

Our Lady of Victories Church

(serving Harrington Park, River Vale and the Pascack/Northern Valley)

150 Harriot Avenue, Harrington Park, New Jersey

www.ourchurch.com/member/o/olvparish

February 7, 2016 A.D.

Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy

WELCOME

**To the Parish Family of
OUR LADY OF VICTORIES
(THE LITTLE CHURCH WITH THE BIG HEART)**

COME WORSHIP WITH US

Mass Schedule

Saturday: 4:00pm, 5:00pm, &
6pm (Spanish)

Sunday: 7:30am, 9:30am, 10:45am,
12:00pm, 6:00pm & 7:00pm

Latin Mass: Every Sunday at 8:15am

Weekdays: M-Sat 8:00am & 12:00noon



ASH WEDNESDAY

February 10, 2016

Mass at 6:30a.m., 8:00a.m., 12:00Noon, 5:30p.m., 7:00p.m.

Service of Word at 3:30p.m.



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PRAY FOR OUR SICK

Please **PRAY** in the name of **JESUS**, the Healer, that the **SICK** of **OLV PARISH** may be restored to health and all those who **ASSIST** and **CARE** for the sick will be given the **STRENGTH** to continue **GOD'S GOOD WILL**: Baby Luca, little Niamh Devlin, Br. Pius, Isabella Ruggiero, Maria Aleman, William Biasi, Michael Conmy, Kathleen Dolan, Mario Gobbetti, Thomas Haring, Peter Kelleher, Arnold Kemner, Ken Mosier, Kathleen Musante, Dan Ragusa, Mary Rinner, Suzanne Rothschild, Wendy Ruggiero, Cookie and George Rush, Cynthia Simonelli, Mildred Speck, Therese Vaglio, Mike Weber, Darien Wesler, Al Wiese, Roy Wurtz, Marian Zanetti, Elaine Zito.

SPIRITUAL EXCERPT

"I have accustomed myself never to complain when anything of mine was taken away; and when unjustly blamed I chose rather to remain silent than to defend myself." **St. Therese of Lisieux**

ADDITIONAL FRIDAY MASS

During LENT there will be an additional Friday evening Mass offered at 7:00PM followed by the Stations of the Cross which will be led by one of the adult ministries of OLV parish.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

During Lent there will be Stations of the Cross, followed by Exposition and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, on Thursday evenings at 7:00p.m. Each week the Thursday evening Stations will be led by OLV's Confirmation Class. Also, Stations of the Cross will be held after 8:00a.m. Mass on Saturday mornings during Lent.

QUESTION?

Where do we get the ashes that are used on Ash Wednesday?

We begin Lent with ashes, the burnt remains of last year's palms. Surprisingly, the use of ashes was reserved for serious public sinners. Eventually, they grew in popularity; in 1091 Pope Urban II mandated the use of ashes for all Catholics. This is to show that we will turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We also remove all signs of joy and festivity to focus on the core of our Faith. That is why from Ash Wednesday to the Easter Vigil we omit the "Alleluia" (a Hebrew word which means "Praise God") since it is our most joyful word of praise, and we also omit the joyful "Gloria" from the Sunday Mass. Through prayer, works of mercy, acts of self-denial, and Lenten practices, we prepare for the Sacred Triduum and Easter.

OLV K of C Council #14483

All men over the age of 18 are cordially invited to join the OLV Knights of Columbus Council. The Knights are the largest Catholic Fraternal Organization in the world. For info call Rich at 201-767-6689.

3:00PM ROSARY

On Sundays at 3:00PM parishioners have organized and will be reciting the rosary. All are welcome.

LIFE FROM DEATH

Lent is about Easter, and Easter is about life after death. As we draw closer to Easter, the Sunday readings become more and more explicit about this. In a rather dry, matter-of-fact way, in such readings from St. Paul's Letter to the Romans teaches that our "mortal bodies" will be raised to life. But in a far more gripping way, the Lord shouts at us through the prophet Ezekiel, "O my people, I will open your graves; I will put my spirit in you; I have promised, and I will do it." When Jesus saw the people weeping over the death of Lazarus, he was troubled in spirit and moved by the deepest emotions. Approaching the tomb, Jesus himself began to weep. He loved Lazarus. In fact, Jesus loved Lazarus so much that he snatched him out of his tomb, back to life. That's how God loves us.

