

# Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church

210 South Wellwood Avenue + Lindenhurst, New York 11757 +

Telephone: 631-226-7725 + Fax: 631-225-9597 +

www.olphlindenhurst.com + Facebook: Our Lady of Perpetual Help



1871

Celebrating 150 Years

2021

Go to [www.olph150th.com](http://www.olph150th.com) to order great 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Memorabilia!



*Behold,  
this child is destined for  
the fall and rise of many in Israel.*

Luke 2:34

**THE FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY  
OF JESUS, MARY, AND JOSEPH  
December 27, 2020**

## PASTORAL STAFF

**Pastor:** Reverend Monsignor Joseph DeGrocco

**Parochial Vicars:** Reverend Fidelis Ezeani, Reverend Frank Zero, Reverend Emmanuel Okonkwo

**Deacons:** Deacon William Crosby, Deacon Douglas G. Smith, Deacon Robert A. Becker

**Business Manager:** Mr. Thomas Crennan

**Director of Faith Formation:** Mrs. April Kleinlaut

**Music Director:** Mr. Christopher Ferraro

Deacon Frank Odin, Retired

## COME AND PRAY...

Our church is open

**6:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.** seven days a week,  
except for Thursdays when it closes  
after the 12:15 p.m. Mass for cleaning.

Come in and spend some time in prayer.

**Face covering and social distancing required.**

## MASS SCHEDULE

**Monday – Friday:** 6:30 a.m. and 12:15 p.m.

**Saturday Morning:** 8:00 a.m.

**Saturday Afternoon (Sunday Anticipated):**  
5:00 p.m.

**Sunday Masses:**

8:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m. (live-streamed), 12:00 p.m.

5:00 p.m. *Sunday Mass suspended until further notice.*

*Mass intention will be fulfilled privately by one of the priests.*

## LITURGY OF THE HOURS

We pray Evening Prayer each Saturday at 4:00 p.m.,  
each Sunday at 7:00 p.m., and

Morning Prayer each Sunday at 9:15 a.m.

on the Zoom video platform. Click on the Zoom link  
on the home page of our website.

## SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Every Saturday, 4:00 p.m. to 4:45 p.m.

Confessions are being heard in classrooms  
in the “new school annex” near High Street.

**See inside bulletin for safety protocols.**

*Also available by individual appointment  
with one of the priests.*

## OLPH NOVENA DEVOTIONS

Monday afternoons  
at 12:45 p.m. in the church

## ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

**Wednesday:** 12:45 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

**Sunday:** 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

**First Saturday:** 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

## PARISH OFFICE HOURS

**Monday-Thursday:** 9:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

**Friday:** 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

**Saturday and Sunday:** 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

# DOWNLOAD THE OLPH APP

## Catholic Life Every Day

with the Our Lady of Perpetual Help App

**Step 1:** Open App Store or Google Play



**Step 2:** Search "myParish app" & press download 



**Step 3:** Open up the myParish app and type in "Our Lady of Perpetual Help Roman Catholic Church"

**Step 4:** Set OLPH as your main parish

**Step 5:** Explore the great features in our parish app!



# FORMED<sup>®</sup>

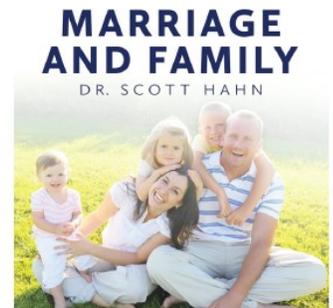
PICK OF THE WEEK

December 27, 2020

## WATCH

## LEARN

## LISTEN



Our parish has a FORMED subscription. To set up your free account visit [formed.org/signup](http://formed.org/signup) and select our parish.

## SUPPORT OLPH THROUGH AMAZON.COM



AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support OLPH every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com), you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to OLPH.

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Support Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church.

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## PASTOR'S PAGE

### ***Merry Christmas!***

Allow me to offer my wishes for abundant Christmas Time blessings to come upon you and your family! The Church continues to celebrate the shining days of Christmas, as we celebrate that the Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us — God became man and lived a human life. Jesus of Nazareth is Emmanuel, God-with-us, revealing to us the fullness of the invisible God. As one of the Mass prayers for Christmas Time in the Roman Missal reminds us, *“On the feast of this awe-filled mystery, though invisible in his own divine nature, he has appeared visibly in ours; and begotten before all ages, he has begun to exist in time; so that, raising up in himself all that was cast down, he might restore unity to all creation and call straying humanity back to the heavenly Kingdom.”* Those are beautiful words for us to pray on over and over again, in order to explore the richness and depth of the meaning of Christmas! How much we need to celebrate the days of Christmas Time during these ongoing days of struggle, difficulty and anxiety.

Don't let all the “after-Christmas” stuff you're hearing fool you — it's still Christmas, and will be for Catholics until the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, which this year is on Sunday, January 10 (a nice, long season of Christmas Time!). Keep the joy and meaning of Christmas Time alive and well through all these days up until January 10. Keep your house lit and your decorations up until then! Let's celebrate the fullness of Christmas Time!

Merry Christmas!

### ***Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph***

This Sunday is the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. This liturgical feast has been on the Church calendar for about one hundred years, although it has been celebrated on different dates throughout its history. The feast celebrates the unity and love so evident in the family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, and one of the main things the Church prays for on this feast is that our families might imitate the virtues of the Holy Family.

For example, the Collect (opening prayer) for Mass praises the Holy Family as a shining example, and it asks that *“we may imitate them in practicing the virtues of family life and in the bonds of charity.”* The Prayer over the Offerings makes another petition for our families when it asks that *“through the intercession of the Virgin Mother of God and Saint Joseph, you [God] may establish our families firmly in your grace and your peace.”* Imitation of the Holy Family is invoked a third time, in the Prayer after

Communion, as that prayer asks that we might *“imitate constantly the example of the Holy Family,”* adding the petition that *“after the trials of this world, we may share their company for ever.”*

In this year of pandemic when so many families have spent more time together because they have been forced to be home, so many people have said that even amidst all the bad things associated with the pandemic, one blessing, one bright spot, has been rediscovering and enjoying anew the grace and love of spending more time together as a family. It seems as though many parents and children have rediscovered each other and have renewed their joy in appreciating their inherent beauty and goodness as a family. So...God's grace has been at work in this way in the midst of it all!

### ***Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God—a Holy Day***

This Friday, January 1 (aside from being New Year's Day) is the Octave (Eighth Day) of the Nativity of the Lord, and it is also the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God, a Holy Day. Masses for the Holy Day will be celebrated on Thursday, December 31 at 5:00 p.m., and at 10:00 a.m. and 12:15 p.m. on Friday, January 1.

