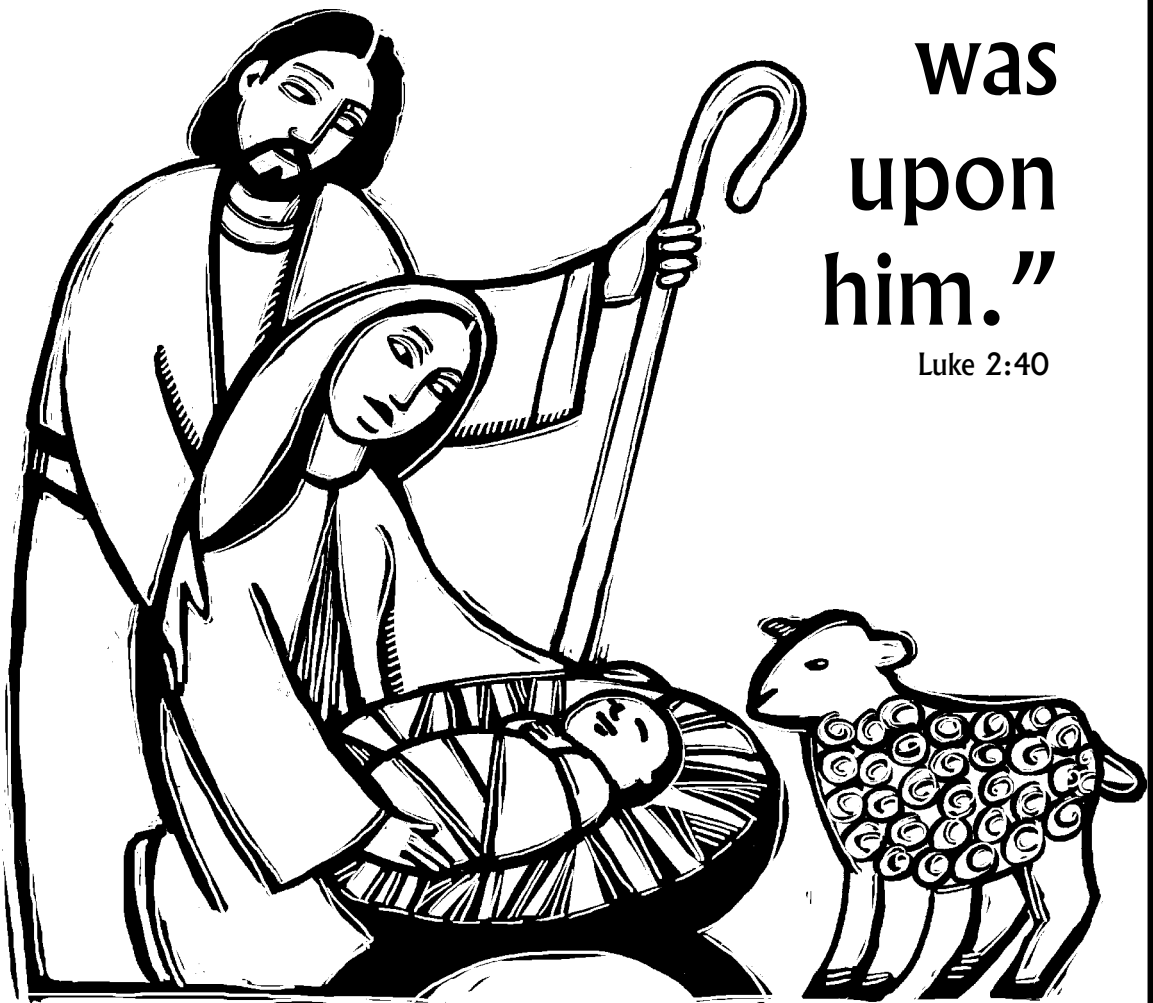


Our Lady of Lourdes • December 28, 2008

**“The child grew
and became strong,
filled with wisdom;
and the favor of God
was
upon
him.”**

Luke 2:40



Feast of the Holy Family



Pastoral Team

Rev. Michael A. Vetrano

Pastor

Rev. Robert Scheckenback

Associate Pastor

Parish Office

661-3224

Monday-Friday: 9 AM - 7:30 PM

Saturday: 9 AM - 3 PM

Sunday: 9 AM - 2 PM

email: ParishOffice@ollchurch.org

fax: 661-7143

website: www.ollchurch.org

Our Lady of Lourdes School

587-7200

Monday-Friday: 9 AM - 3 PM

email: lkrol@ollschool.org

Religious Education Office

661-5440

Monday-Friday: 9 AM - Noon

1 PM - 5 PM

7 PM - 9 PM

email: ReligiousEd@ollchurch.org

Parish Outreach Office

661-9262

Monday -Friday: 9:30 AM - 3:30 PM

S.A.G.E.