2016 LENTEN REGULATIONS

The days of both Fast and Abstinence during Lent are Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. The other Fridays of Lent are days of Abstinence.

On a day of Fast, only one (1) full meal is permitted, and two (2) smaller meals, which, if added together, would not exceed the main meal in quantity. Those between the ages of 18 and 59 are obliged to fast.

On a day of Abstinence, no meat may be eaten. Those who have reached the age of 14 are obliged by the law of abstinence.

The obligation to observe the laws of Fast and abstinence "substantially", or as a whole, is a serious obligation.

The Fridays of the year, outside of Lent, are designated as days of penance, but each individual may substitute for the traditional abstinence from meat some other practice of voluntary self-denial as penance.

The time for fulfilling the Paschal Precept (Easter Duty*) extends from the **First Sunday of Lent, February 14, 2016 to the Solemnity of the Holy Trinity, May 22, 2016.**

*Canon 920, §1. *All the faithful, after they have been initiated into the Most Holy Eucharist, are bound by the obligation of receiving Communion at least once a year.*

ASH WEDNESDAY

Ashes will be distributed during the Masses. The Mass Schedule for the day is as follows: 6:30a.m., 8:00a.m., 12:00Noon, 5:30p.m. and 7:00p.m. There will also be a Service and general distribution of ashes at 3:20p.m.. As a reminder Ash Wednesday is a day of both Fast and Abstinence. On this particular day only one (1) full meal is permitted and no meat is permitted. Those between the ages of 18 and 59 are obliged to fast.

Collection for Priests' Retirement Fund

On Ash Wednesday – February 10 – we will have a special collection at all Masses to support the Archdiocesan Priests Retirement Fund. Archbishop Myers has authorized this collection as a way to ensure that this program, which provides a modest retirement benefit to priests who have served the Archdiocese faithfully for many decades, will continue to have adequate resources to meet the needs in the years ahead. The people of this parish are always generous, and we thank you for your support of this special collection.

THOUGHTS TO PONDER

Am I doing my share to financially support MY parish?

In this day and age is MY parish offering a realistic one?

Rosary Society Baby Item Collection February 20-21st
OLV Rosary Society will be sponsoring a Baby Item Collection on the weekend of February 20th and 21st. The items will benefit Birthright and New Hope, two pro-life organizations in our area, that help young mothers in need. Please leave your items in the lower atrium of the church. Items needed/New Items Only: Diapers of all sizes but especially sizes 4 -5-6, baby shampoo, diaper ointment, diaper wipes, receiving blankets, onesies, baby towels, boys and girls clothing sizes Newborn to 3 Toddler but especially sizes 18 months to 3 Toddler. Gift cards to Shoprite, Target, Babies R Us and Toys R Us.

SAVE USED EYEGLASSES

The OLV Knights of Columbus collects used and old eyeglasses for the less fortunate. Any old or "retired" glasses may be left at the rectory.

Upcoming OLV Parish Events

- Feb 7/8—Sun/Mon – CCD
- Feb 8—Mon—Women of Grace 7:30
- Feb 9 -Tue – Marian Novena Prayer 2:15-3:15PM
- Feb 9—Tue—Social Concerns 7:00PM
- Feb 10—Wed—Bible Study 10:00AM
- Feb 10—Wed—OLV Needlers
- Feb 12—Fri– Adoration from 12:30PM-4:00PM
- Feb 13 - Sat—Confessions 11:00-12:00noon 3:00-3:25PM
- Feb 20/21– Sat/Sun—Baby Item Collection
- Apr 24—Sun—Rosary Society Ladies Breakfast
- May 14—Sat- FIRST HOLY COMMUNION
- May 22—Sun—Confirmation 2PM
- May 30—Mon—Fr. Innocent CFR First Mass & Reception at OLV-1PM

