

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday	February 18th
8:30 AM	Angelo & Rosemary Sauro
5:00 PM	Eleanor & James Mara
Sunday	February 19th
8:30 AM	Homai Gharda
10:00 AM	Parish Mass
12:00 PM	Herbert Endres
5:00 PM	Richard Genova
Monday	February 20th
8:30 AM	Vito Scimeca
12:00 PM	Stanley Dunkelmann
Tuesday	February 21st
8:30 AM	Mary Ruelius
12:00 PM	Larry Connolly
Wednesday	February 22nd
8:30 AM	Louis & Pauline Pfohl
12:00 PM	Vera Coppola
Thursday	February 23rd
8:30 AM	Janet Gregory
12:00 PM	James Loughlin
Friday	February 24th
8:30 AM	Richard Zdonowski
12:00 PM	James Loughlin
Saturday	February 25th
8:30 AM	Jorge Bonilla
5:00 PM	Mary & Savino Camporese
Sunday	February 26th
8:30 AM	Taciana Pinero Uy
10:00 AM	Parish Mass
12:00 PM	Fred Sorentino
5:00 PM	Cesar Gomez DeLeon

PRAY FOR THE SICK

Vincent Lucanie, Roberta Papagni, Bernadette Boyle, Brene Brown, James Leung, Chantel Fernandes, Alice Coleman, Robert & Mary Tardona, Ken Kirwin, Christopher Tolve, Roseann Salerno, Bishop Cisneros, Rose Jonsson, Larry Ginsberg, Antoinette Wagner, Richard Kelly, Frank & Carolyn Kalnberg, Josie Bellina, Vera Garofalo, Gladys Sanchez, Mary J.

Riley, John O'Driscoll, Marilyn Jagiello, Eleanor Murray, Jean Strifler, Ava Cautin, Patrick Norton, JoAnn Gatch, Isabel Azzaro, Jim Redmond, Ann Rung, Celina Oleksie, Liane Ginsberg, Helaine Powell & Unborn Child, Claudette David, Denise Michelle, Renata Vecchione, Mary I. Albert, Rosa Rivera, Tom Horgan, Chris Austin, Connie Kwan, John Kelly, Salvatore Calendra, and for **all of our parishioners who are currently hospitalized or homebound.**

PRAY FOR THE ARMED SERVICES

Capt. Peter Sulewski, U.S. Army; Lt. Col. Patrick Davis, U.S. Army (JAG); Chief Ajay James, U.S. Navy NSW; Sgt. Beau Parham, U.S. Army; Capt. Paul Lentz, USAF; Sgt. Larry Saume, U.S. Army; Capt. Travis Swiatocha, USMC, and **all parishioners currently in the Military**



Pray for all of our police, fire, and corrections officers, who risk their lives daily to insure our safety.

PRAYERS FOR THE DECEASED

Doris DeVoy
Brother Francis O'Malley
Rev. William Dulaney
Dorothy Ustaski
Jaime Cadavid
Joann Fisher
Enrico D. Montesa

THIS WEEK IN THE PARISH**SUNDAY – February 19th**

Seventh Sunday In Ordinary Time

-Lay Ministry Sunday Mass & Hospitality-10:00am

MONDAY – February 20th

Weekday

Presidents' Day

-All Offices and Buildings Closed

TUESDAY - February 21st

Weekday

WEDNESDAY – February 22nd

The Chair of Saint Peter the Apostle

-Exercise Class-Parish Hall at 9:00am

-Golden Age-Parish Hall at 12:30pm - **All Are Welcome**

-Divine Mercy-Rectory at 7:00pm

THURSDAY – February 23rd

Saint Polycarp, Bishop and Martyr

FRIDAY – February 24th

Weekday

SATURDAY – February 25th

Weekday

**If you are not yet registered in the Parish,
please stop into the Rectory for a Census Form
Mon. thru Sat. 9am-4pm.**

ALTAR FLOWERS

Many thanks for this week's flower donation
given in **loving memory of:**

**Richard & Regina Gunaratna
and**

Mario Gunaratna

by

Indira Richards

**MEMORIALIZE A LOVED ONE**

Consider the possibility of a donation of the **Bread & Wine, Flowers for the Altar, Tabernacle Light, or the Memorial Worship Fund** in memory of a special person. Names of all those memorialized will be published in the bulletin. Call or stop by the Rectory for more info.

POOR BOX

We continue to receive requests for assistance so we ask you to please remember the poor and make a donation to the Poor Boxes at the entries of the Church. Your continued generosity is greatly appreciated.

Dear Parishioners:

In the Readings for today, we are challenged to "... *be holy (or perfect) as your heavenly Father is perfect.*" You might say, "Wow! What a challenge!" God knows that we cannot be perfect or even holy without His help; and He is there to give that help when we are ready to call on Him. He is waiting for us and wants us to ask Him for help, and then He asks us to do our part.