661-3224

(Senior Advocates for Growth
and Enrichment)

email: Sage@ollchurch.org

Rev. John Asomugha

In Residence

Rev. Ambrose Cabildo

In Residence

Deacon John DeGuardi

Deacon Tom Lucie

Deacon Jack Meehan

Coordinator of Stewardship

Deacon John Teufel

Sr. Margaret Bickar

Senior Ministry-SAGE

Sr. Nancy Campkin

Director of Religious Education

Jennifer Gallagher

Childrens' Choir/Women's Chorale

Summer Program Director

Carol M. Goetz

Parish Music Director

Louise Jane Krol

School Principal

Sr. Diane Liona

Director of Religious Education

Mary McMahan

Director of Parish Social Ministry

Vita Scorgia

Ministry Spiritual Director

John Sureau

Coordinator of Worship

Sr. Betty Toohig

Senior Ministry-SAGE

Anthony Trombino

Business Manager

Pastoral Council

Stacie Baltrusitis

Lisa Cantalino

Sonia DaSilva

Nilo DeLeon

Jane Desthers

Jerry Esposito

Deacon Jack Meehan

John Muldoon

Bob Natale

Eileen Rega

Vita Scorgia

Mary Steck

Fr. Mike Vetrano

Christine Volk

Parish Staff

Barbara Catuosco

Religious Education Office

Mary Anne Lettieri

Parish Office

Debbie Meyer

Bulletin Editor/Parish Office

Rosemary Multer

School Office

Rex Muro

Organist

Rita Spera

Religious Education Office

Lori Walsh

Parish Office

Mission Statement

As stewards of all that God has given us, the Parish Family of Our Lady of Lourdes serves and ministers to all who come to this place. Regardless of a person's history, ethnicity, gender, orientation, age or race, we commit ourselves to open wide the doors of our Parish to provide a place of welcome and hospitality.

Welcome to our Parish Family! New Parishioners are cordially invited to register as members of our parish family. Please call or visit our Parish Office.

Vision...

so that all may know that they are a vital part of the Body of Christ, we further recommit and challenge ourselves to:

***Live** out our Baptismal call passionately by caring for all of God's people with justice.*

***Grow** in an understanding of God's role in each of our lives.*

***Respond** to the Gospel in a radical way, inviting and inspiring all to form the Kingdom of God in every moment of life.*

***Acknowledge** we are not complete without the willingness to grow, discern and discover the Spirit who moves and guides us.*

*Our Lady
of Lourdes*

455 Hunter Avenue
West Islip, New York 11795



St. Benedict

Fourth in our series on the saints

Tuesday, January 6

7:30 - 9:30 PM

Parish Center

Presenter: S. Diane Liona, CSJ

“Listen with the ear of your heart...”

When I first heard this core message of Benedict’s Rule, I knew I had found a home. I discovered a way to balance an active ministry with a rhythm of prayer which would provide a balance in my life which was essential.

Through the years, I have come to marvel at this saint whose spirituality is infused with Scripture, sanity and a deep appreciation of the nature of work.

This evening of reflection will not only introduce us to the wisdom of St. Benedict, but will give us some practical ways to incorporate the Psalms into our everyday prayer, leading us to mindfulness and reverence for the gift of each moment.

To register, please call the Religious Education Office, Monday-Friday, between 9AM–5PM at 661.5440 x3, or e-mail to: religioused@ollchurch.org.

Come to The Six!

Hate getting up early? Need a more casual Mass? Need some music to shake you up a little bit? Want to get a little praying in before a busy school and work week?

The 6 PM Mass is our Sunday night Mass at Our Lady of Lourdes. Our Sunday night liturgy provides a comfortable, casual and relaxed atmosphere for prayer. Our Six Committee and Contemporary Music Group work hard to make this interactive, exciting and meaningful for our young people, their families and people of all ages!

Come and give it a try...encounter God in a radical way and take a break before the beginning of a new week.

Children’s Liturgy of the Word

All are welcome at OLL – particularly the children. We invite everyone with kids from age 4 to about fourth grade – to be part of our Children’s Liturgy of the Word at the 9:30 A.M. Mass.

What’s this about....you may be asking?

During the first part of Mass – the Liturgy of the Word – we send our young people out to learn about the readings in a way that’s set for them. The readings are much simpler and there are activities designed to make the readings come to life for the kids and.... You get a break during Mass! While your children are at the Children’s Liturgy, you can sit back, listen well to the readings and reflect on what they mean to you! After the Intercessions (when we say “Lord hear our prayer”), the children return and remain with you during the remainder of the liturgy. This is a great way for you and your entire family to experience the Mass and one another, too!

Celebrating New Year's Solemnity of Mary

The Church gathers on Wednesday, December 31 and Thursday, January 1 to ring in the New Year and to celebrate the Solemnity of Mary (*a holy day of obligation*).

We'll celebrate the Solemnity of Mary on...

Wednesday, December 31 at 5 PM (vigil)

Thursday, January 1 at 8 AM and 11 AM

Please come and pray with us!



Please mark your calendars...

OLL School Night at the Races

“Night at the Races” will be held on **Saturday, January 17. Doors open at 7 PM.**

Admission is \$10 and no pre-registration is necessary. Bring Your Friends!

Come have a wonderful time and cheer on your favorite horse!

For more information, please contact Frank Antonawich at 587.7988.

