

Our Lady of Lourdes · Fourth Sunday of Advent · December 19, 2010



“...and his name
shall be called
Emmanuel
(which means, God is with us).”

—Matthew 1:23



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

Louise Jane Krol

School Principal

Sr. Diane Liona

Director of Religious Education

Mary McMahan

Director of Parish Social Ministry

Robin Reynolds-Brennan

Director of Music and Worship

Vita Scorcio

Ministry Spiritual Director

Sr. Betty Toohig

Senior Ministry-SAGE

Anthony Trombino

Business Manager

Pastoral Council

Diane Ackerly

Stacie Baltrusitis

Mary Borgs

Lisa Cantalino

Sonia DaSilva

Nilo DeLeon

Jerry Esposito

Trish Frodell

Rosalie Mangels

Maryellen McKee

Deacon Jack Meehan

John Muldoon

Bob Natale

Eileen Rega

Vita Scorcio

Fr. Mike Vetrano

Parish Staff

Jennifer Gallagher

Women's Chorale Director

Mary Anne Lettieri

Parish Office

Debbie Meyer

Bulletin Editor/Parish Office

Rosemary Multer

School Office

Rita Spera

Religious Education Office

Lori Walsh

Parish Office



Parish Office

661.3224 (*option 1*)

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 (*option 2*)

Monday-Friday: 9 AM - 3 PM

email: lkrol@ollschoo.org

Religious Education Office

661.5440 (*option 3*)

Monday-Friday: 9 AM - Noon

1 PM - 5 PM

7 PM - 9 PM

email: ReligiousEd@ollchurch.org

Parish Outreach Office

661.9262 (*option 4*)

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:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Joining the Parish | <input type="checkbox"/> Baptizing my Children |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Religious Education of my Children | <input type="checkbox"/> Becoming a Catholic or Adult Confirmation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marriage or Annulment / Remarriage | <input type="checkbox"/> Spiritual Direction or Counseling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Our Parish Catholic School | <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

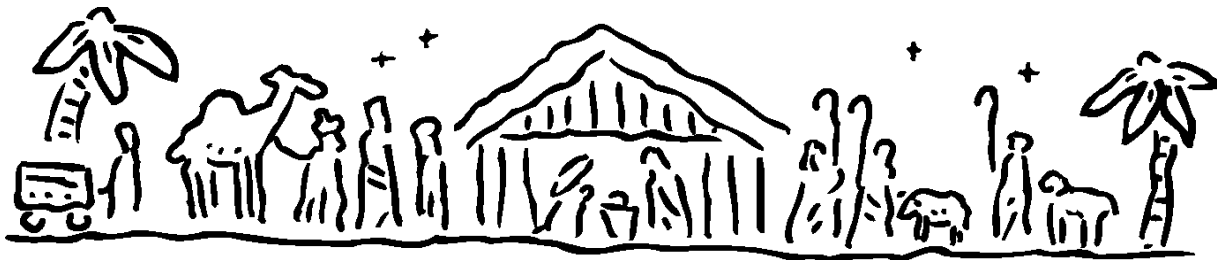
I would prefer to be contacted by:

Phone at: _____ Email at: _____

Mail at: _____

Your Name: _____

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



***Our Lady of Lourdes Ninth Annual
Family Christmas Pageant
Wednesday, December 22
7 PM in the Church***

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





Christmas Mass Schedule

Christmas Eve

Friday, December 24

4 PM Bertolotti Family members
(Church) *Fr. Bob Scheckenback*

Family Mass with music led by our Contemporary Music Group Christmas Carols to begin at 3:30 PM.

4 PM Salegna, Paladino & Ardolino Families
(cafeteria) *Fr. Ambrose Cabildo*
The Mass "Down Under" with quiet music and an intimate atmosphere.

6 PM Lillian LaRocca
(Church) *Fr. Mike Vetrano*
Our Young People's Mass which includes Children's Liturgy of the Word and our Youth Choir.

8 PM Virginia & Joseph Beno
(Church) *Fr. Pat Amabile*
Our most solemn liturgy, a manageable crowd, and a solemn spirit of prayer and worship.

11 PM Doris Brewer
(Church) *Fr. Mike Vetrano*
This Mass, which ends around midnight, begins the actual celebration of Christmas. The liturgy includes a beautiful candle light service and music led by our Adult Choir.
Christmas Carols to begin at 10:30 PM.

