

"It is written,



**one does
not live
on bread alone."**

Luke 4:4

Our Lady of Lourdes
First Sunday of Lent • February 25, 2007



Pastoral Team

Rev. Michael A. Vetrano
Pastor

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.

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

Mary McMahon

Director of Parish Social Ministry

Vita Scorcia

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 McMahon

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)

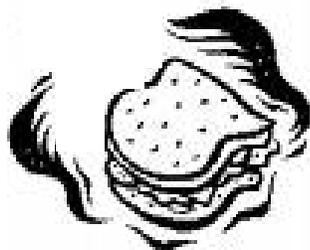
email: Sage@ollchurch.org

Lent 2007

Sunday Nights at the Six!

Come and pray with us!

Our Six Committee and Contemporary Music Group are working hard to make this a beautiful celebration for you...



Sunday, February 25

Help the Homeless

Following “The Six”, we’ll gather in the cafeteria to make peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for local homeless shelters. This is a wonderful service project and a great way to begin the Lenten season.

We are also in need of donations of peanut butter and jelly. Bring them with you that night or drop them off any time before.

Lent 2007

Clean Up Your Act

Get ready to be challenged to “Clean Up Your Act” at “The Six” this Lent.

We’ll look at areas of our lives – especially for middle and high school teenagers – that need some improvement.

Stations of the Cross

We remember the road to Jesus’ death and link his journey to our own as our parish’s deacons lead us through this beautiful devotion.

Come and pray with us...

Each Friday during Lent

1 PM and 7:00 PM



Living Stations of the Cross

Good Friday, April 6 at 7:30 PM in the Church

This is a must for your Lenten and Holy Week journey!

Our parish community comes together – led by our young people, our Music Ministries and members of our parish community – who share their own personal experiences on this most holy and solemn night. The celebration includes the Veneration of the Cross.

Parish Lenten Mission 2007

Do you feel overworked, rushed, stressed out, like there's never enough time for what's important? Give yourself a gift this Lent, and come to our Parish Mission: four nights of peaceful prayer and renewal, time to really refresh yourself and put God back in the center. Each night will feature special musical and artistic reflections to help us remember that "We Are God's Work of Art!"

We Are God's Work of Art!

preached by our own Fr. Mike Vetrano



Monday, March 5 - Thursday, March 8
7:30 PM - 8:30 PM
in the Church

*Mini-Mission homily at 8 AM Mass each morning
for those who cannot come at night.*

Nightly Themes:

Living Life in God's Friendship

Monday, March 5

Where is God in my life? How can I be closer to God and closer to the people I care about?
How is God's love present in my life? How can I be a sign of God's love?

Overcoming Obstacles and Finding Our Way Back to God

Tuesday, March 6

Life's difficulties can sometimes make it so hard to see God.
How can we find our way back, and how can we help others to do the same?

Why I Need the Church, Why the Church Needs Me!

Wednesday, March 7

All are welcome and all are needed! How can we really be a community of believers?

Closing Mass-

A Celebration of Anointing and Healing

Thursday, March 8

Come for a closing Mass and celebration of healing in our community.

Each night there will be:

- Special Children's Liturgy of the Word
- Teen Fellowship following the Mission
- Hospitality for all in the All-Purpose Room
- Something for everyone—from age 4 to 94!

Directed Retreat Week

“The “Directed Prayer Retreat” was an opportunity of learning, praying, and sharing with someone deeply moving spiritually.” -J



All Are Welcome to our Second Annual Directed Retreat Week experience...right here at OLL!

Sunday, March 11 – Saturday, March 17

St. Ignatius Retreat House offers the opportunity for the experience of the Directed Retreat to the people of a parish, in their parish surroundings... as they live out their daily lives.

“My experience during the “retreat” was the feeling of renewal. It was a time of reflection and examination of my experiences of faith during my faith life. My spiritual director was wonderful to speak to each day. I found the retreat has enriched my faith journey.” -L

Who can go?

This “Directed Retreat” is for you! Many people cannot go away for a week or a weekend to experience a directed retreat. This is a wonderful taste of what it is like to have spiritual direction and to be on retreat without leaving your home.