Our Lady of Lourdes 25th Annual Duffers Classic

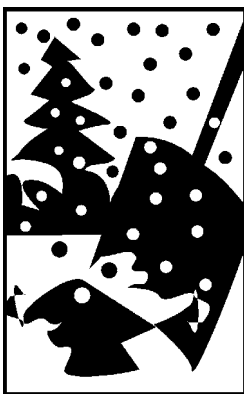
Monday, July 20, 2009

The Our Lady of Lourdes 25th Annual Golf Outing to Support Catholic Education will be held on July 20, 2009. This year we will be honoring Dom and Mary Anne Lettieri, who have supported our Golf Outing and our Parish Italian Family Feast for over 25 years. Please mark your calendars and plan to be with us.

For more information about the outing please contact the Parish Office.

Look for more information in future bulletins...

Saint Bernard League



If you're in need of help when it snows, members of our parish community will come to your home and shovel you out! If you think you can use our help, please call the Parish Office at 661.3224, ext. 135 or e-mail to jsureau@ollchurch.org and you will be added to our list. PLEASE SIGN UP AGAIN- even if you signed up last year.

We also need Saint Bernards...*(those who help people in bad weather)*. Can you and/or your family shovel, snow blow or clear out another family in need within our parish community? If you can help with this call the Parish Office at 661.3224, x. 135 or e-mail to jsureau@ollchurch.org. This is a great way to help those in need and do some tremendous community service!

Everything is Fine... in '09

Look at those 7th Graders

These kids are great!!... more in '09

The 7th Graders in our parish family know how to love and serve... and feel that sense of belonging. As part of their Service Projects so far, they have been living out our Vision Statement, "Live out our Baptismal call passionately by caring for all of God's people with justice." Some of the "serving" includes:

- Hosting refreshments for the Mass of Remembrance with Ministry of Consolation
- Packaged and gave bread out on Thanksgiving Day with our Liturgy Committee
- Organized our Missalettes/Music Issues for our Parish Family
- Helped our 2nd graders with their Sacrament of Reconciliation nights
- Helped put Advent Tags on our Parish Giving Tree and helped organize the presents with Parish Outreach
- Hosted refreshments for our Christmas Concert and Christmas Pageant
- Helped Art and Environment Ministry decorate our Church and All-Purpose Room for Christmas

Grade 8... in '09...They're Great!

All Grade 8 Confirmation Candidates will meet with their Sponsors for **RESCUE** - "Religious Education Sponsor Candidate United Effort" with a kick-off every Sunday afternoon in January '09. This night of prayer and reflection will provide them with an opportunity to learn about their new roles as sponsors and candidates, hear personal reflections about what it means to be a sponsor and commit to take a more active role in this process. Each evening will conclude with Sunday's 6PM Mass. Look for them Sundays, January 4, 11, 18 and 25. Sponsors and candidates plan to meet together three times on their own, including doing some service together. Sponsors and candidates work together at a soup kitchen or cook a meal for a soup kitchen, help an elder adult, help with Parish Outreach, Stewardship, Art & Environment, etc. Let's continue to pray for our parish's Confirmation Candidates.

Grades 6/7/8 Hang Out Nites

Don't miss it ...

Fridays- January 16, February 13, April 24, May 15 and June 19

- Guitar Hero III is here at OLL • Basketball • Volleyball • Dance Revolution
- ...and more
- PLUS some new additions!
- PRIZES and RAFFLES

They continue to serve those in need... they care... every month Grade 6/7/8 bring food/ paper goods/and or \$1.00 for our Parish Food Pantry... they have contributed over \$300 since October '08... wreaths decorated by our Hang Out Kids were given to our families who received "Giving Tree Gifts"... They're GREAT too!!

Taize-Prayer Around the Cross

Tuesday, January 13

7:30 PM in the Church

Presenter: Carol Goetz, Parish Music Director

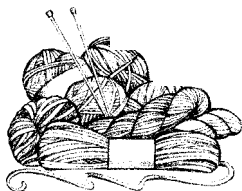


Looking for another way to pray?

Taize is a form of worship that provides some time in our busy lives where we can stop and focus on the love of God. Together we will share simple chants and prayers that will help guide us as we bring our concerns and hopes to the Lord. Join us this evening, as we bless our San Damiano Cross for our Taize Prayer. The original San Damiano Cross was the cross through which St. Francis of Assisi received his commission from Christ: *“Rebuild my Church.”*

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Bring your prayer and creativity together in a gift of love.



Join us at our next meeting...

Wednesday, January 14, 2009 from 9 AM until 11:30 AM in the Parish Center. All you need to bring is scrap yarn, knitting needles or crochet hooks (patterns and instructions will be given to you) and your gifts of love and prayer.

Coming soon...

