Our Lady of Lourdes Parish Community

2nd SUNDAY OF EASTER

April 11, 2021

390 County Road 523, P. O. Box 248, Whitehouse Station, NJ 08889

P: 908.534.2319 F: 908.534.5670 W: OLLWHS.ORG

Clergy

Pastor
Rev. Leonard F. A. Rusay x 16, pastor@ollwhs.org

Pastoral Support
Rev. Maurice Carlton

Deacons
Mr. Charles Paolino
Mr. John Scansaroli x 12, deaconj@ollwhs.org

Parish Staff

Liturgical Music Director
James Cole x 19, music@ollwhs.org

Pastoral Executive Assistant
Doreen Budris-Kovacs x 13, parishadmin@ollwhs.org

Pastoral Finance Assistant
Christine DeLessio x 15, finance@ollwhs.org

Communications Director
Bridget Hackman x 14, bulletin@ollwhs.org

Parish Catechetical Leader (PCL)
Nina Forestiere x 17, faithformation@ollwhs.org

PCL Assistant
Amy Ramsden x 18, ffassist@ollwhs.org

Pastoral Support
Madeline Fisher

Maintenance
Colman Connolly

Liturgical Celebrations

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday: 8:30 am

Thursday During Lent: 6:30 pm

Weekend:
Saturday: 5:30 pm; Sunday: 8:30 and 10:30 am

View Mass virtually on ollwhs.org each Sunday.

Visitation Hours

Church
Open daily from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Penance
By appointment or Saturday from 4:30 to 5:00 pm.

Office Hours

Monday through Thursday: 9:00 am to 4:00 pm.
Closed from 12:30 to 1:30 pm for Lunch.

Prayer Opportunity

Prayer Group:
Each Tuesday at 7:00 pm.

Parish Membership

New members need to visit our webpage, www.ollwhs.org, and fill out the form "New Parishioner" which is located under the "Our Parish" menu. We receive many requests for certificates of sponsorship for Baptism and Confirmation. Certificates can only be given to registered members of the parish who have actively practiced their faith for at least three months. Members are those who regularly attend Mass and participate in and support the life of the Church.

Sacraments

Baptism

The Rite of Baptism is celebrated on the first and third Sunday of the month following the 10:30 am Mass, except during Lent. **Parents must attend a Baptism Preparation session prior to the Baptism.** Arrangements for a Baptismal date are made after viewing that session.

Matrimony

In accordance with Diocesan policy, couples wishing to be married at OLL must participate in a one-year preparation program, which includes FOCCUS, Pre-Cana, God's Plan for a Faith-Filled Marriage, and required paperwork. Please confirm the date with the Church prior to making other plans. Marriages take place on Fridays and Saturdays—no Sunday weddings.

Sacrament of the Sick

Contact the office to arrange for this sacrament of healing.

Faith Formation

Youth Faith Formation

Our Faith Formation Department offers the following religious education programs: Weekly Faith Formation, Summer Intensive Year-Round Faith Formation, and 8th Grade Confirmation Preparation. Please refer to our website for full details,www.ollwhs.org.

Christian Initiation of Adults

The process where those "inquiring" about becoming a Roman Catholic are invited to journey with Church members in sharing their faith, while discerning God's call to conversion. Please contact the Parish Office for further information.

A Note from Fr. Len

Hopefully you had a wonderful Easter. I was a good person and did not go into a candy coma or overdose on pierogi on Easter day. The weather was so magnificent throughout Easter week, so I was able to appreciate the gracious gifts of our Lord by spending time with Him in nature, when I wasn't in the office. I did spend time doing some analysis about what transpired throughout Holy Week and the Triduum. Our attendance rose to a point that on Easter we averaged 167 people per Mass. The 11:15 am Mass had 208 attendees, the most we have had in the Church since March of 2020! The services had some pandemic required changes which did not deter most of us from experiencing the fullness of these holiest of days. On your behalf, I would like to thank Father Maurice and Deacons Chuck and John, the Music Ministry, the Eucharistic Ministers and Lectors, the Greeters, the Ushers and the Decorators for all that was done to make these days liturgically beautiful.

