driven off virtually everyone who cared about me. Father Jim counseled me and took the time to convince me that God would forgive me, and still loved me, and suggested a plan to help me. He suggested I return to AA, start going to SA, and go over to Grace of God Recovery house to see if Sr. Margie needed another volunteer. I can say that I'm still involved in all Three.

Sister Margie said something about Fr. Jim sending her another one of his reclamation projects, and put me to work cleaning her bevy of electric floor fans. But I was immediately impressed with the culture she and Fr. Jim had started with this ministry over 25 years ago: the culture of showing drug and alcohol addicts how a system of structure and love can supplement existing recovery systems, resulting in total self-esteem restoration. After a couple of years, Sr. Margie asked me to join the staff, and being here has been an integral part of my recovery program. Fr. Jim would show his love for the house by joining us a couple times a year for our Wednesday night dinner and Sharing For Life group. He would be a full participant, along with current house residents, the staff, and several alumni. He would always be a staunch supporter and mentor that we could learn from. Here's a short story as evidence of his character: At one of our GOG staff meetings, Sr. Margie noted that someone had broken into Fr. Jim's house and stolen his flat screen TV. A parishioner had given him a replacement, but it didn't have a remote so it could operate. I said I could get him a universal remote and program it for him. It took me about 10 minutes after getting to Fr. Jim's house to get his TV up and running.

After he gave me a tour of his house and the neighborhood, I asked him if he would lock his doors in the future. He said, "No. whoever took the TV need it more than I did, and look – I have an even better one now, and I even got to spend time with you." Every one of the people you see standing up here knows the impact Fr. Jim has had on this house and our lives. We will always carry with us the caveat I use whenever I have to make a big decision. That caveat is: What would Fr. Jim do?

Thanks Fr. Jim for everything.



20 Mental Health

Fr. Jim, you have been a support to the Mental Health Center since the beginning. At the first meeting, when a group of mental health practitioners got together just to talk about the idea, you were there.

Over the years, you offered support and encouragement to each of our directors. We each knew you believed in us and in the mission of the Center.

And you were intentional about joining us in our mission to break down barriers and reduce the stigma, by referring people to us and including those with mental health challenges in your homilies and in the consecration.

Folks in the Living Room still talk about how much they enjoyed your visits.

You made us – staff and those who consult the center – feel seen and included. You have left an indelible mark on us. Thank you.



How Precious

It Is Well With My Soul



21 Farmworkers

My name is Kathleen Tranelli, and I am here with other members of the Spiritus Farmworker Justice Ministry to honor Fr. Jim and to thank him for his longtime support of our work for farmworker justice in NY State. Our Ministry Leader, Marilu Aguilar, couldn't be here tonight but sends her love. Twenty-one years ago, parishioners led by Marilu participated in a 10-day march to Albany with farmworkers and allies to promote passage of the Farmworkers Fair Labor Practices Act. When we returned, Fr. Jim listened, he heard, and he endorsed our work, perhaps in part based on his own experience of outreach to farmworkers during his seminary days. With Fr. Jim's support and encouragement, over the years we educated our Spiritus community about the injustices to NYS farmworkers and mobilized parishioners to advocate for passage of the Farmworker Bill to give them basic workers' rights and dignity. Fr. Jim addressed farmworker rights in some of his homilies, again validating our efforts. Starting in 2010, Fr. Jim joined a contingent of parishioners who marched in the Labor Day parade to draw attention to the Farmworker Bill. He marched with us every single year, wearing his red bandana in solidarity with farmworkers. What a powerful witness! Fr. Jim shared our joy when the Bill was passed in 2019, then continued to march with us to be a public voice and supportive presence for farmworkers.

Fr. Jim, you've been our role model for persisting in our work for the poor and marginalized. You have inspired us to never give up. Like the persistent widow you've preached about in your homilies, we kept the faith and kept going many years to help bring justice and victory to farmworkers. To quote from one of your homilies, **ONLY PRAYER AND PERSISTENCE WILL OVERCOME OUR DISILLUSIONMENT AND ENABLE US TO KEEP GOING, AND GOING AND GOING TILL JUSTICE REIGNS, EVEN IF WE DON'T SEE IT.** We will continue living the social gospel and being persistent as you have modeled for us all these years. Thank you. We love you.



22 Mother Earth

Fr Jim has shown his support for our ministry through his actions. When we started asking parishioners to bring their own place settings to Mass in the Park, Fr Jim was one of the first to do it. He showed up with a basket with his supplies. His quiet example spoke volumes for us.

Our Mother Earth Ministry encourages living simply. Fr. Jim has been doing that his whole life. He refused his first parish assignment because he thought the rectory was too plush. His deep faith and unwavering dedication to living Christ's message have been a source of strength for so many.

Fr Jim often mentions the beauty and wonder of nature and the universe in his homilies and has encouraged us to continue the Green Spots. He has followed many of the suggestions we offer such as signing up for community solar energy and he's been saving up to buy an electric car. He cares for birds and once tried composting. He sees our ministry's work as promoting justice.

We will always remember Father Jim's words at the end of Mass, after he gives us a blessing. He tells us to go out and make the world a better place. Changing the world is hard! We must overcome fear, inertia and apathy. Through his words and actions, Father Jim makes us believe that we can do it - and do it with great joy.



23 SPARC

Father Jim, back at Corpus Christi, there was a point at which you knew that many things were going well, but the work of living out the Gospel of Jesus wasn't done. If the parish was going to make all people welcome "at the table," this meant that people of different viewpoints, genders, sexual orientations, and races had to be not only in the parish, but also at the table of leadership.

We are benefiting from decisions that you made about this back then. One decision was to hire Myra Brown, a psychiatric nurse, an accomplished singer, and a Catholic lay leader who had just wowed her church, St. Bridget's Church, with her first homily.

Your support of now-Reverend Myra to become a priest and pastor, to start a Gospel choir, to further broaden the table of leadership, to start an anti-racism coalition, and to tackle racial justice issues at every level – that support has been unwavering, and we love you for it.

