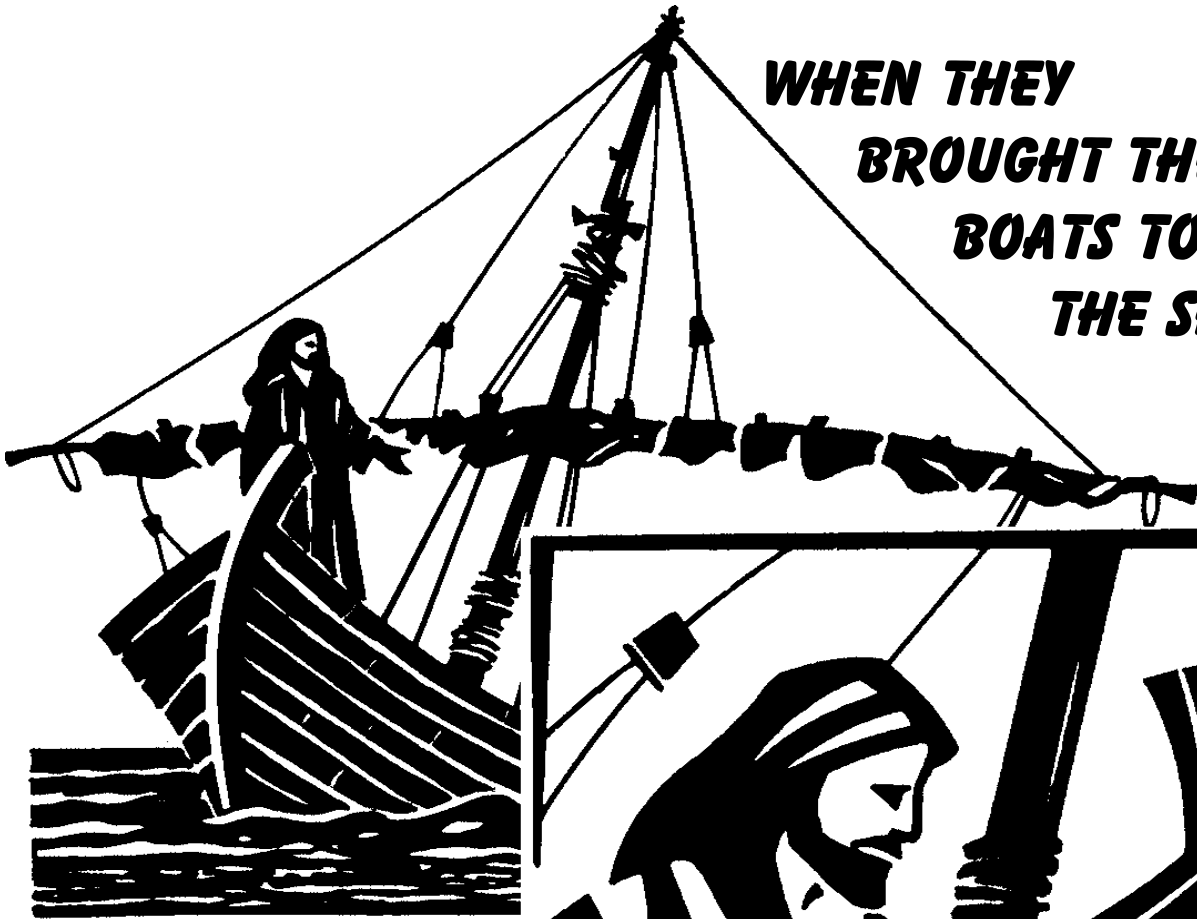


**WHEN THEY
BROUGHT THEIR
BOATS TO
THE SHORE,**



**THEY LEFT
EVERYTHING
AND
FOLLOWED
HIM. LUKE 5:11**



OUR LADY OF LOURDES

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME • FEBRUARY 4, 2007



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.

