

**VOTF PREPARES FOR NEW SEASON**

July 25, 2004

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The August meeting of the Voice of the Faithful (VOTF) in the Diocese of Bridgeport will focus on plans strategies and organization for 2004-05. The meeting will take place Thursday, August 5<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m. at the First Congregational Church on the Green in Norwalk. **Bridgeport Bishop William E. Lori does not allow the VOTF to meet on Catholic Church premises.**

Incoming Chair Anthony Wiggins of Wilton and Co-Chair Margaret Mooney of Stamford will welcome attendees and encourage their views and concerns over the clergy sex abuse scandal. A member of SNAP, the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests will relate his/her experiences.

Bridgeport VOTF Communications Committee members will outline strategy and plans for the coming year focusing on a major advertising program aimed at the hierarchy's response to the continuing international Catholic Church crisis. The Committee will also outline the structural changes in Church administration that will be advocated by VOTF-Bridgeport in the coming year.

The VOTF is also seeking contributions to its Voice of Compassion Fund as a direct means of financial support for charitable and educational works of the Diocese of Bridgeport. Gifts of \$2500 are planned to five agencies when a \$12,500 goal is reached. Last year's four recipients were: Thomas Merton House and Family Stages both in Bridgeport, the School Sisters of Notre Dame Wilton Motherhouse and the Queen of the Clergy retirement residence in Stamford. Contributions may be sent to Voice of the Faithful, PMB #104, 25-13 Old Kings Highway North, Darien, CT 06820.

The Fairfield-Westchester VOTF affiliate will meet Tuesday, August `17<sup>TH</sup> at 7:30 PM in Christ Church in Greenwich. For further Norwalk information, please contact Jim Alvord (203-847-4145). The Fairfield-Westchester contact is Tom Malarkey (914-946-7315). Both local affiliates are among the 181 worldwide aligned with the Boston-headquartered VOTF organization of 40,000 members in forty states and twenty-one countries.

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