Evolution and the Church

Tuesdays, January 20, 27 and February 3 from 7:30 – 9:30 PM in the Parish Center

Presenter: James Philipps, Religious Studies Dept., Holy Trinity High School, Instructor PFI

Not many years ago Pope John Paul II reaffirmed the long-standing position of the Catholic Church that there is no fundamental conflict between the theory of evolution and the creation stories of the Bible. Yet hardly a month goes by without news from somewhere in the United States about a tussle between those wanting to teach Creationism in the classroom and a local school board. Why all the fuss? Is there some fundamental conflict between Christianity and Science? Can a proper understanding of the theory evolution actually help us in incorporating the religious truths of the scriptures into our lives? Join us as we explore these and other related questions during these presentations.

To register, please call the Religious Education Office, Monday-Friday, between 9AM – 5 PM at 661.5440 x3, or e-mail to: religioused@ollchurch.org.

Daily Mass

8 AM

Weekend Masses

Saturday: 5 PM

Sunday: 8 AM, 9:30 AM,
11 AM, 12:30 PM and 6 PM

Reconciliation

Saturday: 4 PM - 4:45 PM

Support Groups

Alcoholics Anonymous:

Monday and Tuesday at
8 PM and Saturday at 2 PM
and 7 PM in Lourdes Hall-
convent lower level.

ALANON:

Each Wednesday at
10 AM in Lourdes Hall-
convent lower level.
(Babysitters available)

Rosary/Novena

Rosary

Daily after 8 AM Mass

Miraculous Medal Novena

Monday after 8 AM Mass

Anointing of the Sick

Throughout the liturgical year.

If needed sooner, please call the Parish Office.

Baptism

Please contact the Parish Office to schedule an appointment.

Marriage

Arranged at least six months in advance, please call the Parish Office.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults(RCIA)

A process to be embraced by the Catholic Church. For non-Catholics and for Catholics who have never received formal religious education. If interested, please call the Parish Office.



Rest In Peace

George W. Murdoch, Jr. died on December 8 and celebration of the Mass of Christian Burial was December 11. We extend our prayers to his children Kelly and Wayne, and entire family.

Mary Powell died on December 12 and celebration of the Mass of Christian Burial was December 16. We extend our prayers to her grandson John and entire family.

Remembering . . .

Monday, December 29

St. Thomas Becket, bishop, martyr

8:00 AM Thomas K. LaPierre, Sr.

Tuesday, December 30

8:00 AM Adam Ippolito

Wednesday, December 31

St. Sylvester I, pope

8:00 AM James Kaste

5:00 PM Louis Montanino

Thursday, January 1

Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God

8:00 AM Chris Hansen

11:00 AM People of the Parish

Friday, January 2

Ss. Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen, bishops and doctors

8:00 AM Bridget Elizabeth Harrington

Saturday, January 3

8:00 AM Herta Bonet

5:00 PM Joseph A. Santangelo

Fr. Mike Vetrano

Sunday, January 4

8:00 AM LaRocca & Sweeney Family

Fr. Bob Scheckenback

9:30 AM John Shay

Fr. Ambrose Cabildo

11:00 AM Thomas Collins

Fr. Mike Vetrano

12:30 PM Thomas Coletto & Joseph Lombardi

Fr. John Asomugha

6:00 PM People of the Parish, Henry Waite, Catherine McDermott,
Joseph Crouch, Courtney Tomkins

Fr. Bob Scheckenback

Nocturnal Adoration

Nocturnal Adoration will **follow the 5 PM Mass on Saturday, January 3**, followed by Benediction at 9:50 PM. Make a resolutionn for the new year and spend some time in prayer with your parish family. We will be praying for our families and our priests. All are invited and welcome! Bring a friend.

Daytime Eucharistic Devotion

The afternoon adoration for the month of January will be on **Wednesday, January 7 from 1- 3 PM**. All are invited and welcome! We will be praying for our children, our country, our men and women in the military and our clergy.



Jesus, King of All Nations Prayer Group

The Jesus, King of All Nations Prayer Group meets each **Thursday afternoon** in the **Church**. The meeting is from **3 PM until 4 PM** in **front of the Blessed Sacrament**.

Good Samaritan Prayer Group of L.I.

The Good Samaritan Prayer Group of Long Island holds their **meetings every Friday (except the first Friday of the month) at OLL School in Room 16 from 8 PM until 10 PM**. All are welcome to experience singing, praying and fellowship each evening.

Rosary Christian Mothers

The Rosary Christian Mothers meet on the first Monday evening of each month.

The next meeting will be **Monday, January 5, 2009**.

We will begin with **Rosary at 7:45 PM in the Church** followed by **meeting at 8 PM in the Parish Center**.

SAGE

The SAGE Group (Senior Advocates for Growth and Enrichment)

will meet on **Tuesday, January 6, 2009** in the **Parish Center at 9 AM**.

All older parishioners are welcome.

Holy Name Society

Our Holy Name Society meets on the second Sunday of each month. The next meeting will be on **Sunday, January 11, 2009**. We will begin with the **Rosary at 7:40 AM in the Church** and the **meeting will follow the 8 AM Mass at 9 AM in Room 16**. Come and join us!

Senior Circle

The Senior Circle meets on the last Monday of each month.

The next meeting will be held on **Monday, January 26, 2009** at **12:30 PM in the Parish Center**.

Our New Men's Group

An Invitation to all men from OLL and beyond...