A preliminary accounting of the Rice Bowl collection is already over $6,000. We will be donating $500 to at least 12 different charities because of your generosity. If any more funds come in, we will add charities to the list. When a final total is tallied, we will let you know who received your gracious almsgiving.

Spend some time in prayer this week reflecting on the goodness and mercy offered to us by our Risen Savior. Please keep all those affected by the virus in your prayers for healing and peace.

Congratulations!

A joyous congratulations to Noelle Mazzaferro & John Icaza on their full initiation into the Catholic Church. Noelle & John received the sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist at the Easter Vigil Mass, supported by their loving families and friends.

Let us continue to pray for Noelle and John as they continue their faith journey as members of the Church and Our Lady of Lourdes parish community.

The Rosarian Gift Shop

The Gift Shop will remain closed for the time being; however, appointments are available by contacting Ruth Stieh at 534-4039 or rastieh@gmail.com.

View our Newest Video

2021 Bishop's Annual Appeal

Transformed by Christ's Body and Blood –
Sent on Mission to Light a Fire
in the Heart of the Church

A vocation to the priesthood is both challenging and rewarding. A priest is called to be a witness of Christ. He is a minister of the sacraments, proclaimer of the word, teacher of the faith, and steward of the Church. He accompanies the faithful through this world, leading the way to the eternal kingdom of heaven.

Discernment of a vocation to the priesthood requires specialized guidance to navigate the spiritual formation and academic demands of the seminary. While the Diocese of Metuchen has been blessed with an increase in the number of men studying for the priesthood—currently 24—the expense of educating and preparing our future priests is also rising. Your gift to the Bishop's Annual Appeal will help provide men with the opportunity to successfully complete their journey through the seminary and ensure the future of our Church. Please give as generously as your means allow.

DONATE NOW

Gifts Given to Share

Recognizing God in Ordinary Moments

Eye Has Not Seen

They say seeing is believing. But if you've ever ordered a pair of pants online, you know that's not always the case. Whatever the photos promise us, what looked like a perfectly nice shade of navy blue on our computer screens comes in the mail as an unusual shade of blue green that only appears in the giant box of Crayola crayons.

The Apostle Thomas, who couldn't bring himself to accept that Jesus had risen from the dead without seeing him, is such an utterly relatable figure in the Gospels. Thomas is still reeling from a loss — not only of his good friend but his Lord, who was taken prisoner and crucified before his eyes. Thomas is guarding himself. He's not believing the hype. He's going to be the only judge of what is real and what is fiction.

Would any of us be any different? We've all had those thoughts. Can we believe it all — Jesus, salvation history, the Eucharist — when we haven't seen it with our own two eyes?

That's when we need to remember that those two eyes were absolutely positive they had ordered a pair of navy blue pants.

It's easy for us to sit back stroking our chins in judgment at Thomas, "you didn't believe the testimony of your friends!" But do we accept the testimony of our friends? The saints, the popes, the Church fathers themselves?

Sometimes the things that are most worthy of believing can't be seen with the naked eye.

by Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

Do You Have a Child Entering 1st Grade in September?

If you have a child entering 1st grade in the fall and would like them to attend our Faith Formation program, please contact Nina Forestiere at faithformation@ollwhs.org.

Summer Faith Formation Volunteers Needed

The Faith Formation Department is planning to offer an in-person program for grades 3, 4, 5, and 6.

Dates: June 21-25 and June 28-July 2
Time 9:30 am to 12:00 pm

We need to fill catechist and aide positions to lead the classes in fun, creative lessons while enjoying a camp-like atmosphere. Please email Nina Forestiere at faithformation@ollwhs.org for more details and to volunteer. Come join us!

Thank You!

