

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Thomas Merton Family Center Commemorates 50 Years of Compassionate Service with a Milestone Celebration

Bridgeport, CT – October 7, 2024 – The Thomas Merton Family Center, a program of Catholic Charities of Fairfield County and a cornerstone of hope and support in the Bridgeport community, is proud to announce its 50th Anniversary Celebration. This event will take place on Wednesday, November 13, from 5:00 to 7:00 PM at CT State Community College Housatonic, Beacon Hall, 900 Lafayette Boulevard, Bridgeport, CT 06604.

For half a century, the Thomas Merton Family Center has stood as a beacon of love and assistance, offering essential resources to vulnerable individuals and families. The celebration is an invitation to honor this legacy of service and to look forward to the future of the Center's impact on the community.

The evening will commence with the unveiling of the "Faces of a Sacred Place" photography exhibit at 5:00 PM. This collection, created by Bridgeport photographers Jay Misencik and Geralene Valentine, portrays the compelling stories of the guests of the Merton Center. Attendees will have the opportunity to engage with the photographers, as well as listen to powerful stories of several of the featured guests. The display is part of the Housatonic Museum of Art's exhibition program and is their second collaboration with Misencik and Valentine.

At 6:00 PM, Bishop Frank Caggiano, alongside local dignitaries, will reflect on the Center's rich history and its enduring impact on the Bridgeport community.

Guests will enjoy hors d'oeuvres and beverages in the Beacon Hall Lounge on the third floor, fostering a warm atmosphere for community members, supporters, and partners to connect and celebrate the Center's anniversary. This event also highlights the partnership between the Thomas Merton Family Center and CT State Community College Housatonic, underscoring their shared commitment to strengthening the region.

Sabine Kuczo, interim Director of the Thomas Merton Family Center, shared her reflections on the event:

“It is an honor and privilege to be part of this historic event. To see the faces of our guests captured in such a beautiful, yet powerful, manner is truly heartwarming. I am proud to be part of this vital mission in Bridgeport and reflect upon Thomas Merton’s own words as inspiration: ‘Our job is to love others without stopping to inquire whether or not they are worthy. That is not our business. The beginning of love is the will to let those we love be perfectly themselves, the resolution not to twist them to fit our own image... otherwise we only love the reflection of ourselves we find in them.’”

This complimentary event is open to all who have supported or wish to learn more about the Thomas Merton Family Center's vital work. The Center warmly invites everyone to join in celebrating 50 years of service, compassion, and love.

To learn more about the Thomas Merton Family Center and its 50th Anniversary Celebration, please visit [TMFC50.eventbrite.com](https://www.themertoncenter.org).

About The Thomas Merton Family Center:

Established in 1974, the Thomas Merton Family Center (TMFC), a program of Catholic Charities of Fairfield County, has been a cornerstone of support for the Bridgeport community. TMFC provides essential resources such as daily meals, a food pantry, case management, showers, and mail services. After relocating to a larger facility, TMFC now offers expanded services, including immigration legal aid, housing assistance, and healthcare through a partnership with Southwest Community Health Care. TMFC is committed to promoting dignity, self-sufficiency, and hope. For more information, visit <https://www.themertoncenter.org>.

About Housatonic Museum of Art:

Located in Bridgeport, Connecticut, the Housatonic Museum of Art is committed to enriching the cultural life of its community through dynamic exhibitions, educational programs, and community outreach. As an educational resource, the museum serves the CT State Housatonic campus and beyond, promoting the transformative power of art. For more information, visit <https://housatonicmuseum.org>.