Pastoral Team

Rev. Michael A. Vetrano

Pastor

Rev. Stanislaus Chukwube

Associate Pastor

Rev. Robert Scheckenback

Associate Pastor

Deacon John DeGuardi

Deacon Jack Meehan

Coordinator of Stewardship

Deacon John Teufel

Sr. Margaret Bickar

Senior Ministry-SAGE

Sr. Nancy Campkin

Director of Religious Education

Regina Ann Cioffi

School Principal

Jennifer Gallagher

Director of Youth Services

Carol M. Goetz

Parish Music Director

Sr. Diane Liona

Director of Religious Education

Vita Scorgia

Ministry Spiritual Director

John Sureau

Coordinator of Worship

Sr. Betty Toohig

Senior Ministry-SAGE

Anthony Trombino

Business Manager

Pastoral Council

Michael Abbruscato

Salomon Acosta

Regina Ann Cioffi

Jane Desthers

Stephen Frodell

Jen Gallagher

Anne Kerrigan

Maria Lucie (*co-chair*)

Mary McMahan

Doreen Spiller

Mary Steck

Fr. Mike Vetrano

Marie Yuliano (*co-chair*)

Parish Staff

Barbara Catusco

Religious Education Office

Mary Anne Lettieri

Parish Office

Debbie Meyer

Bulletin/Parish Office

Rosemary Multer

School Office

Rex Muro

Organist

Rita Spera

Religious Education Office

Lori Walsh

Parish Office

*Our Lady
of Lourdes*

455 Hunter Avenue

West Islip, New York 11795

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.

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.*

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: rcioffi@ollschool.org

Religious Education Office

661-5440

Monday-Friday: 9 AM - Noon

1 PM - 5 PM

7 PM - 9 PM

email: ReligiousEd@ollchurch.org

S.A.G.E.

661-3224

(Senior Advocates for Growth and Enrichment)

email: Sage@ollchurch.org

Parish Outreach



Hello. My name is Mary McMahon and I will be starting as Director of Parish Social Ministry here at Our Lady of Lourdes on Monday, February 5. I am so looking forward to working with the Parish Community and the wonderful volunteers who staff the Outreach office-giving of their time and talent to help those in need.

My family and I have been members of OLL for five years. During that time, I have been involved on the Parish Council, as a teacher of Religious Education, as a Facilitator of the Listening Sessions last spring, and as a Eucharistic Minister. I am a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in the States of New York and Florida, and I have many years of experience (more than I want to admit)! providing social services through agencies, schools and a private clinical practice.

I have been privileged and humbled in my journey as a Social Worker, and I have learned many times the truth of the Scripture Imperative to: "Act Justly, Love Tenderly, Walk Humbly with your God."

The door to Outreach is always open....not only to those in need!

Please check future bulletins for more news on the Outreach programs.

Adult Faith Formation

...upcoming courses

American Mystics: Thomas Merton and Jessica Powers

One Night Only!

Tuesday, March 20, 2007 from 7:30 PM until 9:30 PM in the Parish Center.

Our presenter is Kathleen Reid, MA, Director of Religious Education, St. Philip Neri R.C. Church.

We all need good role models! Here we will explore the life, legacy, and writings of these two 20th century Catholics and Mystics. Through presentation, discussion, and reflection... we will see what wisdom we can receive from these fascinating, creative, and gifted people.

The Eucharist: Gift and Call

One Night Only!

Tuesday, March 27, 2007 from 7:30 PM until 9:30 PM in the Parish Center.

Our presenter is S. Barbara Regan r.c. MA in Theology, Staff of Cenacle Retreat Center.

Each week, thousands come to receive the Eucharist at Our Lady of Lourdes...but are we going through the motions or do we really understand the awesome gift God gives us and how it can change our lives? As we look at the history of the Eucharist and understand it's role in our lives, let's find out!

Pre-Registration is necessary and helpful. This will enable us to have enough reading material and refreshments for all those attending. Please call the Religious Education Office, Monday-Friday, between 9AM – 5 PM and 7PM – 9PM, at 661.5440 x3, or e-mail to: religioused@ollchurch.org. Fee: \$25 [No fee is required for those who have paid the Religious Education Family Fee or Our Lady of Lourdes School Tuition. Fees may vary appropriately.]



