

Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Our Lady of Lourdes October 25, 2009

**“Master, I
want to **see**
you.”**



Mark 10:51

*Our Lady
of Lourdes*

455 Hunter Avenue
West Islip, New York 11795

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.

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.

Pastoral Team

Rev. Michael A. Vetrano
Pastor

Rev. Patsy Amabile
Associate Pastor

Rev. Robert Scheckenback
Associate Pastor

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

Allegra D'Alo

Youth Minister/Social Action

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 Scorcio

Ministry Spiritual Director

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 Scorcio

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



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, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday:

9:30 AM - 3 PM

S.A.G.E.

661-3224

(Senior Advocates for Growth
and Enrichment)

email: Sage@ollchurch.org



Confirmation

“Go out and tell, make disciples of nations. Go out and tell the good news. Sing from your heart, sing to all of creation. Go out and tell the good news.”

Go Out and Tell... Fisher and Lee

This **Thursday, October 29**, Bishop Murphy will administer the Sacrament of Confirmation to our Candidates at 2pm and 430pm. They look to their Parish Family with an even greater awareness of what the words of the hymn “Go Out and Tell” means to them. Many of those who will receive Confirmation are already actively involved in many ministries including our Religious Education Program, Gr. 6/7/8 Hang Out Nights, Music Ministry, Altar Servers, Lectors, Ushers, Parish Outreach, Stewardship and Art & Environment .Please continue to pray for our Candidates , Sponsors and Parents as they prepare for this day.

Divorce and Remarriage

Presenter: Fr. Mike Vetrano
Monday, November 2
Spiritual Life Center

(located at the convent-please use the entrance between the school and the convent.)

7:30 PM - 9:30 PM

Our Pastor, Fr. Mike, is also an advocate with the Tribunal in our Diocese. Advocates help those seeking annulments to bring their case before the tribunal in a pastorally sensitive and compassionate manner.

This evening is geared for those who want to know where they or a friend or a family member stand with the church. Fr. Mike will also explain the various options open to those who were once married in the Church and now wish to seek an annulment for the good of their own conscience or to begin a new relationship with the full recognition of the Church.



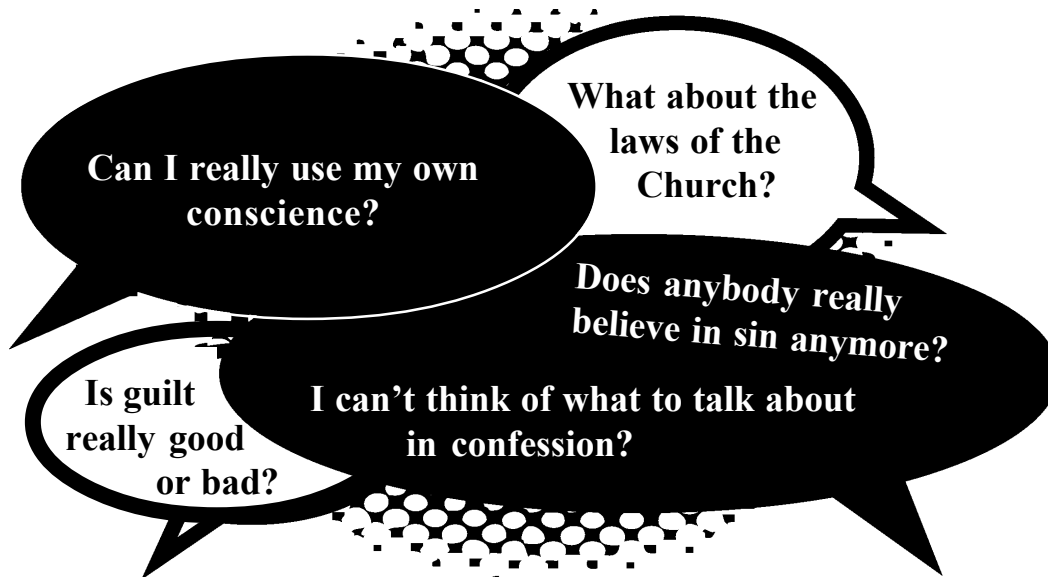
Adult Faith Formation

Top Ten Reasons to be a Catholic: What I Learned in 30 Years of Being a Priest!

