

# BEHOLD!



JOHN 1:29

THE LAMB OF GOD WHO  
TAKES AWAY THE SIN OF  
THE WORLD.

SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

JANUARY 16, 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: \_\_\_\_\_

**Our Lady of Lourdes School**

# **Our Doors are Always Open**



## **OPEN HOUSE**

**Sunday, January 30 • 10:30 AM - 12:30 PM**

**Family Mass 9:30 AM**

### ***Come See What Makes Us Different?***

NEW Fully Stocked Science Lab & Media Center, SmartBoard used in every classroom, Piano/Guitar/Violin/Ballroom Dance Lessons, Italian and Spanish Language, After-School Enrichment Clubs, Student Government, Classroom Laptops, Championship Sports Program, Student run TV Studio, Extended 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.

**Visit our classes in session-  
Have your child shadow a buddy for the day!**

**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)**



## **March for Life**

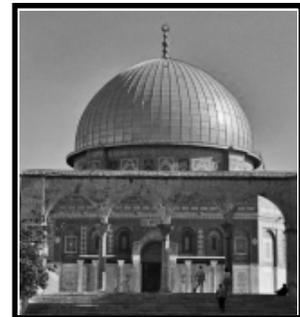
Please join Ss. Cyril and Methodius Parish and School as we  
**“March for Life” in Washington, DC on Monday, January 24.**

Mass will be at 5 AM and then we will leave on the bus and return before 11 PM. A non-refundable \$15 donation is requested.

We have water and snacks. Bring your own lunch, your rosary and your energy to our nation’s Capitol to hear our Church and political leaders speak out for life. For further information, or to sign up, please call Annette at 631.661.9109.

If you have any more questions, you can contact Fr. Bob Scheckenback, Respect Life contact person here at Our Lady of Lourdes.

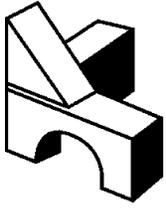
## **OLL Pilgrimage to the Holy Land Walking in Jesus’ Footsteps April 25 - May 4, 2011**



**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**

## Adult Faith Formation



**Family Matters:  
Building Blocks for a Richer Family Life**  
**Presenter: Sr. Lauren Hanley, CSJ**  
**Tuesday, January 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.

### **Book Discussion:**

***The Naked Now* by Richard Rohr**

**Presenter: Tom Petriano**

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

**Parish Center**

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

*Book will be available for purchase in the Religious Education Office. Cost is \$18.*

*It will be helpful to read Chapter 1 before first session.*

The description of Richard Rohr's most recent book, *The Naked Now*, suggests that it was written to:

- *Awaken* your desire for God
- *Free* yourself from the fears that can cripple you
- *Connect* to the joy already within you
- *Transform* yourself
- *Inspire* others to see as the mystics see
- *Live* in full awareness of the Naked Now

Come be a part of lively discussions and interesting presentations. Don't miss it!

*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).*



## Christmas is Jesus' Birthday

The Diocesan Union of The Holy Name Society of Rockville Centre hosts an annual Christmas theme poster contest each year to motivate attention through their efforts to uphold the religious celebration of Christmas. In 2010 the theme was "Christmas is Jesus' Birthday."

Eligibility for participation in the contest is open to every student in both our parochial schools and religious education classes from kindergarten through eighth grade.

Of the hundreds of posters submitted, the students from Our Lady of Lourdes School in West Islip won recognition by placing

**First** – The Royal Blue Ribbon went to *Christopher McDonald* in our seventh grade

**Second** – The Red Ribbon went to *Mia DiCicco* in our first grade

**Third** – The Old Gold Ribbon went to *Natalia Khoury* in our third grade



The Rosary Christian Mothers are sponsoring a **St. Valentine's Day Dance to be held on Saturday, February 12 in the All-Purpose Room.**

The proceeds from the dance will go towards the "Grotto to Our Lady of Lourdes."

There will be dancing to the music of "Rick," dinner, wine, beer, soda coffee, and dessert - all for only \$35 per person. Don't forget 50/50, raffles and baskets of cheer!

We will be taking reservations for tables of two, four, six, and eight people. For reservations, please call Calire at 669-3178, Angie at 586.2084, Patty at 669.1727, or Angela at 669.7275.

