

Second Sunday of Lent
Our Lady of Lourdes • February 28, 2010



Genesis 15:5

“Count the stars if you can.”



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



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



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

Ask Detective Steven McDonald

Friday, March 19
7:30 PM
Church

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.

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

The journey of our candidates and catechumens – now called "The Elect" continues...

Last Sunday, February 21, *Scott Sender, Ronald Thomas and Malik Wallace* participated in the Rite of Election at St. Anne's R.C. Church in Brentwood with Bishop Murphy.

Today, Sunday, February 27, we will celebrate the Call to Continuing Conversion for our baptized candidates – *Leslyn Armstrong, Carol Ann Civile, David Cohen, Timothy Keegan and Roy Miller* – also at St. Anne's R.C. Church in Brentwood.

These are important steps in the journey of the R.C.I.A. It's a clear sign to the community that they are coming closer to receiving the Sacraments of Initiation and full communion with the Church at our Easter Vigil, Saturday, April 3.

Please continue to pray for these women and men and our beautiful RCIA team who minister with them each week.

Mark your calendars...

Our own pastor, Fr. Mike Vetrano, will preach our Lenten Mission this year.

Mission 2010-Living Life in God's Friendship will take place
Monday to Thursday-March 8 to March 11 at 7:30 PM in the church.

Living Life in God's Friendship

Our own pastor, Fr. Mike Vetrano, will preach



Monday through Thursday

March 8th through 11th

All evenings begin at 7:30 PM in our Parish Church

Monday, March 8

A Life in God's Friendship

The first great truth that every Christian must know is that we walk each day in the presence of God and every relationship, every challenge, every moment of joy or sorrow can be filled with God's friendship

Tuesday, March 9

Being at Peace with God and Peace with Oneself

Life is not easy. Things happen. Everyone has moments of failure or has made mistakes. How can we discover a great truth in these moments: God always offers a new beginning.

Reconciliation

Wednesday, March 10

Some things about God that we are not sure about

— or —

If I were God I would run things differently

Why do we die? :: Why do we suffer? :: Why do bad people win lotto?

Thursday, March 11

A celebration of healing and life

*For those who are in need of healing and those who have received it
Illness, grief, loss, emotional pain, depression, desire for children, infirmity....*

Stations of the Cross

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

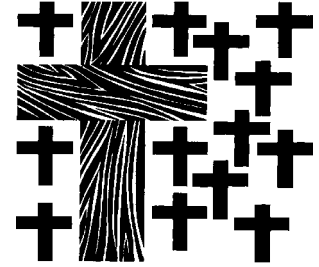
Each Friday during Lent – 12 Noon and 7 PM

Save the date...

Living Stations of the Cross

Good Friday, April 2 at 7:30 PM in the Church

This is a must for your Lenten and Holy Week journey! Our parish community comes together – led by our young people, our Music Ministries and members of our parish community – who share their own personal experiences on this most holy and solemn night. The celebration includes the Veneration of the Cross.



Lent at “The Six”

When is the last time you wrote yourself a letter about the things that really matter to you? Maybe Lent can be a time of self-reflection. Do you have worries and some fears in your life? Do you sometimes wonder about the direction you're headed? How do you feel about the relationships you have?

Come to “The Six” for each Sunday of Lent. “The Six” committee would like to offer a way to look at ourselves a little closer and more compassionately using the 5 Sundays of Lent.

When do we give ourselves five weeks of anything to make our lives better? All Are Welcome!

Come and Pray this Lent...

All fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth Graders **and** their families are invited to come and pray this Lent at “The Six” -Sunday Mass at 6 PM. Please join “The Six” with your grade on...

March 7	3rd Sunday of Lent	Gr. 5	“ <i>SENT</i> ” to make a difference
March 14	4th Sunday of Lent	Gr. 6	“ <i>CELEBRATE</i> ” Religious Education Week
March 21	5th Sunday of Lent	Gr. 7	“ <i>SERVE</i> ” Service Project Sunday
March 28	Palm Sunday	Gr. 8	“ <i>PRAY</i> ” as Holy Week begins

Come celebrate Lent and be a lector, greeter, presentation of the gifts, and more...

Taize-Prayer Around the Cross

Take some reflective time this Lent to join us...

