

**Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**Our Lady of Lourdes • January 31, 2010**

**“They rose up**



**and drove  
Jesus  
out of town.”**



## *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

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### *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.*

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### *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

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**Rev. Patsy Amabile**  
Associate Pastor

**Rev. Robert Scheckenback**  
Associate Pastor

**Rev. Ambrose Cabildo**  
In Residence

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**Deacon John DeGuardi**

**Deacon Tom Lucie**

**Deacon Jack Meehan**

Coordinator of Stewardship

**Deacon John Teufel**

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**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

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## *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



WEEK JAN. 31 - FEB. 5

### **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](mailto:ParishOffice@ollchurch.org)

fax: 661.7143

website: [www.ollchurch.org](http://www.ollchurch.org)

### **Our Lady of Lourdes School**

587.7200

Monday-Friday: 9 AM - 3 PM

email: [lkrol@ollschool.org](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:Sage@ollchurch.org)

## LENT 2010

### *Burning of the Palms*

We are actively preparing for the season of Lent at OLL and we need your help!

Ash Wednesday, February 17, begins the Lenten season and the signing of ashes is a powerful reminder to us of this time of reflection, reconciliation and renewal.

The ashes come from burned palm – preferably the palm distributed last Palm Sunday.



Please bring back any palm you have at home and place it in the baskets at the doors of the Church. This palm will be burned during the weekend of February 13/14.

The purpose of this action is twofold. First, it actively involves each of us in the celebration of Ash Wednesday and Lent. Second, it demonstrates the continuous work of our liturgical cycle/year. By connecting last Palm Sunday with this year's Ash Wednesday, we are reminded of the dying and rising of Christ – the Paschal Mystery - which the liturgy invites us to experience.

### **Thank You**

Contemplative Outreach of Long Island & Queens would like to thank Sr. Nancy, the Religious Education Grades 6/7/8 hangout night kids, and the high school leaders that helped set up the Parish Center for our annual workshop with Fr. Carl Arico.

## **R.C.I.A. – The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults**

### *The Family Grows*

Last Sunday, we began our parish's work with the candidates and catechumens of the R.C.I.A. - The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. They are gathering every Sunday for 11AM Mass and will be "dismissed" after the Homily to pray and share on the Sunday readings. Every Thursday they will meet for catechesis and reflection.

Please pray for them, by name, as they continue on this journey of new life and hope!

Our "Catechumens" (those to be fully initiated into the Church) are:

*Scott Sender, Malik Wallace and Ronald Thomas*

and "Candidates" (those to receive Eucharist and/or Confirmation) are :

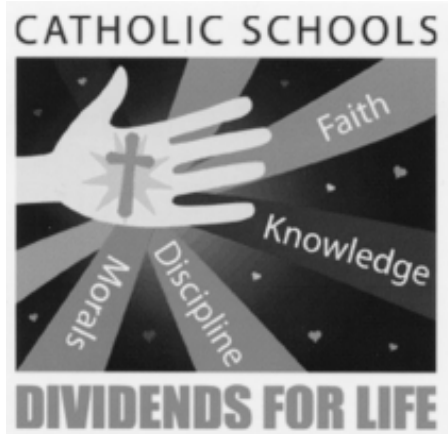
*Timothy Keegan, Carol Ann Civile, Roy Miller,  
Leslyn Armstrong and David Cohen*

# OUR LADY OF LOURDES SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE

## SUNDAY, JANUARY 31

OUR FAMILY LITURGY – 9:30 AM

CURRICULUM FAIR AND RECEPTION 10:30 AM–12:30 PM



VISIT OUR CLASSES IN SESSION  
MONDAY – WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1 - 4  
9 AM – 11AM

### *What Makes Us Different?*

*State-of-the-Art Science Lab & Media Center, Ballroom Dance, Violin, Piano, Cello, Guitar, Italian and Spanish Language, Drama, Public Speaking, SmartBoards, Enrichment Clubs, Before and After Care, 8th Grade Advanced Research Program in Partnership with Stony Brook Medical School*