PRAY for THOSE in the MILITARY

- Lieutenant Julia H. Cheringal, US Navy;
- Lieutenant Ben Clemente, US Army;
- Midshipman Jon Clemente, US Navy;
- Sergeant Nicholas Colletti, US Army;
- 1st Lieutenant Ryan Colomeo, U.S. Marine Corps;
- Captain Michael Franson, US Army;
- Sergeant First Class Charles Greene, US Army;
- Lieutenant Tara Harris, US Air Force;
- Lieutenant Joseph Jaeger, US Navy;
- Lieutenant Andrew Jaeger, US Navy;
- Chief Master Sergeant Shawn Llewellyn, US Air Force;
- Captain Shawn Linn, US Army;
- Colonel John McLaughlin, US Army;
- Corporal Richard McKenna, USMC.

FRIDAY ADORATION

Just a reminder we have Exposition and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament on Fridays from 12noon – 4PM.

So stop by and adore Our Eucharistic Lord.

SPIRITUAL WARFARE

We are constantly under attack and tempted by the forces of EVIL. Every Tuesday afternoon from 2:15-3:15PM members of OLV parish meet and pray the Mary Mother of All Nations Novena which focuses on this daily battle. All are welcome. Join us.

**Catholic Men’s Conference
Saturday, March 5, 2016**

Be Not Afraid... Trust in His Mercy – A Catholic Men’s Conference on Saturday, March 5, 2016, at Seton Hall University in South Orange, NJ. The day begins at 8:00AM and ends around 1:30PM. Mass will be celebrated by Most Reverend Archbishop John J. Myers. Ticket price is \$20 for adults, \$15 for students who provide a Student ID Card. For registration visit our website at www.rcanmenscommission.org or 973-497-4545.

**Women’s Commission Day of Reflection
Saturday, February 27, 2016**

Alive in Christ: Celebrating the Jubilee Year of Mercy at Seton Hall University in South Orange, NJ. The day begins at 9:00AM and ends at 1:30PM. Mass will be celebrated by Most Reverend Archbishop John J. Myers. Registration is \$20. Continental breakfast included. To register, or for more information, visit www.rcan.org/womcom. Tel. 973-497-4545.

SPANISH MASS

Beginning next Saturday evening February 13, OLV will begin offering a Mass in Spanish at 6PM. Please Get The Word Out.

SOUP SUPPER

The 35 Confirmation Candidates will host a soup supper on Ash Wednesday, February 10, after the 5:00pm Mass and before the 7:00pm Mass—in the lower church. So pencil in the date and plan on attending—a free will donation covers the cost of the meal and the proceeds will go to the Mother Theresa’s Missionaries of Charity to feed the poor.

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY at OLV

On Sunday April 3, 2016 from 3-4pm, there will be a Holy Hour conducted by the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal. At 4:15pm there will be Holy Mass offered by Fr. Bonaventure CFR - Br. Deacon Innocent CFR of the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal.

OLV Faith Study Group—Lent 2016

We are assembling an adult group with a purpose of faith study. Learn how to find Catholic answers. We will meet in the church basement at 7PM on Wednesday February 17. Consider spending an hour each week this Lent enriching your faith.

2016 Wedding Anniversary Masses

The Archdiocese of Newark is preparing the annual tradition of honoring those couples who will be celebrating five, twenty-five and fifty years of Christian marriage in 2016. Couples deserving of such recognition are urged to participate. These liturgies will be celebrated at 3:00p.m. at the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Newark as follows:

Sunday, April 24, 2016— 5 & 25 years;

Sunday, May 1, 2016—50 years.

Please call the OLV Rectory to register at 201-768-1706.

Jubilee Year of Mercy Pilgrim Churches

Six Archdiocesan parishes and shrines have been designated as “Pilgrim Churches”; each of these Pilgrim Churches will enable the faithful to gain a Plenary Indulgence. The Pilgrim Churches are: St. Francis Xavier-Newark, St. Theresa of the Child Jesus-Linden, Divine Mercy-Rahway, Our Lady of Mercy-Park Ridge, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus-Wallington, Our Lady of Mercy-Jersey City.