Christmas Day

Saturday, December 25

(all Masses in Church)

8:00 AM Colin & Yankel Family and Kay Sullo
Fr. Ambrose Cabildo

9:30 AM John J. Goode, Sr. & Joan Goode
Fr. Bob Scheckenback

11:00 AM Ethel Dixon Isola
Fr. Mike Vetrano

12:30 PM Herbert G. Olsen
Fr. Pat Amabile

(There is no 5 PM Mass on Christmas Day)

Remembering . . .

Monday, December 20

8:00 AM Carmella Parasole

Tuesday, December 21

*St. Peter Canisius, priest &
doctor of the Church*

8:00 AM Theresa Reardon

Wednesday, December 22

8:00 AM Angela D'Ambrosio

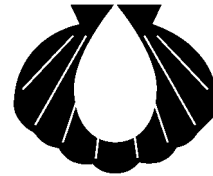
Thursday, December 23

St. John of Kanty, priest

8:00 AM Laura Abela

Friday, December 24

8:00 AM John L. Pizzella



Baptisms

Dominic Vito Romeo

Peter and Elaine

Owen Ryan Okurowski

Steven and Margaret

Matthew Edward Piropato

John and Stacy

Upcoming Marriages

Jacqueline Walsh, OLL and

Joseph Start, St. Jude, Mastic

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Mass Schedule on previous page...

Sunday, December 26

8:00 AM Gertrude Teufel

Fr. Pat Amabile

9:30 AM Dec'd mbrs of Momroe & Shaddock Families

Fr. Pat Amabile

11:00 AM Steven Perone

Fr. Mike Vetrano

12:30 PM Ann P. Keogh

Fr. Bob Scheckenback

6:00 PM People of the Parish, Joseph Zotto, Helen Ianno,
Salvatore Dellaria, Robert Dee, Edward McLoughlin,
Nicholas Viscoso, Dec'd mbrs of Kozlowski, Tyminski,
Caruso, and Sawicki Families

Fr. Ambrose Cabildo

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-9:30 AM beginners meeting convent lower level.
(Free babysitting available.)

Welcome

We would like to extend a warm welcome to all newly registered members of our parish family...

Thomas and Kristine Cantwell and family

Joseph and Justine Zerbo and family

Josephine Walsh

...we are truly blessed by your presence among us!



Rest In Peace

Stephen Vincent Straub, Sr. died on December 3 and celebration of the Mass of Christian Burial was December 7. We extend our prayers to his wife, Diane, children, and entire family.

Joseph Spano died on December 3 and celebration of the Mass of Christian Burial was December 7. We extend our prayers to his children, grandchildren, and entire family.

Vito Mastrorocco died on December 6 and celebration of the Mass of Christian Burial was December 9. We extend our prayers to his wife, Rosa, and entire family.

Rosa Mastrorocco wishes to thank the many parishioners and "friends from morning Mass" for all their prayers and love.

Helen Prendimano died on December 6 and celebration of the Mass of Christian Burial was December 10. We extend our prayers to her son, Robert, 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.

Prayer for Divine Mercy

An invitation to all men and women to be part of God's plan.

We invite you to meet in prayer for the world and our nation to put their trust in God.

Our hope is that the nations will have a new spirit of morality. Please come with your love and hope for humanity as well as your prayer requests.

We gather together every **Thursday at 1:30 PM before the Blessed Sacrament** for about one half hour. For more information, please call Charles Argento at 586.8528.

Advent Day of Reconciliation

Monday, December 20

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!

Men's Prayer Group-AM

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, January 20, 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.

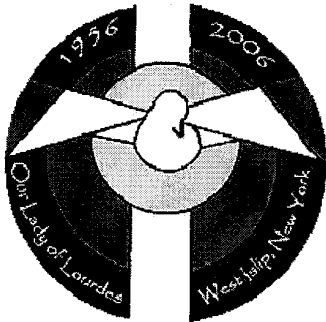
Men's Prayer Group-PM

A new *evening* men's prayer group! It will be held once a month, on the third Tuesday of each month from **7:30 PM until 8:30 PM in the Spiritual Life Center.**

The next meeting will be **Tuesday night, December 21.** Come with your ideas. We'll read and discuss the Liturgy for the following Sunday Mass.

For more information, call Bob Natale at 893.3041, Charles Zeiss at 669.7189 or Cliff Proctor at 669.3198.

"Renewing Our Spiritual Home"



A Stewardship Parish

My parish is composed of people like me.
I help make it what it is.