In a fishing village on a small Italian island, there was a law that a woman caught in adultery had to die. The punishment was that the woman be dropped from a high cliff.

It came to pass that a woman was to suffer that cruel death sentence. However, because of the absence of her husband, who had gone fishing, her execution was postponed. Her husband somehow did not return, the days followed slowly and the moment came when she was to be executed. The island people were surprised when the next day they saw the woman alive and well. *My husband – she told them happily - learned of my fate, spread his nets at the foot of the cliffs and saved my life.*

It is this ability to forgive and to love even our enemies that is the message of Jesus in today's Gospel.

You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.

But I say to you, love your enemies

and pray for those who persecute you,

that you may be children of your heavenly Father,

for he makes the sun rise on the bad and the good,

and causes the rain to fall on the just and the unjust.

What Christ asks of us is very difficult. But this is the only way to be true to the will of God. We should forgive what is done to us by our enemies, because God always forgives our sins. We should also forgive and avoid hatred because hatred, the desire for revenge, does not harm our enemies, but it harms us.

One author explains it this way: *"If you hate your enemies, you give them power over you. Hatred, which harms the heart, does not harm them, only us. They sleep peacefully. We cannot sleep because of hatred. We have high blood pressure. Those who hate, would dance with joy if they knew what havoc they created in our hearts. The hatred that nourishes the heart of our enemies, does not do them any harm. But it turns our days and nights in to nightmare and hell"*

The ancient Greeks had a very wise saying: *"Wise is the man who will suffer evil rather than cause evil to others."*

If we can forgive others, overcome evil with good, overcome hate with love, just as Christ teaches us in today's Gospel, it not only calms our hearts, but also has a positive effect on those people who have done us wrong.

A funny little story will allow us to better understand. There's a group of people waiting in line to take a bus. Among those waiting is a physically powerful woman. When the bus door finally opens, it gets confusing and pushing ensues. In the confusion and mutual pushing the woman, uses her elbows and shoulders, ignoring the fact that it repels others. Upon entering the bus, the woman sat next to a man who, in the course of getting on the bus, she had pushed away from the door. The man decided to bite his tongue about her pushing and mockingly said: *- I'm sorry I so rudely pushed you into the bus. I'm sorry that you were almost knocked over.* Imagine his surprise when in response to his unkind and untrue apology, the woman blushed and said: *You are so kind and good to me after that, when I was so bad and rude to you. Excuse me, sir.* At this point, he felt very foolish because of his sarcasm and insincerity.

During the rest of his ride, the man felt embarrassed and humiliated. *"Lord";*- he prayed in silence - *"tell me what you want to teach me through this event."* After a long prayer, he understood what God wanted him to learn. God wanted to teach him that every act of love, good, kindness and forgiveness breaks the chain reaction of evil and starts a chain reaction of love and goodness.

When we respond with love and goodness to the conduct of those who have done us harm and evil, then in place of evil, seeds of love and goodness are planted where they are needed most. This way, we interrupt the chain reaction of evil and negativity and in its place, we start a chain reaction of good. This is what St. Paul meant, when he wrote in his Letter to the Romans: *"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."*

Christ, who is present here today with us and looks at us with love, lets us pray fervently that his grace helped us in achieving this difficult art of spreading love, goodness and forgiveness even to our enemies.

God Bless You!

Father Gregory

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK**Lay Ministry Sunday**

No modern parish would be able to function were it not for the time, energy and dedication of many of our parishioners. They can be found in a variety of ministries: volunteers at the Food Pantry or Blood Drives; extraordinary Eucharistic ministers, choir members, members of the Ad Hoc Committee for social events, lecturers, ushers and ministers of welcome, altar servers, Consolation Ministers and Bereavement Team members, officers of Parish Societies, catechists, parish trustees, members of the Parish Council and Finance Committee, Altar "Angels" and Church decorators, Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Academy Board of Directors and many other areas of service. In their honor there will be hospitality after the 10:00 A.M. Mass on February 19th to which every parishioner is invited.

Lent

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, March 1st, 2017. The **Lenten Regulations** are:

Fasting is required on both Ash Wednesday and Good Friday (April 14th). Fasting is a serious obligation for all Catholics 18 to 59 years of age. The requirement reminds us of Our Lord's sacrificial love for us. It further reminds us of a our ultimate dependence on Almighty God for everything. It also unites us even if very briefly with the vast majority of the earth's population which often lacks even the basic nutritional requirements.

Abstinence on all the Fridays of Lent is also a serious penitential practice for all Catholics of all ages. Abstinence is the avoidance of meat or meat products. Like fasting, it is a reminder of our dependence on the love of almighty God and at least a brief solidarity with the poor.