Friday, March 26 at 7:45 PM in the Church (*following Stations of the Cross*)

Taize is a form of worship that provides some time in our busy lives where we can stop and focus on the love of God. Together we will share simple chants and prayers that will help guide us as we bring our concerns and hopes to the Lord. Please join us for a Taize Prayer Service.

If you're interested in singing/playing with our Taize Group, please contact Carol Goetz at music@ollchurch.org for further information.

Diocesan Day of Reconciliation

Monday, March 29

3 PM until 9 PM in the Church

Churches throughout the Diocese of Rockville Centre, including Our Lady of Lourdes, will be open between the hours of 3 PM and 9 PM for individual confessions.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is a powerful way for our community to celebrate and pray for God's grace and healing. We also celebrate this Sacrament every Saturday from 4 - 4:45 PM in the Church and always by appointment with a priest.

A Week of Directed Prayer

Sunday, March 14 thru Saturday, March 20

*What's God like for you? What's praying like for you?
Perhaps taking a week to focus more intently on noticing
God's loving presence in and around you might be just
the way for you...*



For the week of **March 14 – March 20**, a group of spiritual directors affiliated with St. Ignatius Retreat Center, Manhasset will come to Our Lady of Lourdes Parish to offer a one week individually “directed retreat” experience.

What's involved?

- a commitment to spend a half hour a day in prayer – at home, on the train, wherever...
- a commitment to meet at the parish for approximately a half hour; with a spiritual director... your companion on the journey
- an openness to God's love

After an initial small group gathering on **Sunday, March 14**, each retreatant will meet with his/her director at the Parish for approximately a half hour each day, Monday through Friday, at a mutually convenient time.

Are there any special requirements?

- No, this experience is helpful for all – experienced pray-ers, beginners, and all who might be somewhere in-between. ***However, the number of participants is limited!***
- Brochures containing applications are available at the Religious Education Office. For more information call Vita Scorcio/Religious Education Office at 661.5440 or email: Religioused@ollchurch.org.

***Sometimes it's nice to be able to “get away” and focus on God. Sometimes it's not possible to get away, but it is still very possible to focus on God, for God is with us everywhere, all the time. A directed retreat week can help us to notice God's presence right in the midst of our everyday lives. And noticing leads to response. Prepare!
Our God is a God of faithfulness and of surprise!***



Nocturnal Adoration

Nocturnal Adoration will follow the 5 PM Mass on **Saturday, March 6**, concluding with Benediction at 9:50 PM. Please come and pray with us. All are invited and welcome! Bring a friend.

Rosary Christian Mothers

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

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

Adult Bowling Night

Saturday, March 13

Time to schedule some adult fun! This event is open to the public so pick your crowd and create your own party. Tickets are \$25 a person, the kitchen and bar will be open and ready to serve. Visit the OLL website, click on the "OLL School" link and go to "In the Backpack" for details. Committe Members Needed Contact: kharris@ollschool.org or lkennedy@ollschool.org if you can help.

OLL Golf Outing

Coming July 2010

Do you miss the outdoors? Do you miss the warm feeling of sunshine? Join us and swing ahead to summer! We are in need of committee members, volunteers, golfers, and donations (Local Merchants and Materials). For more information contact Rich Maher at rmaher@ollschool.org.

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.

Learning & Spirituality

Mark your calendars...

Embrace the Challenge

Embrace the Love

Something to think, pray and talk about

Fr. Pat Amabile

Tuesdays, March 2, 16, and 23

7:30 - 9:30 PM

Parish Center

This series will lead us to new depth in our spirituality.

Each week we will explore one of the following...

- What do you call God?
- Who is Jesus Christ?
- Living in the Lord.

Why We Pray the Way We Do

Fr. Bob Scheckenback

Tuesdays, April 6, 13, 20, 27 and May 4

7:30 - 9:30 PM

Parish Center



What's really happening when we go to Church on Sunday? Understand the liturgy and its role in your life and the life of the Church. Does God need the Sacraments? Understand the sacramental principle of Roman Catholicism and how we believe God communicates with us.

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.