## Adult Faith Formation

### *Images of Mercy - Icons of Justice\**

*\*applicable for Advance Certificate*

**Presenter: Tom Petriano, St. Joseph's College, Patchogue**

**Tuesdays, February 2, 9, 23, 2010 from 7:30 - 9:30 PM Parish Center**

The witness of the lives of prophetic figures from various cultures and traditions can be iconic for us, and studying their lives can be both illuminating and transformative. This course will look specifically at the lives of Mother Teresa, Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin, Mohandas Gandhi, Oscar Romero and the Jesuit martyrs of El Salvador, and Martin Luther King and Rosa Parks as examples of modern day prophets. Their writings, sermons, letters, speeches and the witness of their lives will be examined in order to understand the spirituality and theology that was the source of their prophetic witness.

*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 [religiouslyed@ollchurch.org](mailto:religiouslyed@ollchurch.org).*

It's time for



# FAT TUESDAY!



Outreach is hosting the  
Second Annual

## MARDI GRAS

Tuesday, February 16

7 PM - 9 PM

All-Purpose Room



FOOD ~ GAMES ~ PRIZES  
HOT DOGS ~ ICE CREAM  
and FUN! FUN! FUN!

Admission is \$5 per person - includes all  
Raffle Tickets \$5 for 25  
Proceeds to benefit Outreach.

# Seventh Annual El Salvador Mission Trip 2010

## For Students Grade 8 through College



Consider spending a week this summer on a trip that will change your life!

When I went to El Salvador this summer for my first time, it changed my life.

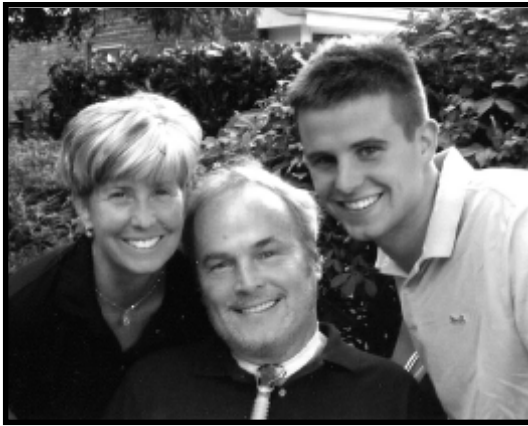


The whole trip was indescribable, but the part that really stuck out to me was the day we spent at the school in our Sister Parish in Tacuba running a vacation bible camp for the kids there. Thanks to the donations of the people of OLL parish, every child got to choose their own book to take home to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

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



**If you are interested in participating in this life-changing experience, come to an information meeting on Wednesday, February 3, at 7 PM in the Parish Center.**



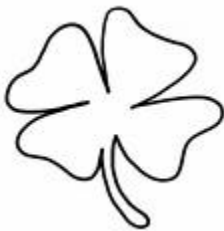
**A Night for the Men of Our Parish**  
**Not Sure if Forgiveness and Mercy are**  
**Manly Virtues?**  
**Ask Detective Steven McDonald**

Steven McDonald is the NYPD officer who was questioning three youths in Central Park one hot summer day in 1986 when one of them shot him three times—a brutal attack that he narrowly survived, but which left him paralyzed from the neck down, and dependent on a tracheotomy.

For the past twenty-four years, Steven McDonald, has been preaching the Gospel of Forgiveness. In doing so, Steven has changed his own life, the life of the young man that shot him and the thousands of people that have heard his message. McDonald focuses on his long road to inner and outer recovery - a remarkable journey through anguish and anger to peace, that began with a decision to forgive his attacker.

OLL Men's Spirituality Group invites the men of our parish (*high school age on up*) to  
**“An Evening of Forgiveness” with Detective Steven McDonald on Friday, March 19**  
**at 7:30 PM in the Church**

Come and experience how evil and violence can be transformed by the liberating power of faith. Please contact Jack Fitzgerald at 631.587.5548 for more information.