Presenter: Fr. Mike Vetrano
Tuesdays-thru November 3, 10
Parish Center
7:30 PM - 9:30 PM

Being a Catholic is wonderful but not necessarily easy. It is demanding, challenging, and not without its controversy. At its best, it can bring you close to God and at its worst, it can scandalize. The five weeks of this course are designed for either the beginner, the searcher, or the experienced Catholic - it will help you learn what I have learned: how to grow with and deepen your faith.

Week 3: October 27
What it Means to be a Moral Person
Is guilt really good or bad?



There is a \$5 fee for each session. No fee is required for those who have paid the Religious Education Family Fee or Our Lady of Lourdes School tuition. Registration is necessary and helpful. This will enable us to have enough reading material and refreshments for all those attending. To register, please call the Religious Education Office at 661.5440, option 3 or email to religioused@ollchurch.org.

Once Again...

Gamblers Take to the Road!

Trip to Yonkers Empire Casino on **Wednesday, October 28**. We will be leaving from Our Lady of Lourdes at 10 AM with an approximate time of return: 6:30 PM.

Cost of Trip is \$30.50 which includes a \$5 coupon for play, a \$5 coupon for food, transportation and FUN!

If interested, or you have any questions, please contact Pat McKeefery at 422.6816.



Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults

What's it all about???

IF you are an adult AND

... you were never Baptized

... you were Baptized in another faith and would like to become a baptized Catholic

... you never received Holy Communion (Eucharist)

... you never received your Confirmation

IF you are an adult AND one or all of the circumstances above apply to you...

IF you feel you would like to become a baptized Catholic or become more fully initiated into your Catholic faith

... Please contact S. Nancy or Fr. Bob at the Parish Office, 661.3224 #1, and we would be happy to help you.

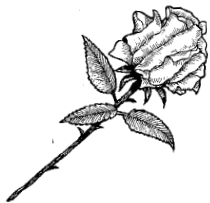


Seton Award Recipient

Our own Mary McMahon, Director of Parish Social Ministry, is going to be honored by the Sisters of Charity - our SAGE Sisters' and Sister Barbara Lynch's Congregation!

At their annual luncheon at the **Milleridge Inn**, Mary will receive the Seton Award. Anyone who knows Mary, or who works with her at Outreach, will immediately understand why she has been selected to receive the award. Mary certainly epitomizes the qualities of Saint Elizabeth Seton, foundress of the Sisters of Charity.

The luncheon will take place on **Sunday, November 8, from 3PM to 6 PM**. Tickets for the luncheon are \$65 and they can be obtained by picking up a form at the Parish Office, calling Lauren Manning at 718.424. 1813 or e-mailing lmanning@schalifax.ca. If you have any questions, just ask our SAGE Sisters or Sister Barbara.



All Souls Mass of Remembrance

We Remember We Celebrate We Believe

During this past year at Our Lady of Lourdes more than 100 Funeral Masses have been celebrated for members of our parish family who have died. Their families will be invited to participate in a special **Mass of Remembrance and Communion Breakfast on Saturday, November 7 at 10 AM**.

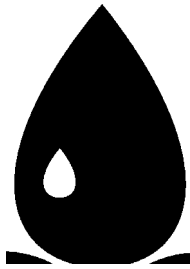
If there is someone you wish to honor whose Funeral Mass was not celebrated at Our Lady of Lourdes, please contact the Parish Office at 661.3224 no later than October 31.

Ministry of Family Healing

Life is not so much about how to survive the storm, it's about the willingness to dance in the rain, with Courage, Wisdom and Serenity. The Ministry of Family Healing invites you to a night of prayer and reflection on **Thursday, November 12 at 7:30 PM in the Parish Center.**

Please call the Religious Education Office at 661.5440 (option #3) to register.