Family Liturgies during Holy Week 2010

Thursday, April 1

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

Friday, April 2

Children's Good Friday Service – 12 Noon - Church

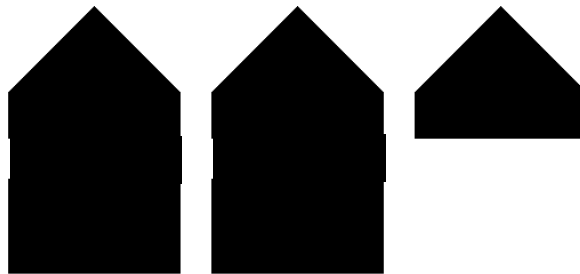
Saturday, April 3

Easter Egg Hunt – 11:30 AM – Great Lawn

We love our children and families here at OLL and want you to be a part of our parish community!



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.

Youth Group Meeting

High School students!

The next youth group meeting is **Thursday, March 4 in Room 16** of the School at 7 PM.

Middle School students!

The next meeting for you is **Monday, March 1 from 6:30 – 7:30 PM in Room 16**.
Come join in the fun!

Young Women's Faith Group

Are you a young woman? Are you finding it hard to keep your faith and spirituality a part of your everyday life? We have just the thing!

Young Women's Faith group has moved its night. Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, March 23 at 7 PM in the Spiritual Life Center to talk about challenges and to give one another support. Stop by one of our meetings!

St. Bernard League

We need you!

In order to service our many clients, we are in need of more St. Bernards-those who help people in bad weather. We have been lucky enough to gain the support of new volunteers, but we still need more volunteers to meet the needs of our community.

Do you live in Bay Shore? How about North Babylon? Then we need you! Many of the folks in our St. Bernard League, who rely on volunteers to shovel their snow in bad storms, live in North Babylon and Bay Shore. We need your help to keep them safe when the weather is bad. If you live in those towns and want to be a BIG help sign up with Allegra@ollchurch.org.

Our Lady of Lourdes 2nd Annual St. Patrick's/St. Joseph's Day Celebration

Saturday, March 20
from 8 PM until midnight
in the All-Purpose Room



The evening will include music, dancing,
Italian and Irish buffet,
beer, wine and soda
-all for only \$30 per person.

Dessert Contest

All are eligible to enter, if you wish.
A panel of judges will determine winners
and award prizes.



To reserve tickets, please call
Parish Outreach at 661.9262, option 4.
Space is limited, so get your tickets early!

The event is hosted by the combined efforts of
Our Lady of Lourdes Holy Name Society,
Rosary Christian Mothers and Parish Outreach.
Proceeds will benefit OLL Parish Outreach.

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)



Upcoming Marriages

Jennifer DeBlase, OLL, Massapequa Park and
Anthony Carbone, St. Francis de Chantal, Wantagh



Rest In Peace

Mary Chimento died on February 14 and the Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on February 22. We extend our prayers to her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and entire family.

Helen Margaret Nolan died on February 19 and the Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on February 22 at St. Lawrence the Martyr Church, Sayville. We extend our prayers to her son, Joseph, and entire family.

Eugene Squillanti died on February 19 and the Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on February 23. We extend our prayers to his children, grandchildren, great-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, March 1

8:00 AM Thomas E. Dowling, Patrick McCarthy
and John Kelly

Tuesday, March 2

8:00 AM Rose Monroe (*birthday*)

Wednesday, March 3

St. Katharine Drexel, virgin

8:00 AM John M. Weiss, Sr.



Baptisms

Chloe Margaret Bellini

Michael and Kathryn

Amanda Sierra Guimaraes

Daniel and Colleen

Sam Philip Marshall

Timothy and Christine

William Jason Nieroda

William and Kimberly

Alexa Mona Lee Tamasi

Damon and Suzanne

Thursday, March 4

St. Casimir

8:00 AM John Lovari

Friday, March 5

8:00 AM Carmine Isola

Saturday, March 6

8:00 AM Dominick LoMedico, John Falciani,
John & Mamie Carbone, Mary P. Sullivan

5:00 PM Josephine Sabella

Fr. Ambrose Cabildo

Sunday, March 7

8:00 AM John Celiberti

Fr. Mike Vetrano

9:30 AM Christopher Clyde

Fr. Pat Amabile

11:00 AM Charlotte Sweeney

Fr. Mike Vetrano

12:30 PM Steven Perone

Fr. Bob Scheckenback

6:00 PM People of the Parish, Jack Timmer, Cecilia Savarese,
Felisa Baltazar, Henry & Lillian Gerken, Doris Brewer,
Grace Accardi (*1st Anniversary*), Assunta Steves,
Jack Ferraro, Mrs. Lombardi, Anthony Palmeri

