

OUR LADY OF LOURDES • SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT • DECEMBER 6, 2009

**'PREPARE
THE WAY OF
THE LORD.'**





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.

Our Lady of Lourdes

455 Hunter Avenue
West Islip, New York 11795

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

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

Robin Reynolds-Brennan

Coordinator of Worship

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

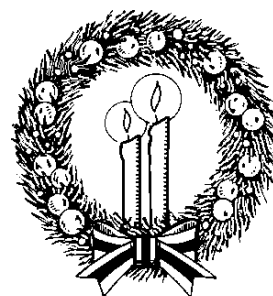
Organist

Rita Spera

Religious Education Office

Lori Walsh

Parish Office



**2nd Sunday
in Advent**

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

Welcome...

to Our Lady of Lourdes!

We are so happy to welcome everyone who has come to worship with us today! Whether you have come a long distance or you live locally, we are glad that you have decided to spend some time with us as we worship our Lord together. Please know that your presence today is a blessing to our parish family.

Would you like to know more about our parish family?

All are welcome at Our Lady of Lourdes and we do our best to reach out to everyone.

If you would like more information about our parish or if you would like one of our team to be in touch with you, please fill this form out and place it in any collection or offering basket, mail it to us, or send an email to parishoffice@ollchurch.org

Welcome...

to Our Lady of Lourdes!



I would like information about:

Religious Education of my Children Becoming a Catholic or Adult Confirmation
 Marriage or Annulment / Remarriage Spiritual Direction or Counseling
 Our Parish Catholic School Adult Education Senior Services
 Joining the Parish Baptizing my Children Other _____

I would prefer to be contacted by:

Phone at: _____ Email at: _____

Mail at: _____

Your Name: _____

Advent '09

I WILL BE A CANDLE IN THE DARKNESS
COME BE A PART OF "THE SIX"...

Sunday, 6 PM Mass

All 5th, 6th, 7th & 8th graders and their families are invited to please join "THE SIX" with your grade...

Grade 7 - 2nd Sunday of Advent, December 6

The message of John the Baptist has a lot to offer many of us!

Grade 6 - 3rd Sunday of Advent, December 13

Prepare to be challenged to live your life in a different way!

Grade 5 - 4th Sunday of Advent, December 20

Discover the unexpected ways of God!

Come and be a lector, greeter, participate in the Presentation of the Gifts, lighting the Advent Wreath, and more...

We ask that you please bring an "un-food" item such as soap, shampoo, kleenex, paper towels, dawn, etc for our OLL Pantry.



Thank you

The Ministry of Consolation would like to say "Thank You" to the seventh grade students in Room 25 for your "hospitality" service for our annual Mass of Remembrance.

Adult Faith Formation

Monday Mornings in Advent

Fr. Pat Amabile - Fr. Bob Scheckenback

Come to 8 AM Mass on Mondays in Advent. You will be able to pray the Rosary after Mass or just take some time for your own prayer. At 9 AM, we will gather in the Parish Center for coffee, rolls and a talk, with some time for discussion and reflection. *(If you can't make Mass, please join us at 9 AM.)*

Finding My Way to Bethlehem

An Advent Evening of Reflection

Fr. Pat Amabile

Wednesday, December 16

7:30 PM

Parish Center

During Advent, we journey as did Mary and Joseph. We bring the *joys* of preparing for Christ's coming, the *love* for one another along the way, the *peace* that waiting holds for us, and the *hope* that brings us beyond ourselves!

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.



Our Lady of Lourdes Eighth Annual Family Christmas Pageant

Tuesday, December 22

7 PM in the Church

*What better way to prepare for Christmas
than to share the Christmas story with our children!*

*We invite our entire parish family to come and
share this special evening with us.*

We'd like to involve many members of our parish community, especially all parish children!
It's easy...there are only two short practices and a dress rehearsal.

There's something for all ages:

Children

Pre-K through Grade 3

Angels and Shepherds

Grades 4 through 6

Three Kings and the Royal Servants; and Dancers

Grades 7 through 12

We need lots of help—musicians, singers, organizers and
assistant directors!

If you can help with our pageant, please call Jennifer Gallagher at 661.3224 or email
jengallagher@ollchurch.org .

Adults

We need help with costumes and supervision of the “angels and shepherds.” If you can
help with any of these areas, please call Jennifer at 661.3224, or email

JenGallagher@ollchurch.org.