Come for yourself and bring a friend. Join with us and your fellow parishioners as we help each other to survive the storms in our lives. As always, food and fellowship to follow. Looking forward to seeing you on November 12!



Blood Drive

There is no substitute for caring people who take the time to donate blood so that others may live.

Thanks and appreciation to all who donated Blood at our Blood Drive here at OLL on October 7.

Your effort and commitment has helped L.I. Blood Services to meet the daily demand for blood products.

We had 79 donors registered and 69 pints were collected. The blood collected was separated into their components and distributed to patients in hospitals throughout the area.

School News

At Our Lady of Lourdes in West Islip, the students start learning Languages other than English (LOTE) as early as the Nursery level. The students in Nursery, Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten are exposed to the Italian language and culture. These students are currently learning how to say "my name is" and "I'm well," "I'm not well," and "I'm so-so," as well as the colors, numbers and the "Ave Maria."

The students in grades 1 through 8 are learning the Spanish language and are being exposed to its various cultures. The younger grades learn the basics such as: the colors, numbers, days of the week, months of the year, and many other topics. Shortly the students will begin learning about "El Día de Los Muertos" (The Day of the Dead) and they will be engaged in activities to help prepare for this celebration. Some of the hands-on projects that the students will take part in are: masks, marigolds, pipe cleaner skeletons, and "Calaveras" (sugar skulls). "El Día de los Muertos" is a happy, colorful holiday used to remember and honor the loved ones in our lives, whom are no longer with us.

We are looking forward to a prosperous year full of exciting new adventures in LOTE!

Parish Outreach

Office telephone:

661-9262, option 4

Office hours:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday:
9:30 AM - 3 PM



Pantry Needs

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

Outreach Donations

September-October 2009

- Outreach has received a donation in memory of *Theresa Bellucci* from the Ambrosino Family.
- The Giuffr  Family has made a donation to Outreach in memory of *Fr. Brendel*.
- Donations to Outreach have been received in honor of the *50th Wedding Anniversary of Deacon Jack and Betty Teufel* from the DiGuardis, the Scorcias, the Ambrosinos, the Meehans, Grace O'Connor.
- Peter and Regina Mirabella have made a donation to Outreach in memory of *Paula Palmer, Edward Gizewski and Philip Charron*.
- Doug and Doris Cameron have made a donation to Outreach in memory of *Philip Charron*.

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.

Outreach Assistance

Outreach has received two separate requests for drivers.

A gentleman in our Parish requires a ride home from dialysis three mornings a week: Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday at 10:30.

A parishioner, recently discharged from Consolation requires transportation to physical therapy three times a week as she continues to heal from a shoulder fracture.

If you are interested in volunteering to assist either person, please contact the Outreach Office.

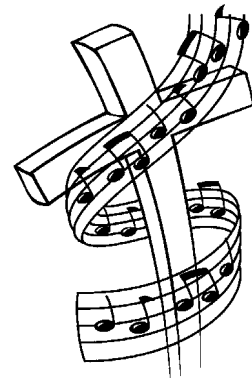
We will request that each person sign a waiver, if transported in your vehicle.

Youth Ministry Update

Students are needed to help at the Donna Cori Gibson concert which will take place on Friday, November 6 at 7 PM.

All students interested in getting service hours should e-mail Allegra@ollchurch.org and arrive at the **church to help with set-up at 6 PM on November 6.**

Visit ollchurch.org/youth to find out about all youth events!



Thank you to Our Lady of Lourdes!

So many of you purchased the house banks which the El Salvador team is using to collect money to build safe homes for those who belong to our sister parishes in El Salvador and it certainly has been a great help so far! We are well on our way to helping those in need and we could not have done it without your support!

The team would also like to thank those of you who sponsored an elderly person or a child. Your compassion has helped us to continue to work with those in need and we thank you! If you wish to join the El Salvador team email Allegra@ollchurch.org.