Our Feast Day

We will celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes...

Saturday, February 10, 2:30-4:30 PM in the Church.

Please join our Parish Family as we celebrate this great Feast which is *ours*...

- We will begin in Church and take a “good look” at OUR Church and learn more about OUR rich history which is OURS and... how “close” we are to the Shrine at Lourdes, France
- We will pray the Rosary and walk in procession as “pilgrims” do in Lourdes, France
- We will see a Virtual Tour of the Beautiful Shrine at Lourdes, France and... share pictures and memories of OUR Pilgrims who traveled in 1999 and 2006 to Lourdes, France

Coming to OLL Church West Islip...

Experiencing Lourdes, France...

Coming to celebrate together as a Parish Family.....*Priceless*

And...

Sunday, February 11...take a moment and visit the Parish Center to experience Lourdes, France thru a video as well as pictures of Pilgrims from Our Lady of Lourdes Parish Family who journeyed to Lourdes, France.

Night of Prayer and Reflection

The Ministry of Family Healing invites you to a night of prayer and reflection. This night we would like to introduce you to one of God’s beloved angels, Herman. Come along on our journey as we discover, with Herman, about the mirror of truth. Is it truth as we see it, or truth as God sees it?

We will be meeting on **Tuesday, February 13 at 7:30 PM in the Parish Center.**

Please call the Religious Education Office at 661.5440 to register.

(There is no fee for this night.)

All are welcome. Please come and bring a friend.

Stewardship News



At a recent meeting, members of our Parish Liturgy Committee thanked Flo Worysz for more than 25 years of service to the committee. Flo is seated in the center holding an icon of Our Lady of Our Lady of Czestochowa that they gave her. Thanks Flo for all you do for OLL!

Parish Pilgrimage

Come with Father Bob and Deacon John on a Parish Pilgrimage to Saint Anne DeBeaupre in Quebec, Canada travel beginning July 9, 2007.

People from all over the world come to this Shrine to ask the help of Good Saint Anne, to give thanks for answered prayers in the presence of a reality which transcends us.

Experience Quebec City, a touch of Europe in the heart of North America - cobble stone streets, historic sites – let the enchantment begin! For additional information, come and meet fellow travelers on Monday, February 26 at 7:30 PM in the OLL School cafeteria.

School News

The Fashion Show Committee Needs You!

Our Lady of Lourdes School will be hosting a Fashion Show on Thursday, March 29, 2007. This event will be held at La Grange and includes dinner, dancing and, of course, many prizes and raffles – this is an event not to be missed! Tickets will go on sale in February and will be open to the parish and school on a first come, first served basis. The cost per ticket is \$50.00.

Our Lady of Lourdes School is reaching out to all parishioners and our school parents for donations of any kind to help support this important fundraising event. All donations can be dropped off in the school office labeled “Fashion Show – Attention Kate Newman.” Make sure you include your name, address and phone number so we can properly thank you for your assistance.

The show can't go on without your help! Whether you prefer to be out in the crowds or behind the scenes, we have an opportunity for you! Anyone interested in helping with the 2007 Fashion Show Event or if you have any questions, please contact Kate Newman at 587-6948 or e-mail at bounceusa@aol.com. Your assistance is greatly appreciated!

Living Liturgy

The Liturgical Cycle...

Connecting the Seasons

Our preparations for Ash Wednesday involve the burning of the palms from last year's Palm Sunday. So...we can use your help! If you can please bring back any palm you have from previous years we would be so grateful. This palm will be burned on **Sunday, February 18 at the 6 PM Mass**. Come and be part of this celebration!

Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday, this year, is **February 21**. OLL will once again have prayer services **every hour** beginning at 7AM with the last service beginning at 9 PM. Think of who you can invite back to Church this Lent. Get ready to invite them to come with you to an Ash Wednesday Prayer Service here at Our Lady of Lourdes on February 21.