Pageant Practices for All

Wednesday, December 9 from 7 PM until 7:45PM in the Church

Friday, December 11 from 7 PM until 7:45PM in the Church

Saturday, December 19 Dress Rehearsal at 11 AM in the Church

Our Lady of Lourdes Mission Awareness Trip

As many of you know, this past July, a team of 28 OLL parishioners traveled to El Salvador to pray and work with the communities of Mogotes and Tacuba. It is in keeping with Catholic Social teaching that we help others and share our faith with Catholics everywhere. With the help of the parishioners here at home, the El Salvador Team has been raising money through our CASA project to build homes for those belonging to our sister parishes. Through the support of Our Lady of Lourdes, our young people have been able to experience another culture and help people in need. Thank you OLL!

The time has come!

If you purchased a house bank for the Team El Salvador CASA project, then now is the time to return this month's change! Remember, we collect on the **FIRST SUNDAY** of each month. Once you have emptied your change into the water jugs in the Narthex of the Church, take your bank home with you and fill it up again!

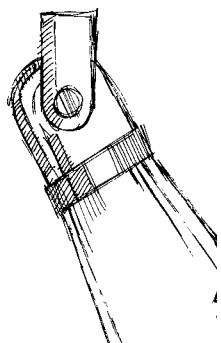
With your help we have made great progress so far!!! We have enough money to build two homes!!!! Thank you for generosity and please continue to give so that we can help as many families as possible!

Young Women's Faith Group

The next Young Women's Faith Group meeting will take place on **Thursday, December 10 at 7 PM in the Spiritual Life Center**. This month we are taking a break and watching the movie "Love Actually." Come and grab a hot chocolate and relax for a bit with us before the holidays.

Fr. Bob Unplugged

"Fr. Bob Unplugged" will take place on **Thursday, December 17 at 7 PM in the Parish Center**. If you ever had a question about the Church, about God or about Fr. Bob's favorite food, now is the time to ask! All questions are anonymous and all questions will be answered! Come grab a snack and hang with your friends, too.



Youth Spotlight!

Our Lady of Lourdes Youth Program now has a FACEBOOK! Friend Bernie Soubirous and join the OLL Youth group and stay in the loop about all of the teen events that are happening at OLL. Awesome things are coming up so you don't want to miss out.



OLL Christmas Concert 2009

The Music Ministry of Our Lady of Lourdes invites everyone to come and enjoy the beautiful music of the Christmas season. Join us for a beautiful evening of music on **Saturday, December 12 at 7:30 PM in the Church.**

We look forward to spending some time together during this busy time of year to enjoy the sounds of Christmas and reflect on the meaning of the season.

Bereavement Ministry

Coping with the Holidays

“How Can I Celebrate When My Heart is Broken?”

All who have experienced a loss are invited to a Presentation and Brunch to help in facing and embracing the holidays while mourning. The Presentation and Brunch will be on **Saturday, December 12 at 11:30 AM in the Spiritual Life Center.** Please call the Parish Office at 661.3224 to register.

Mass for Bereaved Parents

Saturday, December 19

OLL Church – 10:00 AM



The holidays are often times of great celebration. But, for many, particularly those who have lost a child, the holidays are painfully hard. They are a reminder of our losses and a reminder of how our lives are perhaps a little less full. Whether you have lost a child in childhood or adulthood, to stillbirth or miscarriage, this Mass will be celebrated to bring you God's peace and consolation.

We invite all who have lost a child to come and gather together for this special Mass on **Saturday, December 19 at 10 AM.** Mass will be followed by refreshments. Please feel free to invite family or friends. For more information, or to let us know you will be able to attend, please call the Parish Office at 661.3224.

Let's pray that through prayer and coming together, the challenges of the holidays can become a little lighter and that we may be strengthened by God's love and presence.

Parish Outreach

Office telephone:

661-9262, option 4

Office hours:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday:

9:30 AM - 3 PM

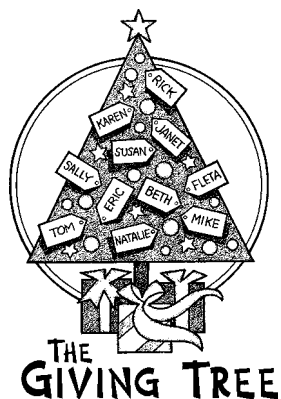


Pantry Needs

canned fruit
canned vegetables
jelly
peanut butter
pudding/jello
soup

Outreach Donations

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.



