

**OUR LADY OF LOURDES CHURCH
BETHESDA, MARYLAND**

December 25, 2022

A Letter from Our Pastor

“Christian, remember your dignity, and now that you share in God’s own nature, do not return by sin to your former base condition. Bear in mind who is your head and of whose body you are a member. Do not forget that you have been rescued from the power of darkness and brought into the light of God’s kingdom.” St. Leo the Great, Pope

Dear Friends,

The quote above is from a reading from the Liturgy of the Hours that all priests and religious read every Christmas morning. I will be reading this until my last Christmas on earth. I wanted to share it with you this Christmas to point out a couple of truths which may be forgotten during this season of celebration.

St. Leo reminds us here of our dignity. It is not our own, just as our lives are not our own. They are a gift from the Father and His son, Jesus Christ. Through becoming a human being like you and me - except for sin - Jesus began the process of restoring us to our former glory. The story of salvation begins with the fact that you and I need salvation! Our dignity is a beautiful thing because we are made in God’s image and likeness. We lose this dignity through personal sin and the mark of Original Sin. Baptism removes the mark, but a hole is left. We often try to fill it with worldly things: money, pleasure, power, the approval of others. None of these things will work because we are made for God alone. St. Augustine famously wrote, “You alone have made us, o God, and our hearts will be restless until they rest in You.” When we forget the dignity that we possess from God himself, we turn back to our “former base condition.” In other words, we go back to a life of sin and turning away from God.

Today we celebrate Christmas in one fashion or another. Some because of the birth of Jesus, the incarnation. Others, because it is a cultural thing to do. Christmas lights, trees and exchanging of gifts is a cultural norm. I have bought gifts for family and friends and today I will hand them over. But the truth is the one gift I need to focus on is the gift of Jesus himself. I, Fr. Rob, have been rescued from darkness, I have lived in darkness by thinking I know better than God, but I have been brought into the light of God’s kingdom. It is the best gift we can receive. I urge you today to not take this gift for granted. Some of you may come to Mass a couple times a year, thinking it’s nice to go to church every once and a while. But we are called to be here every week. If we fail to do so, we will worship something other than God - our own wants and desires. I invite you to come back every week. You are welcome here! God calls you today to be transformed. I beg you today to say yes to Him! Some of you might come weekly but fail to see a transformation. I beg you - actively invite God into your heart and soul! Be not afraid! God wants to surprise and delight you - but he will not go where he is first not invited. WE are called, fellow Christians, to be transformed. WE are members of the Body of Christ. If WE can act upon this more today, the miracle of Christmas will live in our hearts and souls. I look forward to seeing you this Christmas and each week after. I pray for each of you daily to realize the greatness for which you are made!

In Him,
Fr. Rob

OUR TEAM / NUESTRO EQUIPO



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RECTORY HOURS / HORAS DE RECTORÍA
8AM–4PM Mon–Fri / Lun–Vie
SACRAMENTS / SACRAMENTOS
Call Parish Office

MONDAY / LUNES		FRIDAY / VIERNES	
10:00AM	+ Raul Fernandez	7:00AM	+ Christie Smith
		12:00PM	+ John McGrath
TUESDAY / MARTES		SATURDAY / SÁBADO	
7:00AM	+I & C.Abeyegoonewardene	12:00PM	Int. Francis Yeatman
12:00PM	+ Robert J. Brown	5:00PM	+ Barbara Sprout
WEDNESDAY / MIERCOLES		SUNDAY / DOMINGO	
7:00AM	+ Kathy Warner	7:30AM	+ Rev. Everett Pearson
12:00PM	+ Margaret Breeden	9:30AM	For the Blessed Mother
THURSDAY / JUEVES		11:30AM	People of the Parish
7:00AM	+ Peter J. Thaluber		
12:00PM	+Margaret D. O'Connor		

Please note: The graces of each Mass are applied to the persons listed in the intention book regardless of whether they appear in the bulletin or are mentioned during the Mass

Father Rob, Father James, Sister Claudia, and all of the staff at Our Lady of Lourdes wish you and your loved ones a Blessed and Merry Christmas.

May the peace and joy of Christ’s love be with you this Christmas season and always.