**Our Lady of Lourdes**  
**2nd Annual**  
**St. Patrick's/St. Joseph's Day**  
**Celebration**  
**Saturday, March 20**  
**8 PM until midnight**  
**All-Purpose Room**



The evening will include music, dancing, Italian and Irish buffet, beer, wine and soda.  
The event is hosted by OLL Holy Name Society, OLL Rosary Christian Mothers and Parish Outreach.  
Proceeds to benefit OLL Parish Outreach.

*watch future bulletins for more details...*



## Rosary Christian Mothers

The Rosary Christian Mothers meet on the first Monday evening of each month. The next meeting will be **Monday, February 1.**

We will begin with **Rosary at 7:45 PM in the Spiritual Life Center** followed by **meeting at 8 PM, also in the Spiritual Life Center.**

## SAGE

The SAGE Group (Senior Advocates for Growth and Enrichment) will meet on **Tuesday, February 2,** in the **Parish Center at 9 AM.**



## Nocturnal Adoration

Nocturnal Adoration will follow the 5 PM Mass on **Saturday, February 6,** concluding with Benediction at 9:50 PM.

Please come and pray with us. All are invited and welcome!  
Bring a friend.

## Prayer Shawl Ministry

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

**Join us ...**

**Wednesday, February 10 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.

## 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.

## Shaking things up with OLL Youth Ministry!

*There are now a few ways for young people to have fun and to learn at Our Lady of Lourdes...  
Now is the time when you decide who you will be. So who are you?*

### Young Women's Prayer Group

**Young Women's Prayer Group** is the new way that young women and new mothers can come together to reflect on their faith, even in the midst of their busy lives. When you were a student, everyone was trying to get you involved and now it seems like you don't get a chance for anything but work! We meet on the second Thursday of each month and talk about what it is to be a Catholic Woman.



### Peace and Justice Spotlight

Did you know that Our Lady of Lourdes has a Peace and Justice Club? We do!  
**Peace and Justice meets on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 7 PM in the school library.**

There, the members of the club discuss current pressing social issues within the context of Catholic Social Teaching. We also think of ways that we can support those in our community who are in need. Below is a topic of discussion for the club. It is a statement released by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops concerning their stance on the need for respect of natural death.

### Scripture and the Death Penalty

In *A Culture of Life and the Penalty of Death*, the bishops explain the scriptural roots of Catholic teaching on the death penalty. This begins with the story of creation which teaches "that every life is a precious gift from God (see Gn 2:7, 21-23). This gift must be respected and protected. We are created in God's image and redeemed by Jesus Christ, who himself was crucified." The bishops also explain "some argue that biblical statements about 'life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth' (see Ex 21:23-25, Lv 24:17, Dt 19:21) require that the death penalty be used for certain crimes. A correct interpretation of these passages indicates, however, that the principal intent of such laws was to limit the retribution that could be exacted for an offense, not to require a minimum punishment. Furthermore, it is important to read individual passages in the context of Sacred Scripture as a whole. While the Old Testament includes some passages about taking the life of one who kills, the Old Testament and the teaching of Christ in the New Testament call us to protect life, practice mercy and reject vengeance.

*-The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops*

**What do you think? Come to Peace and Justice and talk it out!**



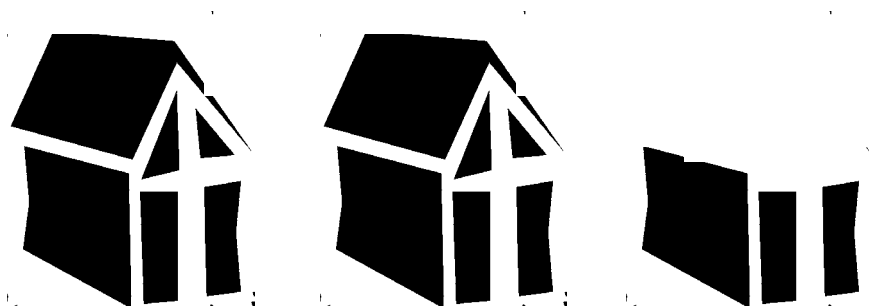
## Our Lady of Lourdes Mission Awareness Trip 2010

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!