“Being part of the “retreat” was a gift I gave to Me - of special prayer time and personal reflection. I found this time to be nourishing, comforting and spiritually invigorating, bringing me to a deeper level of understanding of my faith, family and community.” -D

How does it work?

We will meet initially on Sunday afternoon at 2 PM at Our Lady of Lourdes. Our first meeting will last about one hour and you will meet your retreat director/prayer guide. The Prayer Guides are a group of spiritual directors, affiliated with St. Ignatius Retreat Center, Manhasset who have been trained in leading prayers and spiritual exercises in the tradition of St. Ignatius.

After this meeting, each retreatant will meet privately with his/her prayer guide at our parish for approximately one-half hour each day, Monday through Friday. During these meetings, the retreatant and prayer guide will reflect together and will examine different ways to pray, including meditation and praying with scripture. Each retreatant commits to set aside a half hour each day for a prayer period on a scripture passage. On Saturday morning at 9:30 AM, there will be a group closing session at Our Lady of Lourdes.

*Brochures containing applications are available at the Religious Education or Parish Office. **Registration deadline is Friday, March 2.** For more information, call Vita Scorcia at the Religious Education Office at 661-5440 or email Religioused@ollchurch.org.*



2007 Catholic Ministries Appeal
The Hands of Christ-Supporting the Community Around Us

The Catholic Ministries Appeal Kicks Off

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Diocese of Rockville Centre and as we kick off this 2007 Catholic Ministries Appeal we continue the tradition of helping all those in our community who look to our Church to be the beacon of hope. Our appeal helps to fund the different ministries and agencies throughout Long Island. As stewards of God's gifts, you are invited to respond by sharing those gifts to help others in our communities.

"Is not this the fast that is pleasing to God...to clothe the naked, shelter the homeless, feed the hungry, take the side of the afflicted and proclaim a year of favor from our God." -Isaiah 58

Lent is traditionally a time of giving up, but you can do even more if you transform your giving up into giving to.

Your pledge to the Catholic Ministries Appeal helps our Diocese support our outreach to those most in need through Catholic Charities, Education, and many other ministries. It also helps our own parish with both the resources and funding we need to continue to serve all who come to our door.

Please make a gift to the Catholic Ministries Appeal a part of your generosity this Lent.

CATHOLIC MINISTRIES APPEAL • DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE
 PO Box 4000 • ROCKVILLE CENTRE, NEW YORK 11571-4000 • 516-379-5210 EXT 2 • www.drvc.org/cma.html

2007 CATHOLIC MINISTRIES APPEAL
Supporting the Community Around Us

TO PROVIDE FUNDS I/WE AGREE TO MAKE A GIFT OF:

PLEDGE \$ _____ INITIAL PAYMENT \$ _____ BALANCE \$ _____

If you would like to charge your contribution to your credit card, please check here and see reverse side of this form.

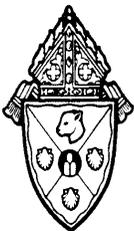
NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PARISH OF DONOR _____

SIGNATURE OF DONOR _____

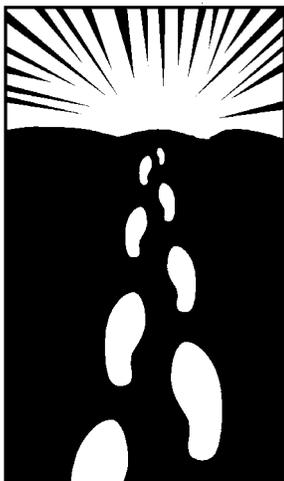


A GUIDE TO GIVING	
PLEDGE	10 PAYMENTS
\$5,000	\$500
2,500	250
1,500	150
1,000	100
500	50
300	30
150	15
OTHER \$ _____	
EVERY GIFT COUNTS!	