The Giving Tree

Each ornament on our Parish Giving Tree is a gift tag that represents something needed by a family in our parish. Help us to meet these needs by taking a tag from our tree and returning a gift. Your gift will help you to think about the real meaning of Christmas and will help a needy family in a very concrete way. You may also make a financial gift to Parish Outreach and they will use it to purchase a gift or to help a family who needs financial support. Please remember to attach the tag on the gift.

Did you notice The Giving PODS?

Our thanks goes to Terry Lacher, manager for PODS on Long Island, for donating the use of a POD to our Outreach Office for the Christmas Season.

The POD will be used to store your generous gifts and contributions until they can be distributed at Christmas.

Terry has also offered a discount on a POD rental for any OLL parishioner! Contact the Outreach Office for details.



Thanksgiving Feast

It was a Thanksgiving Feast for Mrs. Oskey's Kindergarten class at Our Lady of Lourdes School. The class made their own holiday costumes by making Pilgrim hats and Indian headdresses. Afterward, the Indians and the Pilgrims sat down to share their bounty.



Looking for...

all Eucharistic Ministers of Holy Communion

Please join Fr. Pat on Monday, December 7 at 7:30 PM in the Church. Let's get together to share ideas, needs and any help that might be needed.

all Lectors

Please join Fr. Pat on Sunday, December 13 at 7:30 PM in the Church. Fr. Pat would like to meet with you all, and introduce himself and share any concerns or ideas that you might have.

Seminarian Updates

Thank You!



Thank you so much for the way you so welcomed me back at Our Lady of Lourdes last weekend and for putting up with my talking at the Masses! I cannot tell you how great it was to be back – if only for a weekend – and share life with you once again. In so many ways, so many of you have helped me to get to this point in my life with your great “Advent vision”. Thank you for that.

Following Up While we spoke much about the need of community pulling out vocations last weekend, there may be women and men from our parish who are considering religious life or priesthood. There are certainly places and people to talk to. A good place to start is our Diocesan Vocation Office. You call 631.424.9888 or e-mail Fr. Brian Barr, Director of Vocations, at bbarr@drvc.org. If in some way, I might be able to help, please don't hesitate to e-mail me at jsureau@ollchurch.org or by contacting me at the Seminary at 631.423.0483.

Following Seminary Life I had mentioned a few months ago that I would be keeping a blog about life in the Seminary. It'd be great, if you're interested and able, to follow it. You can link to it through the parish website or go directly to johnsureau.blogspot.com.

“Deacon” John Ryan This Tuesday, on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, our parish's own John Ryan will be ordained a deacon by Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio, Bishop of Brooklyn. John is in his final year of study at the seminary as he prepares to be ordained a deacon and a priest this June! Please keep him and his family in your thoughts and prayers this week and in the days ahead.



Thank you again for all your support and care! It makes all the difference in the world.

Peace –



Our Lady of Lourdes School

Breakfast with Santa

Sunday, December 13

OLL School Cafeteria

Breakfast with Santa

Don't miss our delicious
Homemade Hot Pancake Breakfast
There will be crafts, prizes, a 50/50 and of course
Santa!

Buy your tickets early, seating is limited
\$5 per person Children 3 and under - FREE

There will be two seatings:

8:30 AM - 10:30 AM and 11 AM - 1 PM

If you have any questions, call Charlene at 254.4998

Please cut out this order form, complete it in full and submit it to our School Office to the attention of: Breakfast With Santa Committee. Enclose form with your check made payable to: Our Lady of Lourdes School. Families will receive a call for ticket pick up.

Family Name: _____

Phone number: _____

of people in attendance: adults _____ children _____ # of Kids 3 & under: _____

Which seating will you be attending?: 8:30 AM _____ or 11 AM _____

Total amount enclosed \$ _____



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)

Rosary/Novena

Rosary

Daily after 8 AM Mass

Miraculous Medal Novena

Monday after 8 AM Mass

Anointing of the Sick

Throughout the liturgical year.

If needed sooner, please call the Parish Office.

Baptism

Please contact the Parish Office to schedule an appointment.