SOLEMNITY OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

Carta de nuestro pastor

“Reconoce, cristiano, tu dignidad y, puesto que has sido hecho partícipe de la naturaleza divina, no pienses en volver con un comportamiento indigno a las antiguas vilezas. Piensa de qué cabeza y de qué cuerpo eres miembro. No olvides que fuiste liberado del poder de las tinieblas y trasladado a la luz y al reino de Dios.” San León Magno, Papa

Queridos amigos,

La cita anterior pertenece a una lectura de la Liturgia de las Horas que todos los sacerdotes y religiosos leemos cada mañana en el tiempo de Navidad. Yo la leeré hasta mi última Navidad aquí en la tierra. Quería compartirla con ustedes esta Navidad para señalar un par de verdades que podemos olvidar durante esta época de celebraciones.

San León Magno nos recuerda aquí nuestra dignidad. No es nuestra, como tampoco nuestra vida lo es. Son un don del Padre y de su Hijo, Jesucristo. Jesús, al convertirse en un ser humano como tú y como yo -excepto por el pecado-, comenzó el proceso de devolvernos nuestra antigua gloria. La historia de la salvación comienza con el hecho de que tú y yo necesitamos salvación. La dignidad es algo hermoso porque estamos hechos a imagen y semejanza de Dios. Pero, perdemos esta dignidad por el pecado personal y la marca del Pecado Original. El bautismo quita la marca, pero queda un hueco. A menudo intentamos llenarlo con cosas mundanas: dinero, placer, poder o la aprobación de los demás. Sin embargo, ninguna de estas cosas funcionará porque estamos hechos sólo para Dios. San Agustín escribió célebremente: "Nos hiciste Señor para ti, y nuestro corazón esta inquieto, hasta que descanse en Ti". Cuando olvidamos la dignidad que poseemos de Dios mismo, volvemos a nuestras "antiguas vilezas". En otras palabras, volvemos a una vida de pecado y de alejamiento de Dios.

Hoy todos celebramos la Navidad de una manera u otra. Algunos por el nacimiento de Jesús, por su encarnación. Otros, porque es algo cultural. Las luces de Navidad, los árboles y el intercambio de regalos son una norma cultural. He comprado regalos para la familia y amigos y hoy los entregaré. Pero la verdad es que, el único regalo en el que tengo que centrarme es el regalo de Jesús mismo. Yo, P. Rob, he sido rescatado de la oscuridad, he vivido en la oscuridad por pensar que sé mejor que Dios, y he sido traído a la luz del reino de Dios. Es el mejor regalo que podemos recibir. Les exhorto hoy a no dar por hecho este don.

Algunos de ustedes pueden venir a Misa un par de veces al año, tal vez pensando que es algo agradable ir a la iglesia de vez en cuando. Pero estamos llamados a estar aquí cada semana para que podamos ser reorientados hacia Dios. Si no lo hacemos, adoraremos algo que no es Dios: nuestros propios deseos. Te invito a que vuelvas cada semana. Aquí eres bienvenido. Dios te llama hoy a ser transformado. Te ruego que hoy le digas sí a Él. Algunos de ustedes pueden venir semanalmente pero sin que haya una transformación.

Te lo ruego: ¡Invita activamente a Dios a tu corazón y a tu alma! No tengas miedo. Dios quiere sorprenderte y deleitarte - pero no irá donde primero no se le invite. Estamos llamados, hermanos cristianos, a ser transformados. NOSOTROS somos miembros del Cuerpo de Cristo. Si NOSOTROS podemos actuar sobre esto sólo un poco más hoy, el milagro de la Navidad vivirá en nuestros corazones y almas. Ésta es la dignidad para la que tú y yo estamos hechos.

Espero verlos esta Navidad y después cada semana también. Oro diariamente para que cada uno de ustedes se dé cuenta de la grandeza para la que estamos hechos.

En Él,
Padre Rob

2022 Christmas Schedule:

**Christmas Eve Day:
Saturday, December 24:**

10:00am Daily Mass Only

**Christmas Eve:
Saturday, December 24**

5:00pm Mass
7:00pm Mass (Spanish)
10:00pm Mass

Christmas Day: Sunday, December 25:

7:30am Mass
9:30am Mass

**On Monday, December 26, there will be
one daily Mass only at 10am.**





**Wedding Anniversary Mass to
Celebrate the Vocation of Marriage**

This year Bishop Roy E. Campbell will celebrate the Annual Wedding Anniversary Mass to Celebrate the Vocation of Marriage on **Saturday, February 11, 2023, 10:00am at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.** This celebration is to highlight the witness to the Catholic vocation of marriage and the beauty of God's plan for married life. Couples must register with the parish office to attend the Mass and/or receive a certificate from Cardinal Wilton Gregory in honor of their anniversary year by January 20, 2023.