Come join us on **Thursday, January 15, in the Parish Center after the 8 AM Mass**.

We meet once a month to read and discuss the Scriptures for the following Sunday.

Come with your ideas and suggestions. We'll gather for conversation and fellowship.

Join us in this pioneering experience for MEN ONLY. If you plan to attend, please call Jack Fitzgerald at 587.5548.

Parish Outreach

Office telephone:

661-9262, option 4

Office hours:

Monday - Friday: 9:30 AM - 3:30 PM

Pantry Needs

canned fruit
canned vegetables
jelly
peanut butter
pudding/jello
soup

Outreach Memorial Donations

Parish Outreach has received many donations in memory of loved ones.

If you would like to make a donation to Parish Outreach in memory of a loved one, please call Mary McMahon, Director of Parish Social Ministry at 661.3224, option 4.

Are You a Registered New York State Catholic?

We would like everyone in our parish to visit the New York State Catholic Conference's website at www.nyscatholic.org and register today. By doing this, you'll receive regular e-mail updates about important issues and learn ways you can make a real difference in the life of the Church and the world.

New "Liturgical" Year Resolution

How about committing to coming to Mass better prepared. We are happy to provide a special resource, "At Home with the Word" that provides the readings for every Sunday along with some important suggestions and ideas for how to live the Word out for the week ahead. If you're interested, e-mail John Sureau (jsureau@ollchurch.org) or stop by the Parish Office. The suggested offering for the book is \$10.

Sixth Annual Mission Trip to El Salvador June 26 to July 2, 2009 For Students grade 8 through college



**Consider spending a week
with us this summer that
will change your life!**



The whole trip was indescribable, but the part that really stuck out to me was the day we spent at the school in our Sister Parish in Tacuba running a vacation bible camp for the kids there. Thanks to the donations of the people of OLL parish, every child got to choose their own book to take home to keep. Just seeing the look on a little girl's face as she picked up her Dora the Explorer book made me so grateful for everything I had back home.



Each day we visited towns and villages with arms full of donations from the United States. We were able to interact with the villagers and get a sense of who these people really were. Warm welcomes awaited us in each town along with humble gifts of wildflowers. I was amazed to find that many had walked miles to meet with us and thank us for coming. Even more astounding was that all of these miles were walked by men, women, and children, some with no shoes! This mission to El Salvador was a life-altering experience. It hit me hard after I returned home and went straight to sleep in my own room complete with TV, Internet and stereo, with my warm bed next to my closet filled with the latest \$100 sneakers.

**Our trip is almost full!
If you would like to be a part of our
Mission Trip 2009, please contact Jen Gallagher
as soon as possible at jengallagher@att.net**

amazed
at what was
said 

©LPI

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph

It may sound like a story line from a bad situation comedy, but how many of you parents out there have gone to one of those parent-teacher meetings, only to come away shaking your head in wonder. "Was that our kid she was talking about?" Little Junior who can't find the clothes hamper, talks with his mouth full, and slugs his sister at home is one of the most delightful young students in Mrs. Smith's class. Sometimes, are we standing too close to our children to really see them for who they are?

According to ancient Jewish laws, a woman who had given birth was not allowed into the temple for forty days, where she was then given "purification" as described in today's Gospel reading from Luke. Most new mothers would also offer a lamb and a dove for a sacrifice, or if the family was very poor, two doves or pigeons, as was the case for Joseph and Mary.

It was Simeon and Anna, two faith-filled individuals from outside the family, who recognized with joyful exclamations that the child Jesus was the Messiah. Luke tells us that Joseph and Mary "were amazed at what was said about him."

In today's seemingly secular world, where those of faith are greeted with disdain and even hostility, the faithful family stands even more importantly as a center of life itself (CCC 1656). The Second Vatican Council even recognized that parents are "by word and example? the first heralds of the faith with regard to their children. They should encourage them in the vocation which is proper to each child." Today is the feast of the Holy Family; look at the children around you, perhaps for the first time, with amazement at these young gifts from God.

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Readings for the Week of December 28, 2008

Sunday:	Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 <i>or</i> Gn 15:1-6; 21:1-3/Col 3:12-21 <i>or</i> 3:12-17 <i>or</i> Heb 11:8, 11-12, 17-19/Lk 2:22-40 <i>or</i> 2:22, 39-40
Monday:	1 Jn 2:3-11/Lk 2:22-35
Tuesday:	1 Jn 2:12-17/Lk 2:36-40
Wednesday:	1 Jn 2:18-21/Jn 1:1-18
Thursday:	Nm 6:22-27/Gal 4:4-7/Lk 2:16-21
Friday:	1 Jn 2:22-28/Jn 1:19-28
Saturday:	1 Jn 2:29---3:6/Jn 1:29-34
Next Sunday:	Is 60:1-6/Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6/Mt 2:1-12

Altar Society

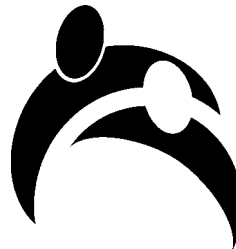
Altar linens this week will be cared for by *Carol Grillo*.