Marriage

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

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults(RCIA)

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



Rest In Peace

Josephine Swierupski died on November 17 and the Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on November 23. We extend our prayers to her children, grandchildren, and entire family.

Donata Oliva died on November 20 and the Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on November 24. We extend our prayers to her son, Patrick and entire family.

Alberta Hawkins-Firth died on November 21 and the Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on November 24. We extend our prayers to her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and entire family.

Margaret Macaluso died on November 22 and the Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on November 28. We extend our prayers to her daughter, Sarah, and entire family.

Santa Quevedo died on November 27 and the Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on December 2 at St. James, Setauket. We extend our prayers to her husband, Francis, her children, including her daughter, Carol Grillo, children, grandchildren and entire family.

Remembering . . .

Monday, December 7

St. Ambrose, bishop & doctor

8:00 AM Pearl Harbor Victims

5:00 PM (vigil) Lodespoto Family

Tuesday, December 8

Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

8:00 AM Laura & Charles Abela

7:30 PM Pat Curry

Wednesday, December 9

St. Juan Diego, hermit

8:00 AM George Stone

Thursday, December 10

8:00 AM Joseph Battaglia

Friday, December 11

St. Damasus, pope

8:00 AM Michael Sanfilippo

Saturday, December 12

8:00 AM Mary Slatterley, Frederick Ansman, John Timmer,
Linda Grant, Antonia Elias, Jean Mortensen

5:00 PM Joseph A. Santangelo
Rev. Mike Vetrano

Sunday, December 13

8:00 AM Barbara McGarrity
Rev. Bob Scheckenback

9:30 AM Tony Squeo
Rev. Pat Amabile

11:00 AM William Small
Rev. Mike Vetrano

12:30 PM Carmella Parasole
Rev. Ambrose Cabildo

6:00 PM People of the Parish, William Small, Katherine T. McCann,
Jack Timmer, Baby Mulstay, William Kruger, Lida Cavalluzzo,
Oliver Ramirez, Frank & Marge Magri, George Prygocki,
Rose & Dominick Cocco, Mamie & Mike Raia, Mary Tortorella,
Teresa & Frank Marsala, Tavie Caratozzola
Rev. Bob Scheckenback



Feast of the Immaculate Conception Tuesday, December 8

(holy day of obligation)

Mass Schedule:

Monday, December 7

Mass 5 PM (vigil)

Tuesday, December 8

Mass at 8 AM and 7:30 PM



2nd Sunday of Advent

The very music swells and lifts at the beginning of George Frederick Handel's Messiah as the tenor sings, "Every valley shall be exalted." The staccato of "ev-ry va-al-ley" jumps up the scale as though the music itself is lifting up the valleys making a level path and a smooth highway. Performances of the Messiah abound this time of year in concert halls, churches, and on television. Listen closely, and you may even hear selections punctuate the piped in music of malls and department stores.

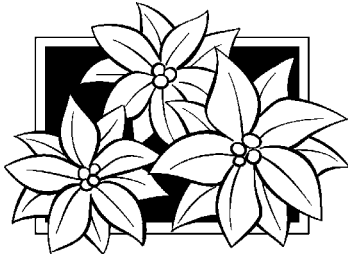
What is fascinating is that most people associate one of the most famous selections from the Messiah with Christmas. But the renowned "Hallelujah" chorus is not part of the Christmas section of Messiah. It comes at the end of part two, the section devoted to Christ's passion, death, and (hallelujah!) resurrection. There is a certain wisdom in associating this Easter message with the Advent-Christmas season. It is Christ's resurrection from the dead that is the origin of our faith. And while we prepare to celebrate his birth, what we are ultimately called to do is to be ready for when he comes again.

The prophet's message that "all flesh shall see the salvation of God," is a reminder in this Advent season of where we are really headed. It's likely that we're getting into our cars a little more often these days heading to stores and parties and Christmas events. We hope that the road we travel will be smooth. But the prophet's vision isn't about highway projects. It is about eternal salvation. Maybe when we get behind the wheel each day this month we can just say a little prayer asking God to keep us on the right path.