*Watch future bulletins for more details...*



## Youth Group Meetings

Happy New Year 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. *Please check the bulletin for important El Salvador meetings and fundraisers.*

## Children for Children at CLTW

*“Whatsoever you do to the least of my people, that you do unto me...”*

Throughout the month of January the Children’s Liturgy of the Word Committee will be collecting the following items for Parish Outreach:

*Diapers of all sizes*

*Formula*

*Baby wipes*

*Baby Food*

Please bring donations to the Outreach pantry bin at the Parish Center on Sundays in January. There are children all over Long Island, and here in West Islip, who need our help which is why CLTW has started “Children for Children.” Christ was a child born to a modest family in a manger and we know his worth. Please help us to celebrate the value of the children in our community who are also members of families who are struggling. Your generosity is greatly appreciated!

## 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: \_\_\_\_\_

## **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***

*Margaret M. McHugh* died on January 1 and celebration of the Mass of Christian Burial was January 5. We extend our prayers to her children, grandchildren, and her entire family.

*Anthony E. DeVivo* died on January 3 and celebration of the Mass of Christian Burial was January 6. We extend our prayers to his wife, Louise, his 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.

## Remembering...

### Monday, January 17

*Saint Anthony, abbot*

8:00 AM Juzef Kozlowski, Janusz Tyminski, and Tina Caruso

### Tuesday, January 18

8:00 AM William Ball

### Wednesday, January 19

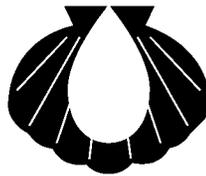
8:00 AM Mario & Elizabeth Lombardi

### Thursday, January 20

*Saint Fabian, pope and martyr*

*Saint Sebastian, martyr*

8:00 AM Tom Malcolm



## Baptisms

*Joshua Lucas Beylin*

Lev and Lorena

*Delilah Marie D'Amico*

Curtis and Mara

### Friday, January 21

*Saint Agnes, virgin and martyr*

8:00 AM Henry Riedemann

### Saturday, January 22

8:00 AM Anna & Joe Nosarzewski, Linda Kelly,  
Lucila Sugatan, Theresa Feliney

5:00 PM John & Mamie Carbone

*Fr. Pat Amabile*

### Sunday, January 23

8:00 AM Elinor Shaddock  
*Fr. Ambrose Cabildo*

9:30 AM Connie Sasso-Ragonese

*Fr. Pat Amabile*

11:00 AM Nancy Proctor

*Fr. Ambrose Cabildo*

12:30 PM Ross Goldin

*Fr. Mike Vetrano*

6:00 PM People of the Parish, Sheila & John Timmer,  
Faye Seltzer, Barry Fox, Rosemarie Dascole,  
Dolores Robastelli

*Fr. Mike Vetrano*

## SAGE

The SAGE Group (Senior Advocates for Growth and Enrichment) will meet on **Tuesday, January 18**, in the **Parish Center at 9 AM**.

## 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 12:30PM in the Parish Center**.

## Men's Prayer Group-Morning

*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.

## Centering Prayer Group

OLL Centering Prayer Group will be meeting in the **Spiritual Life Center** on **Thursday, January 20 at 7:30 PM**. If you have any questions, please contact Diane at 587.0966.

## Men's Prayer Group-Evening

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, January 18**. 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.

## 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.

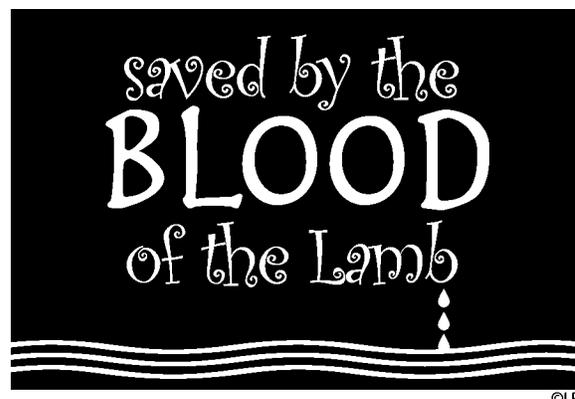
## List of projects that need to be addressed...

- 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!



## 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

There's a sheep farm just down the road from where I live. The herd is out grazing in the pasture almost every day, and when I go to the grocery store I pass by the field and see them wandering around. Cheese is an important agricultural product in my part of the world, and right now there is a great shortage of sheep's milk for quality artisanal cheeses. Part of the problem is that even though there is increased lamb production in the United States, they're not making it to maturity because the price for slaughtered lambs is so high. Australia and New Zealand are exporting less to the US, and so domestic production is going to slaughter rather than being raised for the milk.