If you would like to help care for our altar needs,
please call the Parish Office at 661.3224.

Pastoral Care of Our Sick

Please call the Parish Office at 661.3224 to leave the names
of parishioners who:

- are homebound and would like to receive the Eucharist
- are in Good Samaritan Hospital and would like to be visited
by a member of our Pastoral Care Ministry.
- would like to receive the Sacrament of the Sick.



Pray for Our Sick

Please remember to keep in your thoughts and prayers ...

*Connie Altadonna, Lucas Anderson, Susan Aviza, Deacon Dick Barry,
Deacon Steve Behar, Claire Beierle, Nicholas Buscemi, Jr.,
Howard Campkin, Michael Ciotkosz, Regina Cranor, Karen DellaVecchia,
Josephine DiBenedetto, Janet Eifler, James, Jr. & Julia Florio (infants),
Susan Gigante, Brian Hinkelman, Lili Hinkelman, Kathleen Kerrigan,
Nancy Letsch, Kara Lobasso, Baby Josephine Mahan, Vicky Massaro,
Michele McCann, Peter McCann, Sr., David McCarthy, Eleanor McGee,
Dorothy Meloni, Brenden Muldoon, Frances Parine, Arthur Petrino,
Joanne Popper, Joe Radosti, James Reilly, Patricia Salimbene,
Patricia Santangelo, Dorothy Shiavone, Joe Shields, Derek Stahl,
Joseph Sullivan Diana Marie Taveras, Charlie Tibbetts, Baby John Tramazzo,
Jean Virgilio, Pat Wallace*

**“When you give food to the poor, they call you a saint.
When you ask why the poor have no food, they call you a communist.”
– Dom Helder Camara, Brazilian Archbishop**

Ending Hunger - A Call to Action

MICAH*: An Interfaith Campaign to End Poverty on Long Island
(*Mobilized Interfaith Coalition Against Hunger)

“Do justice, love mercy, walk humbly with your God.” *Micah, 6:8*

More and more of our neighbors are turning to soup kitchens and emergency food pantries for help, especially during the holiday season. One study estimated that the nation pays \$90 billion a year- that’s \$800 per household- to shoulder the effects of hunger. Hungry people have more health problems, are more likely to be undereducated and are less productive at work. One in six children is undernourished, which affects health, behavior, school performance and brain development. Hungry children are more likely to be poor as adults than those who are not. What do we do about this?

Communities of faith on Long Island have a rich history of caring for the poor and the hungry. As they have the experience of operating the majority of food pantries and soup kitchens, we need them now, to push for policy reforms aimed at ending hunger. One in every 10 U.S. households does not have regular and reliable access to nutritious food. Because more people are requesting help than ever before here on Long Island, MICAH is focusing part of its advocacy efforts in getting more food to pantries and soup kitchens rather than wasting it- and not just at the holidays, but all year-round.

The strategy for reducing hunger shows signs of shifting. Hunger is linked to poverty and the lack of affordable housing and health care. When organized to put more emphasis on public advocacy efforts that address the root causes of hunger, the faith community can be a powerful voice for those who don’t have a voice. For example, hand-written letters to government officials are viewed as one of the most effective public advocacy tactics.

Just imagine - one hand-written letter represents 100 people. What if just 10 people in your congregation wrote letters to their town supervisor or town board asking them to create a plan that would offer more housing options that people can afford? Those ten letters, would represent 100,000 people. This is one way of exerting pressure on the powers-that-be, to listen and make positive changes. And this is one way we can all ask for structural change that will help to end the cycle of hunger and homelessness that exist in our communities.

To learn more about the MICAH campaign, contact Rev. Thomas Goodhue at the LI Council of Churches (licchemp@aol.com) or LICC Advocacy Director Neelofer Chaudry (liccmicah@aol.com)

Members in the Military

We ask that you pray especially for those in our parish that are on active duty in the Middle East conflict.

They are:

Bryan R. Dempsey-*US Marines*

Danielle DiLapi-*US Army*

James J. Ferrara-*US Marines*

Thomas W. Ferrara -*US Air Force*

John Finn-*US Army*

Christopher Florca-*US Marines*

Donnie Frank-*US Marines*

Armand J. LeComte-*US Marines*

Michael Mallimo- *US Army*

Anthony Mannino-*US Marines*

Trent Narra-*US Marines*

Peter Provenzano-*US Army*

...and remember those of our parish family that are in the armed services, listed in our Parish Book of Intentions.

Catholic Ministries Appeal Update

Our Lady of Lourdes would like to thank all those who have made a sacrifice by making a gift to the *2008 Catholic Ministries Appeal*. We appreciate your generosity and thank you very much for your contribution.

One of our goals is to have every family participate in this Appeal by responding with a YES. We are hopeful that every family in our parish and diocese has responded to this call for sacrifice. Our goal has been based on every family making an equal sacrifice, not an equal gift. Look at what God has given to you and your family and consider the gift you can give to help those in need here on Long Island. Only you can decide what that gift will be.

