

Dear Parishioners:

Next weekend (October 17 – 18), our parish family of Our Lady of Lourdes will welcome a special guest. Msgr. James McNamara will be here for a Parish Visitation. While Msgr. Jim McNamara and I are not related, we both come from St. Ignatius Church in Hicksville and we lived about 4 blocks away each other. Often times, we would get each other's mail by mistake which was funny since his dad and my dad were involved in local politics (on opposite sides of the fence) and we would get each other's political literature!

Msgr. Jim McNamara is the "Episcopal Vicar" for our area. He represents Bishop Murphy and Msgr. Jim has certain administrative and pastoral responsibilities regarding our parish. One of his **responsibilities is to visit parishes. On Page 10 of this bulletin, Msgr. McNamara outlines the** purpose of the parish visitation. The visitation is an opportunity to reflect on what we, as a parish, have accomplished and what, as a parish, do we need to do for the future. Please welcome Msgr. James McNamara to our parish family.

As many of you know, the Diocese of Rockville Centre has been committed to the safety of our children from child sexual abuse. As part of that commitment, Bishop Murphy has mandated that **all** employees and **all** volunteers accomplish three (3) tasks: undergo a criminal background check, sign a Code of Conduct and attend a VIRTUS training session. VIRTUS training is an approximately 3-hour training session to alert one to the signs of child sexual abuse and what we can do to prevent it.

Over 10 years ago, the United States bishops had mandated that these three tasks had to be accomplished by all employees and those volunteers greatly involved with children. Bishop Murphy raised the bar to include all volunteers. I think it is a sign of Bishop Murphy's strong support and commitment of the work of the Diocese in this area.

Every year (around June), the diocesan Office for the Protection of Children and Young Persons asks each parish to submit a list of everyone who has accomplished those three tasks mentioned above. As your pastor, I take this responsibility – the safety of your children – very seriously. No person is allowed to work for the parish or to volunteer in any capacity unless they have had a criminal background check, signed a Code of Conduct and attended a VIRTUS training session.

In Christ,

Fr. Brian

**PS: Don't forget we are still open for more donors to the Catholic Ministries Appeal. We are at 86% of our goal. When we reach our goal, our parish receives a 20% rebate. Our goal is \$107,000. That means if we reach our goal, we will receive a \$21,000 rebate, money that will be put to good use here in the parish. Help the Diocese and our own parish at the same time by contributing to the Catholic Ministries Appeal. There are envelopes at the doors of the Church.**