We as a SPARC team have so appreciated your support of our events: donating, showing up, participating, giving us time and space, and modeling the humility that we all need to have in the work of learning how to achieve racial justice. Thank you, Father

Jim! We love you!

-- The SPARC team



24 LGBTQIA++

Many of us know that Father Jim has been a steadfast advocate of the LGBTQIA+ community throughout his life in ministry.

In preparing for this evening folks sent statements describing the love of Jesus they experienced from his participation in their major turning points: coming out, estrangement from families, getting married, the loss of a partner, and just dealing with being 'othered' by traditional churches. The warm, inclusive welcome we experienced in Corpus and Spiritus flows out of the radical hospitality which Father Jim exudes.

Of the many anecdotes we have heard in recent days regarding Father Jim, who I have always referred to as Ally Number One, this piece by Linda DiStefano stands out. It perfectly captures his loving openness:

'Fast forward to 1990, AIDS was devastating the LGBTQ community in Rochester. Two of my dearest friends, Tom and Rob, were diagnosed with HIV/AIDS. There was no cure at the time. They were Catholic, but their church turned away from them. I heard how Fr. Callan was administering the Sacraments to people with HIV/AIDS. He was my priest, so I contacted him. Before the sun set that day, he was at Tommy's side at Highland Hospital. The same when Rob became ill later that year. The thing I remember hearing about is that Fr. Jim "was not afraid to touch them." That's when I knew that if Jesus truly does send saints to earth, Fr. Jim is one of them. Tom and Rob both passed away later that year. Their funerals were held at Corpus Christi with Fr. Jim officiating, along with "Pastoral Assistant" (now Reverend) Mary Ramerman.'

I met Father Jim on my first visit to Corpus in 1991 as a 26-year-old attending my friend's funeral. Corpus was one of the few churches that extended unconditional hospitality to the families of young people who succumbed to that heartbreaking illness. I was inspired by the genuine celebration of the person David who was an out, loud and proud gay man, a drag queen, a person unafraid to express the fullness of the life God intended for him.

The fearless acceptance of Father Jim and the Corpus community was and is unequalled and will never be forgotten. Father Jim chose this David Hawkins excerpt for a homily at a Thursday Night Mass I attended ten years ago. I will close with it, as it now describes the life he has lived:

'Make a gift
of your life
and lift all mankind
by being kind,
considerate,
forgiving,
and compassionate
at all times,
in all places,
and under all conditions,
with everyone
as well as yourself.

This is
the greatest gift
anyone can give.'

Father Jim, on behalf of the LGBTQIA+ community, words cannot express our unending gratitude for your perfect love. You have truly made a gift of your life.

We thank you for 'not being afraid to touch us', and I just know the mother of all parties is being planned for your arrival in paradise by the many amazing gay boys we bid heartbreaking farewells to in our church during our days of crisis. Give them our regards, until we meet again.

Peace.



25 Speaking from the Heart/ Lydia's Closet

Speaking from the Heart was started in 2013, as a way for new refugees to our city to practice conversational English in an atmosphere of friendship. Our group was always meant to be an inclusive one that would not promote any one religion. When our founder, Karen Heavey, heard from some community members who wanted to use our group to convert refugees to Christianity, she sought out Fr. Jim in a panic. He agreed that had to be prevented. He said, "Here at Spiritus, we don't choose to TELL people about Christ so much as we choose to be the hands and feet of Christ and SHOW them the love he taught us." Throughout the years, as Marybeth Knowles and now Lydia Rodriguez have become our leaders, Father Jim has always offered us encouragement, even if it was a "keep it up, you're doing good work". I think what it comes down to is a smile or a hug and a good word from Father Jim makes you feel as though as you've connected to the spirit of God, and just by the way he treats people, and the way he lives HIS life - makes us all want to be better and do better.





26 Adult Enrichment

SWIFT

Dr. Shawnee Daniels-Sykes - a nurse, theologian, and Little Sister of Notre Dame - founded Sisters Walking in Faith Together or SWIFT. Dr. Daniels-Sykes passed away from cancer in 2022 leaving Courtney Davis as the ministry's sole surviving member. She could have carried Shawnee's legacy anywhere, because we, who live with chronic illness and disability, are everywhere. So, why Spiritus? Because like Shawnee, you, Fr. Jim, have spoken truth to power, despite great personal risk.

Your prophetic ministry of inclusion has been a clarion call to this community of faith to unite in the belief that everyone is born with inherent dignity and worth. Everyone has something meaningful to contribute to the Church.

That is clearly evidenced at every gathering of SWIFT, now Spiritus Walking and Wheeling in Faith Together. Our identities are as diverse as our diagnoses, because SWIFT is a safe space, because Spiritus is a safe space, because you, Fr. Jim, dared to make the Church a safe space.

We thank you, we love you, and we are walking with you.





Men's Group

Fr Jim

You encouraged us to form this group and keep it going because men needed a space where they could find support and be vulnerable and talk about their spirituality. This is especially important in our current male dominated, tough guy culture.

You told us the ministry was important even if numbers in the group were small. You showed us the importance of treating everyone as special. Many times you directed someone to this ministry and we ministered to them as they joined the group and ministered to us.

At group meetings we often discussed how you are a powerful example for us, as you walk the talk, living a Christian life. Your example led to many discussions about spirituality that were meaty and impactful, some life changing.

Thank you for your encouragement, your kindness and especially your sense of humor. This ministry of men is flourishing because of you.



27 Adopt A Family

Dear Father Jim,

The Adopt a Family committee has been thinking of you, sending prayers to you, and holding space for you in our hearts. Our work with this committee is possible because of the generosity of our parishioners – a generosity of heart that has been modeled so well by our church leadership – especially you.