If you have not yet responded, please consider what you can do to the best of your ability to help our parish reach those in need. If you have not had an opportunity to make a gift to the Appeal or have been waiting to make a pledge, please do so now. Your sacrifice will help us towards reaching our parish goal.

Moral Progress and Regression

by Ron Rolheiser, OMI

“We didn’t stop burning witches because we stopped reading scripture; we stopped burning witches because we kept on reading scripture.”

Gil Bailie, *Violence Unveiled*, wrote those words and they teach a lesson that we would be wise to learn as we debate whether morality is progressing or declining today within secular culture.

What Bailie’s axiom suggests is that history should be written carefully: The past wasn’t all golden and the present isn’t all bad, just as the past wasn’t all bad and the present isn’t all good. Our age, like every other, has brought moral advancements in some areas and moral decline in others. Mostly this is not acknowledged in our debates about morality.

Conservatives too easily idealize the past and demonize the present. In their view, secular culture is generally seen to be morally decadent, soft, hedonistic, shortsighted, and superficial, a fall from a better time, from a golden moral age wherein people believed in God more strongly, were more generous, more community-minded, more committed to church, and more responsible sexually. Conservatives tend to look at certain moral indicators within our culture (abortion, euthanasia, family breakdown, declining church attendance, sexual irresponsibility) and see the whole culture as “a culture of death”.

Liberals too easily do the opposite: They tend to see secular culture precisely as an “enlightenment”, a huge moral advance over many former moral blind-spots, racism, superstition, sexism, narrow fundamentalism, unhealthy fear, and intolerance in the name of God. Secular culture is then seen as possessing the moral high ground and this achievement is itself seen as the result of secular culture shedding the narrowness and restraints of religion. For many liberals, we have stopped burning witches precisely because we have stopped reading scripture, or at least because we have stopped listening to organized religion.

What Bailie’s comment does, among other things, is expose both these views as being too selective in their reading of history.

Conservatives are right in pointing out that secular culture’s too-easy acceptance of abortion, family breakdown, euthanasia, faith without church, pornography, and sex outside of marriage are major moral blind-spots, a regression that does make for a certain “culture of death”. But, as Bailie’s comment also makes clear, that’s not the whole story. The same culture, so blind in some areas, is progressing morally in other areas. It has stopped burning witches. In what way?

Christianity and the cross (which lies at its center) can be compared to a time-released moral-capsule that is dissolving slowly in history. We can trace, historically, some of the more salient moments in this process: It took us, the Christian world, eighteen hundred years to accept, unequivocally, that slavery is wrong, but eventually we learned it. We kept reading scripture long enough. It took us two thousand years, and the last pope, John Paul II, to accept that capital punishment is wrong, but, like slavery, eventually too we learned that. We kept reading scripture long enough. And it has taken us two thousand years and we are still, slowly, learning and accepting more and more of the implications of the gospel in terms of social justice, equality for all, and respect for the integrity of creation.

The good news is that we are, slowly, getting it and it is no accident that, for instance, Holland, the most secularized culture in the world, takes care of its poor better than any other country in the world, has perhaps the highest status for women in the world, and is a culture of high tolerance. These are major moral achievements inside of a culture that is at the same time regressing morally in terms of its acceptance of abortion, euthanasia, prostitution, pornography, and drugs. Moreover, its moral achievements have come about not because Holland or secular culture has stopped reading scripture. What’s best morally inside of secular culture issues forth mostly from its Judeo-Christian roots. Liberalism’s reluctance to admit that stems more from an adolescent grandiosity than from any honest reading of history, akin to a seventeen-year-old who sees only her parents’ faults and is unable to acknowledge that the very moral guns she now has trained on her parents were given to her by those same parents.

What all this highlights is that our moral judgments may not be simple: The past we sometimes idealize, for all its moral strengths (its faith in God, in church, in family, in sacrifice, in self-renunciation, in sexual responsibility) was, because of racism, sexism, and dogmatic intolerance, less of a golden age for some than for others. We once too had our “Taliban” that declared that error had no rights and killed people in the name of God and of purity of doctrine. Conversely, today, our secularized liberal culture, for all its heightened moral sensitivity within the areas of race, gender, justice, tolerance, and the integrity of creation, has its own glaring moral blind-spots in the areas of abortion, end of life issues, church, family values, and sexuality.

And so, no doubt, we need, all of us, to keep on reading scripture.

Used with permission of the author, Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser. Father Rolheiser is a theologian, teacher, and award-winning author and is currently the President of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, TX. He can be contacted through his website-www.ronrolheiser.com.

Financial Summary

December 21, 2008

Weekly Collection	\$
Weekly Budget	-\$ 19,000.00
+/- for the week	\$

The estimated weekly collection needed to maintain and operate our parish buildings, ministries, programs and salaries is \$19,000.

Did you notice our new budget amount- \$19,000 vs. \$21,000 (*last year*)? This reflects the difficult economic times and our attempt to adjust our budget to meet that.

Please Note:

Due to a change in this week's bulletin deadline, the weekly collection and mass attendance will be published in a future bulletin.

