

"Rise up in splendor,  
Your light has come"



Is 60:1

## THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

JANUARY 2, 2011 • OUR LADY OF LOURDES



## *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

**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 Scorgia**

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 Scorgia  
Fr. Mike Vetrano

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

fax: 661.7143

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

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

587.7200 (option 2)

Monday-Friday: 9 AM - 3 PM

email: [lkrol@ollschool.org](mailto:lkrol@ollschool.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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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 _____                               |

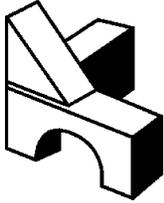
I would prefer to be contacted by:

Phone at: \_\_\_\_\_ Email at: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail at: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Adult Faith Formation



### **Family Matters:**

### **Building Blocks for a Richer Family Life**

**Presenter: Sr. Lauren Hanley, CSJ**

**Tuesdays, January 11 and 18**

**Parish Center**

**7:30 PM – 9:30 PM**

- *Have you ever felt* concerned about how family life is changing?
- *Do you wonder about* how your experience growing up in a family has impacted who you are today?
- *Are you interested in* discovering ways to make changes in how you interact with your family members?
- *Would you like to learn* more about what makes families tick?

### **YES? Then this workshop is for you!**

Recognizing the importance of "family matters", this workshop will provide an opportunity to explore how families work. Emphasis will be placed on how to build on strengths and change patterns that are not life giving.

### **Media Safety for Parents...not to be missed!**

**Presenter: Allegra D'Alo, OLL Youth Director**

**Tuesday, January 4 in the Parish Center at 7:30 PM**

Allegra D'Alo, parish Youth Director, takes us into cyberspace and beyond into "Cautionspace." If you have a child in middle school or high school, please join us for this informative and interactive class on internet security. Learn how to use the security settings on Facebook and discuss the various concerns that parents face in supervising their children on the internet.

### **Save the Dates...and the Time...and the Place...**

**Tuesdays January 25, February 1,8,15 and March 1**

**7:30-9:30 PM**

**Parish Center**

**Book Discussion on *The Naked Now* by Richard Rohr**

**Presenter: Tom Petriano**

Book will be available for purchase.

*More to come...*

*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](mailto:religioused@ollchurch.org).*



## **OLL Pilgrimage to the Holy Land Walking in Jesus' Footsteps April 25 - May 4, 2011**

**Come and walk in the footsteps of Jesus along with our Pastor, Fr. Mike Vetrano.**

Consider being with family and friends on a trip of a lifetime! Walk the streets of Jerusalem and be in the place of our Christian heritage. Come to Bethlehem, visit the Basilica of the Nativity. Be at the Baptism site of Jesus on the Jordan River, sail on the Sea of Galilee and walk in the Garden of Gethsemane. You will visit the room of the Last Supper, walk on the Via Dolorosa "The Way of the Cross", and drive through the wilderness of Judea and the mountains of Jerusalem. All this on your trip of a lifetime. *For more information, our next meeting will be on*

**Thursday, January 20, 7:30 in the Parish Center**

### **Baptism Celebration!**

This past year, Our Lady of Lourdes has welcomed over two hundred newly baptized infants into our faith community. As a parish, we would like to acknowledge and celebrate our new members! Please join us in this celebration on Sunday, January 9 at the 12:30 PM Mass. January 9 is the day that our church remembers the Baptism of our Lord. We couldn't think of a more fitting way to celebrate our Lord's Baptism than to invite the newest members of our parish, God's most precious gift, your baby!

After Mass, we will have a small reception with refreshments in our Parish Center. Please join us to meet the other families that have had their babies baptized, along with the Baptism Ministry Team, here at Our Lady of Lourdes. We hope to see you there!

### **Bereavement Ministry**

#### **Bereavement Support Group**

Our next bereavement group will begin on **Wednesday, January 12, 2011**. We are a general group for all losses. We will be meeting, for six weeks, in the **Spiritual Life Center located in the Convent, from 7:30PM to 9:30 PM**. There is no fee to attend and the group is open to people of all faith denominations and parishes. For information and registration, please call Diane Ackerly at 631.226.9373 or email at [dkkkk710@hotmail.com](mailto:dkkkk710@hotmail.com).