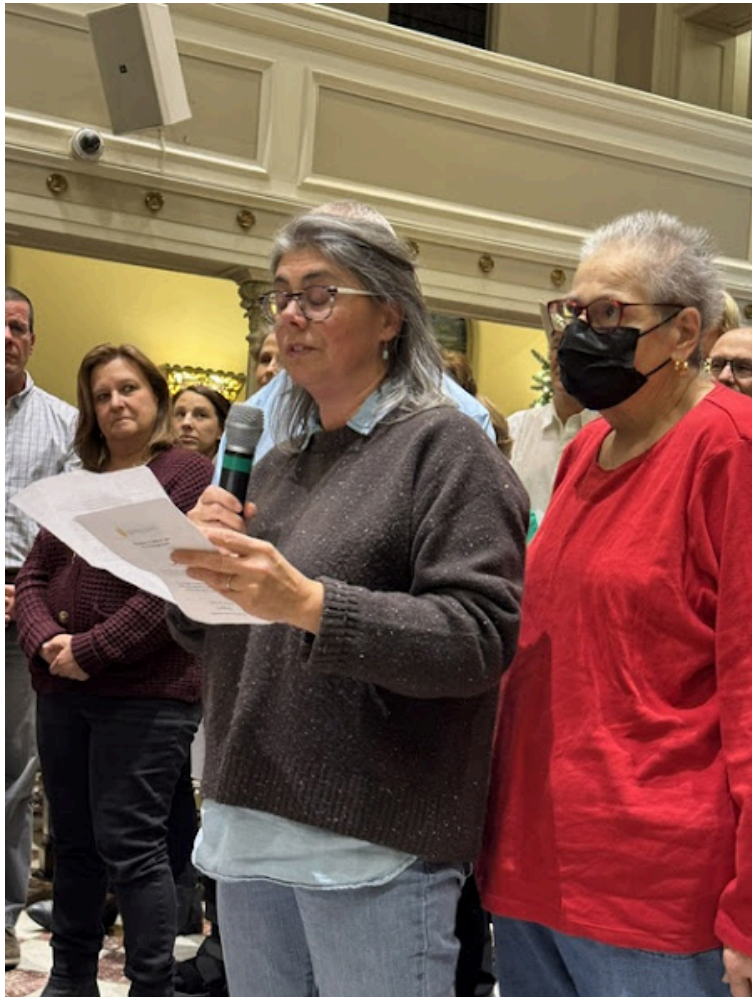
Every year when we start the Adopt a Family process, a sermon you gave back in the 1990s comes to mind. You told us that one day you were on your way to mass early because you had not finished your sermon, and you needed time to reflect and craft your talk. A man was waiting at the church doors and wanted to speak to you. He was struggling financially, mentally and had most likely slept outside or in a shelter. You were frustrated because you needed to work on your sermon and you said to God, “Please, God, I need to get inside and talk to you.” and before you knew it, you heard an answer to your plea. “I’m right in front of you”. And sure enough, you slowed down and gave the man your attention and your time and certainly, your love.

Thank you for being generous with your time. Thank you for being generous with your words. Thank you for being generous with your spirit. Thank you for modeling love, compassion and humanity for all these years.

May you know how deeply your life has affected all of us and may the magic of Christmas be present in your heart. Your beautiful light will forever shine within us.

Love,

Pete, Maria, Kathy, Kelley, Michelle and Mark



Oh Happy Day

The Blessing





28 Across The Miles

Father Jim, you are a man with a lot of moral courage and unconditional love walking in the footsteps of our Lord. You have willingly given everything for the betterment of your neighbor, no matter the cost. You welcomed us, not so near neighbors from across the Miles to worship and become parishioners at Spiritus and you welcomed many of us into your home when we came on pilgrimage to Rochester. It felt like being home. During your kitchen table ministry with us, you shared stories of the history and struggles of the early founders and members of the Spiritus Christi community. We have all been drawn to Basque in your light. Now it is time for us across the miles parishioners to continue radiating your love and spreading your wisdom to our neighbors, both far and near. Blessings and prayers to you as your journey to be with God in heaven.



29 Spiritus Music Ministry

When Fr. Jim came to Corpus Christi, he brought with him a desire to make music an integral part of the liturgy. And not just any type of music, but every type of music. From Folk Mass to the traditional Mass; from the Spanish Mass to Mass with a harp soloist; from amazing soloists to the creation of the Gospel Choir; from the singing of the Passion to the creation of the current Mass Choir. Fr Jim always felt that music was an important way to amplify the message from the pulpit and to touch those of us in the pews and watching at home. It is because of his leadership and his passion that we now have the Spiritus Music Ministry.

At Spiritus we incorporate music in our gatherings with great intention – during masses, in times of celebration and in times of grieving – to make each event special. Fr. Jim has a gift of making every person feel special, loved and seen. Speaking of love, he has also said that being a member of the choir can be good for your love life, which has turned out to be true on occasion!

Fr. Jim has the music in him, too – every time he sang along with us, or sat down to the piano and played. And while he never overtly broke into dance, he could be found toe tapping, shaking his hips, and clapping – and always putting his hand over his heart during Total Praise. Sometimes when walking off the altar at the end of mass, he would stop, smile, look over at choir and give Paul a thumbs up and Paul would say, “thanks, Padre.”

He welcomed it all – ballads, jazz, blues, Latin, Haitian, contemporary Christian music and gospel. His love of music, and insistence on the inclusion of all types of music in our worship parallels how he lived his life and modeled it for all of us – that all should be included. As our world grows and changes, he encourages our music ministry to also grow, change and be open to new ideas and music. We will continue to honor his vision and to joyfully share his love of music with all.



30 Parishioners State of the Heart

Fr Jim. As I gathered phrases from your flock so many were repeating words you have shared with us over the years. The most frequently used words to describe you were loving, welcoming, uplifting, extraordinary, compassionate, someone described you as sunshine in human form. And always with the answer yes to whatever was asked of you.

So many expressed that you brought them back to church with your example of sincere passion for Jesus and love of others which showed us how to follow Jesus' message. You showed us a God who loves us no matter what. Demonstrating it daily with Your ability to Love and care for everyone you encountered.

The Homilies you prepare provide us with real life examples of how to create the Kingdom of God. And the life you have led has shown us a daily example of how We can show the world God's Kingdom.

You have been courageous in your determination to uphold the ideals of the Church, not the rules. Just as Jesus did, you welcome all to the table an act some thought was rebellious, but you were teaching us equality. And when you have gotten in trouble for that, your leadership showed us a new way to be church. Your prophetic speaking and actions challenge us to live the radical message of God.