Please make checks payable to:
 Catholic Ministries Appeal
Thank you for your support

FOR GIFTS OF SECURITIES, PLEASE CALL THE APPEAL OFFICE FOR INSTRUCTIONS.
 MATCHING GIFTS: IF YOU QUALIFY FOR A MATCHING GIFT FROM YOUR EMPLOYER, PLEASE FORWARD TO THE CMA OFFICE

Children's Liturgy of the Word



Following the Footsteps of Jesus

This Lent, our children are making use of the Little Purple Book – a day by day book for them to walk through the Lenten season. Each week we're going to look at the ways we can "*follow in the footsteps*" of Jesus by listening to His Word and being more like Him each day!

Please note that during our **Parish Lenten Mission 2007** –

"We Are God's Work of Art"

– we will offer Children's Liturgy of the Word each night.
This will allow our children to have a little retreat of their own!

We love our children and families here at OLL and want you to be a part of our parish community! Save the following dates for Holy Week 2007...

Monday, April 2

Family Reconciliation Service – 7:30 PM – Parish Center

Thursday, April 5

Children's and Family Holy Thursday Service – 4 PM – Church

Friday, April 6

Children's Good Friday Service – 12 Noon – Church

Saturday, April 7

Easter Egg Hunt – 11:30 AM – Great Lawn

OLL Duffers Classic

save the date... **August 23, 2007**

It's never too early to start thinking about signing up for the OLL 23rd Annual Duffers Classic. This 2007 Golf Outing includes lunch, 2 PM tee off and dinner, with lots of fantastic raffle prizes! Those choosing not to play golf but attend the dinner only are also welcome. To make a reservation, call Joe Macina at 587.0241.

Financial Summary

February 18, 2007

Weekly Collection	\$ 17,582.70
Weekly Budget	-\$ 21,000.00
+/- for the week	\$ (3,417.30)

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

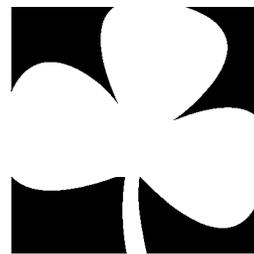


Parish Pilgrimage 2007

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.**



A little bit of Ireland Comes to OLL!

AOH Festival Singers Concert

Continue your St. Patrick's Day Celebration on **March 24 at 8 PM**, with a concert at Our Lady of Lourdes by the Ancient Order of Hibernians Festival Singers. This fantastic choir, fresh from their performance at Carnegie Hall, will bring tears to your eyes with their repertoire of Irish and popular hits!

And one of these "Irish Tenors" is OLL's own *Bill Best!*

Tickets are only \$10, and are available at the Parish Office. Get yours before they sell out!

We are looking for event sponsors:

For \$100, your name will be published in the event program as a sponsor, and you will have preferred seating for yourself and your guests. If you are interested in being a sponsor for this event, contact the Parish Office at 661-3224, or email jengallagher@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

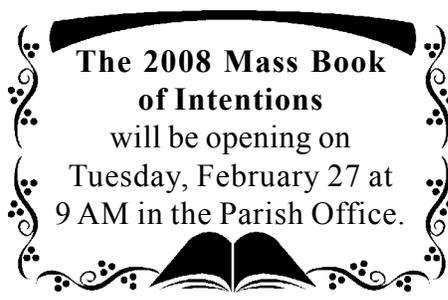
Saturday: 4 PM - 4:45 PM



Baptisms

Annabella Marie Dixon

Margaret and Michael



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.

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 26

8:00 AM Winifred Yasinovsky

Tuesday, February 27

8:00 AM Edward Cameron III

Wednesday, February 28

8:00 AM Robert Beck

Thursday, March 1

8:00 AM Thomas Dowling, John Kelly, Patrick McCarthy

Friday, March 2

8:00 AM Ann D. Murray

Saturday, March 3

8:00 AM Rose Fenimore, Walter Reutlinger, Daniel Farrell, Luke Galfano,
Antoinette Maddaluna, Katherine Flynn, Daniel O'Keefe,
Timothy Francis Sullivan, Helen Snyder, Josephine Brogan,
James Ward

5:00 PM Josephine Sanfilippo
Fr. Mike Vetrano

Sunday, March 4

8:00 AM Anthony Alfieri
Fr. Bob Scheckenback

9:30 AM Madeline Hopper
Fr. Stan Chukwube

11:00 AM Charlotte Sweeney
Fr. Mike Vetrano

12:30 PM John Lovari
Fr. Ed Dowling

6:00 PM People of the Parish, Tom & John Rebholz, Dolores Betsch,
John Weiss, Lindsey Sangiorgio, Luciano Reyes, Jr., William Raimo,
Joey Vincuillo, Kristen Rennert, Mary Fusco, Susan Scharff,
John Feeney
Fr. Bob Scheckenback

Rest In Peace

*Florence A. Crawford
Josephine Brogan
Ruth Mahoney
Mafalda Vincenzi*

Altar Society

Altar linens this week will be cared for by *Nancy Trujillo*.
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 ...