#### **Coffee and Conversation**

This group is to bring past bereavement support group members together for a night of conversation and hospitality. Our next meeting is on **Wednesday, January 5, 2011, in the Spiritual Life Center, from 7:30PM to 9:30PM**. For information, please call Diane Ackerly at 631.226.9373 or email at [dkkkk710@hotmail.com](mailto:dkkkk710@hotmail.com)





## Youth Group Meetings:

Merry Christmas to all from our active youth group! Youth Ministry has taken on a new life at OLL. Youth Group is meeting once a week with both High School and Middle School students. Each meeting is a chance for students to discuss the things that are on their minds—we begin with a prayer and something we call “the high/low check in.” Our group of about twenty explains the best and worst parts of their week. We then move on to a spiritual reflection. Sometimes we talk about faith, what God “looks” like or even sit in complete silence for ten minutes (no easy accomplishment for a teenager)! We finish off each meeting with a “Big Question.” What is a “Big Question?”

It is a question that starts an ethical discussion; a debate about what is right and what is wrong and maybe some things that are in between. Some times it is about Catholic Social teaching which the students act out in our monthly service projects. *The next youth group meeting will take place on January 6, 2011 at 7 PM in Room 16 of the School. Please check the bulletin for important El Salvador meetings and fundraisers.*

## Youth Group Activities:

Since the beginning of the school year, we have been to the “Hospitality Too” Soup Kitchen at St. Anne’s Church in Brentwood and Madonna Heights, a residential treatment facility for abused women in Dix Hills, to volunteer at a fair. Then, last but not least, is our annual trip to El Salvador. Many of our teens have participated and it is certainly a big commitment. Each student must be a part of fundraising for the trip itself, our sponsorship program “Families with Heart,” fundraising for the CASA Project which, through the generosity of the parish, built a home for a family in El Salvador this year. It is such a pleasure as a young adult to be a part of the lives of the truly brilliant teens at OLL. They are living examples of Christ and I am very proud to host them in our Youth Ministry programs. *If you or someone you know is interested in participating in any of our youth projects please do not hesitate to contact Allegra@ollchurch.org or phone 661.3224 ex. 135.*

## El Salvador Sponsorship and Drive at OLL

This year we are celebrating our Familias Con Corazones—“Families With Hearts”—all of the OLL families who sponsor children through CFCA. We are building a display in the narthex to celebrate all of our generous families, and the connections they have with their sponsored children. If you sponsor a child through CFCA, please return the form below to the Rectory or to the special box in the Narthex. If you can, please include a picture of your sponsored child.



**We sponsor a child through CFCA!**

Family/Sponsor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Sponsored Child or Adult: \_\_\_\_\_

# THANK YOU!

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

There are so many who helped to make our Christmas celebrations so beautiful—too many to mention by name, but I wish to thank all those who:

*prepared our worship space, welcomed our parishioners,  
presided at our liturgies, set our altar, ushered those who came to worship,  
ministered the Eucharist, read the Word of God, led us in song,  
praised God with instrument and voice, served at our masses,  
and most of all, for all who prayed and celebrated with us.*

*Fr. Mike*

## You're Invited!

Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton is the first American-born Saint and foundress of the Catholic School system as well as the Sisters of Charity.

On her feast day, **January 4**, the SAGE Group will be presenting a film / reflection on her life in the **Parish Center** and they are inviting all parishioners. Refreshments will be served at **9AM** prior to the film. All are welcome!



## Thank You

The Ministry of Consolation would like to say “Thank-you” to *Michael Librizzi, Matthew Morales, and Tye Ricciardella*, Religious Education-Grade 7 students, who did their Service Project by helping out at the Mass for Bereaved Parents held on Saturday, December 18.

## Our Lady of Lourdes School

# Our Doors are Always Open



**Visit our classes in session-  
Have your child team up with a buddy for a day!**

### ***What Makes Us Different?***

NEW Fully Stocked Science Lab & Media Center, SmartBoard, Piano/Guitar/  
Violin/Dance Lessons Included in Curriculum, Italian and Spanish Language,  
Enrichment Clubs, Student Government, Classroom Laptops, Sports Program,  
Student run TV Studio, Before and After Care, 8th Grade Academy of Inquiry  
in partnership with Stony Brook Medical School, Distance Learning with  
NASA, and Virtual Field Trips from Nursery through 8th Grade