Open Mic Night

All high school students are invited to attend the All Hollow's Open Mic Night on **October 30 at 7 PM in the haunted Cafeteria.** Come in costume and share your music, poetry or art work with friends as we celebrate Halloween.

Contact Allegra@ollchurch.org for more information or to sign up.

“Our Catholic Faith”

in Scripture, Song & Prayer

Donna Cori Gibson

in concert

Our awesome faith, a beautiful voice, brought together to draw you closer to God. Come and sing and “pray twice” with Donna on **Friday, November 6 with a concert at 7 PM here at Our Lady of Lourdes.**



Ms. Gibson has appeared on Catholic television networks like Telecare and EWTN and has performed her prayerful and spiritual music throughout the country. The concert will be both beautiful and a benefit for our new Youth Ministry Program. Under the direction of Allegra D’Alo, our Youth Ministry will have a focus on service, meaning that the main goal will be to involve young people in every part of parish life. From worship, to outreach, to efforts like the St. Bernard League (which assists senior parishioners with snow removal each year), we believe that our young people have a great understanding of the Gospel call to welcome and serve one another. Our Youth Program will also offer opportunities for prayer, reflection, and learning about our faith together.

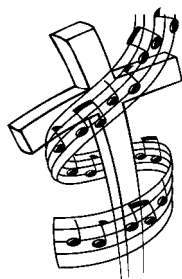
The concert itself is free, and a free-will offering will be taken. I am hoping today that you might be willing to support our youth program by being one of the sponsors of our benefit concert.

- **For a gift of \$200** you will receive a full page acknowledgement in the program and 4 reserved seats at the concert.
- **For a gift of \$100** you will receive a ½ page acknowledgement in the program and 4 reserved seats at the concert
- **For a gift of \$50** or more you will receive a ¼ page acknowledgement in our program and two seats at the concert.
- **For a gift of \$25** or more you will receive a one line “Friends of OLL Youth Ministry” acknowledgement in the program and 1 reserved seat at the concert

Please join me in supporting this joyful beginning to our youth ministry program.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Mike



“Our Catholic Faith”

in Scripture, Song & Prayer

Name: _____

Address: _____

Name to appear in the program: _____

I would like to make a gift of:

- _____ \$200
- _____ \$100
- _____ \$ 50
- _____ \$ 25
- _____ Other

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

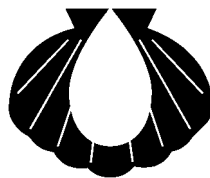
Alcoholics Anonymous:

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.

(Free babysitting available)



Baptisms

Jessica Sophie Abraham

Biju and Lena

Marccello Roberto Attallah

Robert and Ghada

Anna Therese Bishop

Nicholas and Susan

Ryan Thomas Murray

Michael and Donna

Jason Ray Graham Faller

William and Maria

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.

Remembering . . .

Monday, October 26

8:00 AM Valerie Moscarelli

Tuesday, October 27

8:00 AM Nicholas Caccavo

Wednesday, October 28

Ss. Simon & Jude, apostles

8:00 AM Elizabeth Homann

Thursday, October 29

8:00 AM Mary Tammaro

Friday, October 30

8:00 AM Linda Francavilla

Saturday, October 31

8:00 AM John R. Hodgkins, Peter Reehil, Gary LaCarrubba,
Andrea Grippi, George Steinhauer, Manuel Albanio,
Jean (Johnson) Virgilio, Giuseppe Ingoglia

5:00 PM William Heim

Fr. Pat Amabile

Sunday, November 1

8:00 AM John Lovari

Fr. Bob Scheckenback

9:30 AM Baby Jack Salerno

Fr. Mike Vetrano

11:00 AM Mary J. and Teresa Werner (20th Anniversary)

Fr. Ambrose Cabildo

12:30 PM Catherine McKenna

Fr. Pat Amabile

6:00 PM People of the Parish, Joseph Zotto, George Cronk,
Carmela, Giuseppe, Michael, Marie & Connie Severino,
Pasquale & Clara Strocchia, Jusith Tullo, Ruth Phelan,
Frank & Margaret Riggio, Rachel Shaw, RoseMaria Russo, Linda Rodino

Fr. Bob Scheckenback



Rest In Peace

Carlos Mussenden died on October 12 and the Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated in Florida. We extend our prayers to his daughter, Ann Deluca and entire family.