Communion Bow

The procession to receive communion is a clear sign of our willingness to receive the Body and Blood of Christ. Remember that we are called to make a slight bow of the head before receiving the Body and the Blood of Christ. This bow should take place *as the person in front of you* is receiving Communion. This act is a good personal reminder to us of what we are about to receive (and hopefully become) and to those who are praying for us while we are processing.

Evening of Prayer for Liturgical Ministers

We are humbled and honored to welcome Msgr. Christopher Heller to a special Evening Prayer for all Liturgical Ministers on **Monday, February 12, at 7:30 PM in the Church**.

Fr. Chris has written numerous articles on the liturgy and is the pastor of our neighboring parish to the West – St. Joseph's in Babylon. While this night is geared primarily for liturgical ministers all are certainly welcome to come and pray with us!

R.C.I.A.

Our Family Grows

This week began our parish's work with the candidates and catechumens of the R.C.I.A. They are gathering every Sunday for Mass and every Monday for catechesis and reflection. Please pray for them as they continue on this journey of new life and hope.

Daily Mass

8 AM

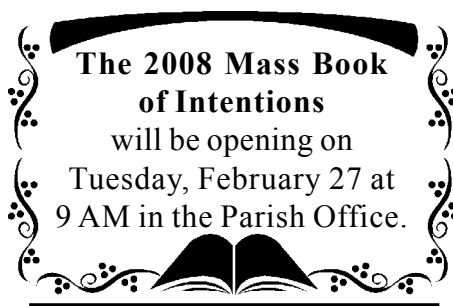
Weekend Masses

Saturday: 5 PM

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

Reconciliation

Saturday: 4 PM - 4:45 PM



Rosary/Novena

Rosary:

Daily after 8 AM Mass

Miraculous Medal Novena:

Monday after 8 AM Mass

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.

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.

Support Groups

Alcoholics Anonymous

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

ALANON

Each Wednesday at
10 AM in Lourdes Hall-
convent lower level.

Remembering...

Monday, February 5

St. Agatha, virgin, martyr

8:00 AM LaRocca & Sweeney Family

Tuesday, February 6

St. Paul Miki, priest and companions

8:00 AM Elinor Shaddock



Wednesday, February 7

8:00 AM James Sweeney

Thursday, February 8

St. Jerome Emiliani, priest

8:00 AM Albert Ritacco (*40th anniversary*)

Rest In Peace

Lucy Pavalkis

Edna Pareso

Teresa D. Wright

Hortense (Lily) Turano

Friday, February 9

8:00 AM Joseph Fernandez

Saturday, February 10

8:00 AM Concetta Petrucci, Dolores Betsch, Anton Cully, Ellie Vail,
Al Ryan, Stephen Brennan, Maureen Wilson

5:00 PM Michael Reilly

Fr. Mike Vetrano

Sunday, February 11

8:00 AM Consuelo Ball

Fr. Stan Chukwube

9:30 AM Our Lady of Lourdes Feast Day

Fr. Mike Vetrano

11:00 AM Nancy Santoro

Fr. Ed Dowling

12:30 PM Frank Gagliano

Fr. Ed Dowling

6:00 PM People of the Parish, Liberta Brusca, Patricia Callahan,
Very Reverend Brother Shane Burke, O.S.F., Ed. D.,
Brother Donan Conrad, O.S.F., Millie Artale, Michael J. O'Keefe,
Mary Higgins, Beatrice Elsik, Louis Montanino, Angelina Pepe

Fr. Stan Chukwube



canned fruit
canned vegetables
jelly
peanut butter
pudding/jello
soup

Parish Outreach

Outreach Office Hours

Monday through Friday from 9:30 AM until 3:30 PM.
For information/assistance call 661.9262.

Financial Summary

January 28, 2007

Weekly Collection	\$ 18,565.00
Weekly Budget	-\$ 21,000.00
+/- for the week	\$ (2,435.00)

The estimated weekly collection needed to maintain and operate our parish buildings, ministries, programs and salaries is \$21,000.