**Early Childhood Programs beginning at 2 years old!**

**2010 -2011 Rolling Registration  
Stop in or Call to Make an Appointment**

**Testimonial:** *“My daughter is in the fifth grade and is in her first year at OLL. I am so very pleased with the challenges that fifth grade has given her so far. This has been such a positive change for my daughter. All her teachers have challenged her to do her very best and to not settle for less. I know she has only been here for a few months, but if this is any indication of what she is to expect in the coming years, we are in for a wonderful ride!”*

*- B. Molina*

**Phone: 631.587.7200 ext.100**

**Fax: 631.587.4531**

**Please visit our Website: [www.ollschool.org](http://www.ollschool.org)**

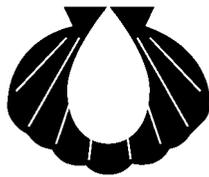
## **Support Groups**

### **Alcoholics Anonymous:**

Monday and Tuesday at  
8 PM and Saturday at 2 PM  
and 7 PM in Lourdes Hall-  
convent lower level.

### **ALANON:**

Each Wednesday at  
10 AM in Lourdes Hall-  
convent lower level.  
(Free babysitting available)



## ***Baptisms***

*Joseph John Zerbo*

Joseph and Justine

## ***Upcoming Marriages***

*Jacqueline Walsh, OLL and*

*Joseph Start, St. Jude, Mastic*

## **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, January 3

*The Most Holy Name of Jesus*

8:00 AM LaRocca & Sweeney Family

## Tuesday, January 4

*Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, religious*

8:00 AM Frank Salerno

## Wednesday, January 5

*St. John Neumann, bishop*

8:00 AM John Francis Dolan, Sr.

## Thursday, January 6

*Blessed André Bessette, religious*

8:00 AM Rose Giacalone

## Friday, January 7

*Saint Raymond of Penafort, priest*

8:00 AM Francis Ahlert

## Saturday, January 8

*The Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God*

8:00 AM Giuseppe Ingoglia, Kathryn Herger,  
Linda Kelly, Rocco Commisso,  
Patricia Caron, Clark Mitchell

5:00 PM Patricia Darois

## Sunday, January 9

8:00 AM Barbara Ann Cassidy

9:30 AM Inez Hunter

11:00 AM Dec'd mbrs of Sweeney & Primrose Family

12:30 PM Alex MacGregor

6:00 PM People of the Parish, George Garone,  
Stephen Straub, Frank Petrelli, Breda Murnane,  
Bruce & Louise Davenport,  
Benjamin Linger, In Thansksgiving to St. Jude



## Rest In Peace

*Marie A. Pandolfo* died on December 9 and celebration of the Mass of Christian Burial was December 14. We extend our prayers to her husband, "Buddy," children, grandchildren, and entire family.

*John J. Kelly* died on November 7 and celebration of the Mass of Christian Burial was December 18. We extend our prayers to his wife, Margaret, son, John, and entire family.

## Senior Circle

**Please note:** There was no meeting held on Monday, December 27.

The next meeting will be held on **Monday, January 31, 2011 at 12:30 PM in the Parish Center.**

## Rosary Christian Mothers

The Rosary Christian Mothers meet on the first Monday evening of each month. The next meeting will be **Monday, January 3.** We will begin with **Rosary at 7:45 PM in the Church** followed by **meeting at 8 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! We will be praying for our children, our country, our men and women in the military and our clergy.



## 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.

## Holy Name Society

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

## 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, call Charles Argento at 586.8528.

# "Renewing Our Spiritual Home"

## Summary Data

- 119 Responses to Questionnaire
- 91% Positive Responses



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

## List of projects that need to be addressed...

- 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

### *Brief summary of written comments...*

- almost all agree lighting in the Church needs to be addressed
- some felt the parking lot is not a top priority
- Parish Center repair/remodel should be a high priority
- flexibility in payment plan for pledges would be appreciated
- many comments stated their understanding that the projects are like maintenance each must do to their own homes

It is time for our current parishioners of our parish to respond with the same love and generosity of our original parishioners and those who were part of our efforts in 1986. We need to care for our home. We need to give priority to our house of faith. Please take a moment and fill out the questionnaire (*found in the Parish Office*) and let us know how you feel-your feedback is important!



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## The Epiphany of the Lord

The wonder and fascination implicit in the appearance of a star and of Magi with their exotic retinue and precious gifts usually overshadows the prophetic words that are found in today's Gospel. Matthew's mash up of Micah 5:1 and 2 Samuel 5:2 represents a method on his part to portray Jesus as the true Messiah and king who is born in accordance with the Scriptures. In alluding to the prophet Micah's oracle about Bethlehem, Matthew has the chief priests and scribes of the people respond to Herod's question with:

"from you shall come a ruler, who is to shepherd my people Israel."

