

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Our Lady of Lourdes • February 14, 2010



**"Blessed are you who are
poor, for the kingdom
of God is yours."**



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

LENT 2010

Distribution of Ashes

On Ash Wednesday, February 17, we celebrate the distribution of blessed ashes every hour on the hour from 7 AM until 9 PM.
Mass with distribution of ashes is celebrated at 8 AM and 8 PM.

Burning of the Palms

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

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



We invite all parishioners to bring palm from last year's celebration of Palm Sunday. These blessed palm branches from last year's Holy Week will be burned outside church at all masses on February 13/14 to mark the beginning of Lent and to provide the ashes for Ash Wednesday.

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

Save the dates...

Directed Retreat

Sunday, March 14 thru Saturday, March 20
*Looking for something to do for **YOURSELF**
during Lent?*



RIGHT HERE... in our own parish surroundings...
Vita Scorcio and her team from St. Ignatius Retreat House offers the opportunity to experience a Directed Prayer Retreat to the people of Our Lady of Lourdes, **RIGHT NOW...** as we live out our daily lives. Details to follow...

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. Keep those dates open.

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....*

Adult Faith Formation

*Images of Mercy - Icons of Justice**

**applicable for Advance Certificate*

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

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

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

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 religiously@ollchurch.org.

It's time for

FAT

TUESDAY!



Outreach is hosting the
Second Annual

MARDI GRAS

Tuesday, February 16

7 PM - 9 PM

All-Purpose Room



FOOD ~ GAMES ~ PRIZES

HOT DOGS ~ ICE CREAM

and FUN! FUN! FUN!

Admission is \$5 per person - includes all the
food and fun your heart can hold as we prepare to
enter the great feast of Lent!

Call our Outreach office for more information.

Raffle Tickets \$5 for 25

Proceeds to benefit Outreach.

An Invitation to all men from OLL and beyond...

Men's Group

We invite all men of the parish to meet for prayer and reflection after 8 AM Mass on **Thursday, February 18, 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.

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

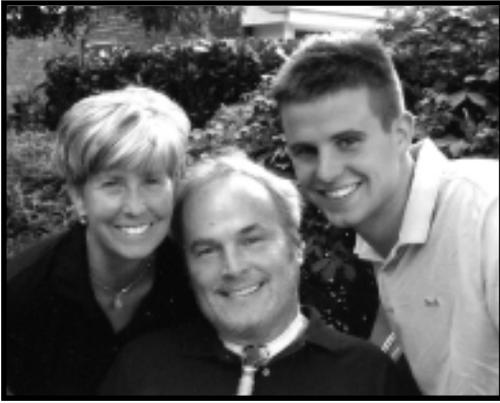
Do you miss the outdoors? Do you miss the warm feeling of sunshine? Join us and swing ahead to summer! We are in need of committee members, volunteers, golfers, and donations (Local Merchants and Materials). For more information contact Rich Maher at rmaher@ollschool.org.

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.



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

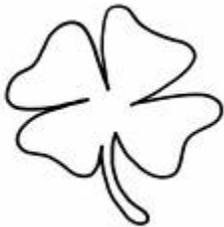
Steven McDonald is the NYPD officer who was questioning three youths in Central Park one hot summer day in 1986 when one of them shot him three times—a brutal attack that he narrowly survived, but which left him paralyzed from the neck down, and dependent on a tracheotomy.

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

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

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

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



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

watch future bulletins for more details...



Our Lady of Lourdes Mission Awareness Trip 2010

As many of you know, this past July, a team of 28 OLL parishioners traveled to El Salvador to pray and work with the communities of Mogotes and Tacuba. It is in keeping with Catholic Social teaching that we help others and share our faith with Catholics everywhere.

With the help of the parishioners here at home, the El Salvador Team has been raising money through our CASA project to build homes for those belonging to our sister parishes. Through the support of Our Lady of Lourdes, our young people have been able to experience another culture and help people in need. Thank you OLL!