Fr. Bob Scheckenback



2nd Sunday of Lent

Ten days into Lent, and we can't wait for Easter. Maybe it's that we haven't gotten used to the fasting yet. Or maybe it's that we haven't been as good at the extra prayer we promised ourselves that we would do. Even the church recognizes that we need a little boost to move us along. That's why we hear the Gospel of the Transfiguration on this Second Sunday of Lent. It is just a little foretaste, an appetizer, of what Easter is to be. For those of us who are already baptized, and for those who are preparing for baptism, the image of the glorified Christ stands as a beacon of what we are to become when we share in the fullness of the Resurrection.

Paul writes to the Philippians that Christ "will change our lowly body to conform to his glorified body." That is the hope that is held out to us as we progress through Lent. In this season we unite ourselves to Christ so that we may become more like him.

But we abandon this world, looking for some far-off promise of glory. Our almsgiving, our care for the poor, is a reflection of Christ's love for everyone. When we reach out a little more this Lent (often made possible because we've decided to give something up, and so have extra available to give away) we act like Jesus, who gave up his life for us. His suffering and death on the cross found fulfillment in his resurrection from the dead.

When we care for others through our own sacrifice, we are helping to transfigure their lives, letting a little bit of God's glory be seen through our transforming love. The Transfiguration reminds us what awaits us after our own suffering if we are faithful to the commands of Christ.

2009 Liturgical Publications Inc

Readings for the Week of February 28, 2010

Sunday:	Gn 15:5-12, 17-18/Phil 3:17---4:1 <i>or</i> 3:20---4:1/Lk 9:28b-36
Monday:	Dn 9:4b-10/Lk 6:36-38
Tuesday:	Is 1:10, 16-20/Mt 23:1-12
Wednesday:	Jer 18:18-20/Mt 20:17-28
Thursday:	Jer 17:5-10/Lk 16:19-31
Friday:	Gn 37:3-4, 12-13a, 17b-28a/Mt 21:33-43, 45-46
Saturday:	Mi 7:14-15, 18-20/Lk 15:1-3, 11-32
Next Sunday:	Ex 3:1-8a, 13-15/1 Cor 10:1-6, 10-12/Lk 13:1-9

Parish Outreach

Office telephone:

661-9262, option 4

Office hours:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday:

9:30 AM - 3 PM

Outreach Memorial Donations

February Donations

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

Mary DeVivo has made a donation to Outreach in memory of *Alberta Firth* on the memorial of Alberta's birthday.

Margie McHugh has made a donation to Outreach in memory of *John McHugh, Howard Campkin and Flo Worysz.*

Theresa McCarthy made a donation to Outreach in memory of *Howard Campkin.*

Phyliss Diesso has made a donation to Outreach in memory of *Charles Diesso.*

The Buckheit-Segen-Trombley Families have made a donation to Outreach in memory of *Bill Heartt.*

The Hiller Family has made a donation to Outreach in memory of *Flo Worysz.*

Outreach had received a donation in memory of *Justine Eck* from the Katsumi Family.

The Raffaele Family has made a donation to Outreach in memory of *Justine Eck.*

The Guttieri Family has made a donation to Outreach in memory of *Justine Eck.*

Bishop Guilfoyle Regional Catholic School has made a donation to Outreach in memory of *Justine Eck.*

The Trifletti Family has made a donation to Outreach in memory of *Justine Eck.*

The Volk Family has made a donation to Outreach in memory of *Howard Campkin.*

The Meehan Family has made a donation to Outreach in honor of *Marie Ricigliano's Birthday.*

Jerry Esposito has made a donation to Outreach in memory of *Eugene Squillanti.*

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

Financial Summary

February 21, 2010

Weekly Collection	\$ 18,739.00
Weekly Budget	-\$ 19,000.00
+/- for the week	\$ (261.00)

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.

Altar Society

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

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 ...