It's that time again!!! On the first Sunday of the month please bring in your CASA change and empty it into the water jugs that are sitting in the Narthex of our Church. Once you have done that, take your bank home and fill it again! The money collected so far is enough for two and three quarter homes! Thank you for your generosity! Let's keep it going!

### **OLL CASA Project Two Homes and Counting!**



Through your generous donations, we have been able to fund the building of two complete houses and we are well on our way to completing a third house!

Keep up the good work. Through your donations to the OLL Casa Project we will be able to continue to build homes for those belonging to our sister parishes.

## **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)



## ***Rest In Peace***

*Lillian Gerken* died on January 18 and the Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on January 21. We extend our prayers to her daughter, Antoinette, children, grandchildren, and entire family.

*Howard Alfred Campkin* died on January 19 and the Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on January 21. We extend our prayers to his daughter, Sister Nancy, and entire family.

*Veronica Filip-Plucinski* died on January 20 and the Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on January 23. We extend our prayers to her daughter, Kathy, grandchildren, and entire family.

## **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, February 1**

**8:00 AM** Mark Polito

**Tuesday, February 2**

*The Presentation of the Lord*

**8:00 AM** LaRocca & Sweeney Families



**Wednesday, February 3**

*Saint Blaise, bishop and martyr*

*Saint Ansgar, bishop*

**8:00 AM** John Lovari

**Thursday, February 4**

**8:00 AM** Marie D. Turano

**Friday, February 5**

*Saint Agatha, virgin and martyr*

**8:00 AM** Elinor Shaddock (*Anniversary*)

**Saturday, February 6**

**8:00 AM** John Falciani, Rose Stone,  
Robert J. Gigante, Carmine Maiocco

**5:00 PM** Michael Worysz

**Sunday, February 7**

**8:00 AM** The Zucco Family

**9:30 AM** Jean Cilluffo

**11:00 AM** John & Mary Flynn and Jean Sullivan

**12:30 PM** Evelyn Albert

**6:00 PM** People of the Parish, John Timmer, John P. McPartland,  
Phil Ambrosino (*living*), Connie Patchen, Angela D' Ambrosio,  
Marion Bozymowski, Lisa Cavalluzzo, Carl Kuri

## *Baptisms*

*Samuel Joseph Matvya*

Mark and Beth

*Jack Ryan McCartney*

Paul and Jennifer

*Tiana Jaylee Whitehead*

Darnell and Tiffany

*Michael Thomas Williams*

Michael and Donna



## 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Did you tune out the second reading from Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians today? If you have been to a lot of weddings, it is likely that you've heard this paean to love at most of them. It's a favorite that gets chosen again and again. And because of that, the very familiarity of the words can lose their meaning. "Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous? it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury?" Oh, yeah, I know that one; I've heard it all before. No need to listen."

Because of the context in which so often we hear those words (a marriage celebration) we sometimes miss what Paul is really trying to convey. The Corinthians were disputing among themselves what the better gifts of the Spirit were and who had the greater ones. Paul takes them to task, rather harshly, by telling them that all the prophecies and sacrifices are nothing compared to love.

We can feel righteous about many things, and our sense of justice can breed high expectations about equitable treatment and our rights in the world. We expect our "fair share" all the way around. Sometimes our "gift" turns out to be one of self-justification.

Paul turns those expectations on their head. His proclamation that love is the way suddenly put us in a different position. Love does not seek its own interests and it does not brood over injuries. These are not easy things to put into practice, but it is what is asked of us as believers in Christ. Maybe that's really why we tune out these words sometimes, because they are not easy to put into practice. But love is the essence of our faith-love of God, and love for one another.

