

Lease with Tender Garden Pre-School

I am thrilled to report to you that we are in the process of signing a lease with Tender Garden Pre-School. Tender Garden runs a pre-school program for children ages 2-4 and they are already located at St. Bernard Parish in Levittown. Due to the success of their school, they needed to open another campus and I am very happy that we have been able to connect with them. You may have already noticed the banners we have hanging at OLPH.

They will be renting out three classrooms in the “new school/annex” part of the school building for non-exclusive use (*i.e.*, we can still use the rooms for parish use after their school hours) and one classroom (room 14) will be given to them for exclusive use as their office (the parish has agreed to give up use of that room). As you can imagine, the rental income from this space will really help us in returning the parish to financial stability. The personnel at Tender Garden have been wonderful to work with and I am glad to welcome them here. I look forward to a long relationship with them.

You can read about Tender Garden II Early Childhood Learning Center here at OLPH by referring to the ad found elsewhere in this bulletin or by contacting them for more information. Spread the word about them; let's do our part to make this Pre-School a success. Should the program grow thus creating the need for them to lease more space from us, it would benefit the parish even more!

Leasing Space in Our Convent

While we have good news from the perspective of renting out classroom space, I'm afraid I have bad news to report regarding the leasing of space in our Convent. After the possibility of leasing office space to the Town of Babylon Counseling Program was sabotaged, there arose the possibility of the Town of Babylon leasing space in the Convent for other administrative offices. However, I have been notified that their budget will not allow them to make the necessary modifications to the building, so they have backed out of that deal. Unfortunately, then, we are back to square one. The misguided campaign of misinformation and fear-mongering that killed the original arrangement for the Town Counseling Services

to rent space from us did damage on several levels: it not only prevented a much-needed social service from being available right here in Lindenhurst, but it also hurt the parish by putting us back to square one in having to find rental income to assist the parish. That is very unfortunate.

Be assured we will continue to pursue all viable leads. Leasing space in a Catholic parish is a very complicated process insofar as we have to work with the diocesan officials, and our options are limited as to who we can lease to; for example, we cannot lease to just any business since leasing space for profit would jeopardize our not-for-profit status as a Church. Yet, because we need to realize income from this space in order to assure the financial health of the parish, we will continue to work hard. I continue to be open to all suggestions, so feel free to refer any possible leads to me.

Parking Lot: Paving and Sealing

Starting on Monday, May 12, our parking lot and other blacktop areas will be undergoing some much-needed rehabilitation. The south parking lot on the corner of High and Gates Streets will be completely ground up and re-done, including new striping for maximum parking space; in addition, other blacktop areas such as the parking lot between the rectory and the school, and between the rectory and the church, and behind the church, will be re-sealed. This maintenance will not only bring the blacktop areas to a much-needed state of repair, but it will also, of course, make the appearance of the campus that much more attractive. We expect that the inconvenience and the loss of parking space during the job will be minimal; we have tried to work out the timing so it will have little impact. The parking lot should be useable next weekend, May 17-18, and all work is projected to be finished (weather permitting) by the weekend of May 24-25. We thank you for your patience and cooperation as we continue to do our best to spruce up the physical plant and keep the facilities and grounds in a condition worthy of the great parish that is OLPH.

Congratulations to our First Communicants!

Yesterday, Saturday, May 10, saw the last of our Saturday First Holy Communion

Masses, although we still have some First Communion remaining at some Sunday Masses during Easter Time. I take this opportunity to congratulate all our First Communion families. OLPH Parish shares your joy, and we are thrilled to have your children sharing at the Eucharistic table with us! Parents, I cannot urge you enough: please remember the God-given responsibility you have to bring your children to participate at Mass **every** Sunday — not every other week, not a few times a month, but **every** Sunday. How desperately we all need to be at Mass every Sunday, the Lord's Day, in order to be formed by God's Word and to be transformed into the presence of Christ as we share in the Banquet of the Lord's Sacrifice around the altar.