Roy Anderson, Susan Aviza, Deacon Dick Barry, Andrew Bartlett, Ben Bellotti, Antoinette Bongiorno, Theresa Buffa, Nicholas Buscemi, Jr., Nicholas Cibelli, Michael Ciotkosz, Donald L. Coffey, Thomas Courtney, Regina Cranor, Catherine Dare, Jeanne DellaRagione, Ann Donlon, Debbie Eichen, Suzanne Ferguson, Edward Herger, Brian Hinkelman, Lili Hinkelman, Max Illiano, Diana Kaehne, Mary Kaval, Veronica Kenny, Kathleen Kerrigan, Joseph Lehmann, Kara Lobasso, Louise Malcuit, Vicky Massaro, Philip Matzen, Michele McCann, Peter McCann, Sr., Dorothy Meloni, Rick Mirabella, Rae Morris, Brenden Muldoon, Ruth Murray, Evelyn Nonnon, John O'Brien, Arthur Petrino, Joanne Popper, Laura Prichard, Joe Radosti, Carol Randazzo-Hopkins, 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, Geraldine Wloszczyna

Our Struggle in Faith- Between Knowing It Is True and Believing It!

by Ron Rolheiser, OMI

At the heart of our faith lies the deep truth that we are unconditionally loved by God. We believe that God looks down on our lives and says: You are my beloved child, in you I take delight! We do not doubt that truth of that, we just find it impossible to believe.

Some years ago, at a workshop, a woman came up to me during the break and articulated this in these words: "God loves me unconditionally. I know that's true, but I how can I make myself believe it? I simply can't!" She could have been speaking for half of the human race. We know we are loved by God, we can say the words, but how do we make ourselves believe that?

Why? Why is that so difficult to believe?

For many reasons, though mostly because (unless we are extraordinarily blessed) we rarely, if ever, experience unconditional love. Mostly we experience love with conditions, even from those closest to us: Our parents love us better when we do not mess up. Our teachers love us better when we behave and perform well. Our churches love us better when we do not sin. Friends love us better when we are successful and not needy. The world loves us better when we are attractive. Our spouses love us better when we do not disappoint them. Mostly, in this world, we have to measure up in some way to be loved.

Moreover many of us too have been wounded by supposed expressions of love that were not love at all but were instead expressions of self-serving manipulation, exploitation, or even positive abuse. Beyond even this, all of us have been cursed and shamed in our enthusiasm by the countless times someone, either through words or through a hateful or judgmental glance, in effect said to us: Who do you think you are? We wither under that and become the walking wounded, unable to believe that we are loved and loveable. So, even when we know that God loves us, how can we make ourselves believe it?

At one level, we do believe it. Deep down, below our wounded parts, the child of God that still inhabits the recesses of our soul knows that it is made in God's image and likeness and is special, beautiful, and loveable. That is why we so easily become angry and enraged whenever someone violates our dignity or puts us down.

But how do we make ourselves believe that we are unconditionally loved in a way that would make us less insecure

in our attitude and our actions? How do we live in a surer confidence that we are unconditionally loved so as to let that radiate in the way we treat others and ourselves?

There are no easy answers. For a wounded soul, like for a wounded body, there are no magic wands for quick easy healings. Biblically, however, there is an image that, while confusing on the surface, addresses this: When God gives Joshua instructions on how to move into the Promised Land he tells him that, once there, he must "kill" everything there, all the men, women, children, and even the animals.

Taken literally, this text is horrible and speaks about everything that God is not. But this is not a literal text but an archetypal one. It is an image, a metaphor. I suspect that someone in an Alcoholics Anonymous program will more easily get its message: Killing all the inhabitants of Canaan means precisely giving away all the bottles in your liquor cabinet - the scotch, the bourbon, the wine, the cognac, the gin, the beer, the vodka, and everything else that's there. You can't take the Promised Land and still keep a few "Canaanites" on the side or you will soon lose the Promised Land.

That image also tells us what we must do to enter our true self-image, the deep truth that we are unconditionally loved by God. In great mythical literature we see that, usually, before the great wedding where the young prince and the young princess are to be married so as to live happily ever after, there first has to be an execution: the wicked older brothers and the wicked step-sisters have to be killed off. Why? Because they would eventually come and spoil the wedding.

Who are those wicked older brothers and wicked step-sisters? They are not different people from the young prince or princess getting married. They are their older incarnations. They are also inside of us. They are the inner voices from our past that can, at any given moment, ruin our wedding or our self-image by dragging in our past humiliations and saying: "Who do you think you are? Do you really think that you can marry a prince or princess? Do you really think that you're loveable? We know you, we know your past, so don't delude yourself!"