2009 Liturgical Publications Inc

Readings for the Week of December 6, 2009

Sunday:	Bar 5:1-9/Phil 1:4-6, 8-11/Lk 3:1-6
Monday:	Is 35:1-10/Lk 5:17-26
Tuesday:	Gn 3:9-15, 20/Eph 1:3-6, 11-12/Lk 1:26-38
Wednesday:	Is 40:25-31/Mt 11:28-30
Thursday:	Is 41:13-20/Mt 11:11-15
Friday:	Is 48:17-19/Mt 11:16-19
Saturday:	Zec 2:14-17 or Rv 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab/Lk 1:26-38 or 1:39-47
Next Sunday:	Zep 3:14-18a/Phil 4:4-7/Lk 3:10-18



Christmas Flower Offerings

Christmas Flower offerings received by **Sunday, December 13** will be published in the Christmas bulletin. Offerings received after that date, will be published in subsequent bulletins.

Men's Group

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

We invite all men of the parish to meet for prayer and reflection after 8 AM Mass on **Thursday, December 17, in the Parish Center**. We meet once a month to read and discuss the Scriptures for the following Sunday. Come with your ideas and suggestions. We'll gather for conversation and fellowship. Join us in this pioneering experience for men. Call Jack Fitzgerald at 587.5548 for more information.

Save the date....

Advent Day of Reconciliation

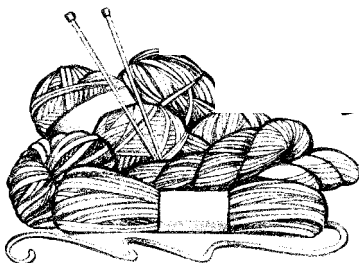
Monday, December 21

3 PM – 9 PM

Our parish priests will be available to hear individual confessions. The Advent season brings us promises of transformation and renewal. This beautiful sacrament is one way this can happen. Be open to the healing forgiveness of Reconciliation!

Prayer Shawl Ministry

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



Join us...

Wednesday, December 16 from 9:30 AM until 11:30 AM in the Parish Center. All you need to bring is scrap yarn, knitting needles or crochet hooks (patterns and instructions will be given to you) and your gifts of love and prayer.

To register or for more information, please call the Religious Education Office at 661.5440, option #3 during office hours (9 AM - 12 Noon and 1 PM - 5 PM.)

Financial Summary

November 30, 2009

Weekly Collection	\$ 18,523.00
Weekly Budget	-\$ 19,000.00
+/- for the week	\$ (477.00)

Due to a change in the bulletin deadline, the collection amount for November 22 will be published next week.

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

Rosary Christian Mothers

The Rosary Christian Mothers would like to thank the following for their support and generosity for our Holiday Raffle...

<i>Chapey's Funeral Home</i>	<i>Parkwood Café</i>
<i>Boyd-Spencer Funeral Home</i>	<i>Chowder Bar</i>
<i>Mangano Funeral Home</i>	<i>Advent Shop</i>
<i>West Islip Wines & Liquors</i>	<i>Anthony's Pizza & Pasta</i>
<i>Gemelli Fine Foods</i>	<i>Flavor Crisp</i>
<i>YMCA-Great South Bay</i>	<i>Bali Hair Design</i>
<i>Lowe's</i>	<i>Pizzaiola</i>
<i>All-Brite Cleaners</i>	<i>Stuff-a-Bagel</i>
<i>Irish Coffee Pub</i>	<i>Italiano's Pizza & Pasta</i>
<i>Premier Diner</i>	<i>Our Little Italy</i>
<i>Bonwit Inn</i>	<i>Joe's Pasta & Pizza</i>
<i>Towers Flowers</i>	<i>Carmela's Hair Salon</i>
<i>Molly Malone's</i>	<i>Painted Presents</i>
<i>Jon Thomas Inne</i>	<i>Coyle's Ice Cream Parlor</i>
<i>Hometown Heroes</i>	<i>A & G Bakery</i>
<i>Peter Pan Diner</i>	<i>Panera</i>
<i>Mauricio's Restaurant</i>	<i>Best Kitchen</i>
<i>Raindrops & Roses</i>	<i>Café Europa</i>
<i>Popei's Restaurant</i>	<i>Long River Restaurant</i>
<i>Carousel Diner</i>	<i>Ziegler's Delicatessen</i>
<i>Shear Instincts</i>	<i>McDonald's</i>

Special thanks to the Rosary Christian Mothers for their generous contribution for the Holiday Raffle gift baskets. We would also like to extend a heartfelt thanks to those who se generously contributed and are not listed.