You have guided us and cared for us like a shepherd with a beautiful soul and caring heart you have been our role model and our friend. As all good Shepherds, you know our name. You are always present when talking to each of us. You have been present at our celebrations of weddings, births and baptisms. You have also walked by our side when we have been in the hospital, when we have gotten bad news and when our loved ones have died. During our darkest moments you have been a light and helped Us find God's light inside of us. Whether we're behind physical bars or the invisible bars of the mind and soul, you have shown through your leadership and life example that the love of Jesus is the "key" to true freedom. You have always Fully embraced our joy and sorrows with compassion.

We have so often found your beautiful blue eyes looking at us with compassion, joy, humor, a twinkle and most of all love. A personal welcoming connection. A tremendous smile freely and often given that lights up the world. As anyone who has received a warm hug from you knows they have felt the unconditional Love of God in your hugs. A man with a big heart you use to provide love to all unconditionally, affirming and unlocking the goodness in each person.

When you speak either at the podium or at the door, we feel the voice of Jesus talking to us. Your faithfulness to God, justice, inclusivity, respect, and service has demonstrated to us how to follow Jesus' message.

A favorite quote of yours "Where there is love there is chaos". Helped us remember to find the joy in each situation. A joy that shined through you daily which you shared freely with everyone you met.

You have walked humbly; shown us what mercy looks like and taught us how to seek justice for all.

From all of us we say Thank you and We Love You.





Final Blessing from Rev Celie



Our Father



Oh Precious Lord



Individual Parishioners Statements

1. My heart is breaking, knowing how he has suffered and that now, he is preparing to meet our Lord, Jesus Christ, and we will not see him again. Oh, what a homecoming that will be - Christ will be there with open arms to greet him.

There are so many words that represent Father Jim, trying to sort out which to choose is difficult.

For me, Father Jim truly taught me about Jesus Christ. I knew about Catholicism, because I attended Catholic Schools for 9 years of my life. Despite all of that education, I only knew the rules of the church, but never really knew Christ. Father Jim showed me the way.

P.S. Other words for our dear Father Jim - kindness, love, forgiveness, acceptance, determination, rebellion, honesty, friend, priest (I told him after the schism, that he would always be my priest, no matter what the Vatican said), wisdom, integrity, joy, laughter, music, acknowledgement, humble, orator, holy, steadfast.

2. I haven't had the pleasure of knowing Fr. Jim for long, but he made a deep impact. I remember one of his particularly stirring homilies about equality. I went up to him afterward and told him it was beautiful. He looked up, seeming mildly surprised and said, "Oh, really?" I was struck by his modesty. If I had to choose one word from my experience, it would be modest, although of course many wonderful adjectives describe him.

I also remember leaving the church one day soon after joining the congregation and walking up to him, hugging him, and saying I love him. He said, "I love you, too," so genuinely, even though he barely knew me. Warm is another word for him.

One Sunday recently I thought about him, sadly knowing he will pass on soon, and that I didn't get to know him long. I swear I felt him say goodbye. So, he is also so connected to us even when he isn't physically present. I couldn't properly describe it.

3. The faithful servant. The one the master was very pleased with in the story of the Talents.

4. Kind, loving, caring, compassionate, beloved, holy, divine

5. Father Jim is a remarkable, extraordinary human being, and a forever friend.

6. Father Jim is a prophet. His homilies share the Gospels and teachings of Jesus eloquently: His examples are golden and inspirational.

The world is a better place because of you, Father Jim. Your ability to speak to truth to power, your unconditional love for all love and the way you live your faith have served as strong examples for Mike and me.

Personally, you mean so much to us. Having you on our first date and walking me down the aisle are memories we hold deep in our hearts and always will.

You gave both our parents peace they never would have found on their own at the end of their lives. You've taught us to love even when it seems hard or impossible—and to never forget that love. You've taught us to adapt—which you are living right now. You've taught us to forgive ourselves and others and to keep our hearts tender.

We love you more than words can ever express. You will be with us forever. And although different than we hoped, I know that when we meet again, it will be a glorious reunion.

7. Father Jim is kind to all people. His presence is a blessing. It is a privilege to know Father Jim.

8. Father Jim reflects the character of Christ with an unpretentious heart.

9. Thank you, Father Jim, for sharing the many gifts of you with us – your compassion, insights, blessings, warmth, guidance, inspirational leadership, and welcoming essence continue to touch me deeply. I have been indelibly blessed by you and your grace, and am sending love and a forever thank you to you

Loving

Kind

Compassionate

Spiritual

Amazing sense of humor

Beautiful smile

10. My word for Father Jim is prophet. He has always spoken the truth, encouraging people to lead a better life, bringing God's Message to all. He shows everyone how to follow Jesus. He speaks truth to power; his truth is what guides him in his life. He can sometimes make a person uncomfortable like the prophets did, but what he tells us is always right. His message of forgiveness is a hard one to hear, but it is God's message to us. The world will lose one of the rare and priceless gifts God has given to us all.

11. You have impacted my life by being an example of God's love. You are the reason why people believe in beautiful souls. I'm so fortunate to have had you in my life.

12 Father Jim officiated our wedding last September and we still have guests who comment on what a special ceremony he led for us. There are many words I could use to describe his impact he has had on us and the Rochester community, but the short phrase we will submit is “a compassionate, inspirational leader”.

13 Dearest Father Jim,

When I picture you in my mind's eyes I see you on the altar, holding hands, gazing upward singing the Our Father prayer with a smile that lights up the world. Thank you for your graceful & kind presence. For the past 29 years your words have inspired me & given me so much hope. Thank you with all my heart. Wishing you peace.

14 Fr. Jim – You are a wonderful human being that has meant so much to so many. I will never forget when I joined Spiritus Christi some years ago, and you took me to lunch as a new parishioner. We had a wonderful conversation, and I will never forget how special you made me feel. You are a true example of what a good person should be, because you have always lived by example. My only regret is not meeting you 20 years ago. I will hold you in my heart and in spirit forever.