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 Schedule



Middle School

- February 22nd (PC)
- March 1st, 15th (PC)
- April 5th, 19th (PC)
- May 3rd, 17th (PC)
- June 7th

High School

- February 18th (PC)
- March 4th, 18th (PC)
- April 8th (PC), 22nd
- May 6th, 20th
- June 3rd

**All meetings will be in Room 16 of the school unless otherwise specified.*

OLL Youth Ministry

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



Young Women's Prayer Group

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

Peace and Justice Spotlight

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

There, the members of the club discuss current pressing social issues within the context of Catholic Social Teaching. We also think of ways that we can support those in our community who are in need.

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.

Can you and/or your family shovel, snow blow or clear out another family in need?

If you need service hours, or just want to be a BIG help, sign up to be a St. Bernard! St. Bernard volunteers shovel snow for the elderly and disabled members of our community in the winter. Sign up with Allegra@ollchurch.org and I will sign off on your service hours.



If you have any questions or concerns, please call Allegra at 661.3224, extension 135.

Support Groups

Alcoholics Anonymous:

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

ALANON:

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



Rest In Peace

Harold M. Cannon, Sr. died on January 31 and the Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on February 4. We extend our prayers to his wife, Judy, children, grandchildren, and entire family.

Justine Eck died on February 1 and the Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on February 4. We extend our prayers to her husband, Don, her children, grandchildren, and entire family.

Judith Tasso died on February 1 and the Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on February 4. We extend our prayers to her husband, George, her children, 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.



The Parish Office will be **closed on Monday, February 15** in observance of President's Day. The Parish Office will re-open on Tuesday, February 16 at 9 AM.

Remembering . . .

Monday, February 15

8:00 AM Theresa Reardon & Carmine Bucherelli

Tuesday, February 16

8:00 AM Gordon Carlock

Wednesday, February 17

Ash Wednesday

8:00 AM Barbara Lanigan

8:00 PM Carmela Maietta

Thursday, February 18

8:00 AM Margaret Homann

Friday, February 19

8:00 AM Thomas & Lillian Calogero

Saturday, February 20

8:00 AM Albert Ritacco, Kathryn Puma, Lillian Gerken,
Gloria Oliveira, Boris Grcic, Archie Bahruth, Brian Thomas

5:00 PM Armand Porzio
Fr. Mike Vetrano

Sunday, February 21

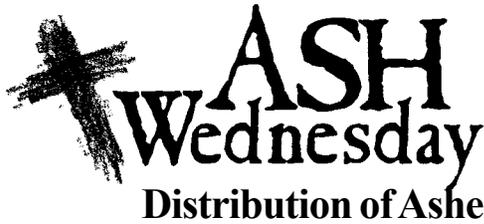
8:00 AM Robert J. Wilson
Fr. Ambrose Cabildo

9:30 AM George Constantine Khoury
Fr. Mike Vetrano

11:00 AM Robert Mariani
Fr. Pat Amabile

12:30 PM Nena Morales
Fr. Bob Scheckenback

6:00 PM People of the Parish, Frances Baker, Gertrude Teufel,
Antoinette Cellura, Mary Fedele, Rose Muschio,
Archie Bahruth, Joan Maietta, Gloria Petrizze
Fr. Bob Scheckenback



Distribution of Ashes

On Ash Wednesday, February 17, we celebrate the distribution of blessed ashes every hour on the hour from 7 AM until 9 PM.

Mass, with distribution of ashes, is celebrated at 8 AM and 8 PM.



6th Sunday in Ordinary Time

It's unlikely that anyone has wished you "Happy Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time!" And I doubt that any Hallmark store carries fancy cards celebrating the Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time. It is Valentine's Day, and many cards and chocolates will be proffered to loved ones on this day named after a martyred Roman priest whose feast has become synonymous with the celebration of love.

While St. Valentine's Day is in full swing, this is also the last Sunday before Lent begins. We'll celebrate Ash Wednesday in just a few days and renew our traditional Lenten practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Sunday's Gospel can get us ready for that.