Este año, el Obispo Mons. Roy E. Campbell presidirá la Misa de Aniversario de Bodas para celebrar la Vocación al Matrimonio el **sábado 11 de febrero de 2023 a las 10:00am en la Basílica del Santuario Nacional de la Inmaculada Concepción.** Esta celebración pone de relieve el testimonio de la vocación católica al matrimonio y de la belleza del plan de Dios para la vida matrimonial. Se invita a las parejas a inscribirse, antes del 20 de enero de 2023, en la oficina parroquial para asistir a la Misa o para recibir un certificado firmado por el Cardenal Wilton Gregory como homenaje a su aniversario de bodas.

**The Gabriel Project Cluster of Montgomery County
serves mothers and their families in
crisis pregnancies.**

During the past 6 months, 181 mothers have requested assistance. Please help us provide maternity clothes and winter clothing for newborns and older children of our client families. We especially need girl/boy 0-3 months, girls size 6 everything, long-sleeve boys size 5-16. New or gently used clothing is greatly appreciated, or go to our Website, www.gpmoco.org, click on our Amazon *wishlist* and choose from any number of items.

Please also pray about joining our team of over 90 Angel Friends who stay in touch with client mothers during their pregnancies. We especially need bi-lingual women to serve as Angel Friends. A volunteer photographer is also needed.

Questions? Contact Jill Gadwood at
jill.gadwood@gmail.com

The next Study of Saints Book Club will take place on Sunday, January 29 from 3-4 pm in the Delacroix Room.

The book is: *Christ is Passing By*
by Saint Josemaría Escrivá

The text is available online at:
www.escrivaworks.org and in print.

Please contact SoS@saintly.com
with any questions.

Join us for an exciting
new program that
will explore the history
of Christian Art:



This 6-part series of presentations will explore the connection between art and liturgy. It will run monthly on Thursday evenings:
Jan 5, Feb 16, Mar 12, Apr 20, May 18,
from 7:30-9:00 pm.

Registration is required. \$35 per person per session (if registered by Early-Bird deadline) or sign up for the entire series for \$210 per person.

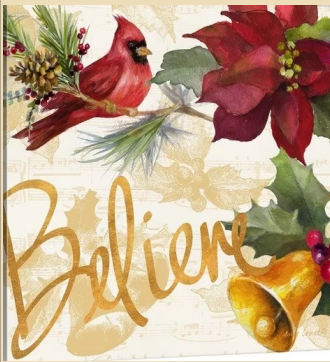
Find more information and links to register on the website www.ourladyofbethesda.org.

WITNESS FOR LIFE

Join us every first Saturday of
the month at 10am

Wildwood Medical Center
10401 Old Georgetown Road
For more info email
Jill Gadwood at
Jill.Gadwood@gmail.com





If you would like to donate the Altar Flowers for a special intention, a special occasion, or in memory of a loved one, please call the parish office or email: sgolden@ololrcc.org or ctoms@ololrcc.org. The donation for the flowers is \$150.00.

OUR LADY OF LOURDES

Mom's Group

Is meeting Wednesday, January 4
from 8:30-10am
in the Delacroix Room

All moms welcome!
Bring your little ones and a
treat to share!



Claire Toms
ctoms@ololrcc.org

Our December Poor Box will be going to the Saint Ann's Center for Children, Youth and Families. They are a nonprofit organization, committed to lifting vulnerable children, mothers and families out of poverty and homelessness. Their housing and support programs help provide the tools for life-long independence and self-sufficiency. Thank you for your generosity.

We encourage you to sign up for Faith Direct! Our parish code is MD33. Please email Claire Toms at ctoms@ololrcc.org with any questions.

Beginning January 2023, we will no longer be mailing out end-of-year parishioner contribution statements. We are implementing a new system where parishioners are able to access, download, and print their contribution statements and giving history through a personal account.

You must be a registered parishioner in our system with a verified email address to create an account and access your information. Please see our website for complete instructions and email Claire Toms at ctoms@ololrcc.org with any and all questions.

Please pray for all the sick in our parish, especially Marie Anne.

Please pray for our brave parishioners, relatives and friends of our Parish family who are serving their country in the Armed Forces.

We ask the Lord to keep them safe from harm, and we pray for their families while they are away from home.

Please help us keep our records up-to-date by filling out this form and dropping it in the collection basket or rectory mail slot. You may also register at our parish website or by emailing ctoms@ololrcc.org.

NAME: _____ ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____

- ☐ I/we am/are new to the parish
☐ Change of address within the parish
☐ I/we am/are moving out of the parish