15 Dear Father Jim,

We are writing from across the lake in Toronto where we've been joining you regularly at 9:30 Sunday mass...and Thursday nights (and more).. since the beginning of Covid. We are so happy to have landed into the zoom outreach of Spiritus Christi....

We found you again from suggested sites at the beginning of covid in lockdown...by a group I am part of here..CNWE ...Canadian Network for Women's Equality. My husband and a several friends have also been hooked into your net... and ever, ever so grateful!!

Our connection to Spiritus predates Covid ...though we hadn't connected since some years back. I was first introduced to Spiritus by Mary Ramerman and her visit to Toronto at the turn of the century when she celebrated mass with us for a wonderful gathering of folks in Holy Trinity Church downtown Toronto. (I was filmed ...without knowing ...receiving communion from Mary on our national CBC news ...broadcasted that 11 o'clock news. I didn't see the news but colleagues from Mount Sinai hospital where I worked at the time as a chaplain rang my phone off the hook. I was employed by the hospital but endorsed by the archdiocese here for work there...and friends were worried I'd be in trouble 😊... never heard more 😊).

My husband and I journeyed to Rochester to attend mass at Spiritus soon after...bought the Tshirt, DVD about the spiritus story... and the rest is history. Except... I journeyed too several years later through major health issues which I gratefully got through... and we landed then in the Jesuit parish here in Toronto (I'd studied with them)... and remained there til Covid. But not since.

Our opportunity to participate in mass online...and Eucharist ...has been such a gift to us... we can't say enough. Liturgy, music, walking the talk that Spiritus does as a community...is truly the best anyone could ever find this side of heaven. We have been so privileged!! You saw us

through Covid and beyond. Daniel even had me sending recorded music to participate in the choir recordings that were happening then... zoomed meetings with them too. What a group...what a team...what Spirit!

The gifts you've given with your prophetic move years back ripple out far across the lake and beyond... and keep on rippling. It's immeasurable... Thank you Thank you Thank you, Fr Jim. You have helped keep hope alive for us.

We are so saddened that this challenge for your health is cutting short your time on this plane. You have continued through this time to be in our prayers and love... Please know we will continue to hold you in our hearts.

We are sad too to not have travelled around the lake by now to hug you directly... we had hoped to. Hope you can feel our hugs now... we certainly image and feel yours!

We are confident that you, your love and your work are bigger than anything that could separate you from us. You have helped build and surround Spiritus with a community of love that will not stop

From us here in Toronto whose lives you have touched and given hope to for a church that works for God and all...

We thank you from the bottoms of our hearts and souls.

16 Jerry Welch - Christlike

Joan Welch - Honest; Loving

Dave Cassidy - Heartwarming; Sincere

17 Probably 12 years ago we were new to the parish. We were going south for two months and went to the Thursday night mass before we left. We were at Mass a bit early, and Fr. Jim walked over to us, introduced himself and asked us our names. We chatted and left for 2 months. When we came back and went to our regular Sunday Mass, Fr. Jim called us by name. He had remembered who we were and has called us by our name ever since. We felt a personal, welcoming connection. Fr. Jim is like the shepherd who knows his flock.

18 When I think of Father Jim, I think of his "Faithfulness!" He is.

Faithful to his God, above all else

Faithful to his beliefs in Justice, inclusivity, respect, honesty, service

Faithful in bringing joy and love to everyone he meets

Faithful to himself in life and in death

19 For 50 years, you have embodied the love of Christ in Rochester. You were the face of Jesus to thousands of people, relentlessly teaching them about--and enacting--God's unconditional love. From your illness, we can only conclude that God has perhaps grown a little tired of sharing you with us, and now wants you back home.

20 Of course, we will miss you always, and so we say: Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!
Jim, your heart has touched mine deeply through so many years, as you've walked by my side
on my personal and family journey with kindness and care.

I treasure every memory!

The statement that we feel best exemplifies Fr. Jim to us is, "courageous, divinely inspired
leadership".

21 If you want just words to describe him – kindness, attentive listening, prophetic speaking and
actions to inspire and challenge me to live the radical message of the gospel.

22 Dear Fr. Jim

We want to THANK YOU for having influenced our lives. We met you at a Call-to-Action
Convention with Pastor Mary Rammerman, many years ago. We were so excited to be able to
experience such a progressive church. Then we stopped for mass, at the Presbyterian Church,
in Rochester, on our way to Camp Koinonia, Family Camp, in Italy Valley, NY. And Thank
God-ness, Spiritus Christi has been on live stream when COVID happened. It has been our life
saver and continues to be. You are in our prayers. Until we meet again, good friend.
Affirming and unlocking the goodness in each person

Transforming the church

A consequential person

23 Taken from Alabama's song Angels Among Us

When life held troubled times, and had me down on my knees
There's always been someone to come along and comfort me
A kind word from a stranger, to lend a helpin' hand
A phone call from a friend, just to say I understand
And ain't it kind of funny at the dark end of the road
Someone lights the way with just a single ray of hope
Oh, I believe there are angels among us
Sent down to us from somewhere up above
They come to you and me in our darkest hours
To show us how to live, to teach us how to give; To guide us with the light of love.
They wear so many faces; show up in the strangest places
To grace us with their mercy, in our time of need
Fr Jim has been an angel among us
Sent down to us from somewhere up above
He's come to you and me in our darkest hours
To show us how to live, to teach us how to give
To guide us with the light of love

24 When I was experiencing a dark and troubled time in my life, Fr Jim said that it probably feels like I am in a deep, dark forest. He told me that I have a light in me that shines brightly. He said that I needed to shine that light onto the ground right in front of me and take one step at a time being guided by that light. He said to let that light give me comfort in taking the next sure and steady step. He said, over time, one step at a time, I would be on the other side of the dark forest looking back at it. I am very much on the other side of that dark forest and don't even bother looking back at it. Fr Jim was an angel sent down to me and guided me with his light of love. I will forever be grateful to him for helping me and my children in our greatest time of need.