All Catholics, after having received First Communion, **are bound to receive the Lord in Holy Communion at least once a year.** This obligation is called the **Easter Duty.** Most practicing Catholics receive the Eucharist regularly throughout the year so this obligation is more than fulfilled. The law applies a basic minimum and refers back to a time when Holy Communion was much less frequently received. However, if the recipient of Holy Communion is in a state of serious sin then recourse to the Sacrament of Penance is necessary.

Ash Wednesday (March 1st)

Ash Wednesday is not a holy day of obligation but most Catholics and many other Christians will observe it by obtaining blessed ashes. Sackcloth and ashes were the Biblical indications of repentance and sorrow for sins. The sign of ashes in the shape of a cross on our foreheads is a reminder to each of us that in order to realign ourselves with God our lives must be marked by the sign of Christ. The minister has two choices as the ashes are applied: The first and more traditional is "Remember, thou art dust and unto dust thou shall return" - a rather stark reminder of the shortness of human life and that we are made from the same "stuff" of as everything else. The second choice is "Repent and hear the Good News". The Good News is that this "human dust" has been called by Almighty God to share in His life.

Ash Wednesday Schedule

8:30 A.M. Mass
 10:00 A.M. (Mass for OLMC Academy - all are invited)
 12:00 P.M. Mass (The Golden Age Group is urged to attend this Mass)
 3:00 P.M. Prayer Service
 7:30 P.M. Mass

Ashes will be distributed after the Gospel at each Mass and at the Prayer Service.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

The week of February 19, Deacon Dean Dobbins will host the **RCIA meeting** with talk on the Sacraments of Holy Orders and Marriage. Any other parishioners who wish to attend are welcomed.

Centering Prayer will be cancelled for Feb. 22nd, both afternoon and evening session. It will resume again on Tuesday, Feb. 29.

OLM BLOOD DRIVE

The New York Blood Center will be sponsoring Blood Drive here at OLM Church on Sunday, February 26, 2017 from 8:45am to 2:45pm, in the Parish Hall. At this time of year, the **Blood Center's Inventory is at a critically low level**, and there is an **urgent need for donors of all blood types. Please help to replenish the supply and give the gift of life by donating**

blood. Donor literature and sign-up sheets are in the vestibule of the Church for your convenience. If you would like more information or would like to make an appointment please call the Rectory Office (718-268-6143).

To facilitate the registration process on February 26th, please bring you donor card, or ID number (if you have donated before) and a photo ID.

**WALK-IN DONORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!
 COME AND BRING A FRIEND!**

Donating Blood is Not The Only Way to Help! Volunteers will be needed throughout the day to provide refreshments and support the donors, and to help facilitate the overall process. If you are able to offer an hour or two of your time please leave your name and time available at the Rectory Office.

ST. PATRICK AND ST. JOSEPH PARTY

Everyone is invited to celebrate these two great saints-St. Patrick and St. Joseph – in the Lower Church Hall on **Saturday, March 18, 2017 from 6:30 to 10:30 PM** with DJ Tim O'Brien of Good Time Party Music, pipers, dancing, superb hot buffet, coffee, tea, soft drinks, desserts, and BYOB. And Monsignor McGuirl promises his famous homemade family recipe soda bread. All for **\$40 /person by March 11, 2017** with **Early Bird Special of \$35/person for monies received by February 28, 2017.** Please see fliers in the bulletin and around the church to get your ticket. For more info, please contact **MaraGold Productions:** Helen Van Tine-Golden or Jim Mara at 718-497-5705

**OPERA COMES TO MERCY AGAIN!
 RESERVE NOW FOR MARCH 31st & APRIL 2nd!!**

Golden Rose Opera Works, Mercy's resident opera company, proudly presents Pietro Mascagni's 70 minute glorious one-act glorious masterpiece, "Cavalleria Rusticana" right here in the church on Friday, March 31, 2017 at 7:30 PM and Sunday, April 2, 2017 at 2PM.

A terrific tale of a spurned pregnant lover, a reckless young man, a spoiled bored housewife and an avenging husband -AND the swift settling of fate all on Easter Sunday morning. And the audience is in the middle of all that action and glorious music.

Please see flyer in the bulletin and around the church for reservation details and tear off form for ticket purchases. General admission tickets are \$20 adults and \$15/ students and seniors. Please call Helen Van Tine -Golden at 718-793-2033 for additional information or see her after or before the 8:30 AM and 10AM Masses! Thank you for your continued patronage.

SPRING ALREADY?!



Although there seems to be some disagreement between Phil and Chuck as to when Spring will arrive, here at OLM, plans are being made for our Spring Fling event in early May.

If you are a vendor or know someone who would like to participate in this event, please have them call or email the Rectory for more details.

THINK SPRING!!!!