Holy Name Society

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



Daytime Eucharistic Devotion

The afternoon adoration for the month of February will be on **Wednesday, February 7 from 1 PM until 3 PM**. All are invited and welcome. We will be praying for world peace, our families and our priests.

Rosary Christian Mothers

The Rosary Christian Mothers meet on the first Monday evening of each month. The next meeting will be **Monday, February 5**.

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

Altar Society

Altar linens this week will be cared for by *Marie Cirone*.
If you would like to help care for our altar needs, please call the Parish Office at 661.3224.

Communion Calls

Communion brought to those who are homebound.
Contact the Parish Office at 661.3224.



Pastoral Care of the 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.

Pray for Our Sick

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

Pat Bonavita, Thomas Brennan, Elise Brenner, Jo Brogan, Christian Bullock, Peggy Cornell, Regina Cranor, Joseph Cristallo, Jason Fisher, Barbara Frank, Diane Garretson, Adam Ippolito, Brian Kaehne, Peggy Keegan, Leonore Keller, Brigid Kinney, Janet Kohlenbush, Anthony Lombardo, Mike Lorento, Diego Marino, Michele McCann, Peter McCann, Sr., Bryan Monahan, Jackie Paeggel, Adelaide Panzarella, Joe Radosti, Rose Serragano, Dorothy Sullivan, Connie Telesca, Loretta Vitale

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.

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**.



Fifth Sunday of Ordinary Time

Luke 5:1-11

Father John Caropi is an inspirational priest and public speaker who was called to religious life after nearly destroying his own with materialistic greed and drug addiction. On the evening before his ordination at St. Peter's Basilica by Pope John Paul II, he sat in meditation with his bishop. In what might be called cold feet, Father Caropi asked the bishop why God would call a man such as him to the priesthood. "Because," the bishop replied, "he couldn't find anyone worse!"

Luke tells us today of the story of Jesus sending Simon Peter out to fish where there had been none before. When their nets nearly tore from the weight of the fish they now caught, Simon Peter knew the man before him was from God. He begged Jesus to leave him alone, for he was a sinner. Of course, Jesus would have it no other way. "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men."

The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches us that Christ stands at the very heart of this gathering of people, the "family of God" (CCC 542). In gathering his disciples, Jesus did not seek scholars or politicians or leaders of the temple. He was beginning a family. He sought fishermen and craftsmen and generally very common men whose past didn't matter to him. Nor should ours; today, allow yourself the gift of living with Christ's love.

Readings for the Week of February 4, 2007

Sunday:	Is 6:1-2a, 3-8/1 Cor 15:1-11 <i>or</i> 15:3-8, 11/Lk 5:1-11
Monday:	Gn 1:1-19/Mk 6:53-56
Tuesday:	Gn 1:20—2:4a/Mk 7:1-13
Wednesday:	Gn 2:4b-9, 15-17/Mk 7:14-23
Thursday:	Gn 2:18-25/Mk 7:24-30
Friday:	Gn 3:1-8/Mk 7:31-37
Saturday:	Gn 3:9-24/Mk 8:1-10
Next Sunday:	Jer 17:5-8/1 Cor 15:12, 16-20/Lk 6:17, 20-26

Religion & Rock

Tune into "Religion & Rock" with Fr. 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.

Next Sunday's theme is:
"Giving of Ourselves."
Don't forget to tune in!

Visit "Religion & Rock" on the web, www.religionandrock.com.
Also watch "Good News with Father Jim" on TELECARE, channel 29, on Mondays and Fridays at 9:45 AM; Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays at 7:45 PM; Sundays at 8 PM.