It is the last part of this quote that comes from 2 Samuel at the time David was anointed king of Israel.

We tend to think of kings as omnipotent rulers who are in charge of everything. But the biblical dimensions of kingship involve a different set of realities. The king is shepherd and protector of the people. His power—that is, the loyalty of his forces to him—is to be used to ward off enemies and to care for the tribes that the LORD has entrusted to him. When the king fails in this duty, especially when it comes to protecting the poor, it is then that the LORD pronounces judgment against the king. This newborn King of the Jews in Matthew's Gospel comes to shepherd and care for his people. He will save us from the enemy: sin and death.

Now comes the big leap! This day, the Epiphany, is one of the great baptismal feasts of the church (after Easter and Pentecost). The early church saw in this celebration its own call to put on Christ, who is priest, prophet, and king. When we were anointed at our baptism we were given that very charge: to be a king like Christ. So how will you care for the poor today? How will you shepherd God's people?

2010 Liturgical Publications Inc

### Readings for the Week of January 2, 2011

<b>Sunday:</b>	Is 60:1-6/Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6/Mt 2:1-12
<b>Monday:</b>	1 Jn 3:22---4:6/Mt 4:12-17, 23-25
<b>Tuesday:</b>	1 Jn 4:7-10/Mk 6:34-44
<b>Wednesday:</b>	1 Jn 4:11-18/Mk 6:45-52
<b>Thursday:</b>	1 Jn 4:19---5:4/Lk 4:14-22a
<b>Friday:</b>	1 Jn 5:5-13/Lk 5:12-16
<b>Saturday:</b>	1 Jn 5:14-21/Jn 3:22-30
<b>Next Sunday:</b>	Is 42:1-4, 6-7/Acts 10:34-38/Mt 3:13-17

## Altar Society

Altar linens this week will be cared for by *Carol Grillo*.  
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, Bill Howe, Kathleen Kerrigan, Robyn Kerrigan, Ann Losee, Louise Malcuit, John McNevin, Vincent Meade, Frances Miranda, Julio Miranda, Michael Montesanto, John Mordente, Ruth Murray, Evelyn Nonnon, Karen Parpounas, Fran Pizzani, 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*

## Financial Summary

### December 19, 2010

Weekly Collection	\$ 17,606.00
Weekly Budget	-\$ 19,000.00
+/- for the week	\$ (1,394.00)

*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

**Joshua Tyrrell**-US Army

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

## 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 McMahan, Director of Parish Social Ministry at 661.3224, option 4.



## Christmas Flower Offerings

*Chris Romanello*

*Edward F. White*

*Virginia Cruse*

*Joseph E. Manno, Sr.*

*Thomas Dillon, Sr.*

*Thomas Dillon, Jr.*

*James Dillon*

*Loehr/Marczak Families*

*George Prygocki*

*Dec'd mbrs of Schmitt &*

*Loscalzo Family*

*Endres & Perdue Families*

*Brian D'Angelo*

*Dec'd mbrs of Donofrio &*

*Mascaro Families*

*Nappo-Gianiotis Family*

*Jerry DiCanio*

*Jossep Ennis*

*Douglas Killane, Sr.*

*Lawrence Killane*

*Maureen Ferro*

*Robert J. Boyd*

*Gordon E. McBrien*

*Lawrence & Joan Curreri*

*Carmine Maiocco*

*My Dad*

*James, Edna McGuire*

*Frank DiBisceglie*

*M/M Kevin Kilkelly*

*Anita Macaluso*

*Tony DeLuca*

*Dec'd mbrs Mundy &*

*Conaughton Families*

*M/M Peter Rodney*

*Robert D. Colin*

*Colin & Yankel Families*

*Kay Sullo*

*John Szczecina*

*All Family Members*

*M/M Joseph Belliveau*

*Thomas, Patsy,*

*Elizabeth, Mary*

*Daniel, Mike &*

*Mickey Salegna*

*Anne Harnes*

*Lil Daly*

*M/M Joe Carpenter*

*Joseph DiMola III*

*William LeComte*

*Darlene Schultheis*

*Jennifer Gordon*

*Dec'd mbrs of*

*Buetow Family*

*Melissa Rogan*

*Grace Cavalluzzo*

*M/M Clifford Hunter*

*M/M Richard Kreuzburg*

*Vera DeSantis*

*Joseph Snopkowski*

*Susan Castonguay*

# Reasons to Celebrate Christmas

by Ron Rolheiser, OMI

For many people the thought of Christmas brings fatigue. It's not the religious aspect that causes the tiredness, but the overdrawn rituals that surround it: the overly decorated shops, the conscriptive shopping, the lights, the Santas, the Christmas trees, and the carols that begin to echo through our malls already in early November.