Yes, the lamb is led to slaughter. And even though our celebration of Easter is months away, already the Gospel sounds the theme of the direction in which we are heading. We hear John the Baptist describe Jesus as the Lamb of God in today's Gospel. We use that same imagery when we plead with the Lamb of God in the litany that we sing at Mass during the breaking of the bread. But do we really consider what it means when we call upon Jesus by that title?

In the Book of Exodus, it is the Lamb of God whose blood marks the way for the angel of death to pass over the places where the blood is seen. As Lamb of God, Jesus shed his blood, marking all who are baptized in his name with the Holy Spirit, which John the Baptist describes in today's Gospel. Sin and death have no power over us because we are saved by the blood of the Lamb. When we plead, "Lamb of God, have mercy on us," we acknowledge that Jesus gave his life for us. And when we eat his flesh and drink his blood, we join ourselves to him.

2010 Liturgical Publications Inc

### Readings for the Week of January 16, 2011

<b>Sunday:</b>	Is 49:3, 5-6/1 Cor 1:1-3/Jn 1:29-34
<b>Monday:</b>	Heb 5:1-10/Mk 2:18-22
<b>Tuesday:</b>	Heb 6:10-20/Mk 2:23-28
<b>Wednesday:</b>	Heb 7:1-3, 15-17/Mk 3:1-6
<b>Thursday:</b>	Heb 7:25---8:6/Mk 3:7-12
<b>Friday:</b>	Heb 8:6-13/Mk 3:13-19
<b>Saturday:</b>	Heb 9:2-3, 11-14/Mk 3:20-21
<b>Next Sunday:</b>	Is 8:23---9:3/1 Cor 1:10-13, 17/Mt 4:12-23 or 4:12-17

## Altar Society

Altar linens this week will be cared for by *Rose Grant*.  
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, Viola Callanan, Grace Ciccarello,  
Virginia Crescini, Lucilia DaTorre, Beverly DeCanio, Jeanne DellaRagione,  
Tony Drexler, Debbie Eichen, Jerry Fabozzi, Ann Farrell, Jake Feldman, Zana Gashi,  
Kathleen Kerrigan, Robyn Kerrigan, Eric Lee, Ann Losee, Louise Malcuit, John McNevin,  
Vincent Meade, Frances Miranda, Julio Miranda, Michael Montesanto, John Mordente,  
Ruth Murray, Evelyn Nonnon, Karen Parpounas, Mary Phelan, Fran Pizzani,  
Joe Radosti, Dorothy Schiavone, AnnMarie Schiraldi, Baby Isabella Shaw,  
Derek Stahl, Lindsay Stahl, Linda Starr, Kay Stevesnon, Patrick Tardo,  
Nancy Turano, Bunny Vilim, Patricia Wallace, Joe Yezek*

## Financial Summary

### January 2, 2011

Weekly Collection	\$ 18,474.00
Weekly Budget	-\$ 19,000.00
+/- for the week	\$ (526.00)

*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.

## “Reach Out” Program

***“Some people live their entire lifetime and wonder if they have ever made a difference in the world...”***

*Ronald Regan*

Please contact the Outreach office if someone you love is serving on active duty overseas. Outreach will be starting a “Reach Out” Program offering support to men and women on active duty in any branch of the Military.



### **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**

The Parish Office will be **closed on Monday, January 17** in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. The Parish Office will reopen on Tuesday at 9 AM.

## Of Elders, Character, Christ's Passion, and Blessing

by Ron Rolheiser, OMI

At a workshop several years ago, a woman shared this story: She was the mother of four children and, while they were all still young, at home, in school, her father, already a widower, suffered a stroke that left him severely debilitated. He has unable to take care of himself and needed assistance.

Being the dutiful daughter, she had him move in with her own family, at great inconvenience to her husband and children. So many of their family routines had to be adjusted and re-arranged to accommodate her dad's presence. Their life changed radically.

At a point, her father's condition deteriorated to the point where she had to take him to a hospice where he could receive full-time care. But, even then, she still needed to visit him daily, often having to take one or more of her children with her. This went on for seven years. Daily, she and one or other of her children would have to go and spend some time with her father.