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:



Daniel D'Arienzo-*US Army*
Bryan R. Dempsey-*US Marines*
Frederick Wm. Ellis-*US Army*
John Finn-*US Army*
Armand J. LeComte-*US Marines*
Michael Mallimo-*US Army*
Peter Provenzano-*US Army*

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



The parish family of Our Lady of Lourdes would like to list those in the armed forces on active duty so that we can include them in our prayers. If you would like to include a family member on active duty to our prayer list, please fill out the following:

Name: _____

Branch of Service: _____

or email information to bulletin@ollchurch.org

Social Action Alert

Life After Abortion

This time of the year, particularly with the March for Life, calls us to focus on the morality and legality and damage of abortion. Our faith also calls us to compassion and reconciliation not condemnation. There are a number of prayer opportunities and retreats being offered in our area for those who have had abortions and are seeking ways to work through this. For more information, look at the Rachel's Vineyard website – www.rachelsvineyard.org. In our own diocese, you can contact the Respect Life Office at 516.379.8292, x. 215 for more information.

Our Diocese offers a number of residences for young people who are pregnant and seeking shelter and resources to begin life as a parent.

For more information about these services contact:

Regina Maternity Services – 516.223.7888

Mother of Good Counsel Home – 516.223.1013

Momma's House – 516.781.8637

Bethany House – 516.868.6866

The Mercy INN

The Mercy INN Soup Kitchen of Wyandanch needs volunteers to help prepare and serve food one day a week, Monday-Friday. The hours are 10 AM until 2 PM. Also, they are in need of two volunteers to pick up produce one Monday a month. If you can help, please call Kathy at 631.422.1420.

Living God's Call for Charity and Justice in Political Life

An excerpt from *Deus Caritas Est* (God is Love), the first Encyclical of Pope Benedict XVI
 ...to the Bishops, priests, and deacons, men and women, religious and
 all the lay faithful on Christian love.

Faith, Hope and Love

Faith, hope and charity go together. Hope is practiced through the virtue of patience, which continues to do good even in the face of apparent failure, and through the virtue of humility, which accepts God's mystery and trusts him even at times of darkness. Faith tells us that God has given his Son for our sakes and gives us the victorious certainty that it is really true: God is love! It thus transforms our impatience and our doubts into the sure hope that God holds the world in his hands and that, as the dramatic imagery of the end of the *Book of Revelation* points out, in spite of all darkness he ultimately triumphs in glory. Faith, which sees the love of God revealed in the pierced heart of Jesus on the Cross, gives rise to love. Love is the light—and in the end, the only light—that can always illuminate a world grown dim and give us the courage needed to keep living and working. Love is possible, and we are able to practice it because we are created in the image of God. To experience love and in this way to cause the light of God to enter into the world—this is the invitation I would like to extend with the present Encyclical.

Annual Service and Goods Auction

St. John the Baptist D.H.S. is proud to announce the **Eighth Annual Service & Goods Auction which will be held on Friday, February 9 at 7 PM in the Cougar Café.**

Many items to bid on, door prizes and raffles including one month's tuition, vacations, camps and dinners, to name a few. Please join us for a fun evening where the proceeds will benefit the students of SJB. We thank you for your continued support.

Pastoral Visitor

Are you that special person who is called to be a Pastoral Visitor?

Would you like to visit people in our parish who are patients at Good Samaritan Hospital?

Our Lady of Grace Parish will present a series of classes for the education of Pastoral Visitors visiting patients from their parish who are in Good Samaritan Hospital.

A five session course will be conducted by Sister Dorothy Monks and start on **Saturday, March 3, from 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM at Our Lady of Grace Parish in West Babylon, Room 118.**

A registration fee of \$25 plus a phone call to Our Lady of Grace Stewardship Office at 661-9077 will reserve your place. For additional information call Deacon John at 661.3224.

Maria Regina Residence

Maria Regina Residence is a skilled long term care facility located on the property of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Brentwood. It provides Adult Day Health Services offering a wonderful day program including transportation and meals, as well as a loving atmosphere provided by an inclusive staff. If interested, or for further information, please contact Veronica Anderson, Director at 631.299.3045.

The Four Greatest Stories Ever Told!