30th Sunday in Ordinary Time

When you have an opportunity to take a once in a lifetime chance, do you take it? Granted, there is no strict definition for such an instance, but in the strictest sense of the term, do you take chances or do you play it safe? One could argue that our lives are a series of opportunities, and some of the choices we make are the only chances we'll ever have. We may decide to go to work rather than college, and years later we're unable to find the time or the will to go back and get that degree. Or, sometimes a once in a lifetime chance is as simple as asking for something.

Bartimaeus figured that he had nothing to lose; blind since birth, he had heard that Jesus was preaching to a crowd nearby. Knowing in his heart that Jesus was truly the Son of God, Bartimaeus went to Jesus, and interrupting his sermon asked Jesus to cure his blindness. Jesus' compassion for a man who had such faith without seeing led him to grant his wish. If we can have faith in Jesus without ever having seen or heard him, will we realize a "once in a lifetime chance"?

The Catechism of the Catholic Church, teaching on faith, states: "[A] disciple of Christ must not only keep the faith and live on it, but also profess it, confidently bear witness to it, and spread it" (CCC 1816). Bartimaeus not only possessed great faith in Jesus, he was unashamed and unafraid to call out to his Savior in front of the many people around him. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus said, "Everyone who acknowledges me before others I will acknowledge before my heavenly Father." Today, if you meet someone who needs the loving arms of Jesus Christ, take that chance to share his promise of everlasting life.

2009 Liturgical Publications Inc

Readings for the Week of October 25, 2009

Sunday:	Jer 31:7-9/Heb 5:1-6/Mk 10:46-52
Monday:	Rom 8:12-17/Lk 13:10-17
Tuesday:	Rom 8:18-25/Lk 13:18-21
Wednesday:	Eph 2:19-22/Lk 6:12-16
Thursday:	Rom 8:31b-39/Lk 13:31-35
Friday:	Rom 9:1-5/Lk 14:1-6
Saturday:	Rom 11:1-2a, 11-12, 25-29/Lk 14:1, 7-11
Next Sunday:	Rv 7:2-4, 9-14/1 Jn 3:1-3/Mt 5:1-12a

Altar Society

Altar linens this week will be cared for by *Elizabeth Netska*.

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 ...

*Susan Aviza, Deacon Dick Barry, Buzz Baxter, Ben Bellotti, Nicholas Buscemi, Jr.,
Howard Campkin, Nicholas Cibelli, Michael Ciotkosz, Beverly DeCanio, Mary DeVivo,
Ann Donlon, Sal Ferrante, Marge Flem, Edward Herger, Brian Hinkelman,
Lili Hinkelman, Mary Kaval, Veronica Kenny, Kathleen Kerrigan, Kara Lobasso,
Vicky Massaro, Marie Mathena, Michele McCann, Peter McCann, Sr., Muriel Meade,
Vinny Meade, Dorothy Meloni, Rick Mirabella, Brenden Muldoon, Evelyn Nonnon,
John O'Brien, Arthur Petrino, Joanne Popper, Laura Prichard, Santa Quevedo,
Joe Radosti, Frank Raimo, Carol Randazzo-Hopkins, Michael Savino,
Ann Marie Schiraldi, Jayna Schmidt, Dorothy Shiavone, Joe Shields,
Albina Sipplak, Derek Stahl, Mary Clair Stephen, Stephen Straub, Sr.,
Jack Timmer, Baby John Tramazzo, Vera Vieni, Flo Worysz*

2009 Catholic Ministries Appeal

Hands of Christ-Supporting the Community Around Us

Thank you to all those who have responded!