To actually believe that we are unconditionally loved, we first have to kill a few "Canaanites".

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.

2010 CATHOLIC MINISTRIES APPEAL

One Faith, One Hope,
Many Gifts.

A Letter from Bishop William Murphy

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Our Holy Father asks us to “act as beacons of hope, casting the light of Christ upon the world.” The Catholic Ministries Appeal is an opportunity for us to respond to that call; to be Disciples of Christ and share our *one faith, one hope and many gifts* with others.

The Catholic Ministries Appeal is one of the ways that our Church can “cast the light of Christ upon the world” as we provide critical support to so many programs and ministries.

Last year it enabled us to bring religious education to more than 100,000 public school children, it helped us prepare 4,000 couples for the sacrament of marriage, 36,000 parents to be fully prepared to have their children baptized and 18,000 adolescents ready and eager to be confirmed in our faith. It also enabled us to serve or deliver more than 500,000 meals to people in need, provided support to our parishes and supported our men in formation to become priests and deacons.

This year we hope that you and your family will join us to support these critical services. It will enable us to continue to do God’s work, casting the light of Christ to more places, touching more people than I can mention in this brief note.

May we prayerfully ask you to consider joining with your fellow parishioners in making a contribution to the 2010 Catholic Ministries Appeal? Whatever the amount, every gift is deeply appreciated and 100% of every dollar raised goes to support the five critical ministries of our Appeal.

With gratitude and prayers, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Bishop of Rockville Centre

You can make a difference in your parish and in the lives of those around us by making a gift to this year’s appeal. Visit the CMA Web Site at www.CatholicMinistriesAppeal.org for more information, or to view the video.

Spiritual Care Companions

Are you looking for an avenue to volunteer your time to help others? Come learn more about sharing your gift of time and presence as a Spiritual Care Companion with those who are hospitalized, homebound or living in a nursing home.

Catholic Health Services of Long Island will sponsor a free, six week training to provide basic pastoral care skills and information to become a caring, attentive, listening presence. Spiritual Care Companions will attend afternoon OR evening training sessions during April and May.

For further information, please call: Carol Cella at 516-705-3714, Trish Luvin at 516-705-2763 , or Peggy Nixdorf at 631- 587-1600 x8236.

Dominican Village

Please join us for an Open House on Thursday, March 4, 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.

FISH (Friends In Service Helping)

Could you spare just one day a month to help those in our local communities who do not or cannot drive and therefore are not able to get to medical appointments or treatments on their own?

FISH (Friends In Service Helping) is an all volunteer organization that has been serving residents of Babylon Village, North and West Babylon, West Islip and Lindenhurst in this way for 35 years!

We are currently in need of additional drivers and telephone coordinators—retirees are welcome!

All we ask is your time one day a month on a day that is convenient for you. If you are interested in helping, please call Linda at 631.587.5133 or the FISH number at 631.669.3733 and leave a message. Thank You.

Godspell

St. Joseph's College Clare Rose Playhouse, Patchogue, presents Godspell, a musical based upon the Gospel according to Saint Matthew.

The dates are March 5, 6 at 8 PM and March 7 at 3 PM.

For reservations, call 631.654.0199.

General admission is \$15, students and seniors are \$12.

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.

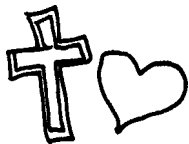
Next Sunday's theme is "**Forgiveness.**" Don't miss it! To listen online or receive more information regarding "Religion & Rock" go to www.religionandrock.com or at "Religion & Rock" on ITUNES. Don't forget to tune into TELECARE, Cablevision 29 or Verizon FIOS 296 for the Best in Catholic Television!

Sharing the Gospel

One night when Jesus prayed, Jesus showed Peter, James and John what he would look like in heaven. Jesus' face changed and his clothes glowed brightly. Jesus even talked to Moses and Elijah, who had gone to heaven many years earlier. Jesus was different. He was from God!



Mission for the Week



Find something that glows in the dark. As you see it in a dark room, imagine how brightly Jesus must have glowed.

Puzzle

Help Jesus find the way to his tent.



Prayer



Dear Jesus,

I can hardly wait
to see what you really
look like in heaven.

Something to Draw



Draw a picture of Jesus
with bright, glowing
clothes.