FEEL GREAT & LOOK GREAT

Feel and look great at our exercise class every Wednesday from 9:00 to 10:00 AM in the Parish Hall. The class focuses on gentle movements for your muscles and joints. There is a nominal fee of \$2 per session. Please come and enjoy the fitness fun. All ages are welcome.

OLM MUSICAL NOTES

We are hoping to get some additional members this year to expand our choirs. We hope that you will consider joining us.

The Adult Choir will rehearse on Mondays at 7:30PM and sing at the 10AM Mass on Sundays.

The Youth Choir will rehearse in the church on Sundays at 11AM and sing at the 12 Noon Mass **The youth choir will be accepting students from third grade and up.**

If you are interested in joining either choir please contact our Music Director, Jane Lawson. You can see her in the choir loft after any Mass on Sundays, or leave a message for her at the Rectory

DIVINE MERCY SCHEDULE

February 22, 2017	Divine Mercy Devotion	7:00pm
March 01, 2017	No Activity	
March 08, 2017	Divine Mercy Devotion	7:00pm
March 15, 2017	Devine Mercy Chaplet Benediction	7:00pm 8:00pm
March 22, 2017	Divine Mercy Cenacle	7:00 pm
March 29, 2017	Divine Mercy Devotion	7:00 pm

FOOD PANTRY

The Food Pantry Community at Our Lady of Mercy Church is a part of our Ministry that seeks to create a hunger free community by sharing our abundant blessings with God's people that are in need. The Food Pantry Ministry operates on every Saturday from 10:00am to 11:00am. The purpose of the Food Pantry is to assist those living within the community of Forest Hills and the surrounding areas of Queens who are in need of basic food and sanitary supplies during times of hardship. However, no one presenting a genuine need will be turned away. Since your donations help us keep the shelves stocked, we are asking for your help in dropping off food, monetary donations or gift cards. If giving a **monetary donation**, please make all checks payable to Our Lady of Mercy Church (in the memo section please state Food Pantry or Human Services) and forward all cash or checks to the Rectory, 70 01 Kessel Street.

Food Pantry Hours are:10:00am–11:00am every Saturday

CONGRATULATIONS

The following **OLMCA graduates**, have merited academic recognition for commendable performance during the past academic quarter:

- Holden Fleisig, Carolyn Langer, Camila Mantilla, Colleen Petre & Isabella Cognata at St. Francis Preparatory School
- Ryan Wilson at Holy Cross High School
- Megan Heerey at Msgr. McClancy Memorial High School



- **Helpers of God's Precious Infants** at the All Women's Pavilion, 120-34 Queens Blvd., on Saturdays between 7:00 AM and 11:30 AM in a peaceful, prayerful witness to life. Lives are saved and the way to conversion is opened. Join us for any amount of time.
- **Ozanam Hall of Queens Nursing Home** (42-41 201st St., Bayside) is seeking part time Activity Leaders. No Experience necessary, but good verbal/writing skills as well as interpersonal skills in working with the senior population are required. If interested, please call Marilyn Gindi at 718-971-2708
- **Celtic Crossings Live in Concert** will be at the NYCB Theatre at Westbury, on March 5th at 3:00pm, to **Benefit Dominican Village**. For info call Dominican Village at 631-842-6618 or visit: www.TheTheatreAtWestbury.com
- On Saturday, April 22, 2017, a Bishop McDonnell MHS (260 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn) Reunion will be held from approximately noon to 5pm. For more information contact Rita Monaghan-Maloney at 718-857-2700 ext.2253 or rmaloney@blmhs.org

THE DEANERY CORNER

- **Our Lady of Hope The Holy Name Society** is sponsoring a Men's Retreat, Friday, February 24 to Sunday, February 26 at the Bishop Molloy Retreat House. Theme: "We Are a People of Promise!" The offering is \$210. For more information, call Steve Stern at 917-648-9707.
- **The Senior Goal Group of Our Lady of Hope** will sponsor a Anointing of the Sick Mass on Saturday, March 4th at 1:00pm at Our Lady Of Hope Church (61-27 71st St., Middle Village, NY, 718-429-5438). Light Refreshments will be served in the cafeteria after the Mass.
- There will be **Pilgrimage to the National Shrine of the Divine Mercy, Stockbridge, MA on Sunday, April 23, 2017.** Bus departs at 6:30AM (sharp) from **Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Church**, 110-06 Queens Blvd (corner Ascan Avenue). Cost: \$50/person. Sponsored by the Charismatic Prayer Group at OLM. For tickets, call any one of these organizers: Virgie Punto 917-770-0897; Nellie Milite 718-704-3862; Cely De Borja 718-255-1654 or 347-743-2304; Cecile Mendoza 718-674-6551 or 347-453-4147, Marlyn Pagmanua 347-791-4398. Or visit ourladyqueenofmartyrs.org/dmpilgrimage2017. Don't Miss Out! First Come, First Serve.