St. Patrick's, Bay Shore, invites you to attend "The Four Greatest Stories Ever Told! The Portraits of Jesus in the Bible" presented by Vicki Toale, O.P. The sessions run from 7:30-9:30 PM beginning February 5. Sr. Vicki is a member of the Dominican Sisters of Amityville. She was a Pastoral Minister and the Director of Religious Education in the Parish of St. Francis of Assisi in Astoria. She is an Associate Professor of Theology at Molloy College and is currently Adult Formation Director at Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Parish. For further information or to register, please call Susan at 631.661.4157 extension 500 or email to susan@delucamaisto.com.

Pasta Night

Our Lady of Grace Columbiettes #11968 are sponsoring "**Pasta Night**" on **February 9 from 7 PM until 10 PM in Father Shanahan Hall.** Dinner will include pasta, meatballs, bread, salad, coffee, tea and dessert. The cost per person is \$9. For further information, call 631.884.4219. Mangia!

From Maintenance to Missionary

Fr. Ron Rolheiser, OMI

*We know what to do for someone who comes to church, but we don't know how to get someone to come to church.

*We know how to be Christian when we are poor, under-educated, and culturally marginalized, but we struggle to be Christian when we are affluent, educated, and have a full place in the culture.

These over-simplifications speak volumes about the state of the church in the Western world. Simply put, today we are better at dealing with someone already sitting in our church pews than we are at getting anyone there in the first place. Our churches are strong on maintenance, weak on being missionary.

This is everywhere evident. We look at our churches today and we see so many wonderful things: faith-filled individuals, good liturgies, good preaching, good music, wonderful programs sensitivity to justice, faith-sharing groups, excellent theology, ecumenical openness, soul-work in our renewal centres, beautiful church buildings, and an ever-increasing lay involvement. It has been centuries since we have done so many things so well and maintained church life with such quality and balance.

But we see something else too, less positive: One-half of all baptized Christians rarely enter a church, our churches are greying, the culture is increasingly marginalizing the church, and, most serious of all, too often we cannot pass on our faith to our own children. Even as so many good things are happening within the church we are losing ground. The crisis, it seems, is not in the area of parish program, liturgy, or theology but in the area of the missionary dimension of Christianity. We know how to run a church, but we don't know how to found a church.

What's needed? We need to become more deliberately, reflectively, and programmatically missionary within our own culture, to our own children. We need to send missionaries into secularity in the very same way as we once sent them off to faraway countries. The church in the secularized world needs a new kind of missionary.

What will this new kind of missionary need to bring? Before anything else, real faith. What we need are men and women who can walk the workplace, the marketplace, the academy of learning, and the arts and entertainment industry, and radiate a faith that is not infantile, over-protective, paranoid, colourless, or

compromising. We need men and women who are post-affluent, post-sophisticated, post-liberal, post-conservative, and post-fearful in their faith. Their faith needs to have a double strength: It must be strong enough not to be defensive in the face of secularity, even as it has the capacity to sweat the blood of self-renunciation rather than compromise the great future for present consolation.

Beyond personal faith, the missionary to secularity will need these things too: A new language for a post-ecclesial generation, a new gospel-artistry to refire the romantic imagination of a secularized mind, a new way to connect the gospel to the streets, a new way of moving beyond personal gift and charisma to the building of lasting community, a new way of connecting eros and spirituality, justice and piety, energy and wisdom, and a new way to combine God's consolation with prophetic challenge. No easy task. In all these areas we are, right now, still searching for new ways.

Perhaps the person we can look to for guidance is Henri Nouwen. To the extent that our age has had a missionary to secularity, he fits the bill. His life and his writings touched people in all walks of life and not just inside church circles. His approach was deliberate and faith-filled, he was trying to speak to the heart of secular culture from the perspective of the gospel. Slowly, through many years of writing, he developed his own language. He re-wrote his books many times over in an attempt to be simple without being simplistic; to carry real feeling without falling into sentimentality; to speak the language of the soul without falling into psychological jargon; to be personal without being exhibitionist; to put forth Christ's invitation and challenge without being preachy; to challenge towards community without being churchy; and to offer God's consolation without falling into mushy piety.