It will be friendly, if I am.

It will be holy, if I am.

Its pews will be filled, if I help fill them.

It will do great work, if I work.

It will be prayerful, if I pray.

It will make generous gifts to many causes
if I am a generous giver.

It will bring others into its worship,
if I invite and bring them.

It will be a parish of loyalty and love,
of fearlessness and faith,
of compassion, charity and mercy,
if I, who make it what it is,
am filled with these same things.

Therefore, with the help of God,
I now dedicate myself to the task
of being all the things

That I want my parish to be. Amen.

*adapted from the stewardship prayer of the Diocese of
San Francisco*

Here is a list of projects which need to be done...

- Church lighting and electrical
- Narthex entrance
- Church pews, kneelers, chairs, and doors
- Parking lot refurbishment
- Parish Center air conditioner unit
- Parish Center repair and remodel

*Would you/could you help
support these projects?*

Is there something we missed?

*Do you see the need
for these projects?*

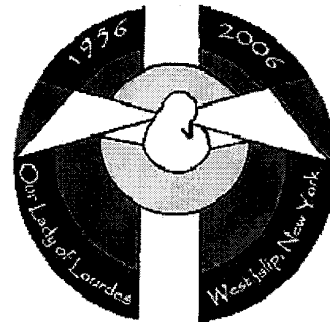
Please be sure to fill out a questionnaire.

Your feedback is important-we want to hear what you think...

"Renewing Our Spiritual Home"

Your Feedback to Date!!!

Thanks to the many individuals/families who have responded to the questionnaire! This feedback is so very important for helping us to take the next steps on our projects!



Summary Data

- 119 Responses
- 91% Positive Response

Trends in Written Comments

So many of our parishioners who responded stated their love for our parish and the warmth that they experience being a part of our parish family.

The willingness to help our parish is so very encouraging!

- Almost every single positive response agreed that the lighting in the Church needs to be addressed as the top priority.
- Many written comments stated that the parking lot should be moved down in the priority list.
- A number of comments expressed that the Parish Center should be moved up in the priority list.
- The small number of parishioners that stated they would not support our projects in almost every case said the reason was the economic times that we live in and the effect it is having on their families.
- Families have told us that they would like to have flexibility in picking the term for payment of a pledge.
- So many comments stated their understanding that the projects are very much like the maintenance everyone must do on their own homes.
- Many have stated that the condition of our worship space is the most important task we need to accomplish.

Children's Liturgy of the Word

CLTW Team

Are you a teacher? A catechist? Do you like kids or volunteering for your church?

Come and join our wonderful team for Children's Liturgy of the Word at our 9:30 AM Sunday Mass. We need adults who are passionate about teaching children what it means to be a Christian.

Contact Allegra@ollchurch.org with any questions or to sign up.

Senior Circle

The Senior Circle meets on the last Monday of each month.

The next meeting will be held on **Monday, December 27**, at **12:30 PM in the Parish Center**.



Daytime Eucharistic Devotion

The afternoon adoration for the month of January will be on **Wednesday, January 5 from 1- 3 PM**. All are invited and welcome!

Follow the CLTW Angel throughout Advent!

The Advent Angel will be teaching our children the true meaning of Christmas during Children's Liturgy of the Word at the 9:30 AM Mass, all through the Advent season.

Our CLTW participants made an Advent Angel to take home, who would be with them through the Christmas count down. Each week in Children's Liturgy, the Advent Angel will teach a new lesson about preparing for the birth of Christ, which every family can follow on the parish website. Just go to www.ollchurch.org to read our lessons and ask the questions that help us to understand this blessed holiday.



Don't worry! If you did not get to make an Advent Angel on the November 21, we have many angels waiting for a friend. Just find a member of CLTW at the 9:30 AM Mass and you may take an Advent Angel home to make and love with your family.

Serving the Body of Christ...

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

What does it take to be an Extraordinary Minister?

- participation in Sunday Eucharist
- commitment to serve two or three times per month
- attendance at a Diocesan training and parish training
- openness to bring Communion to the sick

If you have any questions or are interested in becoming an Extraordinary Minister, please contact Mrs. Mary Borgs of our Parish Liturgy Committee at 665.2928 or you can email Fr. Pat at FrPat@ollchurch.org.

Marriage Preparation and Wedding Ministry

“Married Christians, in virtue of the sacrament of marriage, signify and share in the mystery of that unity and fruitful love which exists between Christ and his Church.”