We're used to hearing Matthew's version of the Eight Beatitudes. Luke does things a little differently. He gives us only four beatitudes, paralleled by "woes." And Luke is very concrete. If you're poor, you'll be rich. If you're rich, you'll be poor. If you're hungry, you'll be filled, and vice versa. Luke's blessings and woes provide a good challenge for us as we enter into Lent. Our fasting and almsgiving are directed at balancing out that equation of emptying ourselves to help the poor and the hungry. In doing that, we can become a blessing to others, and at the same time, bring about less woe in this suffering world.

So maybe it is appropriate that we celebrate Valentine's Day (and the Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time) with a Gospel about blessings and woes. After all, true love isn't always easy; it demands some sacrifice. We'll be asked to sacrifice during Lent, placing a demand on our love. May we be as faithful as that martyred Roman priest, whose name has come to symbolize love, who imitated his Master, by giving up all.

2009 Liturgical Publications Inc

Readings for the Week of February 14, 2010

Sunday:	Jer 17:5-8/1 Cor 15:12, 16-20/Lk 6:17, 20-26
Monday:	Jas 1:1-11/Mk 8:11-13
Tuesday:	Jas 1:12-18/Mk 8:14-21
Wednesday:	Jl 2:12-18/2 Cor 5:20---6:2/Mt 6:1-6, 16-18
Thursday:	Dt 30:15-20/Lk 9:22-25
Friday:	Is 58:1-9a/Mt 9:14-15
Saturday:	Is 58:9b-14/Lk 5:27-32
Next Sunday:	Dt 26:4-10/Rom 10:8-13/Lk 4:1-13

Parish Outreach

Office telephone:

661-9262, option 4

Office hours:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday:

9:30 AM - 3 PM

In December, I wrote that Outreach had enough food and asked that people stop donating for awhile. Well, the time has come to request assistance again.

Outreach is in need of specific food items:

Pantry Needs

peanut butter
jelly
canned pork and beans
spaghetti sauce
hand soap
hot cocoa
cookies
crackers



Thank you for your ongoing support to Outreach.

Free Food for Those in Need

The Commodity Supplemental Food Program, (C.S.F.P.) funded by USDA, NYSDOH, and administered by Catholic Charities, is offering free food for 6 to 12 month post-partum women, children from the age of 5 and up to their sixth birthday, and seniors age 60 and over who are income eligible.

The food package includes cheese, milk, starches, cereals, juices, canned fruits, vegetables, fish, meats and more. Income guidelines for seniors are as follows:

- gross monthly income is \$1,174 or less for a single senior
- \$1,579 or less for a senior couple.

For further information and income guidelines for women and children in Nassau or Suffolk, please call 631.491.4166 or 631.491.4156.

Financial Summary

February 7, 2010

Weekly Collection	\$ 19,892.00
Weekly Budget	-\$ 19,000.00
+/- for the week	\$ 892.00

Church in Need \$ 3,791.00

The estimated weekly collection needed to maintain and operate our parish buildings, ministries, programs and salaries is \$19,000.

Members in the Military

We ask that you pray especially for those in our parish that are on active duty in the Middle East conflict.

They are:

Bryan R. Dempsey-*US Marines*

Christopher Florca-*US Marines*

Michael Mallimo- *US Army*

Anthony Mannino-*US Marines*

JD Montefusco-*US Marines*

Peter Provenzano-*US Army*

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

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

Mass Book of Intentions

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

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

Altar Society

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

Pastoral Care of Our Sick

Please call the Parish Office at 661.3224 to leave the names of parishioners who:



- are homebound and would like to receive the Eucharist
- are in Good Samaritan Hospital and would like to be visited by a member of our Pastoral Care Ministry.
- would like to receive the Sacrament of the Sick.

Pray for Our Sick

Please remember to keep in your thoughts and prayers ...

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

Humility, Ego and Greatness

by Ron Rolheiser, OMI

For most of us, I suspect, the word ego has a negative connotation. To accuse someone of having a big ego is to accuse him of being overfull of himself, inflated, grandiose, and lacking in humility. We almost always oppose the words ego and humility. To have a big ego is to not be humble.