Our Lady of Lourdes and the Diocese of Rockville Centre would like to thank all those who have made a sacrifice by making a gift to the *2009 Catholic Ministries Appeal*.

OLL CMA

October 20, 2009

Parish Goal	\$101,839.00
Amount Pledged	\$112,947.00
Total Paid	\$101,155.00
Number of Pledges	466
Average Pledge	\$242

As you can see, we have reached our parish goal in the amount pledged. However, we do not see the benefits of reaching our goal until the total paid has met or exceeded our parish goal amount. Therefore, our work is not done yet!

Please continue to make your annual pledge. If you have not already done so, please fill out the pledge card below and return to the Parish Office or place in the collection basket at Mass.

Thank you for your continued generosity.



CATHOLIC MINISTRIES APPEAL • DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE
PO BOX 4000 • ROCKVILLE CENTRE, NEW YORK 11571-4000 • www.drvc.org/cma.html

2008 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.

SIGNATURE OF DONOR _____

PARISH OF DONOR _____

A GUIDE TO GIVING

PLEDGE	10 PAYMENTS
\$ 1,000	\$ 100
\$ 500	\$ 50
\$ 350	\$ 35
\$ 250	\$ 25

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. 516.379.5210, EXT. 2
MATCHING GIFTS: IF YOU QUALIFY FOR A MATCHING GIFT FROM YOUR EMPLOYER, PLEASE FORWARD TO THE CMA OFFICE.

Financial Summary

October 11, 2009

Weekly Collection	\$ 17,531.00
Weekly Budget	-\$ 19,000.00
+/- for the week	\$ (1,469.00)

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

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:



Lorenzo Bacchi-*US Marines*
Bryan R. Dempsey-*US Marines*
Christopher Florca-*US Marines*
Michael Mallimo- *US Army*
Anthony Mannino-*US Marines*
Peter Provenzano-*US Army*
Frank Sliva-*US Army*

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

Dark Nights of Faith in our Lives

by Ron Rolheiser, OMI

When the memoirs of Mother Theresa were published they revealed that for the last 50 years of her life she had struggled painfully to feel God's presence in her life. Her critics felt a certain glee: Underneath it all, they now believed, she was an agnostic, doubting the existence of God. Her devotees were confused: How could this happen to her? How could a woman of such exceptional generosity and seeming faith not be secure in her sense of God's existence and providence?

What underlies both reactions is a failure to understand an experience as old as faith itself, that of being inside a dark night of the soul. Looking at Mother Theresa through the eyes of Christian mysticism the better question might be: How could she not experience what she experienced? She was an extraordinary woman, a spiritual athlete, someone who had given her entire freedom over to God; might we not expect this to happen to her? Wouldn't you expect her to experience a dark night of the soul?

What is a dark night of the soul? A dark night of the soul is an experience where our felt-sense of God dries up and disappears. At the level of feeling, thought, and imagination, we are unable to conjure up any sense of security or warm feelings about the presence of God in our lives. We feel agnostic, even atheistic, because we can no longer imagine the existence of God. God seems non-existence, absent, dead, a fantasy of wishful thinking.

But notice that this takes place at the level of the imagination and feelings. God doesn't disappear or cease to exist. What disappears are our former feelings about God and our capacity to imagine God's existence.

God exists, independent of our feelings. Sometimes our heads and hearts are in tune with that and we feel its reality with fervor. Other times our heads and hearts cannot attune themselves to the think, imagine, and feel the existence of a God who ineffable, unimaginable, and Other (by definition) and we experience precisely a certain absence, depression, or void when we try to imagine God's existence and love.

We should expect this in our lives; Jesus experienced dark nights of the soul. Just before he died on the cross, he cried out in anguish, expressing feelings of being abandoned by God. But inside this seeming agnosticism something beyond his feelings and imagina

tion held him steady and enabled him to give himself over in trust to Someone whom he could no longer imagine as existing. This wasn't doubt, it was real faith. Faith begins exactly where atheism assumes it ends.