*Gabrielle Azzarelli, Pat Bonavita, Thomas Brennan, Elise Brenner, Christian Bullock,
Lynn Castellano, Peggy Cornell, Regina Cranor, Joseph Cristallo,
Millie Durkin-Barrera, Jason Fisher, Barbara Frank, John Gervasio, Adam Ippolito,
Douglas Killane, Brigid Kinney, Anthony Lombardo, Mike Loreto, Ruth Mahoney,
Diego Marino, Michele McCann, Peter McCann, Sr., Bryan Monahan, Anna Nieroda,
Jackie Paeggel, Adelaide Panzarella, Frieda Perry, Gene Perry, Joe Radosti,
Dorothy Schiavone, Rose Serragano, Dorothy Sullivan, Loretta Vitale, Michael Walsh*



The family of Josephine "Jo" Brogan would like to thank the
Parish Family of Our Lady of Lourdes for all of their prayers
and support. The many people who came to the wake and
funeral; the many cards and phone calls from the members of the
parish groups to which Jo and Ray belonged - all of these along
with the kindness and thoughtfulness, the prayers and love the
parish extended to them have been overwhelming to Jo's family.
They are greatly appreciated.

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**.

SAGE

The SAGE Group (Senior Advocates for Growth and Enrichment) will meet on **Tuesday, February 27**, in the **Parish Center at 9 AM**. All older parishioners are welcome.



Nocturnal Adoration

Nocturnal Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament **follows the 5 PM Mass on Saturday, March 3** and concludes with Benediction at 9:50 PM. Let us prepare our hearts this Lent for the coming of Easter by joining together in prayer for religious men and women and the Diocese of Rockville Centre.

Senior Circle

The Senior Circle meets on the last Monday of each month. The next meeting will be held on **Monday, February 26**, at **12:30 PM** in the **Parish Center**.



Food
Pantry
Needs

- canned pasta, ravioli, etc.
- chili
- macaroni & cheese
- pasta
- tomato sauce

Outreach Office Hours

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

Gentle Reminder: *We no longer have a Thrift Shop.*

Please do not leave household items and clothing. All donations can be dropped off at Ss. Cyril & Methodius Thrift Shop, 139 Bay Shore Road, Deer Park. You can call them at 242.6718 for further information.

News from Outreach...



I have just completed two weeks working side-by-side with the volunteers in our Parish Outreach Office. What I have seen and been part of in these weeks is an experience I need to share with you. OLL is a large parish—a very busy place with a lot of energy and activity. There is a surge of life at OLL. But, behind the scenes; actually not far removed from the Tabernacle—the center of our Faith, is a gentle and welcoming place that many may have never visited. It is the Outreach Office.

The Outreach Office is staffed only by volunteers; men and women, who answer phones, keep records, stock the pantry, fill bags with food and most importantly, offer respect, understanding and acceptance to those among us in the most need. Each phone inquiry or office visit is met with an unconditional, “How can we help you?”

Many of our volunteers have been with Outreach for years. And so, I asked, why they stay? At first, my question was dismissed as if in the asking I was being too intimate. Gradually, as the answers came forth, I understood—the overwhelming response was that they stay because there is a connection with others, because they have been blessed and wish to continue that blessing, because they have walked with those in need and in reaching out they have received far more than they could ever imagine. One of the women told me: “It is an honor to be here and a privilege to be with another in need.”

In the quiet presence of each volunteer who works in our Outreach Office, our parish community does respond, each day to the Scripture Directive to, “Act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with your God.”