*2009 Liturgical Publications Inc*

### Readings for the Week of January 31, 2010

<b>Sunday:</b>	Jer 1:4-5, 17-19/1 Cor 12:31---13:13 <i>or</i> 13:4-13/Lk 4:21-30
<b>Monday:</b>	2 Sm 15:13-14, 30; 16:5-13/Mk 5:1-20
<b>Tuesday:</b>	Mal 3:1-4/Heb 2:14-18/Lk 2:22-40 <i>or</i> 2:22-32
<b>Wednesday:</b>	2 Sm 24:2, 9-17/Mk 6:1-6
<b>Thursday:</b>	1 Kgs 2:1-4, 10-12/Mk 6:7-13
<b>Friday:</b>	Sir 47:2-11/Mk 6:14-29
<b>Saturday:</b>	1 Kgs 3:4-13/Mk 6:30-34
<b>Next Sunday:</b>	Is 6:1-2a, 3-8/1 Cor 15:1-11 <i>or</i> 15:3-8, 11/Lk 5:1-11

## Parish Outreach

### Office telephone:

661-9262, option 4

### Office hours:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday:

9:30 AM - 3 PM

## Pantry Needs



baked beans  
boxed potatoes  
boxed rice  
canned meat  
cookies  
crackers  
hot chocolate  
mayonnaise

## Outreach Collection for Haiti

Outreach is collecting supplies for Haiti. Most Holy Trinity Parish in Brooklyn will pack all supplies we collect and a benefactor has offered to ship these to Haiti.

### Items most in need:

*rubbing alcohol, peroxide, infant diapers, toilet paper, band-aids, soap, first aid cream, bandages, baby food, aspirin, latex gloves, paper plates, paper cups, easy open cans of food.*

Please leave these at the Outreach Office as soon as possible.

Thanks for your help.

Mary

## Outreach Donations

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

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

## Financial Summary

### January 24, 2010

Weekly Collection	\$ 18,560.00
Weekly Budget	-\$ 19,000.00
+/- for the week	\$ (440.00)

*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:

**Bryan R. Dempsey**-*US Marines*

**Christopher Florca**-*US Marines*

**Michael Mallimo**- *US Army*

**Anthony Mannino**-*US Marines*

**JD Montefusco**-*US Marines*

**Peter Provenzano**-*US Army*

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

Our whole parish family rejoices with the Sliva Family in gratitude for the safe return of their son, Frank from active duty. **Frank Sliva**-*US Army*, has returned to the United States safe and sound from his second tour of duty in Iraq. Thank you, *Frank*, for your most generous service to our country! The Sliva Family would like to thank Our Lady of Lourdes Parish Family for all of their prayers.



## Mass Book of Intentions

The 2011 Mass Book of Intentions will be opening on **Tuesday, February 23** at **9 AM in the Parish Office.**

As always, we will do our best to accommodate your Mass Intention requests.

## Altar Society

Altar linens this week will be cared for by *Terri Ryan*.

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 ...

*Phil Ambrosino, Roy Anderson, Susan Aviza, Matthew Badamo, Deacon Dick Barry, Ben Bellotti, Antoinette Bongiorno, Theresa Buffa, Nicholas Buscemi, Jr., Frances Ceribelli, Nicholas Cibelli, Michael Ciotkosz, Regina Cranor, Tom Courtney, Jeanne DellaRagione, Ann Donlon, Justina Eck, Debbie Eichen, Susan Ferguson, Edward Herger, Brian Hinkelman, Lili Hinkelman, Robert Kaminski, Mary Kaval, Veronica Kenny, Kathleen Kerrigan, Joseph Lehmann, Kara Lobasso, Louise Malcuit, Vicky Massaro, Michele McCann, Peter McCann, Sr., Dorothy Meloni, Rick Mirabella, Rae Morris, Brenden Muldoon, Evelyn Nonnon, John O'Brien, Frances Parine, Robert Petersen, Arthur Petrino, Joanne Popper, Laura Prichard, Theresa Quinn, Joe Radosti, Carol Randazzo-Hopkins, Jenny Rocchio, Domenica Ruocco, Michael Savino, Ann Marie Schiraldi, Jayna Schmidt, Dorothy Shiavone, Joe Shields, Derek Stahl, Mary Clair Stephen, Stephen Straub, Sr., John Tramazzo, Nancy Turano, Vera Vieni, Pat Wallace, Joseph Walsh, Sr., Kyle Williams*

# The Healing Embrace of the Eucharist

by Ron Rolheiser, OMI

There are different kinds of loneliness and different kinds of intimacy. We ache in many places.