How beautiful it is to have a feast of the Blessed Mother so prominent during Christmas Time! One of the most outstanding characteristics of Mary is her willingness to know and do God's will. While we would like to follow her example, we often find it difficult to do so, don't we? Do we have a clue that could help us imitate Mary more perfectly? I think the Gospel for the Mass of this Solemnity gives us that clue, words that I am always struck by: *“And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart.”* She reflected on events that had happened and that were unfolding before her eyes. In other words, she meditated! Don't we need to do that more — to stop, reflect, meditate, ponder, and even, at times, just wonder (with a sense of awe!) at what God has done and is doing? God is always manifesting Himself, but we often miss it. Often we simply just don't spend as much time in prayer as we should. It can be a wonderful source of spiritual nourishment for us to quiet down, to pray and to meditate a little more, and so to rediscover a sense of wonder and awe about being in a never-ending love relationship with God. Talk about a great New Year's resolution! Would you be willing to make that yours?

***Thank you, thank you, thank you!***

I take this opportunity to offer a tremendous THANK YOU to EVERYONE who gave so much of themselves to help ensure that everything ran in a reverent, smooth and dignified manner with all our Christmas Masses. It was not an easy job this year, dealing with all the adaptations we had to make because of the coronavirus. Tasks such as ushering, serving, cleaning, decorating, arranging, and any of the other behind-the-scenes or in-front-of-the-scenes tasks: all of you who offered your time and your service are to be commended for your devotion and good work during those days! Our liturgical life together is one of the main things that makes OLPH “the place to be,” and everyone who offers their time and talent in service to our worship is an important part of that. THANK YOU to all!

***Thank you for all the Christmas gifts and goodies!***

Fr. Fidelis, Fr. Frank, Fr. Emmanuel and I take this opportunity to thank all of you who sent goodies and other Christmas gifts to the rectory. We are very grateful for your thoughtfulness and generosity. Thanks to everyone for taking such good care of your priests!

***Journal Ads for the 150th Anniversary Journal***

If you have not already done so, take an ad in the special Commemorative Journal for the parish’s 150th Anniversary; see the order form elsewhere in this bulletin for details. It’s a great way to offer your congratulations to our parish, or to advertise your business, or to honor someone you wish to put in the spotlight! This is an important fund raiser and a big part of our Anniversary Year celebration, so we’re looking to have many, many people and businesses take out ads. Please be sure to participate.

***Anniversary Year Commemorative Items for sale***

Special items celebrating our 150th Anniversary continue to be on sale; see the order form in this bulletin, or use the special link on the homepage of our website [www.olphlindenhurst.com](http://www.olphlindenhurst.com) to order online. Support the parish by buying these items. Supplies are limited, so get them while they last!

***Brick Memorialization***

Allow me to remind you that our brick memorialization program is ongoing. You can memorialize a brick in our “Let the Children Come to Me Prayer Garden” as a great way to start the new year! The flyer and the form are in this bulletin, so take advantage of the opportunity as soon as you can. It’s a great way to memorialize a

prayer intention, or to honor a deceased loved one. The profits from the bricks are an important part of the finances for the parish. Tell family and friends about this; remember, you don’t have to be a parishioner of OLPH, or even be Catholic, to memorialize a brick!

***Divine Intervention Night at OLPH***

The next special event in celebration of our 150th Anniversary Year will be on Friday, January 8 at 7:00 p.m. in the school auditorium. That night will be *Divine Intervention* Night at OLPH, a night of fun for all ages and for the whole family. We will watch four episodes of *Divine Intervention*, the TV game show I hosted several years ago, featuring Chris Ferraro, Deacon Doug, Fr. Frank and Debbie Holmes (one of our Cantors) as contestants. In addition, I will introduce each episode and provide scintillating behind-the-scenes commentary.

Mark your calendar now!

***Happy New Year!***

Finally, I wish everyone a very happy, healthy and holy New Year. I think it’s a safe bet to say that many, many people will be glad to see 2020 end! May the upcoming year of 2021 be filled with an abundance of blessings for all of us, most especially an end to the pandemic and a full return to normalcy!

I know that OLPH will continue to be “the place to be” in 2021 because TOGETHER we will continue to be open to the Lord’s will for us, and we will allow the Holy Spirit to guide us as we seek to do our part in building up the Kingdom of God here in Lindenhurst. Remember in the year ahead to always be grateful for the many blessings God constantly showers upon on; to my mind, gratitude is the primary Christian spiritual attitude from which all else flows. Also, we will continue to celebrate our 150th Anniversary Year throughout 2021!

To all who will be celebrating New Year’s Eve in any way: Be safe!

***In conclusion...***

Together, let’s aim high in Christ. Together, let’s bring out the best in each other. Together, let’s be the best we can be in Christ.

And let’s always remember: LOVE IS A GIFT.

Sincerely,



**EPIPHANY PROCLAMATION NEXT WEEK**

The Solemnity of the Epiphany is a traditional time to announce the major feasts and celebrations of the Church for the upcoming year. Before the advent of online calendars, iPhones, perpetual calendars, and handheld organizers, the formal announcement at Epiphany was the usual way the Church made known the date of Easter and all the celebrations that are dependent upon its date. Next weekend, after the Gospel at Mass, our cantors will chant this ancient announcement.

**SPECIAL CARDS FOR THE EPIPHANY BLESSING OF YOUR HOME**

It is traditional for families to bless their home on the Solemnity of the Epiphany, which takes place next Sunday, January 3, 2021. In next week's bulletin we will have special information about blessing your home on Epiphany. We will also have available special cards which may be used in the blessing and placed above your doorway, to remain there for the entire upcoming year. Please look for these special cards available throughout the church next weekend.

Peace be with this house and all who live here

20 +  +  +  + 21

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church  
Lindenhurst, New York

1871

Celebrating 150 Years

2021

**150<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY YEAR EVENT!****DIVINE INTERVENTION NIGHT AT OLPH****FRIDAY, JANURAY 8, 2021****IN THE SCHOOL AUDITORIUM 7:00 p.m.**

Come and join in a night of fun for the whole family—  
*DIVINE INTERVENTION* NIGHT here at OLPH!

*Divine Intervention* was a TV game show  
hosted by Msgr. Joe several years ago.

Come watch four episodes featuring Chris Ferraro, Deacon Doug, Fr. Frank  
and Debbie Holmes as contestants.

*See whether they won or lost! See if you can answer the questions!*

*Fun for the whole family, everyone of all ages!*

Msgr. Joe will also provide behind-the-scenes information  
about the show and his years hosting.

As with everything else, mask and social distancing will be required.

*Don't miss out on the fun of DIVINE INTERVENTION at OLPH!*

## JANUARY 1—SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD



### Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God (Holy Day)

#### Mass Schedule:

Eve of the Solemnity,  
Thursday, December 31, 2020: 5:00 p.m.  
Friday, January 1, 2021:  
10:00 a.m. (live-streamed) & 12:15 p.m.