-Mary McMahon

Adult Faith Formation

...upcoming courses

American Mystics:

Thomas Merton and Jessica Powers

One night only...

Tuesday, March 20, 2007

7:30 PM until 9:30 PM

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

7:30 PM until 9:30 PM

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 its 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: religious@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.]

FREE *from* temptation

©L.P.

First Sunday of Lent

Luke 4:1-13

Can you ignore commercials? Driving down the road, do you look past billboards to the scenery of the landscape? Can you easily toss away the relentless stream of mailed advertisements? Temptations are everywhere; home improvements, nicer clothes, tasty meals in restaurants. Of course, companies who sell goods and services have an obligation to themselves to let us know what they have available. But our obligation is to be able to discriminate between our needs and our wants, not always an easy task.

On this first Sunday of Lent, we are given the Gospel reading from Luke of Jesus' temptation in the desert. Remember that it wasn't until after he had fasted and prayed for 40 days that Satan attempted to take advantage of what he thought might be Jesus' weakness — hunger — only to be refused. Satan then promised him rule over all the kingdoms of the world, yet Jesus was there to offer the greatest kingdom, that of God, to all of humankind. Not a single temptation existed on Earth that could sway him from his mission.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church explains the seven petitions of the Lord's Prayer. The fifth, "Lead us not into temptation," asks of God to give us the strength to stay away from the paths that lead us to sin (CCC 2863). Looking to the example Jesus gave us in the desert, we must find deep within our hearts the vigilance to lead a faith-filled life, free from the temptations of this world.

Readings for the Week of February 25, 2007

Sunday:	Dt 26:4-10/Rom 10:8-13/Lk 4:1-13
Monday:	Lv 19:1-2, 11-18/Mt 25:31-46
Tuesday:	Is 55:10-11/Mt 6:7-15p
Wednesday:	Jon 3:1-10/Lk 11:29-32
Thursday:	Est C:12, 14-16, 23-25/Mt 7:7-12
Friday:	Ez 18:21-28/Mt 5:20-26
Saturday:	Dt 26:16-19/Mt 5:43-48
Next Sunday:	Gn 15:5-12, 17-18/Phil 3:17-4:1 <i>or</i> 3:20-4:1/Lk 9:28b-36

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:

"Forgiveness."

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

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.

Here Politics and Faith Meet: Long Islanders Seeking Justice

How Catholic citizens “work for a just ordering of society” as called for in Pope Benedict XVI’s encyclical, *Deus Caritas Est* (God is Love)

Serving Our Neighbors Who Can’t Read

By Maria Toulas, Public Policy Education Committee, St. Agnes Cathedral

The Church cannot neglect the service of charity any more than she can neglect the Sacraments and the Word.

-Pope Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est*.

As a member of the Public Policy Education Committee at St. Agnes Cathedral, I have learned that my faith calls me to advocate with government officials on behalf of the poor and vulnerable people I serve in my charitable works. Here is one way that I have done so.

Long Island has some of the best schools in the country. Yet, surprisingly, some Long Islanders cannot read. On September 28, 2006, I was part of a panel of office staff, tutors and students who made a presentation on behalf of Literacy Nassau (L/N) to the Nassau Community College Women’s Faculty Association, explaining the plight of those people in our Long Island communities who are not literate in the English language. We all know that in our highly-educated region, people who cannot read are likely condemned to a lifetime of poverty. Our goal in this meeting was to persuade faculty members to become community activists for literacy by volunteering their time and talents to help L/N fulfill its goal to teach English to all who have the will to learn.

On October 6, 2006, L/N Executive Director Tina Sanacore and I visited the office of Dean Skelos, our New York State Senator in Rockville Centre, to personally request that he include a member-item grant in the 2007 state budget for funds desperately needed to recruit and train volunteer tutors. Other tutors are also needed for adult English language tutoring, especially in workplaces such as hospitals, supermarkets and department stores that have many hard-working immigrants who want to learn English.

Do you want to work for justice? Contact Dr. Richard Koubek at Catholic Charities’ Public Policy Education Network, 516.733.7077 or by e-mail: Koubek.richard@catholiccharities.cc

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.

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.