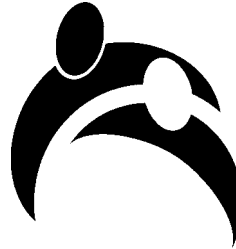
Altar Society

Altar linens this week will be cared for by *Angela MacDermott*.
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.



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.

Pray for Our Sick

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

*Roy Anderson, Susan Aviza, Matthew Badamo, Deacon Dick Barry, Ben Bellotti,
Nicholas Buscemi, Jr., Veronica Byrne, Howard Campkin, Nicholas Cibelli,
Michael Ciotkosz, Regina Cranor, Jeanne DellaRagione, Pat DeRosa, Ann Donlon,
Marge Flem, Ed Hawkins, Edward Herger, Brian Hinkelman, Lili Hinkelman,
Mary Kaval, Veronica Kenny, Kathleen Kerrigan, Joseph Lehmann, Kara Lobasso,
Amy Maher, Vicky Massaro, Michele McCann, Peter McCann, Sr., Dorothy Meloni,
Rick Mirabella, Brenden Muldoon, Evelyn Nonnon, John O'Brien, Aiden Pinto-Hawkins,
David Petito, Mark Petito, Arthur Petrino, Joanne Popper, Laura Prichard,
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.,
Baby John Tramazzo, Nancy Turano, Vera Vieni, Pat Wallace, Flo Worysz*

The Checkered Origins of Grace

by Ron Rolheiser, OMI

God writes straight with crooked lines. We know that expression, though we rarely apply it to sacred history or to the birth of Jesus. We should. The Christmas story is written with some pretty crooked lines.

The renowned biblical scholar, Raymond Brown, writes up a particularly insightful piece on the origins of Jesus as described in Matthew's gospel, where Matthew, in a text we like to ignore, traces the lineage of Jesus from Abraham to Mary. What Matthew reveals in his list of people begetting other people is, as Brown highlights, quite a checkered story. Jesus' family tree contains as many sinners as saints and his origins take their roots too in the crooked lines written by liars, betrayers, adulterers, and murderers. Jesus was pure, but his origins were not.

Matthew begins his story of the origins of Jesus with Abraham, who fathers Isaac and then sends his other son, Ishmael, and his mother packing, off into the desert, to be rid of them. Not quite what you would expect from the great patriarch. How can that be fair and how can that be justified? Then Jacob steals his older brother's blessing from Isaac (just as Israel itself earlier had seized the land of Canaan from a people who had a prior claim). Next, among all the sons of Jacob, Joseph is clearly the most worthy, but he is not the one who gets chosen. Judah, who had sold Joseph into slavery out of jealousy and then impregnated his own daughter-in-law, taking her to be a prostitute, is the one who gets chosen. It is fair to ask the question, why Judah?

Then Matthew lists the names of fourteen kings who are part of the genetic origins of Jesus. Of those fourteen, only two, Hezekiah and Josiah, were considered faithful to God as judged by the Book of Kings. The rest, in Brown's words, were "adulterers, murderers, incompetents, power-seekers, and harem-wastrels." And then there is David, the great king, from whose lineage the gospels proudly proclaim that Jesus descends. Admittedly, David was a great man, humanly and spiritually; he united the community, built the temple, and wrote the psalms, but he was also an adulterer who covered sin by murder.

Finally there is the question of which women are named as significant in Jesus' lineage. Instead of naming Sarah, Rebekah, and Rachel, Matthew names instead: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, and Bathsheba, before finally naming Mary, as Jesus' mother. A curious selection: Tamar was a

Canaanite woman who, because she had been left childless by two of Judah's sons, disguised herself as a prostitute and seduced Judah himself. Rahab was a real prostitute, though her kindness protected Israel's spies during the conquest of the promised land. Ruth, like Tamar, was foreigner, and Bathsheba, as we know, was the woman David seduced before he had her husband killed. The scandal of their affair and the death of their illegitimate child didn't prevent her from scheming to insure that one of her children became heir to the throne. Each of these women had marital issues that contained elements of irregularity or scandal and yet each was able to be an instrument in God's birth on this planet. Clearly Matthew highlights their names to set the stage for Mary, whose pregnancy is also irregular, since Jesus had no human father.

The last part of the genealogy contains mostly names of unknown persons, no-names. That too is important since, if unknown persons contributed so significantly to Jesus' origins, then we too are not too insignificant, unimportant, or anonymous to contribute to the continuation of that story.