(Rite of Marriage #1)

Our Lady of Lourdes has a well founded reputation of hospitality and welcoming.

The Wedding Ministry assists the Groom, Bride, their families and guests at the wedding rehearsal and at the Marriage Liturgy itself, so that they can pray well together and experience the hallmark warmth of our Parish. The Ministry consists of volunteer Parishioners; men, women and couples, who give their time to be present at the rehearsal and Liturgy.

“...They are invited to understand the meaning of the responsible and mature love of the community of life and love which their family will be, a real domestic Church which will contribute toward enriching the whole Church...”

(Preparation for the Sacrament of Marriage #2)

“FOCCUS” and “Pre-Cana” are used as our preparation program for the Sacrament of Marriage. They are also facilitated by volunteer Parishioners; married couples who have been trained by the Diocese so they can share the nature of Marriage as they have lived it out in their lives and in their faith. We hope you have benefited from these ministries and hope that you would consider sharing your gifts by being a part of them yourself.

Altar Servers

Starting in fourth grade, our young people, both girls and boys, are asked to consider being trained to serve the Altar for our Saturday, Sunday, Wedding, and Funeral Liturgies. This is a great opportunity to significantly contribute to the Parish as a young member, as well as a wonderful way to be involved in and learn about the prayer and faith-life of the Parish. We are grateful to the many boys and girls, some now men and women, who have been a part of this Ministry through the years. There will be training sessions this winter, spring, and fall.



4th Sunday of Advent

A number of years ago, the teenage son of a friend of mine went on a trip to France. He was going to spend the summer in Taiz, the ecumenical religious community known for welcoming young people. When Harry arrived at Charles de Gaulle airport, he was totally lost. He didn't speak French, and like many a young college student, just imagined that he would breeze through everything without a problem. Travel from the airport to Taiz meant a subway, followed by a train, and then finally a bus. Luckily, in the French transportation system he could just buy one ticket to get him through the excursion. He just had to figure out where to get that ticket. A helpful traveler at the transport center who spoke English helped Harry set off with the correct purchase for the right train. Later, Harry described the situation in this way, "God sent an angel to guide me!"

Angels can be consoling figures. They can also be challenging. The angel that appears at the end of Part I of Tony Kushner's Pulitzer prize-winning diptych, *Angels in America*, portends an uncertain future that will play out in the second part. In biblical tradition, Raphael is the guiding, consoling archangel; Michael is the defending challenger, the warrior. It is Gabriel who lies in the middle: the heralding messenger who shows up with puzzling news that requires a response. Imagine the reply of a fiancé today who might be told, "Oh, by the way, the person you're engaged to is going to have a baby, but it's not yours, but God wants you to marry her anyway." That makes it pretty evident why angels are not always welcome visitors!

These final days before Christmas are filled with so much running around and preparation that it is difficult to grab a moment of peace and quiet. But what would you do if an angel showed up on your doorstep? You'd have to stop!

2010 Liturgical Publications Inc

Readings for the Week of December 19, 2010

Sunday:	Is 7:10-14/Rom 1:1-7/Mt 1:18-24
Monday:	Is 7:10-14/Lk 1:26-38
Tuesday:	Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a/Lk 1:39-45
Wednesday:	1 Sm 1:24-28/Lk 1:46-56
Thursday:	Mal 3:1-4, 23-24/Lk 1:57-66
Friday:	<i>Morning:</i> 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16/Lk 1:67-79
Saturday:	<i>Vigil:</i> Is 62:1-5/Acts 13:16-17, 22-25/Mt 1:1-25 or 1:18-25 <i>Midnight:</i> Is 9:1-6/Ti 2:11-14/Lk 2:1-14 <i>Dawn:</i> Is 62:11-12/Ti 3:4-7/Lk 2:15-20 <i>Day:</i> Is 52:7-10/Heb 1:1-6/Jn 1:1-18 or 1:1-5, 9-14
Next Sunday:	Sir 3:2-7, 12-14/Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17/Mt 2:13-15, 19-23

Thank you

The Bereavement Ministry would like to thank the Religious Education students in Room 24 for their help in setting up the Spiritual Life Center for our Holiday Program on Saturday, December 11. Thank you to the students and their catechist!



Altar Society

Altar linens this week will be cared for by *Pat Wissing*.
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 ...