The Easter season is a time to give thanks to those who have been doing so much to keep our parish and its activities alive:

1. Justin and the staff at Stanton Italian Table for supplying all the meals for last month's Shepherd's Meal.

2. The Knights of Columbus for their hard work in rebuilding the carport for the Rectory.

3. For the camera persons who have been taping our liturgies since we went live this past January, especially Mike DaSilva.

4. A special blessing and much gratitude to all the Cantors, Eucharistic Ministers, Greeters, and Lectors for their assistance during Holy Week. An extra special thanks to the Ushers who went above and beyond.

5. A big thank you to Frank Andreyko for always being there to lend a helping hand...from hauling rocks to securing signs.

Monday 12

Easter Weekday

Acts 4:23-31/Ps 2:1-3, 4-7a, 7b-9 [cf. 11d]/ Jn 3:1-8

Mass Intention:
Peggy DeRossett
r/b Cookie Hackman

Tuesday 13

Easter Weekday

Acts 4:32-37/Ps 93:1ab, 1cd-2, 5 [1a]/ Jn 3:7b-15

Mass Intention:
Rose Higgins
r/b The Rosary Altar Society

Prayer Group

Wednesday 14

Easter Weekday

Acts 5:17-26/Ps 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9 [7a]/ Jn 3:16-21

Mass Intention:
Ronald Rallo
r/b Gloria Rallo

Gospel Meditation

Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

What a wonderful joy fills us today as we ponder the inexhaustible mercy of God. "Mercy is the heart of God," Pope Francis tells us. The image of a heart has been used to point to the very life source of a person as it is the organ that allows life to flow through our veins and sustain us. Mercy is the heart of God. Imagine this dynamic, powerful, compassionate, piercing, embracing, loving, propelling, penetrating, absorbing, and enveloping, transforming presence of God flowing into the very depth of our souls. It is God's mercy that allows blood to flow through our veins. It is God's mercy that forms every atom of our being and leads us to what is true. God's mercy reveals all superficiality and falsehood, and lays bare all distortions, empty promises, weakness, and sin.

"Mercy is the force that reawakens us to new life and instills in us the courage to look to the future with hope," Pope Francis continues. God's all forgiving, compassionate love is with us. When we finally believe and accept that Christ's resurrected transfigured presence resides with us, we then find within us a strong confidence to accept life's imperfections and disappointments and move on. Every day is a new adventure in new life. God leaves the past behind and opens doors to the future. It doesn't matter how many mistakes we made yesterday. All that matters is what we do tomorrow and what we learn along the way. It is so easy to remain tethered and mired in the past, but there is no need to do so. God is all about tomorrow and the work God has yet to do in our lives.

Mercy gives birth to hope. Hope for the greatest of sinners and hope for the worst of disasters. There is nothing God cannot do and nothing God cannot fashion. After all, everything we know and treasure was once nothing, and look what God did with the nothing God had! The

resurrected Christ stands before us with nail marks in his wrists and wounds on his body as a testament that not even injustice, suffering and death can trample over and destroy God's mercy. What have we to fear? Why do we keep ourselves from peace? Our lack of faith prevents us from going forward and fully receiving the holiness God desires to breathe upon us. Breathe in God's mercy, allow the wind of God's presence to kiss all of your sins and caress all of your fears. Exhale peace.

Scripture Reflect and Respond

First Reading:
Luke gives us a glimpse into the solidarity of heart and mind with the original community of believers in Jerusalem. How does your current community of faith compare to this first-generation Jerusalem church?

Second Reading:
John speaks of the power of faith and love for believers in conquering evil in the world. How does the faith and love in your life sustain you?

Gospel:
The story of Thomas' doubt in the resurrected Jesus is one of the most well-known resurrection narratives. Why do you think Christians throughout the ages are drawn to this story?