I am so appreciative to have had you in my life, Fr Jim. Thank you for your honesty, compassion, insight, humor and love.

25 Jim, you've walked with me through joys and sorrows, addiction and recovery, always, always, modeling the unconditional love of God. My life and our family's lives are so much richer because of you. Peace on the journey,

26 Our names are Terri and Roger Larker. Father Jim officiated our wedding as a deacon on February 15, 1974, at St. Margaret Mary Church in Irondequoit. We are possibly the very first couple he married. We celebrated our 50 years of marriage this past February. Aside from some physical challenges in the past few years, we are and have been extremely blessed. Father Jim certainly tied the marriage knot tight as both my husband and I joke about at times.

I first met Father Jim in September 1973 while teaching my first year in Kindergarten at St. Mary's School in Canandaigua. We became good friends, and he frequently came into my class to talk to my students about how very wonderful Jesus is. They loved his visits and always looked forward to him coming in. He was phenomenal in his interaction with young children which is a trait that not everyone has. His genuine love for God and children was demonstrated every time he visited my classroom. Because Father Jim is a talented pianist, he even played the piano for our Kindergarten graduation in June. The ceremony was beautiful and memorable for all in attendance. Father Jim will always hold a very special place in our hearts.

THANK YOU, FATHER JIM!!

27 If I have one word to describe Fr. Jim, it would be Magnificent! And I would say it with such joy & my hands outstretched!

28 Don't you just love a person who is pure Sunshine in human form?! ☀️ Fr. Jim Callan is that for me ~ and for so many others! He is a beautiful soul & has a caring heart bigger than anyone! We are blessed to know him as our priest, our role model & our friend. Fr. Jim has forged an extraordinary pathway throughout his 50 years as a priest, has a key to the city of Rochester & even has a day named after him - October 4th! He has touched many hearts & changed lives for the better with his outreach ministries ~ throughout our church community & beyond! Thank you, Fr. Jim ~ we lift you in daily prayer & we love you deeply!



YOUR BEAUTIFUL PATHWAY

You are trailing a beautiful pathway through this life ~

An invisible star-bright network of YOU.

All the times you touch the hearts of others are stars on that trail.

Every time you smile, give advice, show kindness & love, play music & sing, share wisdom,
give those amazing, long hugs ~
stars ~ all of them.

Your twinkly star-bright galaxy of YOU grows every day ~
reaching places, you've never been to ~ but your energy has ~
through your words & actions...

You are blazing a shimmering pathway ~ full of love, peace,
faith & joy, kindness & sincerity, companionship & loyalty ~
all over the place!

And you don't even see it!

If you could, you would be mesmerized
by the effect you have on this planet.

Keep trailing that beautiful pathway ~

You have so much more to add!

And one day (now) many others will see your remarkable service & follow that incredible trail
made by you ~ made just by YOU!

* (paraphrased from a poem by Donna Ashworth)

Spiritus Christi Church

29 My word for Father Jim is GOOD.

30 Having grown up in a traditional RC church and spent 12 years in parochial schools, I was shocked when Fr. Jim asked me my name the 1st time I received communion from him at Corpus Christi. It touched my heart as he said "Body of Christ, Dorothy" that 1st time and each time after that. (only ever asked my name once) I also love Fr. Jim's quote "the Church is a place for sinners, not Saints" Fr. Jim really made me feel so special & welcomed at God's table. I knew this was the church for me.

31 In April of 2011 I suffered from a variety of illnesses starting with a heart attack and followed by months of problems breathing and general physical weakness. I was hospitalized several times with no improvement. In August, having been admitted again, Father Jim came to pray over me as he had done on many of my previous hospitalizations. He offered to anoint me, which I gladly accepted. Shortly after Father Jim left, my doctor came in to examine me once again and became somewhat agitated that nothing was being done at the hospital. He left my bedside and soon one of the nurses came in to tell me that I was scheduled for a procedure later that day. During that procedure they diagnosed a general condition and widespread infection which they began treating. This all culminated in an operation in October to repair the internal condition that was causing my ill health. If it had not been for Father Jim's anointing me and his prayers, as well as the prayers of many families and friends, I might not have survived.

31 When I think of Fr. Jim, I always think of the words "YES, the answer will always be YES!"
(When I asked whether he'd do a funeral for a friend who was a non-believer.)

32 When I think of Father Jim, what comes immediately to my mind is LOVE and ALWAYS BEING PRESENT.

33 My words for Fr. Jim are: Welcoming, kind, and compassionate blue eyes.

34 Not good at writing but would like to Thank Fr. Jim for always being there for everyone. He always smiling I attend the 7.30 Mass my daughter sons were baptized and received First Communion in his present. Peace to a wonderful man

35 sustenance for my soul

36 ALWAYS WELCOMING AND UPLIFTING

37 When I think of Jim extraordinary and unforgettable are the words that come to my mind!!

38 Jim is a compassionate and loving man whose heart could hold more than most any hearts could, as he loved and cared for everyone that he encountered.

39 Fr. Jim, wish I had known this years ago:
"You didn't cause it, you can't control it and you can't change it"
Thank you for these very true words.
Love

40 When it comes to Jim Callan all I can say is that I love him dearly and I have felt that same love whenever we meet. My thoughts are drawn to a cross-stick.
J-- stands for Jesus. I have never known a priest that speaks to how I would imagine Jesus to be like. I could elaborate but we can all see this. We have experienced this.

I- There is irony in the "I". It is just the opposite for Father Jim. Yes, he has loved himself in a very humble and healthy way but He chooses to keep the focus on "you "or "we", His church family.

M- is for Magi. Jim has kept his eye on the " Star " of Bethlehem in his prayer life and the model for his life. He always comes bearing gifts for all mankind. Gifts more precious than silver. More precious than gold.

"

J- Jesus
I - Irony
M- Magi

I love you Father Jim!