Mass Attendance

Beginning with this new liturgical cycle, we will publish Mass attendance figures for each of our Sunday liturgies. In the same way that we pay attention to the amount of money donated to the support of our parish, let's now pay closer attention to the amount of people praying with us each week. May this be a good awareness raiser for our parish community and for each one of us!

December 21, 2008

5 PM
8 AM
9:30 AM
11 AM
12:30 PM
"The Six"
Total

Membership Sunday

Sister Margaret Rogers, SHCJ will be visiting our parish on the weekend of January 10/11, 2009. Sister Margaret spent twenty-two years as a missionary in Nigeria, West Africa before beginning ten years of development work all across Africa with an ecumenical organization.

Sister looks forward to sharing her mission experience with the people of our parish. A collection for Membership Sunday for the Society for the Propagation of the Faith will be taken up at the Masses on January 10/11. It is your opportunity to share in the mission work of The Diocese of Rockville Centre.

The Beginning Experience

The "Beginning Experience" is help for the heartache of divorce, separation and widowhood. Come experience a weekend away for a lifetime of change. The next weekend is February 20 through 22, 2009. For information and reservations, please call Carmen at 516.739.0973.

Holy Innocents Parish

Attention former parishioners of Holy Innocents Parish, Brooklyn!

We will begin celebrating our 100th Anniversary in 2009. We are seeking former parishioners and graduates of the parish/school. We'd love to see you at the celebrations which are being planned - a Mass in the Latin rite in the Spring and future parties. We'd love your assistance as a volunteer or donor. To be on the contact list or for further information, please call Louise Perrotta, class '66 at 631.412.3831 or Holy Innocents at 279 E 17th Street, Brooklyn

Dominican Village

Please join us for an Open House on Saturday, January 10, 2009 from 1 PM until 3 PM. Dominican Village is an independent retirement community that offers assisted living and respite care, outstanding programs, all-inclusive services and bountiful amenities. For more information, or to schedule a tour at your convenience, call 631.842.6091.

Religion & Rock

Tune into "Religion & Rock" with Msgr. Jim Vlaun on Sunday from 7 AM to 8 AM on WBAB 102.3 FM or 95.3 on the East End of Long Island. The show is also available on Sirius Radio, Channel 159 at 11 PM on Saturday.

Next Sunday's theme is "**New Beginnings.**" Don't miss it!

To listen online or receive more information regarding "Religion & Rock" go to www.religionandrock.com. Don't forget to tune into TELECARE, Cablevision 29 or Verizon FIOS 271 for the Best in Catholic Television!

Sharing the Gospel

Love God and trust him with your life. Then you will want to do what God asks. Simeon listened to God. Anna served God for many years in the temple. Mary and Joseph did everything God asked them to do for Jesus. Everyone in the temple knew that Jesus was sent by God to be their Savior. They trusted God with Jesus' precious life.



Mission for the Week

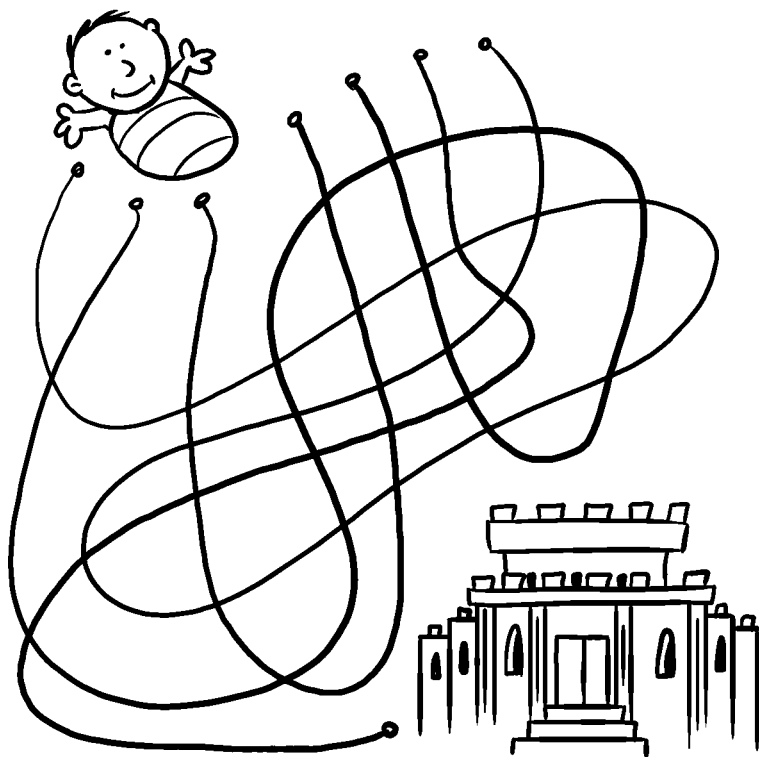


Jesus belonged to God. Look up the word "belong" in the dictionary. Thank God that you are his child, too.



Puzzle

Find the path to bring Jesus to the temple.



Prayer



God,
help me to love you
enough to do all
that you ask me to.

Something to Draw



Draw a picture of
God watching over
you and your family.