And so it is asked: What has all of this, or any of it, got to do with the birth of Jesus? Hasn't Advent, which is supposed to be a time of preparation for the feast, become an exhausting ordeal that brings us to Christmas day already saturated with what we were supposed to be building up to? Wouldn't we honor Jesus more if we spend the money we lavish on Christmas on the poor instead? Don't our Christmas celebrations serve to obliterate our awareness of Jesus' birth more than highlight it? Valid questions.

Our Christmas celebrations, admittedly, do start too early, are too-commercially driven, do focus too little on anything religious, and do not take the poor sufficiently into account. Too often too they serve to obliterate religious awareness rather than highlight it. And so it is easy to be cynical about the Christmas. It contains too many excesses.

However, with that being conceded, we need to be careful not to throw out the baby with the bath water – and that is more than a pun in this case. Because something is done badly does not mean it should be cancelled. What is called for, I believe, is not the cancellation of the tinsel, the lights, the socials, the food, and the drink that surround Christmas, but a better use of them. There are good reasons to cancel the rituals with which we surround Christmas, but there are even better reasons for keeping them.

What are those reasons? Why continue so many of these rituals when, almost invariably, they degenerate into excess and fatigue?

Because we have a congenital need to celebrate, pure and simple. As human beings we have a healthy, God-given, genetically-encoded need to sometimes make festival, to have carnival, to celebrate an elaborate Sabbath, to park our prudence for a few hours, and to live life as if there wasn't any reason to pinch our pennies or to be cold to our neighbors. Christmas is Sabbath, the supreme Sabbath.

There are seasons in life, and these should be on

a regular cycle, that are meant precisely for enjoyment, for family, for friends, for color, for tinsel, and for good food and good drink. There is even the occasional time for some prudent excess. Jesus gave voice to this when his disciples were scandalized by a woman's excess in anointing his feet with perfume and kisses.

All cultures, not least those who are economically poor, have times of festival where, explicitly or implicitly, they take seriously the words: The poor you will always have with you, but today it is time to celebrate. Christmas is such a time, meant for festival.

John Shea, in his now-classic book on Christmas, *Starlight*, tells the story of a family who decided one year to celebrate an alternative Christmas. They did not put up a tree, did not string up any lights, played no carols, and did not exchange gifts. They met for a simple, quiet meal on Christmas day. Asked by friends how it all went over, one family member replied that it "was pleasant". Another member, perhaps speaking more honestly, stated that it was "an existential abyss".

There is a God-given pressure inside of us that pushes us to celebrate and instills in us an irrepressible sense that we are not meant for poverty, gloom, and carefully measured-out relationships, but that we are meant ultimately for the feast, the dance, the place of lights and music, and the place where we don't measure out our pennies and our hearts on the basis of having to survive and pay mortgages. The celebration of festival and carnival, even with their excesses, help teach us that.

Christmas is such a festival. In the end, its celebration is a lesson in faith and hope, even when it isn't as strong a lesson in prudence.

To make a festival of Christmas, to surround Jesus' birthday with all the joy, light, music, gift-giving, energy, and warmth we can muster is, strange as this may sound, a prophetic act. It is, or at least it can be, an expression of faith and hope. It's not the person who says: "It's rotten, let's cancel it!" who radiates hope. That can easily be despair masquerading as faith. No. It is the man or woman who, despite the world's misuse and abuse of these, still strings up the Christmas lights, trims the tree and the turkey, turns up the carols, passes gifts to loved ones, sits down at table with family and friends, and flashes a grin to the world, who is radiating faith, who is saying that we are meant for more than gloom, who is celebrating Jesus' birth.