### FIRST SATURDAY AND SUNDAY DEVOTIONS

*All are invited to come  
and pray with our parish community.*

**First Saturday Devotions**—in honor of Our Lady of Fatima—will be conducted Saturday, **January 2** beginning with the Rosary at 7:40 a.m., Mass at 8:00 a.m. and continued devotion following Mass.

**First Sunday Devotions** —Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament will take place Sunday, **January 3** at 7:00 p.m.

Each month, all are invited to join the members of the Nocturnal Adoration Society for Eucharistic Adoration beginning at 6:30 p.m. Reflecting the diverse community present at OLPH, each hour of the evening is celebrated in different languages (English, Spanish, Polish). The evening concludes with Benediction at 9:30 p.m.

*Please note: A mask MUST be worn by all who attend First Saturday Adoration. Anyone not wearing a mask will be asked to leave.*

### ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

**Wednesdays 12:45 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.**  
in the church after the 12:15 p.m. Mass

### Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help



Each Monday, parishioners pray to seek the help and assistance of the Lord for healing, family, children and the needs of the world, seeking the intercession of the Blessed Mother. Take some time each Monday to join in the OLPH Novena.

**Monday, December 28—12:45 p.m.**  
**Monday, January 4—12:45 p.m.**  
**Monday, January 11—12:45 p.m.**

### CHILDREN'S LITURGY OF THE WORD

EVERY SUNDAY ON YOUTUBE - [OLPH CHURCH LINDENHURST](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqjKjKjKjKjKjKjKjKjKjKj)



LOOKING FOR ANOTHER WAY TO ENGAGE YOUR CHILD IN THEIR FAITH FROM HOME?

JOIN US WEEKLY TO BREAK OPEN THE GOSPEL AND LISTEN TO A REFLECTION ON THE OLPH YOUTUBE CHANNEL.

Participating in the Children's Liturgy of the Word continues to teach children how to participate in Mass, since they do the same things as are being done in the main body of the church.



OLPH Knights of Columbus Council #794 has "*Consecration to the Holy Family*" prayer cards available on the pew ledges this weekend. Every family is encouraged to say this prayer together. Weather permitting, we will gather after each of the Masses, on the Rectory lawn, to recite this prayer.

## SAFETY PROTOCOLS FOR BEING IN CHURCH

### FOR THE SAFETY OF EVERYONE, ALL WHO ENTER MUST:

- ▶ **WEAR A FACE MASK OR FACE COVERING – NO EXCEPTIONS**
- ▶ **REMAIN AT LEAST SIX (6) FEET APART, SIDE-TO-SIDE AND IN FRONT OF AND BEHIND YOU**
- ▶ **SIT IN DESIGNATED SEATS ONLY**
- ▶ **ENTER ONLY THROUGH WELLWOOD AVENUE DOORS**
- ▶ **EXIT ONLY THROUGH SIDE DOORS ON NORTH AND SOUTH SIDE**

## THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Confessions are being celebrated in the school building, in classrooms in the “new school” annex along High Street every Saturday, 4:00 p.m. to 4:45 p.m. until further notice.

Each priest will be in his own classroom.

These are the protocols that must be followed for going to Confession:

- ▶ **Entry is only via the blue doors at the north end of the hallway (off of the small parking lot)**
- ▶ **Exit is only via the doors at the south end of the hallway (into the large parking lot)**
- ▶ **Everyone – priests and penitents – is required to wear face masks or face coverings**
- ▶ **Lines on the floor will indicate a 6-foot social distance between those waiting on line outside each classroom**
- ▶ **Signs on easels outside the classroom will indicate the name of the priest who is in the classroom**
- ▶ **Social distancing and plexiglass dividers will keep a safe distance between priest and penitent, whether the penitent celebrates anonymously or face-to-face (both options are available)**

## IF YOU CANNOT YET COME BACK TO MASS...

### LIVE-STREAM MASS

We live-stream the **10:00 a.m. Sunday Mass** each week.\*  
You can join us virtually using one of the following:

- The link at the top of the OLPH website:  
[www.olphlindenhurst.com](http://www.olphlindenhurst.com)
- OLPH Facebook page: @olphlindenhurst
- OLPH YouTube Channel: OLPH Church Lindenhurst



\* Unfortunately, this is the last weekend we will be able to livestream the 5:00 p.m. Mass. Beginning next weekend, the 10:00 a.m. Sunday Mass will be the only livestreamed Mass.



## 2020/2021 ANNIVERSARY JOURNAL PRICING

### BE AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE ANNIVERSARY YEAR AND SUPPORT OLPH! PLACE AN AD IN OUR COMMEMORATIVE JOURNAL!

One of the highlights of the Anniversary Year will be a **Commemorative Journal**, available in conjunction with our Anniversary Year Dinner Dance on April 23, 2021.

**Support the parish by placing an ad in our journal!** Ads can be taken in the name of your family, or your business, and can include congratulatory wishes to the parish, or it can be a memorialization of deceased loved ones, or an expression of gratitude to God. Honor that special priest, family members living or deceased, or just say thanks for the memories. If you're creative, prepare your own ad; if you're not that creative, just send us your message and our team will create the ad for you! There are many possibilities!

Note the deadline date of March 15, 2021!

**Don't miss out! Send in your ad copy and payment TODAY!**

If you need additional information, or have questions, contact Bob Dobres 631-592-8697 or Mike Hearney 631-560-0451.

**PLEASE INDICATE AD SIZE AND TYPE**

GOLD FULL PAGE \$350

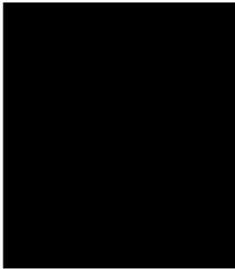
B/W FULL PAGE \$150

B/W HALF PAGE \$100

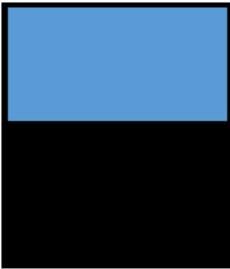
B/W 1/4 PAGE \$75

For more information call Bob Dobres at 631-592-8697 or Mike Hearney at 631-560-0451

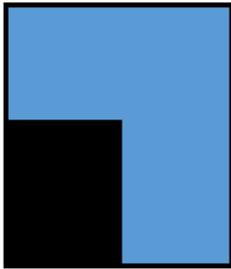
**AD DIMENSIONS**  
(WIDTH X HEIGHT)



Full Page and Cover  
8.5 x 11"



Half Page  
8.5 x 5.5"



Quarter Page  
4.25 x 5.5"

Please submit payment along with ad materials no later than March 15, 2021.

Mail hard copy to rectory address above and attach copy of ad or materials (ad text, photos, images) to this form or write copy on back.

Email electronic version to 150thjournal@oloph.org. Please email a .pdf or .jpg file format.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

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Celebrating 150 Years

2021

Use this form to order great 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Memorabilia!

150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Memorabilia of  
Our Lady of Perpetual Help



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (cell/home) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for celebrating with us! Bring this form & hand it in to the rectory with precise payment of either cash (in a ziplock bag) or check. You will be notified when your order is ready for a pickup date.