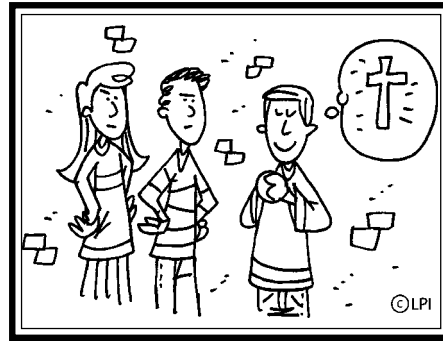
He didn't always succeed, but he did it better than the rest of us. And more so even than the popularity of his writings (that unique appeal and effectiveness of the language he developed) Nouwen is a model to us in terms of the quality of his faith. He walked inside secularity with a visible faith, raw, without fear and without compromise (albeit not without tears, heartache, and breakdown). In the end, what shone through was faith, his belief that God's existence is real and is the most important thing of all.

We need to learn from people like him, learn the difference between providing church-maintenance and being missionaries. We know what to do with people once we get them into a church but we must learn again how to get them there.

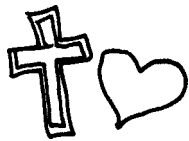
Used with permission of the author, Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser. Father Rolheiser is a theologian, teacher, and award-winning author and is currently the President of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, TX. He can be contacted through his website www.ronrolheiser.com.

Sharing the Gospel

Jesus was powerful enough to control the fish in the sea! Peter caught no fish by himself one night. With Jesus' help, Peter caught more fish than his boat could carry. When Peter saw what Jesus did, he was afraid. How would you feel?



Mission for the Week



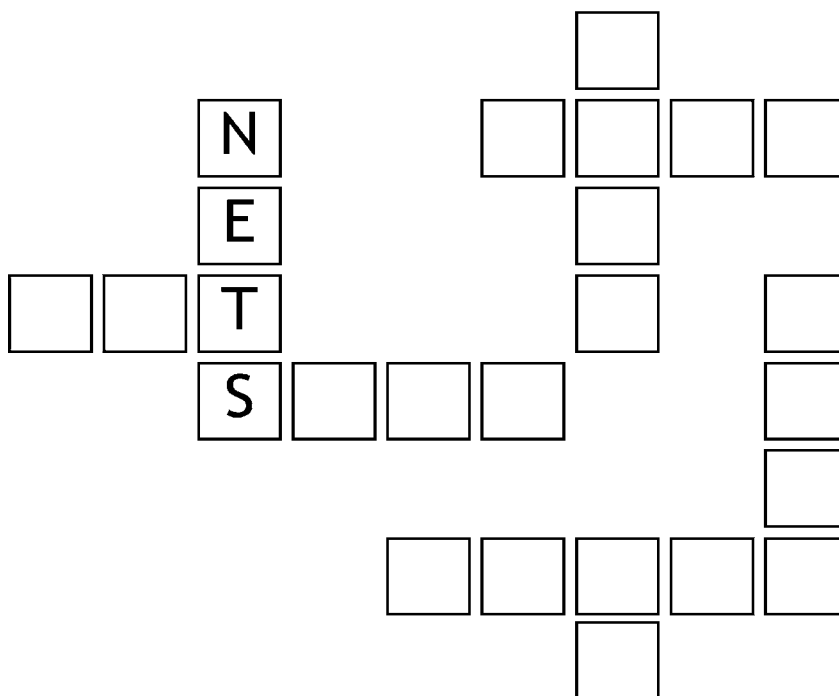
With your parents, try turning on a lamp while it isn't plugged in. It doesn't work, does it? That's how we need to be plugged in to God, to do his work. Without him, what we try will never work.



Puzzle

Fit this Gospel message into the empty squares:

Let your nets down to catch some fish.



Prayer



Dear God,
your power is
so amazing!

Amen.

Something to Draw



Draw fish
swimming into
Peter's net.