But that can be simplistic and untrue. To have a strong, large ego isn't necessarily a bad thing. In fact, it is a needed thing, especially if we are ever to achieve anything of worth. Nobody does anything great without a strong ego, and that doesn't mean that he or she isn't humble. For example:

Few people would ever think of Mother Theresa as having had a big ego. We think of her as humility incarnate. Yet, clearly, she had a huge ego - a powerful self-image that allowed her to stand before the whole world convinced of her truth, convinced of her worth, and convinced of her importance. She could stand before anyone in the world secure in the knowledge that her person and her word were important. It takes a powerful ego to do that, one more powerful than most of us possess. Indeed that was one of the keys to her greatness. She was aware that she was a unique and blessed instrument of God in this world and she was secure enough to act on that.

And yet she was humble. She was aware as well, always, that everything that made her unique and special and powerful did not come from her, but from God. She was simply a channel of somebody else's power and grace. She had a huge ego, but she wasn't an egoist. She was never full of herself, only full of God.

John Paul II might be similarly judged: He too was a model of humility, but he too clearly had a huge ego. He could stand in front of millions of people, stretch out his hands, and say: "I love you!" (Along with the implied corollary?) "And it's important that you hear this from me!" It takes a powerful ego to do that. Most of us would experience a congenital seizure if we tried to do this. We would be blocked by a hundred internal inhibitions, all of them paralyzing us with the words: "Who do you think you are to say something like that! What gives you the right to think the world wants a public declaration of your love?"

Again, like Mother Theresa, John Paul II could say this and still be humble because he was also clear

that his uniqueness and grace did not come from him or belong to him. He was only its channel. He could access greatness and let it flow through him without apology, but he didn't identify with that greatness or claim it as his own. That's the difference between humility and grandiosity, between being great and being an egoist. An egoist accesses the greatness, but, unlike a saint, identifies with it and claims it as his own.

Spirituality, in general, has been slow to admit the importance of ego and has often been in outright denial of the role it plays in greatness, especially spiritual greatness. Somehow we cannot admit that saints like Francis of Assisi, Theresa of Avila, John of the Cross, or Therese of Lisieux had huge egos - powerful self-images that made them secure in the sense of their unique importance. Instead we project on to them a false idea of humility which isn't true to them and which hurts us.

It hurts us because, for so many of us, the bigger problem in our lives, including our spiritual lives, is precisely that our egos are too weak. Our self-image is too weak to allow us to do anything really great or even just to reach out in warmth and love.

Because our self-image is weak, unlike Mother Theresa or John Paul II, we are too inhibited to reach out, to speak our truth and to express our love. We have too many internal voices (no doubt, originally external voices) that habitually paralyze us with the words: "Who do you think you are! That's just pride and arrogance! That's just ego! You aren't talented enough or good enough to do this! Nobody wants this from you!"

As well, it is not because our egos are strong but because they are weak that we so often feel the need to protect ourselves. We struggle to be vulnerable, to not be paranoid and protect ourselves. Why? Precisely because we aren't secure enough inside, because our egos and our sense of self-worth are shaky. Francis of Assisi, Theresa of Avila, Therese of Lisieux, and John of the Cross never needed to protect themselves. They were secure enough to be vulnerable. They had strong egos.

We should always be wary of pride, of egoism. But false humility does not protect us against pride. Instead it prevents us from being warm and loving - and from ever achieving anything great.

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.

A SAGE's Testament

Phil Charron was a member of the SAGE group. He became very seriously ill last year and died on October 7, 2009 the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary. Phil was so real, so genuine. Phil always arrived for our meetings with a cheerful smile, never mentioning his regular dialysis treatments that he would undergo in the early hours of the day, three times each week.

At our meetings, he spoke easily and freely in the group about how he related to God and it seemed to us that he and God had a friend-to-friend relationship. He took the bitter of life with the sweet, and spoke with God about it all. He lovingly shared with the SAGE's those conversations and how they helped him deal with the ups and downs of his life, as he faced the suffering that came with his illness. His words about God flowed and the brightness of his face as he spoke conveyed to us the peace of soul that was his.