You may also check the website for a closer look at these products!

<http://olph150th.com>

Item	Price	Quantity	Item	Price	Quantity
 Keychain	\$10.00		 Tote bag	\$10.00	
 T-Shirt	\$15.00	S ___ M ___ L ___	 Pen with Stylus	\$3.00	
 Sweatshirt	\$40.00	M ___ L ___ XL ___	 Playing cards	\$12.00	
 Tumbler	\$15.00		 Magnet	\$ 3 2 for \$5	

For Office Use Only

Total Price: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of items: \_\_\_\_\_

Received by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Order Placed: \_\_\_\_\_ Order Received: \_\_\_\_\_

Pickup date: \_\_\_\_\_ Notified Date(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Picked up by: \_\_\_\_\_



## A LETTER FROM BISHOP BARRES



DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE  
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Christmas 2020

To the People of God of the Diocese of Rockville Centre:

When he was elected as a Successor of St. Peter on March 13, 2013, our Holy Father chose the name *Francis*. It was a weighty decision with a prophetic message. Especially now, seven years later and with the publication of his latest encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* from the tomb of St. Francis of Assisi on October 3, 2020, the significance of the choice is clear: Pope Francis connects his papacy to St. Francis.

Through the ministry of our Holy Father, St. Francis of Assisi is close to the Church in these times. Therefore, as we draw near to Bethlehem at the end of this difficult year, I wish to recall two points Pope Francis highlights from the life of St. Francis. One will help us celebrate the Nativity of Our Lord; the other indicates a grace for which to pray during the holy season.

First, in his 2019 Apostolic Letter *Admirabile Signum: On the Meaning and Importance of the Nativity Scene*, Pope Francis emphasizes St. Francis of Assisi's foundational role in our celebration of Christmas. The Holy Father recalls the origins of the crèche and the first nativity scene inspired by the holy friar in 1223, by which the saint sought "to bring to life the memory of that babe born in Bethlehem." Importantly, the remembrance of Christ's birth that St. Francis desired to convey was brought alive in Greccio, a small village in Italy, not by statues but by people from the surrounding towns and countryside. Together with St. Francis, his friars, an ox and a donkey, they gathered at a cave to behold a manger full of hay over which the Eucharist was celebrated. That Christmas night, almost 800 years ago, Pope Francis reminds us, "the nativity scene was enacted and experienced by all who were present." That night, there was "no distance between the original event and those sharing in its mystery." (2) Encountering Christ, there was simply joy and hope.

This Christmas, in our world laden with the Crosses of COVID-19, political and economic turmoil, racism, financial hardship, and so many other societal ills and challenges – challenges that impact us on Long Island – let us remember this lesson from Greccio: Christmas is an event to be lived. It demands our participation. Like the women and men who embodied that first crèche, we must be present to Christ who is born for us. We must behold and receive Him.

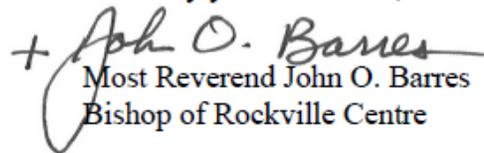
DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE  
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Second, in *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis shows St. Francis as an icon of Christocentric-listening. With great humility and charity, the saint reverently listened to others. He was present to the various voices in his life – the voice of God, the voice of his neighbor, the voice of the poor, the voice of the sick, the voice of nature – and by truly hearing them, he was an instrument of peace, healing, and understanding. How different it can be for us! The Holy Father says well what we know: “Today’s world is largely a deaf world...At times, the frantic pace of the modern world prevents us from listening attentively to what another person is saying.” Aware of this fact, the Pope encourages us, in the midst of our hectic and polarized world, to be like St. Francis and “not lose our ability to listen.” (48)

This Christmas, when we approach the crib, let us ask for the grace to be attentive listeners. Let us ask for the grace to be like St. Francis, so that we may hear the voice of God and the voice of our neighbor and respond with the radical charity he exhibited.<sup>1</sup>

Like Pope Francis, may we be moved by the example of St. Francis, and may St. Francis of Assisi’s love for the Mystery of the Nativity, his ecstatic mysticism, his love for the poor, and his spirit of universal fraternity animate our celebration of Christmas this year.

May God bless you and your families this Christmas.

Sincerely yours in Christ,  
  
+ John O. Barres  
Most Reverend John O. Barres  
Bishop of Rockville Centre

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Bishop John O. Barres October 8, 2020 Statement, “The Compelling Figure of St. Francis of Assisi in the Pontificate of Pope Francis and his New Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti*.”

**OFFICE OF FAITH FORMATION**

Located in the Rectory  
 Phone # 631.226.7725 x. 253  
 Email: [religioused@oloph.org](mailto:religioused@oloph.org)  
 Director: Mrs. April Kleinlaut  
 (akleinlaut@oloph.org)

**OFFICE OF FAITH FORMATION**

Monday: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
 Tuesday: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
 Wednesday: 12:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.  
 Thursday: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
 Friday: **CLOSED**  
 Saturday: By Appointment

Levels 6-8

Be sure to take the time over the Christmas Break to catch up on any missing Mass Reflections in your Journal, or Projects in your Workbook!

All Levels

There will be no classes on Wednesday December 30 and Saturday January 2 due to the Christmas and New Year break. Have a happy and blessed New Year with your family! Remember to stay safe!

**Happy Saint of the Day! Archangel Raphael**

St. Raphael is one of the Archangels named in the Bible. We meet him in the Old Testament in the Book of Tobit. Raphael was sent on a mission to heal Tobit's blindness and to save his future daughter-in-law, Sarah, from a demon. Every time she tried to get married, her husband would be murdered by the demon on their wedding night. This happened seven times! Tobit's son Tobiah was traveling on the road when he met St. Raphael. He did not know he was an angel because he was disguised as a human. He told Tobiah how to scare the demon away from Sarah so he could marry her. Raphael revealed himself after as an Archangel of the Lord. His name means "God heals."