When I was a young priest, newly ordained and barely beyond the loneliness of adolescence, certain words at the Eucharist touched me deeply. I was a young and lonely and words about being drawn together inside one body and one spirit would incite feelings in me to do with my own loneliness. To become one body in Christ triggered, in me, an image of an embrace that would put an end to my personal loneliness, my endless aching, and my sexual separateness. Unity in Christ, as I fantasized it then, meant overcoming my own loneliness.

And that is a valid understanding. The Eucharist is an embrace meant to take away personal loneliness, but, as we get older, a deeper kind of loneliness can and should begin to obsess us. This deeper loneliness makes us aware how torn and divided is our world and everything and everyone in it. There is a global loneliness that dwarfs private pain.

How separate and divided is our world! We look around us, watch the world news, watch the local news, look at our places of work, our social circles, and even our churches, and we see tension and division everywhere. We are far from being one body and one spirit. So many things, it seems, work to divide us: history, circumstance, background, temperament, ideology, geography, creed, color, and gender. And then there are our personal wounds, jealousies, self-interest, and sin. The world, like a lonely adolescent, aches too in its separateness. We live in a world deeply, deeply divided.

And the older I get, the more I despair that there can be a simple solution, or perhaps even a human solution at all, to our divisions. Life slowly teaches us that it is naive to believe that all we need is simple optimism, good-will, and an unflinching belief that love will conquer. Love can and will conquer, but it doesn't happen like in a Hollywood picture, where two people who really have no business ever being together fall in love and despite having nothing in common, despite being deeply wounded, despite being immature and selfish, and despite having no shared faith or values, are able to rise above all their differences to sustained embrace and ecstasy, simply because love conquers all.

At a certain point, we know that real life doesn't work like that, unless we die in that initial embrace as did Romeo and Juliet. Our differences eventually have their

say, both inside of our personal relationships and inside the relationships between countries, cultures, ethnic groups, and religions. At a certain point our differences, like a cancer that cannot be stopped, begin to make themselves felt and we feel helpless to overcome that.

But this isn't despair. It's health. As anyone who has ever fought an addiction knows, the beginning of a return to health lies in the admission of helplessness. It's only when we admit that we can't help ourselves that we can be helped. We see in the gospels where so many times, immediately after finally grasping a teaching of Jesus, the apostles react with the words: "If that's true, then it's impossible for us, then there's nothing we can do!" Jesus welcomes that response (because in that admission we open ourselves to help) and replies: "It is impossible for you, but nothing is impossible for God!"

Our prayers for unity and intimacy become effective precisely when they issue from this feeling of helplessness, when we ask God to do something for us that we have despaired of doing for ourselves.

We see an example of this within Quaker communities when people gather and simply sit with each other in silence, asking God to do for them what they cannot do for themselves, namely, give themselves harmony and unity. The silence is an admission of helplessness, of having given up on the naive notion that we, as human beings, will ever finally find the right words and the right actions to bring about a unity that has forever evaded us.

The Eucharist is such a prayer of helplessness, a prayer for God to give us a unity we cannot give to ourselves. It is not incidental that Jesus instituted it in the hour of his most intense loneliness, when he realized that all the words he had spoken hadn't been enough and that he had no more words to give. When he felt most helpless, he gave us the prayer of helplessness, the Eucharist.

Our generation, like every generation before it, senses its helplessness and intuits its need for a messiah from beyond. We cannot heal ourselves and we cannot find the key to overcome our wounds and divisions all on our own. So we must turn our helplessness into a Quaker-silence, a Eucharistic prayer, that asks God to come and do for us what we cannot do for ourselves, namely, create community. And we must go to Eucharist for this same reason.

*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](http://www.ronrolheiser.com).*

## American Sign Language Classes

Cleary School for the Deaf is offering evening Adult Education classes in American Sign Language. The Spring session runs from February 3 to May 5 from 7 PM until 8:30 PM (age 12 and up). For more information please call Carolyn Kelly at 631.588.0530.