41 Big Guy

One of the kindest and most loving souls I ever met is Fr. Jim. I am guessing it was 1996, when my counselor suggested giving Corpus Christi Church a try. I had mentioned to her that I had not been to church in twenty years. Well, the way she said it piqued my interest, so, I walked through the front doors of Corpus Christi and never looked back. This beautiful church seemed to hum with a sacred history. The air smelled of familiar scents of candles and of incense aromas that lingered. Mass was just starting when I arrived, and the pews were impressively full. I found a spot off to the side and that is where I first saw Fr. Jim, who later became Big Guy to me.

People often asked me why I called him that, as he was around 5'6" in height. I told them that they were looking at his outward appearance and not at his inward appearance.

Listening to him preach, only took a short while to realize his heart was as big as they come. His sincere passion and love for all was totally evident. His joyful and infectious smile revealed his extraordinary person. Where did this guy come from; I asked myself? Wow! Without exaggeration, his heart was radiating love and acceptance to the entire congregation. You could feel it hugging you as he spoke. I also observed a lot of diversity in the pews, as Fr. Jim had said all were welcome. I knew then, I was home.

I took the time to explain to him why I was calling him Big Guy, because of his enormous heart. Well, do you know how he answered me? He calls me Big Guy. Get a load of that.

Fr. Jim will always be my Big Guy, who saved my life. 12-1-24

41 Father jim was a part of our extended family before I even knew him .

After college, I came to Rochester but my dad still in Elmira, my home town was experiencing a whole new perspective on Catholicism at St Peter and Paul with Father Jim.

Dad was extremely conservative .. and way too solemn, almost to the point of suffering while he prayed. Father Jim showed him a whole new level of love, openness and joy to be experienced while he worshiped! Shortly after, dad died suddenly of a massive heart attack at 59. In Rochester, 1977, I had left the church and married John at a justice of the peace- still believing in God, but no interest in Catholicism.

Mom, still in Elmira, who also loved Fr Jim, said "Frannie, go check him out at Corpus Christi- I think you will be pleasantly surprised."

I was reluctant, but said "come on John, let's get a glimpse of this guy." The rest is history, with him baptizing Audrey, marrying Audrey and Dave, blessing our marriage , and baptizing Isabella

Audrey wrote her thesis on him at Georgetown (only a few years after Jim was fired ") !

The Jesuits were hanging over her shoulders, as they nationally had heard all about him, and told her how proud they were of his actions !!

Most of all, Fr Jim showed us “what Jesus would do”, but in such a captivating way.....always with a powerful story .

And we promise to carry out your work, Fr Jim.

Thank you for your incredible inspiration, hope, healing & for showing us a forgiving God . We love you. You will always be in our hearts.

42 My word would be “saint” as I have told so many people that I feel he is a modern-day saint who doesn’t just talk the talk, but walks it every day!

He has inspired me and my family in so many ways and I trust his trip to heaven will be instantaneous upon his death.

43 It is just over 2 years since we attended our first mass at Spiritus Christi; a 5 pm mass in the Sanctuary.

Father Jim came right to us before the mass and introduced himself and talked so freely and genuinely with us. We were taken with him right away. We knew he was special.

Every mass after that he would come over and say, "Hello John and Lisa" and continue to engage in conversation.

We miss his tremendous smile and the twinkle in his eye.

We pray for his comfort and peace.

44 SUNLIGHT

45 Of course, it is impossible to come up with one word or phrase about this precious human being....

Here is one aspect of my experiences with Father Jim that has meant so much to me:

Always fully present with you.

46 Father Jim has meant a lot to me and my family, the Drexler’s, for many years. He presided over the funeral of our Uncle Pat Drexler after his unexpected and untimely death in 2017. My parents would often drive from Geneva up to Rochester for the Sunday Masses at Hochstein because they enjoyed them so much (especially the music!). When my husband Erik and I moved to Rochester in 2022, we found our way to Spiritus and were immediately welcomed by the community. Though we no longer live in Rochester and our time in the community was brief, it was memorable. We are incredibly grateful to Father Jim for his kindness, acceptance, and love. Spiritus was very much a “safe” and a happy place for us, and this was in large part due to Father Jim’s warmth and authenticity. We love you, Father Jim, and are so grateful for

everything you have done for our family and for the community.

47 Dear Father Jim:

You are a role model for so many people, including myself. I am thinking of ALL the people who attended junior high youth group, senior high youth group, and have left the Rochester area who are now “young adults” and “not so young adults” You touched so many of our lives in ways big and small through your love and your example.

I love you.

48 Father Jim, your legacy lives on in us. You have taught us so much about leading by example, demonstrating our faith with action and the hard work of attempting to see God’s light in everyone that we meet. We both searched for a life partner who would dedicate their soul to making this world a kinder, braver and more just place for others, and we realized that your teaching has made us each the perfect match for each other. Our family is your legacy. Each week, you instruct our family to go out to love and serve others and we do this together, forging deep connections with each other and with our community. You always make us feel special, loved and seen when you remember bits and pieces of our lives. We miss you every day and love you so much.

49 Since starting as Spiritus in 1999 right after the split, Father Jim has always been a constant presence for me even when I have not been as consistent with church over the years.

What I love about Father Jim is he has always practiced what he preaches. Our world would be a much better place if all religious figures lived their lives more like Father Jim.

He has always stood up for what’s right and gave a voice to those who need it most.

I am grateful he has been part of my life and will always continue to be through his wisdom and actions.

50 Father Jim has talked the talk and walked the walk in my life, exemplifying what it means to be a true follower of Jesus. I am honored to have been blessed by him over and over again, as I was baptized, did my first communion, reconciliation, confirmation with him, and he married my husband, and I. I will take these blessings with me always as I continue to give love to others in my community, fighting for justice and for our love. Thank you, Father Jim, for your years of fighting for justice on behalf of all people, and continually choosing to do what is right, regardless of the personal consequences. You have blessed our families, our community, and our cities a million times over.

51 Thank you for organizing this means of feedback. I would like to say that I first came to know Father Jim as a dedicated and passionate leader of Spiritus Christi Church. Upon getting deeper into the community and interacting personally with Father Jim I recall feeling nothing but warmth and genuine kindness in his presence; something that let me know that he was happy to have me. Easy smiles and hugs that I will never forget.