During those years, many times, in large and small ways, she apologized to her husband and children for the inconvenience this was causing them. Eventually her father died. Several years after the funeral her eldest son, now in college, said to her: "You know, mum, all those years that we had to arrange our lives so much around Grandpa and his illness – that was really a precious time. That was a great gift to our family!"

How can the life of someone like that, someone whose life and existence can weigh on us like a burden, be a blessing? How are we gifted by having people like that in our lives?

The answer is part of a deep human and spiritual mystery, a part of the secret of love itself. We give life to each other not just in what we actively do for each other, but also, and sometimes especially, in what we passively absorb and are unable to do. Helplessness brings a special presence into a room. We give life through our activity and we also give life through our passivity. We bring a blessing to the sick when we visit them, but we also leave their presence blessed by having visited them. There is love in giving, just as there is love in receiving.

And the gift does not always look or feel like a beautifully wrapped Christmas present. The gift can, initially, seem like a burden, an unwanted imposition, an awkward inconvenience, an unfortunate duty. But those

feelings themselves eventually contribute to the depth of the gift.

We see this mysterious aspect of love illustrated in the Gospels when they describe how Jesus gave his life and his death for us. Each of the Gospels has two very distinct parts: The early parts of the Gospels describe Jesus' activity and how he gave his life for us by what he did for us. The latter part of the Gospels describe Jesus' passivity and how he gave his death for us by what he passively absorbed for us. Appropriately this latter part is called The Passion (from the Latin, *passio*, meaning, passiveness.)

Today, we struggle to understand this, both intellectually and existentially. Sadly, today, we tend to define life and meaning almost solely on the basis of health, productivity, usefulness, and what we can actively contribute to others. What can we bring to the table?

And so we ask ourselves: What do the elderly who can no longer live on their own contribute to our lives? What meaning is there in the continued existence of a person living with full-blown dementia? What does someone who is mentally handicapped bring to the community? Why prolong the life of someone who is in the final stages of a terminal illness? And: Why keep a debilitated Grandpa in the house when he disrupts our normal family life?

The answer: Because a person in this condition, at some deep level, is giving us a precious gift, namely, depth and character.

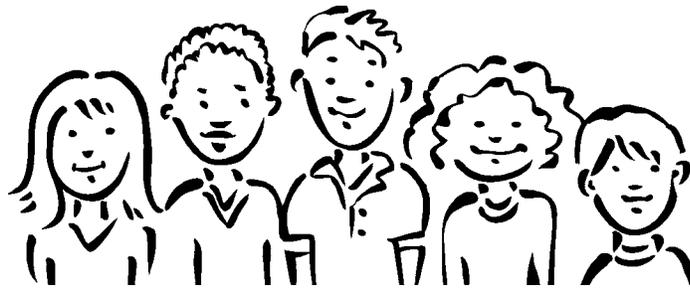
Whenever a culture debates about the merits of euthanasia it is an infallible sign that we no longer understand this.

I like James Hillman's take on this: Productivity is too narrow a measure of usefulness, disability too cramping a notion of helplessness. An old woman may be helpful simply as a figure valued for her character. Like a stone at the bottom of a riverbed, she may do nothing but stay still and hold her ground, but the river has to take her into account and alter its flow because of her. An older man by sheer presence plays his part as a character in the drama of the family and neighbourhood. He has to be considered, and patterns adjusted simply because he is there. His character brings particular qualities to every scene, adds to their intricacy and depth by representing the past and the dead. When all the elderly are removed to retirement communities, the river flows more smoothly back home. No disruptive rocks. Less character too.

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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).*

## 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.

## 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.

## American Sign Language Class

Cleary School for the Deaf is offering evening Adult Education classes in American Sign Language, levels 1, 2, 3, and Intermediate/Advanced. The Spring session is February 2 - May 4.

## Contemplative Outreach of Long Island/Queens

Presents "A Day With Father Carl Arico." Fr. Carl will enrich us with his workshop on "Deepening Our Relationship with God-It Isn't Over Until It's Over" on January 22, from 9:30 AM until 3 PM in the OLL Parish Center. Please bring a bag lunch. Donation: \$25 For any further information, call Diane at 631.587.0966.

## Dominican Village

**Please join us for an Open House on Saturday, January 22 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 "**Unity.**" 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!