# PARISH SOCIAL MINISTRY

- † Bereavement Ministry: Linda Arpino—631.592.1062—forubabe77@gmail.com
- † Blue Door Thrift Boutique: Tricia Buckley—631.561.5790—thebluedoor@oloph.org
- † Catholics for the Freedom of Religion: Kathy Feldman—631 225-9864—cdefeldman@optonline.net
- † Community Meal: Mary Leon—mleon719@yahoo.com
- † Homeless Ministry: Regina Muir—631.226.2709—rmuir11@aol.com—Peggy Pannullo—631. 921.5994—justin97@aol.com
- † Hospital Visitors: Peter O'Neill—631-226-6340—oneillp@optonline.net
- † Middle Ages: Gail Tonnessen—631.957.1449—gtonness@optonline.net
- † Nursing Ministry: Regina Muir—631.226.2709—rmuir11@aol.com
- † Respect Life Committee: Louise Perrotta—631.412.3831—louiseperrotta@optonline.net
- † St. Vincent de Paul Society: Bill Stysiack—631.226.7725, x. 234
- † Senior Moments/Spirituality: Virginia Beyrer—631-226-6635
- † Special Needs Ministry: Jessica Becker Paolo—631.226.6175—jbecker@oloph.org

## NEW Food Pantry List!

**COFFEE**  
**PEANUT BUTTER**  
**JELLY OR JAM**  
**CANNED FRUIT**  
**SHELF STABLE MILK**  
**BAKED BEANS**  
**HOT CEREALS**  
**HOT CHOCOLATE**  
**CAKE MIXES**  
**PAPER PRODUCTS**

*Please bring items to the SVdP office:*

*Wednesday and Friday 9:00 a.m.– 12:00 p.m.*

*and on 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays 1:30 – 3:00 p.m.*

**Thank you for your continued generosity.**

## **Society of St. Vincent de Paul**

Located in the School Building  
 Use Parking Lot located on corner of  
 Gates & High Streets

**631.226.7725 x. 234**

*Our regular office hours:*

**Monday, Wednesday and Friday**

**9:00 a.m.– 12:00 p.m. and**

**1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays 1:30 – 3:00 p.m.**

Today is the feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. During our New Year may our families “grow in wisdom and have the favor of God upon them.”

Last month, through your gifts, in addition to the 34 families that received Thanksgiving dinners, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul served 86 adults, 59 children, 10 seniors and 53 families. Thanks!

### **AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM THE SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL AT OLPH**

During these very difficult times many of us find ourselves in financial difficulty, often for the first time. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is here to help. Please don't feel embarrassed—you are not alone. We want to assure you that all matters relating to SVDP are completely confidential. All volunteer workers in the Food Pantry are Vincentians who are pledged to follow the “Rule” in dealing with our friends and neighbors. We reach out to those who come to us with kindness, sincerity and total confidentiality. You may come to the pantry for food every two weeks. The money that would have been spent on this food can then be used to pay other bills. Please reach out to us by calling our Food Pantry office at 631-226-7725 x. 234. Our regular office hours: Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9:00 a.m.– 12:00 p.m. and 1st and 3rd Saturdays 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. We're here for you.

# SERVING AND SUPPORTING ONE ANOTHER

## IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Parish Phone: (631) 226-7725 Parish Fax: (631) 225-9597

Directory of Phone Extensions

Name	Ext	Email
Carmel Becker, Bulletin	246	cbecker@oloph.org
Carole Carrano, Parish Secretary	212	ccarrano@oloph.org
Linda Coppola, Business Office Assistant	214	lcoppola@oloph.org
Thomas Crennan, Business Manager	204	tcrennan@oloph.org
Msgr. Joseph DeGrocco, Pastor	206	msgrjoe@oloph.org
Fr. Fidelis Ezeani, Associate Pastor	226	fadaprince4christ@yahoo.com
Faith Formation Office	253	religioused@oloph.org
Christopher Ferraro, Director of Music	210	cferraro@oloph.org
April Kleinlaut, Director of Faith Formation	257	akleinlaut@oloph.org
Fr. Emmanuel Okonkwo	223	emmaokons@yahoo.com
Rectory Reception Desk	200	
St. Vincent de Paul	234	stvincentdepaul@oloph.org
Josephine Vagelatos, Administrative Assistant to the Pastor	206	jvagelatos@oloph.org
Fr. Frank Zero, Associate Pastor	203	fzero@oloph.org

### THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Baptism ceremonies are held on the second and fourth Sundays of the month. Parents wishing to have a child baptized must attend a baptism preparation session before the baptism; these sessions are held on the first and third Thursdays of the month excluding holidays. Contact the Parish Office to begin the process of having your child baptized.

### PASTORAL CARE OF THE SICK & ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Those who are seriously ill or facing surgery, as well as those in danger of death, should receive the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. Please call the Parish Office and ask for one of our priests.

### CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS

Adults who wish to be baptized, or who have been baptized in another Christian faith and wish to become Catholic, or who have been baptized Catholic and wish to be confirmed and receive Holy Communion, are invited to join the process of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. Please contact Jeffrey Gaab at (631) 965-0076 or e-mail at [jsg375@gmail.com](mailto:jsg375@gmail.com) to begin the process.

### ADULT CONFIRMATION

Adults who have been baptized Catholic and who have received Holy Communion but who still need the Sacrament of Confirmation should enroll in our Adult Confirmation Classes. Please contact Deacon Robert Becker at 631-226-6175 or e-mail to [DeaconRobert@oloph.org](mailto:DeaconRobert@oloph.org).

### THE SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE

Please contact the Parish Office at least SIX MONTHS before the desired date of your wedding.

## YOUR PASTORAL COUNCIL

Vincent Boccanfuso  
Eileen Corticchia (Chair)  
Msgr. Joe DeGrocco  
Jeffrey Gaab  
Joselyn Kalt  
Mary Leon  
Rachelle Louis-Jacques  
Carlton Mitchell  
Kevin Sabella, Jr.  
Kevin Sabella, Sr.  
Adele Venezia

*Please feel free to speak to any member of the Pastoral Council with any questions you might have.*

## YOUR PARISH TRUSTEES

Gerry Chille  
John Reynolds

## YOUR PARISH FINANCE COMMITTEE

David Barrett  
Bill Bendernagel  
Gerry Chille (Chair)  
Thomas Crennan  
Meg Danaher, CFP®, CLU®  
Msgr. Joe DeGrocco  
Marie Gagneron  
Kenneth Hale  
Bob Meade  
Bob Mehm  
John Reynolds  
Kevin Sabella, Sr.

*Please feel free to speak to any member of the Finance Committee with any questions you might have.*

## YOUR PARISH LITURGY COMMITTEE

Fauvette Auguste  
Deacon Robert Becker  
Mark Costantino  
Msgr. Joe DeGrocco  
Chris Ferraro  
MaryAnn Haas  
Jenine Jimenez-Spina  
Denise Martinez  
Barbara McPhail  
Deacon Doug Smith  
Mike Williams  
Fr. Frank Zero

*Please feel free to speak to any member of the Liturgy Committee with any questions you might have.*

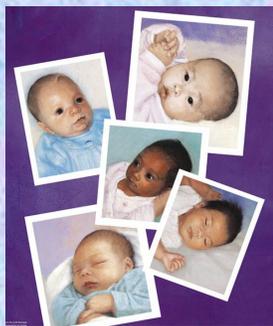
# PRAYING FOR AND SUPPORTING ONE ANOTHER

## SPIRITUAL ADOPTION PROGRAM

### "Here I am!"

#### HAPPY BIRTHDAY SPIRITUALLY ADOPTED BABY!

Your spiritually adopted baby was born this month - nine months after her mother conceived her. The only change at birth is a change in the external life support system of the baby. She is no different now than before birth except that she breathes and eats differently. She is truly a miracle. She began as a 46-chromosome cell and has grown over the past nine months into this unique human baby we now can see. Never before in history, nor ever again, will anyone exist who is exactly like your spiritually adopted baby. Your prayers saved her life. Thank you on behalf of all of the little babies and their mothers for your loving prayers that helped to bring them to birth "so that they might have life and have it to the full!"