## Dominican Village

**Please join us for an Open House on Saturday, February 6, 2010 from 1 PM until 3 PM.** Dominican Village is an independent retirement community that offers assisted living and respite care, outstanding programs, all-inclusive services and bountiful amenities. For more information, or to schedule a tour at your convenience, call 631.842.6091.

## Life Center of Long Island

Life Center of Long Island is a pro life organization, made up of mostly volunteers and located at 1767 Deer Park Ave in Deer Park. The phone number is 631.243.2373.

Donations are needed at the Life Center of Long Island. Specifically needed are baby items for children up to 2 years old including clothing, diapers, wipes, formula, jars of food, bath and layette items, cribs, car seats, pack'n plays, strollers, and high chairs. There are volunteers who do pick ups, if there is furniture involved. Receipts are given for tax purposes.

Life Center is also looking for volunteers, the jobs vary. Please call for further information or if you have any questions.

## Parish Outreach Programs

Fundraiser for local Parish Outreach Programs at the **Division 2 Hall, Babylon on Friday, February 12 from 8 PM - 12 Midnight.** Music will be provided by Tommy Polito and Sweetwater.

Tickets are \$25 per person-reservations are a must-includes full open bar and snacks. Bring a bag of non-perishable foods and be entered into a special raffle. For reservations or further information, please call Kathleen Henry at 631.271.1091, Colette Kavanaugh at 631.277.0759 or Pat Rattigan at 631.957.6426.

## 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 "**Remaining Excited.**" Don't miss it! To listen online or receive more information regarding "Religion & Rock" go to [www.religionandrock.com](http://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!

## **Deepening your Spiritual Practice through the use of FOCUSING**

This program will be held on **Wednesday, February 3 from 7:30 PM until 9:30 PM**. The facilitator is Kathy Porter and the offering is \$15. The program will be held at the St. Joseph Renewal Center, 1725 Brentwood Road, Brentwood. Please call for information or reservations at 631.273.1187, extension 23.

### **Families Anonymous**

Are you concerned about a family member who appears to have an alcohol, drug, or behavioral problem? We can help. Meetings are held every **Saturday at 9:30 AM, Room 115 and every Wednesday at 8 PM, Room 116 at Our Lady of Grace School, West Babylon.**

For information, contact Donna at 631.589.3790 or Julia at 631.587.5921.

### **Girl Scout Awards**

Girl Scout Awards from the Catholic Scouting Office:

- Special patch for scouts and leaders to celebrate the Year of the Priest.
- Brownie Awards: Ave Maria, Family of God.
- Junoir Awards: Regina Coeli, I Live My Faith
- Cadette: Marion
- Senior: Saint Agnes, Spirit Alive

Help and information are available from the Catholic Scouting Office at 516.678.5800 x 245 or email [scouting@drvc.org](mailto:scouting@drvc.org).

### **Help Wanted-Positions Open**

Full time secretarial 40 hours Monday - Friday. Experience with telephone, data input, computer, MS, Word Excel. Good pay and benefits. Contact St. Kilian's Business Manager, phone 249.0127.

Part time cook-Friday and Saturday from 11 AM to 7 PM, 16 hours. Experience preferred. Contact St. Kilian's Business Manager, phone 516.249.0127.

Full time administrative assistant for the Religious Education Office at St. Mary's Church, East Islip. Hours are Monday and Friday, 9 AM to 5 PM and Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 10 AM to 6 PM. Please fax resume to Claire Moule at 631.581.0112 or call for more information at 631.581.4266, extension 122.

# Sharing the Gospel

Jesus did not expect everybody to like him. Jesus chose to follow God's plan, no matter what other people said. Even though some people wanted to hurt Jesus, he always spoke the truth. He always did what was right, no matter what.



## Mission for the Week



Has anyone ever hurt your feelings because you love God? Pray for that person, and keep doing what is right.

## Puzzle

Find the right shadow.

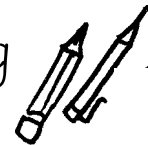


## Prayer



Dear God,  
help me to keep on doing  
what you want, no matter  
what other people say.

## Something to Draw



Draw Jesus walking away  
from people who didn't  
like him.