Giovanni Andriola, Susan Aviza, Ben Bellotti, Viola Callanan, Grace Ciccarello, Virginia Crescini, Lucilia DaTorre, Beverly DeCanio, Mike DeJong, Jeanne DellaRagione, Tony DeVivo, Tony Drexler, Debbie Eichen, Jake Feldman, Patricia Ferrara, Leif Gunderson, Bill Howe, Kathleen Kerrigan, Robyn Kerrigan, Ann Losee, Rachel Mackey, Louise Malcuit, John McNevin, Vincent Meade, Frances Miranda, Julio Miranda, Michael Montesanto, John Mordente, Ruth Murray, Evelyn Nonnon, Karen Parpounas, Joe Radosti, Dorothy Schiavone, AnnMarie Schiraldi, Baby Isabella Shaw, Roy Sorrese, Derek Stahl, Lindsay Stahl, Linda Starr, Patrick Tardo, Nancy Turano, Al Van Pelt, Bunny Vilim, Irv Weiss, Joe Yezek

Please note: All names shall remain on the list for a "short term" of five weeks or "long term" for five months.

Financial Summary

December 12, 2010

Weekly Collection	\$ 18,504.00
Weekly Budget	-\$ 19,000.00
+/- for the week	\$ (496.00)

Immaculate Conception

Collection	\$ 3,085.00
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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*

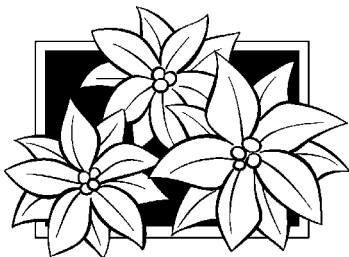
Anthony Mannino-*US Marines*

JD Montefusco-*US Marines*

Peter Provenzano-*US Army*

Joshua Tyrrell-*US Army*

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



Christmas Flower Offerings

Christmas Flower offerings received by **Sunday, December 12** will be published in the Christmas bulletin.

Offerings received after that date, will be published in subsequent bulletins.

Parish Outreach

Office telephone:

661-9262, option 4

Office hours:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday:

9:30 AM - 3 PM

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.

News From Outreach

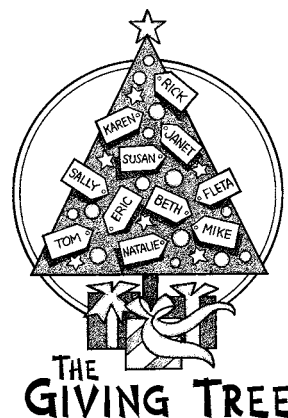
In anticipation of the great event: Christmas!

The Giving Tree will be decorated and filled with tags beginning the first Sunday of Advent, November 28. Once again, PODS will be donating a POD for storage of the gifts you donate.

Each Sunday of Advent, starting December 5, volunteers will be sorting your gifts. If you are interested in becoming an 'elf' -we will meet in the APR at 1 PM and are usually finished by 2:30 PM. We are very organized and work in teams of two-so bring a friend, dust off your elf hat and join us! Another way to 'give' during this Advent season.

-Mary McMahon

Director of Parish Outreach



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.



Chastity and Christmas

by Ron Rolheiser, OMI

Scripture and Christian tradition emphasize that Jesus could only be born out of a chaste womb, just as Christian Spirituality emphasizes he can only come to full bloom inside of a chaste heart. Why? Why this emphasis on chastity?

Chastity needs to be properly understood. For too long we have had an overly-narrow and mostly false concept of chastity. Chastity is too commonly identified with sexual abstinence and sexuality is then seen as something that, in itself, militates against chastity and spirituality. But chastity is not the same thing as celibacy; indeed it is not even, first and foremost, a sexual concept. Someone can be chaste but not celibate, just as someone can be celibate but not chaste. My parents were not celibate, they gave birth to a large family, but they were wonderfully chaste persons. The reverse can also be true. Someone can be celibate but far from chaste.

What is chastity? We are chaste when we stand before the world, others, and God in a way which allows them to be fully themselves without letting our own impatience, selfishness, or unwillingness to remain in tension violate their reality and their natural unfolding. What is meant by that?

Allow me to present three images for this:

- In her book, *Holy The Firm*, Annie Dillard shares this story: One evening, alone in her cabin, she was watching a moth slowly emerge from its cocoon. The process was fascinating but interminably slow. At a point she lost patience and needed to get on to other things, so she picked up a candle and applied a little heat to the process. It worked. The added heat sped up the process and the moth emerged more quickly from its cocoon, but, since a natural process had been interfered with and unnaturally rushed, the moth emerged with ill-formed wings which didn't allow it to fly properly. A fault in chastity led to stunted growth.