CCD Corner

It might seem hard to believe but the holy season of Lent starts this week on Ash Wednesday. Our Confirmation Candidates, as a way of reminding us that Ash Wednesday is a day of fast and abstinence, will be sponsoring a Soup Meal on this date at 6:00pm in the lower church. Our CCD classes will begin their Lenten Projects that will help them to remember that this is a season of fasting, alms giving and repentance. In the next few bulletins you will be hearing about many of these charitable and spiritual Acts of Mercy. Every Thursday evening at 7:00pm the 9th graders will lead us in the Stations of the Cross, followed by Evening Prayer and benediction. Come out and join us!

Baltimore Ravens Star a Strong Pro-Lifer

March For Life leaders announced that, among many other notable speakers, pro-life advocate Matt Birk will speak at this year's March for Life Rally. As a Center for the Baltimore Ravens, Matt is a 15-year NFL veteran, recognized as the 2011 NFL Walter Payton Man of the Year. Named to the Pro Bowl 6 times, Matt's career culminated in February 2013 in a Super Bowl win for the Ravens. Following the Raven's victory, Matt did not participate in the White House Super Bowl celebration because of the President's support for Planned Parenthood, a decision that received wide media coverage. Matt and his wife, Adrianna, have 6 children and are both actively involved with their local pregnancy center and past participation in pro-life marches. "We are very excited about Matt Birk's participation in this year's March for Life and annual Rose Dinner," said Jeanne Mancini, President of March for Life Education & Defense Fund. "Matt has been a role model for all Americans by combining his successful football career with his inspiring leadership in his community."

The March for Life in Washington, D.C., began as a small demonstration on January 22, 1974, the first anniversary of the now-infamous Supreme Court decisions in Roe v. Wade and Doe v. Bolton, and rapidly grew to be the largest pro-life event in the world. The peaceful demonstration that has followed on this somber anniversary every year since is a witness to the truth concerning abortion, the greatest human rights violation of our time. Any rally with a few hundred people is duly reported in the major media outlets. But a rally of several hundred thousand people gets scant reporting. Media bias, anyone?

To Be Pro-Woman Must I Be Pro-Choice?

Quite the opposite, says the March for Life Education and Defense Fund. On November 4, the March for Life hosted a Capitol Hill briefing that featured women heading up organizations that provide a variety of wonderful services for women and their babies. Speakers at the event included Congresswoman Vicki Hartzler (R-MO), Jeanne Mancini, Pres. of March for Life Education & Defense Fund, Helen Alvaré, Founder, Women Speak for Themselves, Serrin Foster, President, Feminists for Life, Leanna Baumer, Executive Director, Assist Pregnancy Center, and Mary McClusky, Assistant Director, Project Rachel Ministry Development, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. [www.MarchForLife.org]

A Sandra Bullock Instagram Message

"Both Louis and Laila are my everything. Being a mother has taught me how to love unconditionally. We have to stop and be thankful for our children, and children should stop and be thankful for their parents. What I truly learned most of all is, every child needs love." Sandra Bullock #family #prolife #prolifeprowoman #moms #Motherhood #kids.[www.MarchForLife.org]

Marriage in America

"The proportion of those women married before the age of 30 has fallen from 50% in 1960 to around 20% today." So says a national magazine in an in-depth article on American marriages. There's good news and bad news. "New data show that America's divorce rate has continued its plunge from its 1981 peak, but this decline is largely concentrated among the better-educated." "The proportion of children being raised by a single parent has more than doubled in the past four decades." There is a growing gap between better- and lesser educated adults. "Mismatched desires among lesser educated men and women have shrunk the share of households headed by a married couple from two-thirds in 1960 to less than half today." Yet, "most Americans are already quite convinced of the value of marriage, and even poorer people hold the institution in high regard. Most agree that marriage is the best arrangement for raising children, and many still hope to trade vows one day." [The Economist, 11/28/2015] ed. by Frank Tinari, Ph.D., tinarifr@shu.edu.