If this happened to Jesus, should we be surprised that it happened to Mother Theresa. Henri Nouwen tells how shocked and surprised he was at the deathbed of his mother, a woman of extraordinary faith, when she began to express anguish and feelings of abandonment by God: "How can this be happening to my mother?" Later, upon reflection, it made sense. His mother had prayed every day of her adult life to die like Jesus. God simply took her prayer and her offer seriously.

Understood correctly a dark night is not a failure in faith but a failure in our imagination: Imagine sitting down to pray one day and having the sure sense that God is real, more real in fact than anything else. At that moment, your faith feels secure both in your head and in your heart. Then imagine a different scene: You are lying in bed, in the dark, one night and, with every ounce of sincerity, intelligence, and will-power, you try to imagine and feel God's existence and come up empty and dry. You are haunted by the fear: "I don't believe! Deep down I'm an atheist!" Does this mean that in the one instance you had strong faith and in the next you had weak faith?

Not necessarily. In the first instance you had a strong imagination and in the second you had a weak one. In one instance, you were able to imagine the existence of God and the other you weren't. Neither determines whether God exists or not. Dark nights of faith have to do with feelings and the imagination and not with God's reality or presence to us.

Why are dark nights of faith given to us? Why does God seemingly sometimes withdraw his presence? Always to make us let go of something that, while it may have been good for awhile, an icon, is now causing some kind of idolatry in our lives.

Whenever we cry out in faith and ask God why he isn't more deeply present to our sincerity, God's answer is always the same one he gives in Scripture, time and time again: You will find me again when you search for me with your whole heart, your whole mind, and your whole soul, that is, when you let go of all the things that, right now, in your mind and heart you have mistaken for God!"

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.

Senior Circle

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

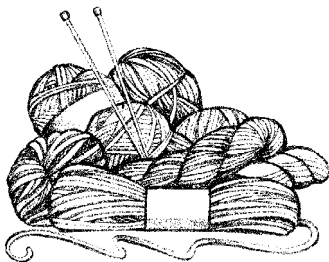
Good Samaritan Prayer Group of L.I.

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.**



Prayer Shawl Ministry

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

Join us ...

Wednesday, November 4 at 9:30 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.

Holiday Gift and Craft Fair

On **Sunday, November 1**, **St. John the Baptist Diocesan High School** will host its Annual Holiday Gift and Craft Fair from 10 AM until 4 PM. Join us for a fun-filled holiday shopping experience with over 100 gift and craft vendors! There is great food, raffle prizes and plenty of parking. If you have any questions, please call Linda or Susan at 631.422.5150 or 631.661.2928.

Introduction to Centering Prayer

St. Raphael's Parish, East Meadow on Saturday, November 7, from 9:30 AM until 2:30 PM.

For further information please call Diane Garretson at (631) 587-0966.

Wanted: Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist

Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist who have been commissioned by the Diocese are needed to bring the Eucharist to patients at Good Samaritan Hospital.

You may schedule whatever mornings are convenient for you. Even one day per month will help a great deal. If interested, please call 631.376.4103.

Rebuilding Together

Volunteers are needed any time, Mondays to Fridays. Rebuilding together Long Island is a volunteer group that performs free repairs to low-income seniors and handicapped homeowners in both Nassau and Suffolk. Volunteers with minor skills are needed. Come join us and feel the joy of helping other in an atmosphere of fun. Call 516.541.7322.