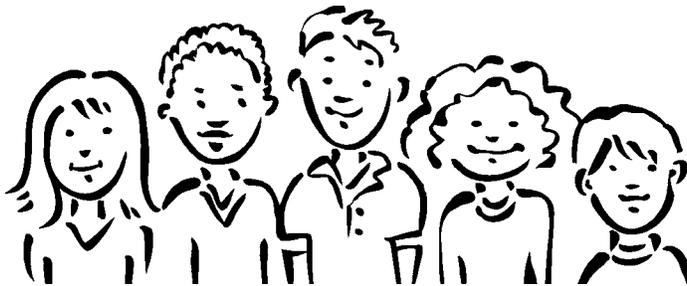
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*Used with permission of the author, Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser. Father Rolheiser is a theologian, teacher, and award-winning author and is currently the President of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, TX. He can be contacted through his website-[www.ronrolheiser.com](http://www.ronrolheiser.com).*

## Service & Goods Auction

St. John the Baptist Diocesan High School, West Islip, is proud to announce their 12th Annual Service & Goods Auction which will be held on Friday, January 21 at 7 PM in the Cougar Café. Many items to bid on, door prizes and raffles! Vacations, camps and dinners are just a few items to bid on. Please join us for a fun evening where the proceeds will benefit students at SJB.

## We Can End Childhood Hunger...



*"If a child smiles, if an adult smiles, this is very important. In our daily life, if we can smile, if we can be peaceful and happy, not only we, but everyone will profit from it. This is the most basic kind of peace work."*

*Buddhist teacher Thich Nhat Hahn*

### **We Have the Resources. Do We Have the Will?**

"Hungry children incur ... impairments that limit their physical, intellectual and emotional development.... [They] do more poorly in school ... because they are not well prepared for school and cannot concentrate. [They] have more social and behavioral problems because they feel bad, have less energy... and cannot adapt as well...."

(Source: Child Food Insecurity: The Economic Impact on Our Nation, John Cook, Ph.D., Karen Jeng, AB, 2009)

Have you volunteered as a mentor or tutor to help end the effects of childhood hunger?

For more information [www.islandharvest.org](http://www.islandharvest.org)

### **Child Nutrition Authorization Signed into Law**

The Child Nutrition Reauthorization is now law! This means that crucial funding for Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), the Special Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and other programs will continue. Thank you to everyone who contacted their Representatives!

Going forward, we must make sure that the SNAP Program (formerly known as food stamps) is fully funded. We will keep you informed.

### **And starting in 2011 - Island Harvest to be Honored by ACIT**

ACIT (Advancement and Commerce, Industry & Technology) will present Island Harvest with its Special Recognition Award at its Executive Business Breakfast on Friday, January 7. A portion of proceeds collected at the breakfast will be donated to Island Harvest.

## 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 Saturday, January 8 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](mailto: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 "**Fresh Start.**" 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 Channel 29/137 or Verizon FIOS 296 for the Best in Catholic Television!

## Sharing the Gospel

When Jesus was born, angels sang. I'll bet you never thought stars could sing for Jesus, too. But the stars in the sky sang in their own way, just by moving and twinkling in the sky. The Savior was born. Jesus was the King that God's people had been waiting for. Magi who had been watching the sky saw a star much brighter than the rest. They followed that star until they found Jesus, and they worshipped their new King.



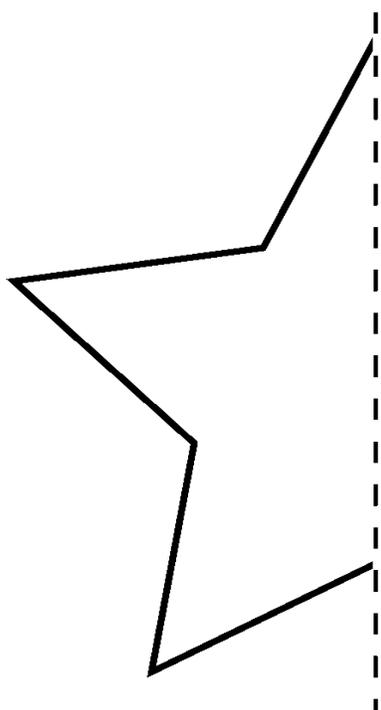
## Mission for the Week

Ask your family if you can visit a planetarium, or look through a special telescope, so you can see the stars God made.



## Puzzle

Can you draw the second half of this star?



©LPI

## Prayer



Dear God,  
 thank you for making the stars move and twinkle in a special way, so that the Magi could find Jesus.

## Something to Draw



Draw a picture of the Magi following the brightest star.