Mass Intentions

Monday, Feb. 8—Ss. Jerome Emiliani, priest and Josephine Bakhita, virgin
8:00 Intentions of Steve and Robin Hartman

12:00 Betty Gulfo—10th Anniversary R/b Don and Liz Ulisse

Tuesday, February 9 – St. Apollonia – Virgin and Martyr

8:00 John Warner R/b Mary Warner

12:00 Anne Brunquell R/b Joan Gaffney

ASH WEDNESDAY, Feb. 10-St. Scholastica of Plombariola, Italy, Nun

6:30 Josephine Conlon R/b John Conlon

8:00 Joseph and Helen Menton R/b Richard and Maureen Ferrara

12:00 Fred DeCroce R/b Norma DeCroce

3:30 Service of Word

5:30 George Gill R/b Winnie Gill

7:00 Josephine Conlon R/b Family

Thursday, February 11—Our Lady of Lourdes

8:00 Estelita Nitting R/b Family

12:00 Joseph Nicoletti R/b Rose Nicoletti

Friday, Feb. 12 - St. Saturninus & Companions, Martyrs

8:00 Filipa Fizulich R/b Michael and Barbara Fizulich

12:00 John Cirelli R/b Michael and Joanne Napoletano

7:00 Mary Sweeny R/b George and Gail Fabiano

Saturday, February 13—St. Catherine De Ricci, Virgin-Italy

8:00 Angel Tamayl R/b the Unanue Family

12:00 Dianne Melchiorre R/b George and Claire Meyer

4:00 Dorothy Nicholson R/b Tom and Jeanne Hennessy

5:00 Virginia "Jeanie" Lauro R/b the O'Shea Family

6:00 People of the Parish

Sunday, February 14—St. Valentine, Priest and Martyr

7:30 Joan Fryling R/b the Coulter Family

8:15 Amado Orbeta—Anniversary R/b Marita Morgan

9:30 Deceased and Living members of Holy Name Society

10:45 Michael Bentivegna R/b the Bentivegna Family

12:00 Richard Murphy R/b the McAuley Family

6:00 Michael Higgins R/b Jim and Michele Linn

7:00 James Cattani R/b the Bogart Family

Sanctuary Memorials

The Sanctuary Lamp burns this week for the souls in Purgatory.

The Blessed Virgin Mary Votive Lamp burns this week for the repose of the soul of Michael Giotta, r/b family.

The Pope John Paul II Votive Lamp burns this week in memory of the deceased priests of OLV.

The St. Joseph Votive Lamp burns this week for the repose of the soul of Luigi Cuomo, r/b loving family.

Sanctuary Offerings

The Altar Flowers, Bread and Wine, the BVM Votive Lamp, and St. Joseph Votive Lamp, the Sanctuary Lamp in the Church and in the Convent can be dedicated on a weekly basis.

KIDZ KORNER ANSWERS

- 1. We do not know. 2. December 25. 3. September 8.
- 4. All Sundays— a) Jan 1 THE SOLEMNITY OF MARY
- b) 40 days after Easter is THE ASCENSION c) Aug 15 THE ASSUMPTION d) Nov 1 ALL SAINTS DAY e) Dec 8 THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION f) Dec 25 CHRISTMAS.
- 5. You must attend Mass.

YEAR OF MERCY

The Year of Mercy [YOM] and the 'Holy Doors.' The official YOM logo was NOT well received, so I will use the beautiful Prodigal Son/Forgiving Father image that graces our the entrances of our parish Church. 'Year of Mercy.' Recent Popes have regularly proclaimed a 'Year of/for' Faith, 1967 & 2012; Our Blessed Mother, 1954 & 1987; The Great Jubilee, 2000; Rosary, 2002; Eucharist, 2005; Saint Paul, 2008; Priesthood, 2009; Consecrated Life, 2013; the Family, 2014; and Marriage, 2015. The Bible and ancient tradition call for a 'Holy Year' or 'Jubilee' every 25 years.