- The movie, *Sense and Sensibility*, based on Jane Austen's classic novel, presents its leading character, a woman played by Emma Thompson, as someone who is asked to carry an extremely painful tension for a long time, one having to do with unrequited and unconsummated love. She has no one with whom she can really share her pain and her circumstance requires her to carry on as if she was not carrying this pain. She carries that tension for a long time, sublimating her pain into a graciousness that she extends

even to the very persons who are the source of her tension. Only after a long time is the tension finally resolved and her forbearance in not forcing an earlier, premature resolution, her willingness to carry the tension to term, helps bring about deeper life for everyone, not least for herself. This is the essence of chastity.

- After the Italian, spiritual writer, Carlo Carretto, had spend a number of years living as a hermit in the Sahara desert, he was asked what message he would give to the world if someone asked him the question: What, in your solitude and prayer, do you hear God saying to those of us who are living active lives in the world? Carretto replied: God is saying: learn to wait, learn to wait for everything – for love, for fulfillment, for consummation, for God! Learning to wait, giving God and life the space to unfold as they need to, is the very essence of chastity.

In a number of his books, Nikos Kazantzakis, both fondly and bitterly, makes this assertion: God, it seems, is never in a hurry, while we are always in a hurry. He's right: Life unfolds according to its own innate rhythms which try our patience and it will not let themselves be rushed, except at a cost. Life and love demand both the time and the space within which to unfold according to their own internal dictates. Whenever, because of impatience, selfishness, or our unwillingness to stay inside a tension, we short-circuit that process we, in slight or deep ways, violate their reality.

Chastity is the virtue that invites us to live in patience, to wait, to respect what's other, and to carry tension long enough so that the other can truly be other and gift can unfold precisely as gift.

The word sublime takes its root in the word sublimation. Nothing can be sublime unless there is first sublimation. Nobody gives birth to a baby without a long period of gestation, nobody writes a doctoral thesis in two hours, nobody creates an artistic masterpiece without long hours of sweat and labor, and nobody becomes a heroic individual without carrying unbearable tension. Cinderella only got to go to the ball after she had spent sufficient time in the ashes. Jesus only got to the glory and freedom of Easter Sunday by first sweating blood in the garden.

That is why the Messiah can only be born from a chaste womb and come to life fully only inside of a chaste heart. Christmas allows for no shortcuts.

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.

Hope



So, here we are, in the Advent Season. Liturgically, Advent is a season of Hope, of Anticipation. We wait in darkness, we watch with vigilance...and we hope, we hope, we hope.

Children hope-they hope for a visit from Santa, for presents under the tree, for toys. What about the child who hopes for an outrageous gift-a gift that is impractical, impossible to give...what child hasn't asked for a horse at least once? On Christmas morning, when the feedbag and pony are not under the tree, does the child lose hope? Does the child stop believing? The innocent, pure hope of a child. A child waiting.

What is it you wait for? For whom do you keep vigil? Do you wait for anything? E-mail, text messaging, cell phones, skype, facebook-instantly connected, or more truthfully disconnected? Disconnected from the reality of others, disconnected from the reality of our self—from our soul, from our core, from our God. Is there an intrinsic value in waiting, in hoping, in holding vigil, lighting a candle in the darkness and waiting-waiting quietly, silently waiting from a position of hope.

While living in Florida, I provided counseling to elderly shut-ins. Most were transplanted New Yorkers who moved to Florida when they retired. At the time of my involvement-many were widows, with no family in the area. One month, four of the women died-I was with each- holding vigil in hospital rooms, nursing facilities, bedrooms and hospice. While religious traditions between us were different, this difference became insignificant as I sat at bedsides reading Psalms with these women of faith, waiting for families to arrive. Alert, always to their stirrings, their need for water, for touch, for connection.

Those days of bedside vigils were difficult -simultaneously painful and grace-filled. Needing to ground myself during this period, I began attending a Zendo, three times weekly, for the practice of Zen meditation. There, too, I found myself waiting in silence-waiting in darkness, hoping to connect with self and with God, struggling to be clear of the many thoughts and distractions which were ever-present in meditation-threatening to pull me back to the state of disconnection I was trying to escape.