## GLUTEN-FREE HOSTS

Gluten-free hosts are available for those with Celiac Disease who cannot receive Holy Communion using the usual bread. If you need to receive Holy Communion using a gluten-free host, please stop in the sacristy before Mass to discuss this with the priest. We will be happy to accommodate you.

## WE REMEMBER

*We remember those who have died in our parish community this week:*

***Barbara Ford***

*"O God, who through the ending of present things open up the beginning of things to come, grant, we pray, that the soul of your servant may be led to you to attain the inheritance of eternal redemption."*

## WE BELIEVE

We pray for the sick of our parish...

<i>James Byrne Jr.</i>	<i>John Figurski</i>
<i>Diego Sarmiento</i>	<i>Gordon Hinds</i>
<i>Mary Rozmus</i>	<i>Janet Novotny</i>
<i>Rosalie Engel</i>	<i>Heather Ventimiglia</i>
<i>Robert Philipps</i>	<i>Laura Fischer</i>
<i>Lisa O'Reilly</i>	<i>Dorothy Fitzgerald</i>
<i>Stan Ryniewicz</i>	<i>Catherine Leavy</i>
<i>Michelle Fallmann &amp;</i>	<i>Lindsey Quinn</i>
<i>Family</i>	<i>Catherine Michalewicz</i>
<i>James Byrne Sr.</i>	<i>Kinsley Apfelbaum</i>
<i>Woodrow Kayaian</i>	<i>Lynn Bodenschatz</i>
<i>Stan Ryniewicz</i>	

If a family member or close friend is ill, please let us know so our community can pray for them. To have your name or the name of a loved one listed in our parish bulletin, please call the Parish Office. **Please make sure the person is aware the request has been made and that they are agreeable with their name printed in the bulletin.** The name will remain on the list for about four weeks.

*"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted."* Matthew 5:4

If you are mourning the loss of a loved one, the support of your Catholic faith community should be a source of comfort and strength. A bereavement group run by trained facilitators helps grieving people learn skills for navigating their loss and opportunities to share their stories of loss. The ***Bereavement Support Group*** is a parish-based ministry responding to the needs of the recently bereaved by offering emotional, and sometimes practical, support as they learn to cope with their loss.

If you have suffered the loss of a loved one and would like to know more about the **OLPH Support Group Program**, please contact Linda Arpino at 631-592-1062 or Marige Reyes at 631-608-3658. You may also leave your name and contact information with the receptionist in the rectory.

## MASSES FOR THE WEEK

<b>MONDAY, December 28—</b> <b>The Holy Innocents, Martyrs</b>	
6:30	Raymond O'Neill
12:15	Elizabeth Madeline (Maddy) Kaiser
<b>TUESDAY, December 29—</b> <b>Fifth Day within the</b> <b>Octave of the Nativity of the Lord</b> <i>(Saint Thomas Becket, Bishop and Martyr)</i>	
6:30	Beatrice Stysiack
12:15	Salvatore & Filomena Mascio
<b>WEDNESDAY, December 30—</b> <b>Sixth Day within the</b> <b>Octave of the Nativity of the Lord</b>	
6:30	Lilian Brada
12:15	Francesco Stancati
<b>THURSDAY, December 31—</b> <b>Seventh Day within the</b> <b>Octave of the Nativity of the Lord</b> <i>(Saint Sylvester I, Pope)</i>	
6:30	Living & Deceased Members of the Breitfeller Family
12:15	June Baker
<b>Eve of The Octave Day</b> <b>of the Nativity of the Lord;</b> <b>Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God</b>	
5:00	Vito & Anna Cudia
<b>FRIDAY, January 1—</b> <b>The Octave Day of the Nativity of the Lord;</b> <b>Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God</b>	
6:30	Vito Lucchese
12:15	For the People of the Parish
<b>SATURDAY, January 2—</b> <b>Saints Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen,</b> <b>Bishops and Doctors of the Church</b>	
8:00	Joann Benkert
<b>Saturday Afternoon (Sunday Anticipated):</b> <b>EPIPHANY OF THE LORD</b>	
5:00	Agostino Pecoraro
<b>Sunday, January 3</b> <b>EPIPHANY OF THE LORD</b>	
8:00	Angelo Di Guglielmo
10:00	Rev. Msgr. Daniel S. Hamilton
12:00	For the People of the Parish

## PARISH CALENDAR

<b>Monday, December 28, 2020</b>		
9:00 a.m.	St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry	Room 24
12:45 p.m.	Devotions	Church
2:30 p.m.	St. Vincent de Paul Business Meeting	Room 24
<b>Wednesday, December 30, 2020</b>		
9:00 a.m.	St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry	Room 24
12:45 p.m.	Exposition	Church
5:30 p.m.	No Level 6 Classes	
7:00 p.m.	No Level 7 or 8 Classes	
<b>Thursday, December 31, 2020</b>		
1:00 p.m.-on	Church closed for cleaning	Church
<b>THE RECTORY AND ALL PARISH OFFICES WILL CLOSE AT 3:00 P.M. NO PARISH ACTIVITIES AFTER 3:00 P.M.</b>		
<b>Friday, January 1, 2021</b>		
<b>THE RECTORY AND ALL PARISH OFFICES WILL REMAIN CLOSED AND NO PARISH ACTIVITIES UNTIL SATURDAY AT 9:00 A.M.</b>		
<b>Saturday, January 2, 2021</b>		
8:30 & 10:00 a.m.	No Rel. Ed. Classes Levels 1-5 and Special Ed.	
9:00 a.m.	St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry	Room 24
4:00 p.m.	Confessions	School
6:00 p.m.	Alcoholics Anonymous	Cafeteria
6:30 p.m.	Adoration	Church
<b>Sunday, January 3, 2021</b>		
7:00 p.m.	Holy Hour	Church

## WELCOME NEW OLPH PARISHIONERS



**TO OUR NEW OLPH PARISHIONERS**

**December 2020**

*Reuben Philip*  
*Marie Gaudio*  
*Steven & Marguerite Colucci*  
*Patrick & Lisa Miles*  
*Daniel & Samantha Perez*

## EL MINISTERIO HISPANO

### EL MINISTERIO HISPANO DE NUESTRA SEÑORA DEL PERPETUO SOCORRO

El grupo de oración “Jesús es el camino la verdad y la vida” le invita a alabar y glorificar al PADRE, al HIJO, y al ESPIRITU SANTO, todos los jueves de 7:00 p.m. en adelante en un ambiente familiar. Comenzando con el Santo Rosario. Le ofrecemos el cuidado de los niños, también les enseñamos la doctrina de la iglesia.