We should all offer special words of gratitude to Mrs. April Kleinlaut, our Coordinator of Faith Formation, to Kristine Doyle and Christine Graham, the secretaries in the Faith Formation Office, and to all the catechists in the second-grade program, for all their hard work and dedication in bringing the children to this day. We are so blessed at OLPH to have such wonderful offerers in our Faith Formation Program!

Parish Wedding Anniversaries Mass

This Friday, May 16, is our parish's celebration of Wedding Anniversaries "on the five's" and 50 years and more; you've seen the information in our bulletin. If this celebration applies to you and you have not yet responded, there is still time to get in on it. Make sure you join us for what will be an evening of both prayer and spirituality, and a great party!

St. Bernard League

Last Sunday at the 9:30 a.m. Mass the members of our St. Bernard League received a special blessing and enjoyed some hospitality after the Mass. At this time allow me to offer some heartfelt words of gratitude and appreciation to all those who are in the St. Bernard League.

You have seen this ministry mentioned in our bulletin, and it is a rather unique and interesting social ministry. Members of the St. Bernard League adopt an older person or some other person in need. When it snows, the St. Bernards go to the person's home and shovel

them out. As you can imagine, all our St. Bernards had a good workout this past winter! The beautiful part is that nearly 40 parishioners or families were assisted this past year.

The St. Bernard League is a powerful reminder of what service is all about. What's even more important is that this ministry is not just about "doing something" for someone, but rather it's about building up community and relationships, as each St. Bernard offerer more or less "adopts" the family or person they will be shoveling out. Thus, through this aspect of our parish social ministry, many of our parishioners were shown that our parish community cares for them.

Thank you to all the St. Bernards! You are terrific and, as your Pastor, I thank you for bringing the presence and caring of OLPH right to your fellow parishioners' driveways, sidewalks, and front doors! I think it's safe to say that you can put your shovels away for now and take a well-deserved rest. Let's hope there's not quite as much call for your ministry next winter!

Evening Prayer each Saturday and Sunday

It's about 6 months now since we started offering Evening Prayer each Saturday and Sunday night after the 5:00 p.m. Mass. This is a wonderful gift to the parish, and I hope you are taking advantage of it by being present for it.

Who's it for? It's for everyone! The Liturgy of the Hours is the daily prayer of the **Church** — that means it's meant to be prayed by **everyone**, not just priests, deacons and religious. To think, "Well, I don't do that" is kind of like saying, "I don't do Catholic prayer!" Of course we do! We pray it to sanctify the day and to place ourselves in the Paschal Mystery of Christ's death and resurrection throughout the course of the entire day.

It's a simple prayer that uses Psalms, a Scripture reading and a Canticle to give praise to God. It takes 15 minutes or less. You know how GEICO advertises that "15 minutes can save you 15 percent or more on car insurance?" Well, a mere 15 minutes can bring you closer to God!

The Liturgy of the Hours is one of those liturgies that can properly be led by lay people, and I am very pleased that Alice Vozzo has taken responsibility for seeing that Evening

Prayer is prayed each Saturday and Sunday evening. We are very fortunate as a parish to have this offered since it is exactly this practice which was called for by the liturgical reforms of the Second Vatican Council. We are doing exactly what the Church is asking us to do by offering this prayer!

Make sure you join us as often as you can for the Liturgy of the Hours each Saturday and Sunday night after the 5:00 p.m. Mass. You'll be glad you did!

Upcoming Meetings for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion and for Readers

We are once again holding meetings for liturgical ministers, for their spiritual formation and to address business items. Meetings for all Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are coming up this week, on Tuesday May 13, at 2:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. in the church (ministers are to choose one to attend). The meeting for Readers will be Tuesday, May 20 at 7:30 p.m. in the church. We look forward to seeing all EMs and readers at these meetings.

Meetings for ushers and altar servers will be coming up soon; watch for further information.

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,