Retrouvaille

You can help your marriage now. Do you feel alone? Do you argue? Have you stopped talking to each other? Retrouvaille helps couples through difficult time in their marriages. For confidential information about the Retrouvaille program, or to register for the next upcoming weekend, please call 1.800.470.2230.

Chinese Auction

Our Lady of Grace Columbiettes will be hosting a **Chinese Auction on Saturday, March 10 at Our Lady of Grace Church, West Babylon.** Admission is \$5 plus 15 tickets, coffee and cake included. The auction will be from 12 PM until 4 PM in the Father Shanahan Hall. For ticket information, please call 631.888.7938.

Communion Breakfast

The Catholic Daughters of the Americas, Court Bishop McDonnell #1403 invites you to their **61st Annual Communion Breakfast on Saturday, March 3.** Call Trish at 321.6833 to reserve your \$25 ticket for the buffet breakfast at **Captain Bill's Restaurant in Bay Shore.** Guest speaker will be Deacon Joe Fitzgerald, who will be ordained to the priesthood in May, will share his life path stories.

The Cross as Revealing the Non-Violence of Christ

Fr. Ron Rolheiser, OMI

The cross of Christ is like a carefully-cut diamond. Every time you turn it in the light you get a different sparkle. It means so many things and its depths can never be fully fathomed, always more meaning spills over. We can never get our minds around it, but, and we sense this, ultimately the cross is the deepest word that can ever be spoken about love. No wonder it is perhaps the most universally-cherished symbol on earth.

How can one begin to unravel the multifarious levels of meaning carried by a cross?

The best place to start is with God. What the cross tells us, more clearly than any other revelation, is that God is absolutely and utterly non-violent and that God's vulnerability, which the cross invites us into, is a power for community with God and with each other. What's being said here? How does the cross reveal God as non-violent?

We are forever connecting God to coercion, threat, guilt, reckoning, and to the idea that a power should somehow rise up and crush by force all that's evil. That concept is the main reason why so many of us either fear God, hate God, try to avoid God, or are disappointed in God ("Why doesn't God do something about the world?") But what scripture reveals about God, and this is seen full-bloom on the cross, is that God is neither coercion, threat, guilt, nor the great avenger of evil and sin.

Rather God is love, light, truth, and beauty; a gentle, though persistent, invitation, that's never a threat. God is like a mother, gently trying to coax another step out of a young child learning to walk ("Come on, try, just another step!"). God exists as an infinite patience that endures all things, not as a great avenger, Rambo and John Wayne, who kills all the bad guys when he has finally had enough. The cross of Christ reveals that God works far differently than do our movies and our imaginations. God never overpowers anyone.

Radically, of course, God could. God has all the power. However God's power to create love and community, paradoxically, works precisely by refusing to ever overpower. It works instead through vulnerability, through something the Gospels call EXOUSIA. What is this?

The Gospels tell us that when people witnessed Jesus' life and ministry they saw something that sharply differentiated him from others. "He spoke with great power, unlike the scribes and pharisees." However they use a curious word to name that power. They never say that Jesus spoke

with great ENERGIJA ("Wow, is he energetic!") or DYNAMIS ("What dynamism!"). Instead they use the (Greek) word, EXOUSIA, a word with no English equivalent, but whose meaning can be conveyed in an image:

If you would put the strongest man in the world into a room with a new-born baby which of these two would be more powerful? Obviously at one level, the man is more powerful, he could kill the baby if he wanted. But, the baby possesses a different kind of power, a far deeper one, one that can move things muscles can't. A baby has EXOUSIA, its vulnerability is a great power. It doesn't need to out-muscle anyone. A baby invites, beckons, and all that's moral and deep in the conscience simply cannot walk away. It's no accident that God chose to be incarnated into this world as baby.

It's no accident either that Jesus died as he did on Good Friday. The cross reveals the power of God in this world, a power that is never the power of a muscle, a speed, a brilliance, a physical attractiveness, or a grace which simply leaves you no other choice but to acknowledge its superiority and bend your knee in obeisance. The world's power works this way, movies end that way. God's power is the power of EXOUSIA, a baby that lies helpless, muted, patient, beckoning for someone to take care of it. It's this power that lies at the deepest base of things and will in the end, gently, have the final say. It's also the only power upon which love and community can be created because it, and it alone, ultimately softens rather than breaks the heart.