In learning about his extensive and radical work in the city of Rochester and in our faith community I am honored to know him. I believe that we as young adults in this congregation can and must preserve Father Jim’s legacy. I feel it falls on us young people to carry on this vital

work in the wake of our sorrow.

52 We are deeply grateful for Father Jim's unwavering love and commitment to all parishioners, especially our young adults. When Lauren and I first visited Spiritus as a newly dating couple, we were searching for a spiritual community that aligned with our values. During our very first Sunday Mass at Hochstein, Father Jim warmly introduced himself within minutes of us sitting down. His kindness and the welcoming atmosphere immediately made us feel at home. Shortly after, we joined the Young Adult Ministry, where we've built meaningful friendships through shared service and fellowship. Thank you, Father Jim, for fostering such a vibrant and inclusive community.

53 I would like to say he has impacted my life in many ways. He always welcomed me in the church, and he always had open arms whenever I came in and made me feel welcomed there. He was there when I was born in the hospital, which was very special in many ways. Am very grateful he was there when I was born and blessed me. He did always make me feel special and welcomed into the Spiritus family.

54 When I think about Father Jim I think about his welcoming, loving smile and kind, nurturing spirit. His smile was one of the first things I noticed when I first came to Spiritus. He would greet me each week, commenting on my joy. When I gave my first homily, he made sure I knew where to go and what to do each step of the way so my only focus was on being present.

55 Ever since we got engaged, Father Jim would see us each time at church and say "6-8-24, right!?" We would gladly say yes. Though he wasn't able to be at our wedding, he was there in spirit. On our mini moon at Belhurst we went to Seneca Falls to a Florist shop and found a Medal for Father Jim. We sent it to him when we got home telling him how much we thought of him. Father Jim has a beautiful soul, and we are so grateful for all of his guidance in helping to shape Spiritus. We will always remember him as part of our Thursday Night Community. We are so grateful to him and know he will always be with us

56 In September 1963, I was a freshman on my way to classes at Mercy H.S. While sitting in the back of the St. Paul Blvd bus with friends, I remember that when it approached your stop, someone said, "Those boys are going to the seminary." I clearly remember how your peaceful, smiling face stood out from the others.

Then, through the years, we would see your photo in a newspaper article featuring an injustice which you and your church were fighting against. And there it was...the same peaceful expression.

Sometime around 1989, Mike, Ben and I happily decided that we were members of Corpus Christi Church. We wanted to be more than Catholics. We wanted to be Christians and to follow the teachings of Jesus. And we knew that you were the best person to lead the way.

Words just are not adequate enough to tell you of the love and gratitude we have for you.

You are in our hearts forever.

57 The word that comes to mind for me when I think of Father Jim is beacon. He is the beacon in the lighthouse that brought me back to faith after being away for 50 years.

58 I later learned that in August and September of 1998, Father Jim went through his own ending and new beginning, around the same time I was unapologetically in front of a dormitory of women on my knees praying to God for my life to change and in return promising to tell all who would listen. I felt lost and didn't trust my own decisions. As I reflect back, when I walked out of Monroe County Jail in September of 1998, I had no idea I would spend the next 25 years of my life helping others in the same facility. I can't help but feel grateful for Father Jim's courage, even though then it may not have looked like courage to others. God showed me that He works all things out, especially when we can't see His plan. I honor Father Jim for his obedience to God's call, which I now see as nothing short of miraculous. Whether we're behind physical bars or the invisible bars of the mind and soul, Father Jim has shown through his leadership and life example that the love of Jesus is the "key" to true freedom.

Thank you, Father James Callan and your blessed and anointed team for all that you have done and all that you continue to do, to impact needed change for cultures, for genders, for the families of God.

I believe I can speak for Jessie and Yvonne, (your first 3 prison outreach housed women) in saying that we love you, we honor you and we thank you!!

59 I want you to know the great influence Fr. Jim has had on my life. We worked together on Sanctuary, I went with him to El Salvador, Peter and I attended Immanuel Baptist Tuesday noon services, also services at Corpus Christi and Spiritus, we walked with farmworkers in the Labor Day Parade. His radiant, welcoming smile always drew me in and kept me within his warm light. He has always worked for justice, lived a life of lovingkindness, and walked humbly with God, Jesus, and all the rest of us. When our grandchildren graduated from college, I created Words to Ponder booklets which included his words of wisdom from June 2012:

Words of wisdom from Fr. Jim Callan of Spiritus Christi Church, June 2012

While Jesus didn't comment about the war in Afghanistan, abortion, homosexuality, nuclear weapons, women's ordination, etc., he gave us certain principles to live by. Most theologians and Christians agree (more or less) that these are the main points Jesus taught---and lived out through his own example:

- 1) Love God and love your neighbor as yourself ("These are the two greatest commandments")
- 2) Love your enemies ("Do good to those who hate you")
- 3) Forgive everyone. No exceptions ("seventy times seven times")
- 4) Seek reconciliation ("Leave your gift at the altar and reconcile with your brother or sister")
- 5) No revenge. No violence ("Don't repay injury with injury." "Put down the sword")
- 6) Do not judge and do not condemn ("and you won't be judged or condemned either")
- 7) Don't be self-righteous ("Hypocrites, take the beam out of your own eye first")

8) Reach those who are in pain, rejected, addicted ("Heal the sick, cleanse lepers, cast out demons")

9) Serve the poor. Invite them to your table ("What you do for the least, you do for Me")

10) Beware of riches and possessions ("Avoid greed in all its forms")

11) Humbly serve others ("As I have washed your feet, go and wash others' feet")

12) Practice justice. Don't oppress people ("Seek first the justice and the Kingdom of God")

13) Be generous to all ("Give, and it will be given back to you in the same measure that you give")

14) Trust God and don't worry ("Don't worry about what you eat or drink or put on." "Where is your faith?")

Fr. Jim lived out every one of them. I thank God for him.

With a heart full of love and gratitude for him,

60 My word is gratitude. Fr Jim -Gratitude for getting to know you and for all you have taught us over the years. I will remember this for the rest of my life. Thank you so much, you are the best.