Todos los martes llevamos el Santo Rosario a los hogares para orar en familia. Familias interesadas favor llamar a Virginia Constantino al (631) 957-1149.

Para información sobre los sacramentos de El bautizo, Matrimonio y servicios pastorales, tales como llevarle la Eucaristía los enfermos, la última unción de los enfermos.

Las charlas de bautizo se llevan a cabo cada segundo y cuarto domingo del mes, los padres interesados en bautizar a sus hijos deben atender a una serie de charlas. Estas charlas son cada primer y tercer lunes del mes

Para más información llamar a la rectoría (631) 226-7725. En español a Alejandro Campos teléfono (631) 671-9257 correo electrónico [saitjoseph98@gmail.com](mailto:saitjoseph98@gmail.com).

### Lecturas del La Sagrada Familia: Jesús, María y José - Ciclo B

Nuestros ojos están viendo el amor salvador que el Señor ha preparado para todos, una luz para alumbrar a las naciones y gloria de su pueblo.

Esta luz es Jesús nuestro Señor. Que él esté siempre con ustedes

**Primera Lectura (Génesis 15,1-6; 21,1-3):** Un Hijo, como Signo de la Alianza

Dios promete a Abrahán un hijo, en su edad avanzada, como signo de que guardaría fielmente su alianza con él. Abrahán creyó y recibió un hijo.

**Segunda Lectura (Hebreos 11,8.11-12.17-19):** La Fe de Abrahán, Sara e Isaac.

Abrahán, con toda su familia, es para todos nosotros un modelo de fe en Dios y en sus promesas.

**Evangelio (Lucas 2,22-40):** Una Luz que Ilumina a las Naciones

Se les dice a María y a José que su hijo Jesús no es suyo para guardarlo exclusivamente para sí mismos. Deben ofrecerlo a todos, como Salvador de todos y de cada uno, y aceptar las dificultades de esta misión.

Este pasaje nos muestra el poder de la “tradición. “La tradición es el proceso de transmitirle a la nueva generación lo que la generación actual recibió. Lo que María y José están haciendo es continuar lo que ellos aprendieron, siguiendo las palabras del Salmista: “Hablaré cosas escondidas desde tiempos antiguos, las cuales hemos oído y entendido, las que nuestros padres nos contaron. No las encubriremos a sus hijos, contaremos a la generación venidera las alabanzas de Jehová, su potencia y las maravillas que hizo” (Sal 78:2-4).

Tal como se suponía que debían hacer, María y José circuncidaron a su bebé, y luego, “cuando se cumplieron los días de la purificación de ellos conforme a la Ley de Moisés” (v. 22), lo llevaron a Jerusalén para presentarlo al Señor. A partir de ese momento, el niño comenzó a aprender los caminos de Dios y la ley de Dios. Este pasaje es clave para entender el ministerio de Jesús, pues explica por qué más tarde veremos a un Jesús que se enfrenta con sus enseñanzas judías y que las desafía, pero que también las continuará transmitiendo. Y es lo hará precisamente porque estuvo expuesto a esas enseñanzas de manera constante, y aprendió a amarlas y a organizar su vida alrededor de las mismas

En este texto vemos a Simeón, un hombre “justo y piadoso” que “esperaba la consolación de Israel” (v. 25), y a Ana, la profetisa que oraba por la restauración y redención de Israel. Es importante subrayar el hecho de que Ana es una mujer y desmentir así la idea con frecuencia construida de que las mujeres son figuras piadosas, mientras que sólo un hombre puede mantener la posición prominente de profeta. Simeón y Ana son figuras que unen los dos lados de nuestra fe: fuerza espiritual y voz profética. Ambos tuvieron sabiduría y fe; ambos pasaron sus vidas adorando a Dios de día y de noche. Sabiduría y fe son las dos fuentes que forman la estructura de nuestra creencia y acción, de nuestra oración y vida, de nuestra alabanza y amor. Necesitamos a un Simeón y a una Ana en nuestras vidas para que nuestra fe crezca con sabiduría y poder.



## OFFERING UPDATE December 19/20, 2020

Mass Time	Attendance	# of Envelopes	Weekly Collection
5:00 p.m.	154	68	\$1,631.50
8:00 a.m.	150	81	2,524.00
10:00 a.m.	215	60	1,990.00
12:00 p.m.	200	56	2,199.00
5:00 p.m.	<i>Not celebrated publicly</i>		
Coin			11.25
Faith Direct			2,797.30
Children's Env.		9	77.00
Mail-ins:			3,681.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>719</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>\$14,911.05</b>
<b>2019 total</b>	<b>1,737</b>	<b>673</b>	<b>\$18,407.80</b>
Candles			\$653.00
Poor Box			\$222.87

### 2021 OLPH CONTRIBUTION TAX LETTERS

Tax letters for the 2020 tax year will be prepared upon request only. Requests can be made by calling the Rectory: 631-226-7725 X 200. The Secretary will take your name, address & envelope number. The letters will be sent out *only upon request*. Thank you for your cooperation.

## HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS

*All parish offices will close at 3:00 p.m. Thursday, December 31. All parish offices will remain closed and all activities are cancelled on Friday, January 1, 2021 for New Year's Day. Offices will re-open Saturday, January 2 at 9:00 a.m.*



### DEADLINES FOR BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS

All requests for items printed in the bulletin must first have approval from Msgr. DeGrocco or the ministry moderator. *All material must be submitted* no later than the dates listed below and *as a Word document* to Carmel Becker at [cbecker@oloph.org](mailto:cbecker@oloph.org).

*Editing and sizes are at the discretion of the editor.*

January 3—passed  
January 10—December 29  
January 17—January 8

## DIOCESAN AND COMMUNITY NEWS

*Retrouvaille* helps couples through difficult times in their marriages. This program has helped thousands of couples worldwide experiencing ALL TYPES of marital difficulties. For confidential information about the *Retrouvaille* program, or to register for the upcoming weekend that begins on **Friday, January 22, 2021**, please call 1-800-470-2230 and you will be connected directly and confidentially to a couple from Long Island/Metro *Retrouvaille* who can help. Location: Marriott Melville Long Island, 1350 Walt Whitman Road, Melville, NY 11747

Rick Hinshaw, former editor of *The Long Island Catholic*, has reprised his column, "*Reading the Signs*," as a blog post. To read Rick's articles, go to [rickhinshaw.com](http://rickhinshaw.com).