Pastoral Formation Institute

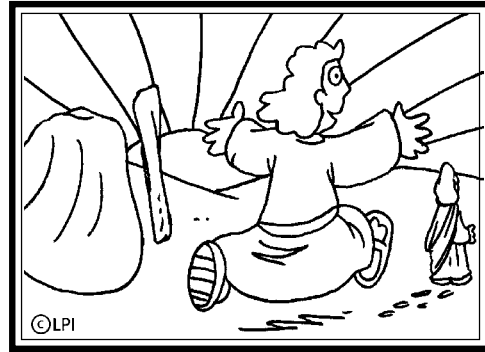
The Diocese of Rockville Centre celebrates the 20th Anniversary of the Pastoral Formation Institute. You are invited to the celebration! **Saturday, November 7 at St. Agnes Cathedral.** Liturgy begins at 6:30 PM, Bishop William Murphy presiding, followed by cocktail hour, dinner and dancing. Limited seating so reserve your tables early! Tickets are \$55 per person. Ticket purchase includes cocktail hour, full course buffet dinner, dessert, wine, beer and soft drinks. Please make check payable to "Pastoral Formation Alumni Association" and mail to Diocese of Rockville Centre, Office of Faith Formation, P.O. Box 9023, Rockville Centre, NY 11571-9023, Attn.: Patricia Schreck.

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. Listen on Saturdays at 11 PM on Sirius Radio, Channel 159, the Catholic Channel and at 11 PM on XM Satellite, channel 117. Next Sunday's theme is "**Prayer.**" Don't miss it! To listen online or receive more information regarding "Religion & Rock" go to www.religionandrock.com or at "Religion & Rock" on ITUNES. Don't forget to tune into TELE CARE, Cablevision 29 or Verizon FIOS 271 for the Best in Catholic Television!

Sharing the Gospel

Bartimaeus may have been poor and blind, but he sure was smart! He had the kind of faith that made Jesus smile. Bartimaeus knew exactly who Jesus was—the Messiah. And Bartimaeus knew Jesus had the power to make him see. When Jesus called him, Bartimaeus left everything behind—even his coat—just to follow Jesus.



Prayer

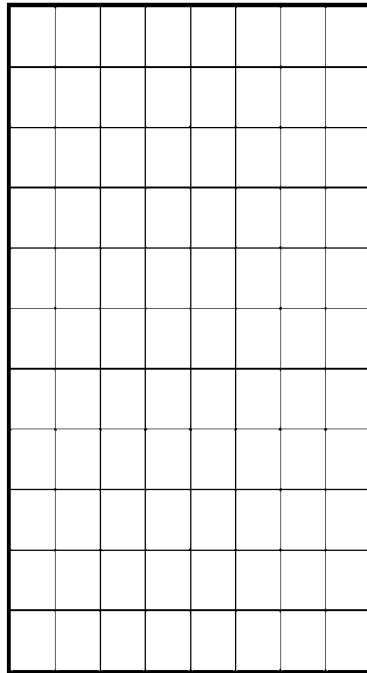
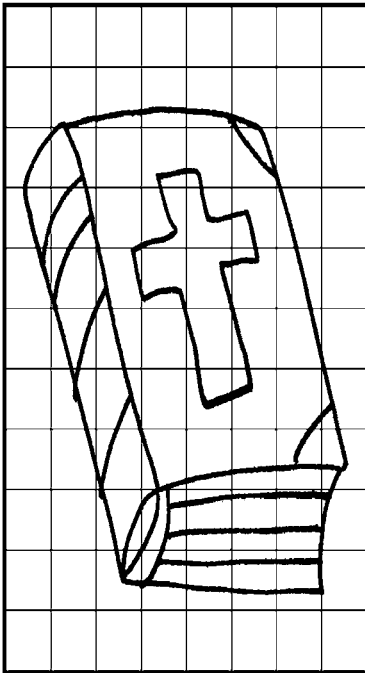


Dear God,
 thank you for helping Bartimaeus see you and follow you.
 Help me to follow his example.



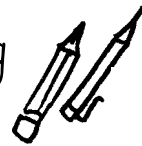
Puzzle

Copy the picture square by square.



©LPI

Something to Draw



Draw a picture of Bartimaeus seeing Jesus for the very first time.

Mission for the Week



Wear a blindfold at home, and ask your family members to talk to you as usual. Just by the sound of each voice, you know who is talking, right? Talk about how being blind did not stop Bartimaeus from recognizing Jesus, either.