What happens on Christmas morning when the gifts have all been opened? What happens when the pony isn't under the tree? I ask because that is exactly the moment when hope enters-when all the external trappings are unwrapped, the gifts are put away, the lights on the tree are turned off for the last time. The Church puts aside the Advent season as a time for us to experience hope, to embrace vigil, to experience longing, to wait in darkness.

What does any of this have to do with Outreach and hope? I would suggest that, unlike the hope of a child, mature hope takes courage. Hope becomes the light in our darkness when reason suggests other, lesser outcomes. For many in our community, Outreach is the light in the darkness offering a respite to those weary from the reality of their struggle. Outreach is only able offer hope because of the commitment of this faith community to be Advent people—to be a light in the darkness, to point to a reality far greater than any one of us.

-Mary McMahon
Director of Parish Social Ministry

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.

Centering Prayer Group

OLL Centering Prayer Group will be meeting in the **Spiritual Life Center** on **Thursday, January 6 at 7:30 PM.** If you have any questions, please contact Diane at 587.0966.

Free Food for Those In Need

The C.S.F.P. (Commodity supplemental Food Program), funded by USDA and NYSDOH, administered by Catholic Charities is offering free food. The food package includes cheese, milk, starches, cereals, juices, canned fruits, and more. For further information, and income guidelines for women and children, please call 6331.591.4166 or 631.491.4156.

Dominican Village

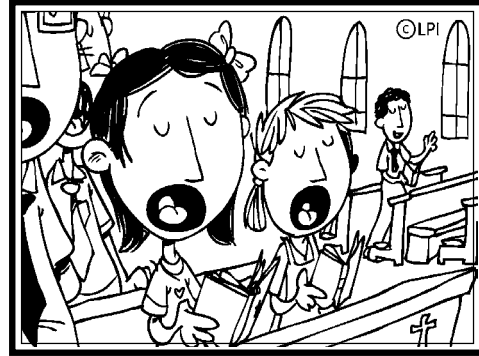
Please join us for an Open House on Thursday, December 30 from 1 PM until 3 PM. Dominican Village is an independent retirement community that offers assisted living and respite care, outstanding programs, all-inclusive services and bountiful amenities. For more information, or to schedule a tour at your convenience, call 631.842.6091 or info@dominicanvillage.org.

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 "**The Best Presents.**" 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

God brought Jesus into the world as a tiny baby. Jesus was God's Son. He was so powerful that he could have gotten anything he wanted. But Jesus did not come to earth to be a rich, selfish ruler. He did not need a palace or fancy clothes. Jesus came to show you that God is with you all the time. He was born to be the King over your life. He gave up his own life to rescue you from your sins, so that you could be close to God forever.



Mission for the Week

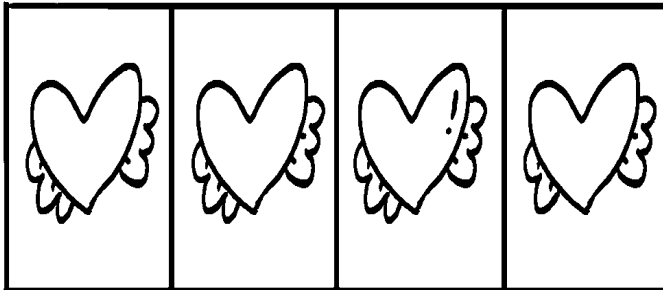
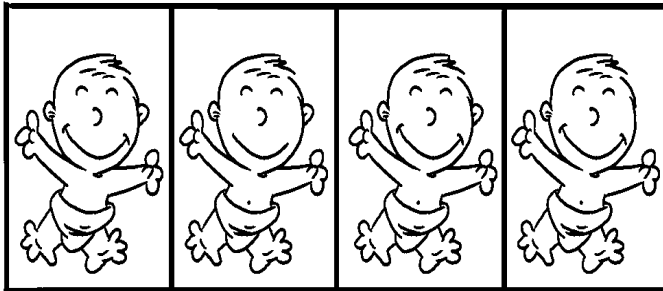


Tonight after dinner, ask your family to light some candles, turn off the lights, and sing some of your favorite Christmas songs about Jesus.



Puzzle

In each series color the image within the box that is identical to the one outside the box. Make sure to notice all the details.



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Prayer



Dear God,
thank you for sending
Jesus to rescue me.

Something to Draw



Draw a picture of
baby Jesus.