**PREPARING FOR**  
**Sunday, January 3, 2021**  
**THE SOLEMNITY OF THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD**  
*Behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying,*  
*“Where is the newborn king of the Jews?”*

Matthew 2:1b-2a

**Isaiah 60:1-6**

Today the Church celebrates the *epiphany*, or manifestation, of Christ to all the world, Jew and Gentile alike. All three readings make that clear. This first reading is from hundreds of years before Jesus' birth at a time when the holy city of Jerusalem had been conquered and many of its inhabitants deported to a foreign land. They longed for the day when they would return to their homeland. The reading overflows with light, brightness, and radiance as it prophesies how glorious that day will be for the Jewish people. But it goes on to say that this saving act of the Lord will also be the marvel of other nations and their rulers who will bring gifts to Jerusalem such as gold and frankincense. People from all nations will come to know and praise God.

**Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6**

In this letter to the Church at Ephesus, Paul stresses that with the coming of Jesus the new Israel will expand to include the Gentiles as well as the Jews. This “mystery” was made known to him by revelation and was unknown to people in the past. It is a part of God's plan for the salvation of all people that was revealed to him by the Spirit. God desires all people, Jews and non-Jews alike, to be saved by Jesus. Good news indeed!

**Matthew 2:1-12**

Matthew was a Jew who came to believe in Jesus as the Messiah. As such, he wrote primarily to an audience of Jewish Christians like himself, telling them the story of Jesus and trying to persuade them to believe in him. Prominent in this account of the birth of Jesus is a passage from the ancient prophet Micah which prophesies that a ruler “who is to shepherd my people” will come from the town of Bethlehem. Witnesses to this wondrous birth are “magi from the east.” While many have debated the exact nature of the magi, what is more important for us today is that they come “from the east,” that is to say, they are non-Jews who recognized that Jesus came as Messiah for all people. Matthew makes it apparent that God, not the Roman emperor or his designated ruler Herod, has crowned the real “King of the Jews” and that even though he first appeared to the Jewish people all people will welcome their true ruler and Savior.

## Readings for the Week

*Take time each day to read the daily readings of the Church.*

**Monday, December 28, 2020:**

1 John 1:5—2:2 + Matthew 2:13-16

**Tuesday, December 29, 2020:**

1 John 2:3-11 + Luke 2:22-35

**Wednesday, December 30, 2020:**

1 John 2:12-17 + Luke 2:36-40

**Thursday, December 31, 2020:**

1 John 2:18-21 + John 1:1-18

**Friday, January 1, 2021:**Numbers 6:22-27 + Galatians 4:4-7  
+ Luke 2:16-21**Saturday, January 2, 2021:**

1 John 2:22-28 + John 1:19-28

**Sunday, January 3, 2021:**Isaiah 60:1-6 + Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6  
+ Matthew 2:1-12

# Mary, the Holy Mother of God

While a coordinator of interns in Washington, DC, the long resumes of recent high school graduates amused me.

These three- and four-page resumes brought to mind my college professor's saying, "The greater your credentials, the shorter your resume will be." He was right. The more an individual does, the less the person needs to say.

For Mary's role in salvation history, she is honored January 1 as Mary, the Holy Mother of God. Though she is venerated for bearing the Messiah, she speaks few words in the Gospel accounts.

Her words modeled discipleship in two sentences at the Annunciation: "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word" (Luke 1:38). With many more words, she proclaimed God's greatness in the prayer that we call the Magnificat (Luke 1:46–55). In John 2:3, she is direct with Jesus, stating, "They have no wine."

Throughout the liturgical year, the Blessed Mother is a prominent figure. Not only do half the Holydays of Obligation in the United States honor Mary (besides Mary, the Holy Mother of God, the Immaculate Conception on December 8, and the Assumption on August 15), dozens of other days, including most Saturdays in Ordinary Time, mark some aspect of her life.

Devotion to Mary began in the early centuries of the Church. After the Council of Ephesus in 431, many churches were built in Mary's name, and a number of liturgies honoring her developed. By the Middle Ages, a strong devotion to Mary was expressed in art, pilgrimages, and prayer. Prayers such as the Angelus, the Hail Mary, and the Memorare all emerged during this time. All of this for a woman of few words.



Mary, the Holy Mother of God, is honored on January 1 for her role in salvation history.

Mary did not need to use many words. She said all that was needed at the Annunciation. May we begin this new year looking to Mary and saying yes to bearing God in our actions and words.



## FROM THE DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE

### ***Background Screening Update***

#### ***The Office for the Protection of Children and Young People:***

The Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People (The Charter) promulgated by the Bishops of the United States in 2002 outlines specific practices and guidelines providing standards of safety in parishes and dioceses throughout the United States. As directed in The Charter, the Diocese of Rockville Centre requires all employees, clergy, and volunteers to complete three requirements within thirty days of employment or volunteering:

- Attend **Protecting God's Children Program (Virtus)**
- Sign the Codes of Conduct;
- Complete a background screen application. The Diocese requires all those who remain in active ministry be rescreened at 5 yr. intervals. volunteers/employees.

### **A Word on Background Screening of Volunteers:**

The Office for the Protection of Children and Young People (OFPCYP) has streamlined the volunteer application process enabling volunteers to complete the three safe environment requirements in one step. Individuals wishing to volunteer in a parish or school:

1. Register to attend a Protecting God's Children class and create a Virtus account on the Virtus website: [www.Virtus.org](http://www.Virtus.org)
2. Electronically acknowledge the Diocesan Code of Conduct- provided during the Virtus registration process.
3. Follow the instructions to complete the Sterling Volunteers background screening application background offered during the Virtus registration process.

### **Active Volunteers:**

If you are active in a parish ministry, have already attended Virtus and have been background screened you may be at – or beyond- the **5yr. rescreening requirement**. If this is the case, you will receive an email from **Sterling Volunteers** asking you to complete the background screening application on-line. You may access the background screening application by following the prompt in the email or logging into your Virtus account. ***Please be aware-this is not a scam nor has your e-mail been hacked.*** The OFPCYP has been working with your parish to update the Safe Environment records and noted it is time for you to be rescreened. You may also be prompted to electronically resign the Code of Conduct when you log into your Virtus account.

### **Edit Your Virtus Account:**

To access your Virtus account: [www.Virtus.org](http://www.Virtus.org) You will need your Username and Password. If you need assistance, please contact Virtus: 1-888-847-8870 or [helpdesk@virtus.org](mailto:helpdesk@virtus.org). Once in your account, review your account information-particularly your e-mail address. If your account requires updating, please hit the TOOLBOX tab at the top of the screen. On the left side of your screen in the green column click "Update My Account" You will be able to make the necessary changes-please remember to hit the SAVE button at the bottom of the screen.

Questions or concerns: [mmcmahon@drvc.org](mailto:mmcmahon@drvc.org); [amendoza-cantos@drvc.org](mailto:amendoza-cantos@drvc.org); [jwinter@drvc.org](mailto:jwinter@drvc.org); or [pditomasso@drvc.org](mailto:pditomasso@drvc.org)

Thank you to all who continue to serve in a ministry during these extremely challenging days.

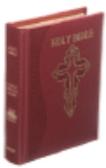
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