God writes straight with crooked lines. Nowhere is this more evident than in the birth of Jesus. There is an important challenge in this. To quote Raymond Brown: If the beginning of the story involved as many sinners as saints, so has the sequence. ... The God who wrote the beginning with crooked lines also writes the sequence with crooked lines, and some of those lines are our own lives and witness. A God who did not hesitate to use the scheming as well as the noble, the impure as well as the pure, men to whom the world hearkened and women upon whom the world frowned - this God continues to work with the same m?lange.

Perhaps the real challenge in all of this comes to those of us who would want to accept only an idealized portrait of Jesus' birth, one that has only straight lines, no impurities, no dark colors. But, despite our struggle to digest this, it is important that we do so because what is highlighted by the Gospels in the birth of Jesus throws light on all subsequent Christian history and on our own lives. Grace is pure, but we who mediate it often aren't. Still God's love and God's plan aren't derailed by our infidelities, sin, and scheming. God's designs for grace still somehow work and this, Raymond Brown points out, is not a lesson in discouragement, but in encouragement.

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.



Daytime Eucharistic Devotion

The afternoon adoration for the month of December will be on **Wednesday, December 9 from 1- 3 PM**. All are invited and welcome! We will be praying for our children, our country, our men and women in the military and our clergy.

Holy Name Society

The Holy Name Society meets on the second Sunday of each month. The next meeting will be on **Sunday, December 13**. We will begin with the **Rosary at 7:40 AM in the Church** and the meeting will follow the **8 AM Mass at 9 AM in Room 16**.

Senior Circle

The Senior Circle meets on the last Monday of each month. The next meeting will be held on **Monday, December 14, at 12:30 PM in the Parish Center**.

Jesus, King of All Nations Prayer Group

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

Good Samaritan Prayer Group of L.I.

The Good Samaritan Prayer Group of Long Island holds their **meetings every Friday** (*except the first Friday of the month*) **at OLL School in Room 16 from 8 PM until 10 PM**.

All are welcome to experience singing, praying and fellowship each evening.

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 others in an atmosphere of fun. Call 516.541.7322.

Irish Christmas Concert

You are invited to attend an Irish Christmas Concert to benefit Hope House Ministries on Sunday, December 13 at 2 PM at St. Joseph's College Auditorium, Patchogue. For ticket information, please call Janet Brennan at 631.9283.2377, extension 22.

Good Shepherd Hospice

Volunteers needed! Do you have a few hours a week to spare? Are you that special person who is willing to walk along with our patients and families during their final journey? Find out! Please call the Good Shepherd Hospice Volunteer Department at 631.465.6355 for more information on volunteer opportunities.

Magnificat-A Ministry to Catholic Women

Please join us on Tuesday, December 8 for a dinner in honor of the Immaculate Conception. Our speaker is Erin von Uffel who has traveled the world, working towards the beatification of Sister Marie de-Mandat Grancey, a Daughter of Charity who was responsible for the uncovering of Mary's House in Ephesus, Turkey. The cost of the dinner is \$35. Registration is required-please call Angela at 516.763.1739 for more information.

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 "**Giving and Helping Others.**" 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 296 for the Best in Catholic Television!

Sharing the Gospel

"Have you ever played a game where you asked for a "do-over" so you could try again? When John told his neighbors to be baptized, he wanted them to have a second chance, A "do-over." He wanted to give them a fresh, clean start with God.



Prayer



Dear God,
when I find myself doing or saying things that you would not like, help me to stop and start over.



Puzzle

Circle these words from today's Gospel:

BAPTIZED
FORGIVEN
ISAIAH

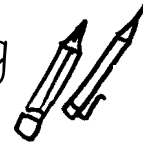
JOHN
DESERT
STRAIGHT

CROOKED
SMOOTH
ROUGH

C I F O R G I V E N
R O U G H L O Y U L
O N B D I F T S M V
O I A S M O O T H E
K C P T W S H R I J
E Y T O U M Y A S O
D U I L I S A I A H
R J Z O C E T G K N
O Y E M K Y I H I W
H A D E S E R T O U

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Something to Draw



Draw John washing someone in a river.

Mission for the Week



When you catch yourself being selfish, not following directions, or using hurtful words, stop. Say you're sorry, ask for forgiveness, and then try again.