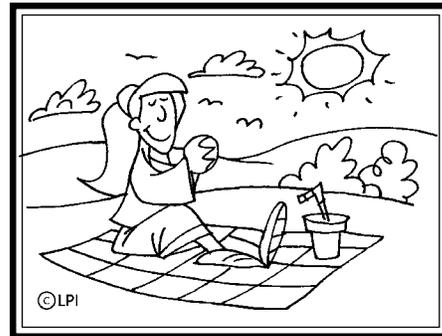
And it's a power that invites us in. It's good to know this so that we don't give into bitterness and grow vicious ourselves when we are slighted and can't defend ourselves, when our dreams get crushed and there's nothing we can do about it, when we so desperately want to do something that stands out but haven't the talent to do so, or when we find ourselves a minority of one before a jeering crowd.

The cross of Christ tells us that, at those moments of painful helplessness, when we can't impress or overpower anyone, we are acting in a divine way, non-violently, and in that vulnerability lies the secret to our coming to love and community.

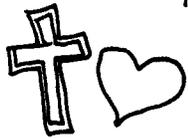
Used with permission of the author, Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser. Father Rolheiser is a theologian, teacher, and award-winning author and is currently the President of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, TX. He can be contacted through his website www.ronrolheiser.com.

Sharing the Gospel

Jesus was powerful, and the devil knew it. Jesus could have used the power he had selfishly, to get whatever he wanted - food, land to rule, or even angels to come running. Instead, Jesus chose to save his power to do what God wanted.



Mission for the Week

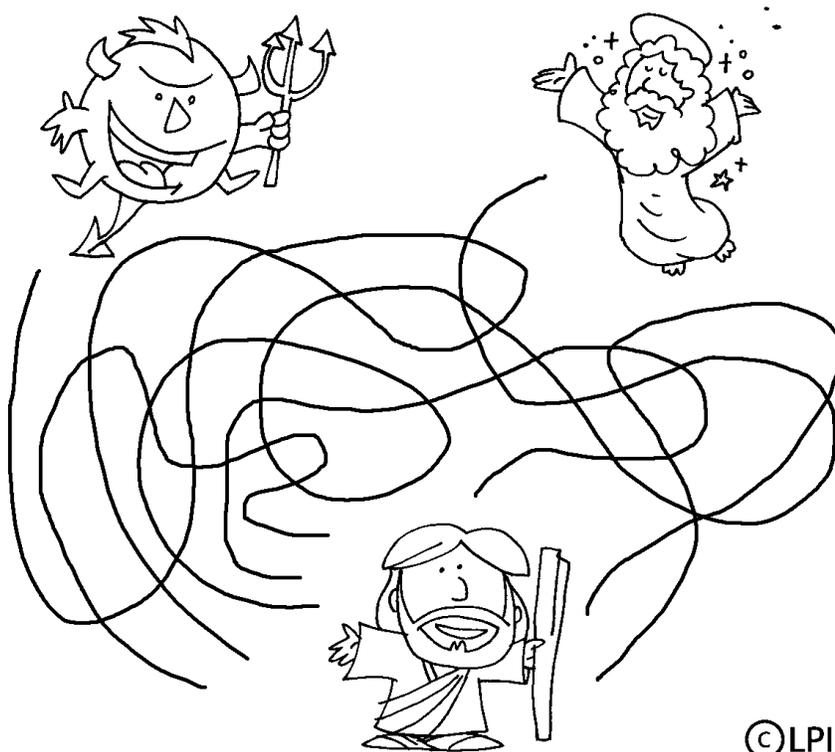


God has given you special talents to share with others. If you enjoy drawing, make a picture for someone else. If you enjoy singing, sing songs that make God smile.



Puzzle

Help Jesus to avoid the devil by staying on the path that leads to God!



Prayer



Dear God,

help me not to
be selfish.
Help me to be
more like Jesus.

Something to Draw



Draw Jesus
praying to God
in the desert.