Thursday 15

Easter Weekday

Acts 5:27-33/Ps 34:2 and 9, 17-18, 19-20 [7a]/Jn 3:31-36

Mass Intention:
John Lambert
r/b The Hyde Family

Friday 16

Easter Weekday

Acts 5:34-42/Ps 27:1, 4, 13-14 [cf. 4abc]/ Jn 6:1-15

Mass Intention:
Gary Tackas
r/b Connette Bercik

Saturday 17

Easter Weekday

Acts 6:1-7/Ps 33:1-2, 4-5, 18-19 [22]/ Jn 6:16-21

Mass Intention:
5:30 PM Frank Feula
r/b Lucille Skledar, *Fr. Len*

OLL's Knights of Columbus

Matthew 25:40

"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

During March, as we lament the changes this full year of the COVID pandemic has brought us, we should not forget to celebrate the works of those in our church community who stepped up to help. At Our Lady of Lourdes, your Knights of Columbus organization has had a positive impact at the Church and in our surrounding community. Whether it was helping at Mass, directing traffic at the Drive-Up Communion, supporting the local charity organizations, or providing local skills contests for young soccer and basketball enthusiasts, they have exemplified the Christian values expressed in Matthew 25:14.

Of special note is the continuation of the monthly Shepherd's Meal. For the last year the Knights have prepared homemade meals in the Church's kitchen when regular month-end donations of food from our parishioners became a COVID casualty. A sit-down meal for those who need the nourishment was no longer an option, so "curb-side" delivery became the distribution methodology. Those who used to enjoy the meal at the Church now pull up outside and are provided "take home" meals, drinks, and snacks. Reaching beyond the Church, your Knights engaged the resources of the Township Director of Social Services to determine who else may need these meals. Meals are now delivered by car to those who could not make it to the Church. Additionally, the local hotel/motels were visited on a regular basis. Hot and cold meals were handed to those who answered the knock on their door.

Donations from the Church, parishioners, and individual Knights powered this activity. A core group of Knights lead planned, prepared, cooked, and packaged meals each month. Meals ranged from pasta and meatballs, chicken, and grilled vegetables, to salmon and penne with vodka sauce and stuffed cabbage and green beans. Nothing was simply warmed up from a can, as old family recipes were put to good use. So far, this team has volunteered over

600 man hours and served almost 3,000 meals to those in need. Your OLL Knights of Columbus Council 6930 were recognized by the Diocese of Metuchen with "The Spirit of Saint Francis" award for their good works during this pandemic year and continue each day to help those less fortunate.

Helen Omilian Memorial Rosary Altar Society Scholarship

Our Lady of Lourdes Rosary Altar Society is pleased to offer scholarships to graduating high school seniors who are active members of our parish and have been accepted as a full-time student (minimum of 12 hours/semester) at a trade school, community college, four-year college or university. Applications can be filled out on Our Lady of Lourdes' web site: www.ollwhs.org. All submissions must be received by April 19. The scholarship presentation date is currently undetermined, but recipients will be notified when decisions are final. Any questions, please contact Mary Jean DiRoberto at 534-4847 or mjdiro@eclipse.net.

Knights of Columbus Scholarship

See our website for information regarding the Knights of Columbus Scholarships for both current high school seniors and current college students. Full details will follow next week.

Sunday 18

Third Sunday of Easter

Acts 3:13-15, 17-19/Ps 4:2, 4, 7-8, 9 [7a]/1 Jn 2:1-5a/Lk 24:35-48

Mass Intentions:
8:30 am People of the Parish, *Fr. Maurice*

10:30 am Bill Fry
r/b George & Lauren Krizenawski, *Fr. Len*

Tabernacle Candles Burn in Honor Of:

† Living & Deceased Member of the Weygand & Silvestri Families

† Kevin McCann

† Norman Landsberg

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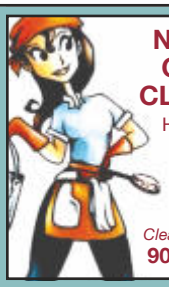

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