



# Groundbreaking | June 1, 2019



*This is an historic moment in the life of a remarkable parish. The church is its people, each a living stone of a living edifice, which is the mystical Body of Christ that expands time and space. We ask that the undertaking we begin this day, for His glory and our well-being, may progress day-by-day to its successful completion.*

**Bishop Frank J. Caggiano, 2019**



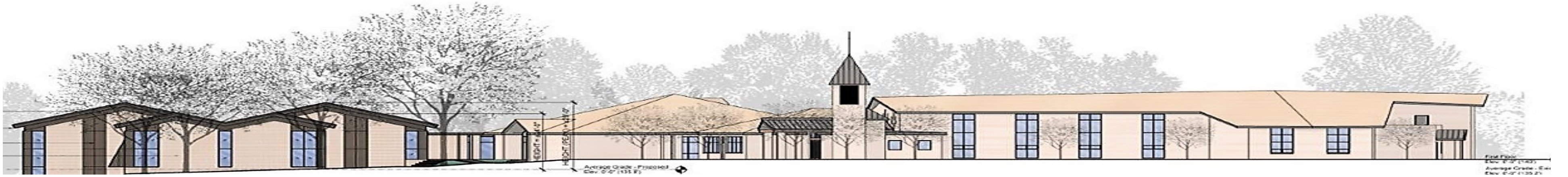
*We're thrilled to welcome people of all ages with opportunities for play, fitness, restoration and even healing. To have a place here at St. Matthew that's even more alive and vibrant in faith, and the center of our lives, building the City of God.*

**Msgr. Walter C. Orlowski, Pastor | 2019**



*These groundbreakers represent all generations, which represent Msgr. Walter's vision: that all ages will enjoy this Rec Center together.*  
**Larry Cafero, Groundbreaking Master of Ceremonies**





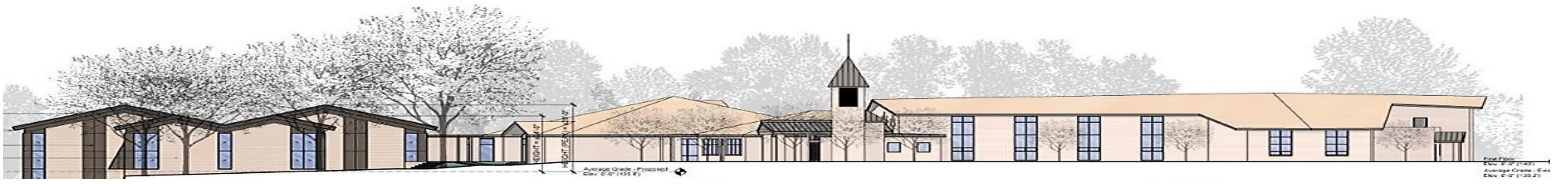
I've been the proud Pastor of St. Matthew Church since July 1, 1994. I grew up in Fairfield where we had the old CYO - Catholic Youth Organization - where kids had the opportunity to gather in a safe space to socialize. Over the years at St. Matthew, I've tried to rent spaces. There are no available public spaces. The purpose of the Rec Center is to complement and to augment what we already do at St. Matthew. My belief is this: if we're to be viable, the Church must be the center of all we do.

We, as a Church, need to present the opportunity for people to gather.  
We, as a Church, must present the opportunity for good growth - not only to approach the Spiritual Life, but also opportunities for service.  
We, as a Church, must present the opportunity for socialization, and anything that brings good people together, both young and old.  
It's all for the good. All for God's people.

**Msgr. Walter C. Orlowski, Zoning Commission Hearing: July 12, 2018**











# Fr. Jeff at the Helm | April - December, 2021



I know you are in very good hands as Fr. Jeff begins his ministry as your Pastor. Fr. Jeff is a man of joyful heart. He is filled with zeal and energy and passion. He is your Shepherd, and together you will be able to bring to completion, as a Family of Faith, this Rec Center so that it may be a haven for everyone in this parish family to come together to socialize, recreate, love each other, coming in unity and faith.

**Bishop Frank J. Caggiano | June 5, 2021 at Fr. Jeff's Installation Mass**

*While the Rec Center building is finished, it is just the beginning of the many, many lives it will touch.*

When I came here in April and was asked to get this done, the building was a shell. Today, I feel like I know every brick in this place. But I never looked at how challenging the project would be to complete. Every time I walked in here, I imagined the echo of kids' laughter, the bouncing of a ball, the swooshing of net, and how wonderful it will be to have kids filling this Rec Center.

I don't think back about the door fittings.  
Or the stairs that needed to be realigned.  
Or the manufacturing delays of a pandemic.  
I think of the kid who will put their handprint on that window, looking in with excitement. The hope for the future. What it will become. A place to laugh and play together... to experience each other's company in a parish community... people of all ages having fun and making a connection.

This building began as Msgr.'s dream, but it has become ours. You and I have adopted it as our own dream, and it will be all of our legacy as a Parish.

**Fr. Jeffrey W. Couture, Pastor | November 2021**



Our Parish owes tremendous thanks to Carl Lecher, Lecher Development; John Doyle, Doyle Coffin Architecture; Bob Lawless, Lawless & Mangione, Architects/Engineers; and Jay Egan, Director of Athletics, New Canaan High School, and Executive Director of our new Rec Center.

Carl Lecher isn't just the Developer of this Rec Center. He is the physical creator of it – the person who made Msgr.'s dream a reality. Words cannot express our immense gratitude to Carl for his guidance, skill, diligence, and incredible hard work in seeing this project through from start to finish. We truly are grateful as a Parish, for without him, this would never have been a reality. It was Carl who built the Rec Center, but it was architect John Doyle who took that dream of Msgr.'s and made it a reality on paper for Carl to go by. We thank John for his planning and designing, from initial concept through completion. And we thank Bob Lawless, architect and engineer for over 40 years, who helped to fashion what St. Matthew Church looks like today, and on whose counsel for this Rec Center Msgr. relied. Finally, a huge thanks to Jay Egan, Director of Athletics at New Canaan High School. Jay's help and guidance, first to Msgr. about how programming would work, and then to me, has proved instrumental in overseeing operational use and programming of the Rec Center. With over 16 years as AD in New Canaan Public Schools, his work as New Canaan District Coordinator for Health and Physical Education, and as Past President of the Fairfield County Interscholastic Athletic Conference, Jay's direction is a tremendous asset.

**Fr. Jeffrey W. Couture, Pastor**