On one occasion, when Sister Betty and Sister Margaret visited Phil at Stony Brook hospital, he dictated a letter that he wanted to be read to the SAGE Group. His letter was read here at his funeral Mass. The SAGE Group members recently asked that his letter be shared with the parish:

To all my SAGEs from Phil -

*I've been living in the presence of death
and the presence of pain.
Pain has a way of cleansing us of all that is false.
Looking at death is the
ultimate challenge to our beliefs.
Being in pain and facing death
remove all thoughts about union with God.
It leaves you mute.
You walk into the ultimate night of darkness.*

*I've walked through it, my dear SAGEs,
and I've found that if you accept being completely helpless
as a weeping child before God,
and pray for protection and loving solace,
by saying: "God, I'm yours." "Your will be done,"
God will be there for you.*

*God did come through my darkness
and held my hand
and guided me around death's door.
Believe, accept,
and live in the assurance
that we are all God's children
and we are LOVED.*

These words give us a glimpse into the faith-life of this good and holy man.

Life Center of Long Island

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

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

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

Dominican Village

Please join us for an Open House on Saturday, February 27, 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.

Chinese Auction

Sponsored by the Tara Court Major Degree Team of the Suffolk County A.O.H. on Sunday, February 21 at the A.O.H. Division 2, 27 Locust Avenue, Babylon. Doors open at 2:30 PM Donation is \$7 and includes coffee, tea and soda bread. For information or directions call Eileen at 631.242.5966 or Pat at 516.796.8201.

Religion & Rock

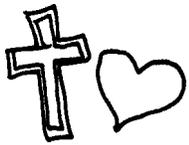
Tune into "Religion & Rock" with Msgr. Jim Vlaun on Sunday from 7 AM to 8 AM on WBAB 102.3 FM or 95.3 on the East End of Long Island. Listen on Saturdays at 11 PM on Sirius Radio, Channel 159, the Catholic Channel and at 11 PM on XM Satellite, channel 117. Next Sunday's theme is "**Relationships.**" 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 day in heaven, God will reward you for all the loving things you do. When you clean up the dishes without being asked, God sees. If other people are mean to you because you love Jesus, God sees. God will be so happy to see you in heaven!



Mission for the Week

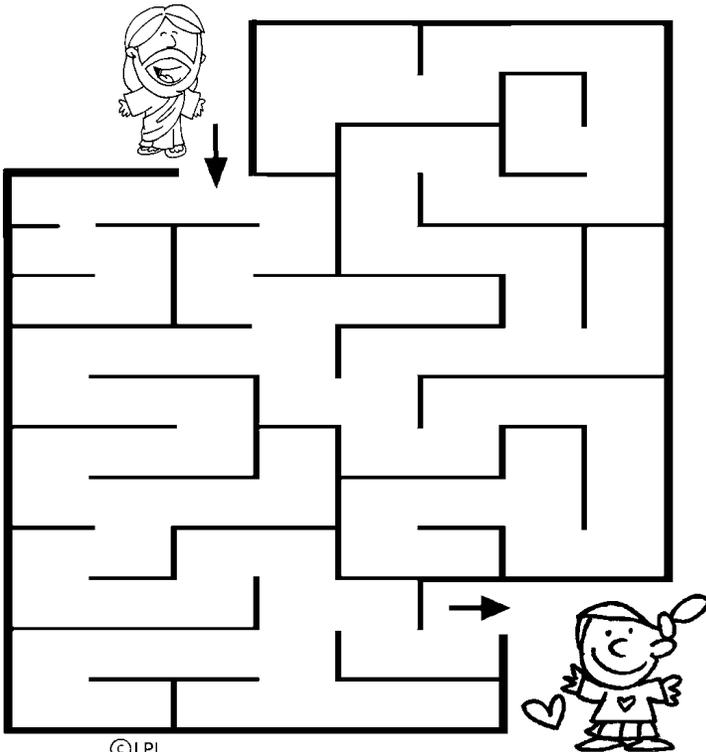


Are any of your neighbors lonely?

Go out of your way to show Jesus' love "to those people.

Puzzle

Find the way that leads to heaven.



Prayer



Dear God,
help me love you
with my whole heart. Help
me do things that will
make "you smile.

Something to Draw



Draw yourself playing with
a classmate who does not
have many friends.