During a 'Holy Year' the Church dispenses special graces or blessings to all who, with proper faith, fulfill certain rites: say certain prayers, go to Confession, pray for the Pope and his intentions, and pass through one or more 'Holy Doors.' We're a People on the Move! Our first Pope exhorted us to "conduct ourselves with reverence during the time of our sojourning. {1 Peter 1:17} for we are on a journey through this passing world and into the glory of heaven, our true and eternal home. The Bible has many accounts of people on a journey: Abraham and Sarah, Moses and the whole nation of Israel; even Jesus was constantly 'on the move' as He headed to Jerusalem for His showdown with sin and death. So the Church offers many motifs to help us remember we are a pilgrim people on the way [hopefully!] to our permanent home.

The Mass has four processions: the Entrance, Offertory, Communion and Recessional; a procession is called for on Passion [Palm] Sunday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, the Easter Vigil; some process with the Blessed Sacrament or statues. The Stations of the Cross became a fixture in every Catholic Church so that those who could not get to the Holy Land could walk a 'virtual' Via Dolorosa: the Way of Sorrows; long before virtual anything became popular, the Church was ahead of the times - which brings us to 'Holy Doors.' What's a Holy Door? The first known Catholic Holy Year was 1300, declared by Pope Boniface VIII; it became customary for pilgrims to pass through a specially designated 'holy door' at old Saint Peter Basilica to mark their journey. The current Basilica's first 'holy door' was opened by Pope Alexander VI on Christmas Eve 1499 to inaugurate the Holy Year 1500. In time, a 'holy door' was added to the other 3 major Roman Basilicas: Saint Paul Outside-the Walls, Saint Mary Major and the Lateran Basilica. As with the Stations of the Cross, other churches began to add their own 'holy door' for those unable to get to Rome. Jesus said, "I am the gate" [John 10:9a] or door through whom all must pass. He alone fulfills the prophecy: "This is the LORD's own gate; through it the righteous enter. [Psalm 118:20] 'Holy Doors' recall the gates of heaven, closed by Adam and Eve's

'Original Sin' [Genesis 3:24] which Christ reopened at His Death. Open gates or doors recall the gates opened by God to release the imprisoned Saint Peter [Acts 12:10] and Saint Paul and Silas. [Acts 16:25-27] However, the door, as they say, swings both ways, for as Jesus says: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, [then] I will enter his house and dine with him, and he with me." {Revelation 3:20} While every door we go through reminds us we are heading from one place to another, 'holy doors' are intended to help us more fully enter into the mystery of salvation by passing from sin to grace, from separation to union with God, and from death to eternal life. One door I hope all will pass through at least once in this 'Year of Mercy' is the door of a Confessional.

MAKE A GIFT THROUGH—IRA CHARITABLE ROLLOVER

The IRA Charitable Rollover has been extended through 2015 and was passed permanently into law. This law will allow individuals 70½ or older to move up to \$100,000 from their IRAs directly to qualified charities such as Our Lady of Victories parish, without having to pay income taxes on the donated money. For more info about how you can benefit from an IRA charitable rollover, please contact Theresa Lynch at (973) 497-4042.

KIDZ KORNER

1. What day was Jesus born?
2. What day do we celebrate Jesus' birthday?
3. What day do we celebrate Mary's birthday?
4. What days are Holy Days of Obligation in the US?
5. What does it mean to be a Holy Day of Obligation?

Answers on page four

TREASURES FROM OUR TRADITION

In the early years of the church, most people never availed themselves of once-in-a-lifetime penance. Yet penitents were highly visible. They wore distinctive garments or chains, and they were relegated to special zones in the church. They might be dismissed from the Sunday assembly after the Word, forbidden to join in the Prayer of the Faithful or the Eucharist. This dismissal was done with great affection and tenderness as the bishop laid his hands on the heads of the sinners. During Lent almost everyone would identify with penitents by clothing, insignia, or by following the penitents' regular diet. Rather than sit in judgment over them, the church desired to intercede for them before the Lord. "Let Mother Church weep for you and wash away your sins with her tears," said St. Ambrose to his penitents in Milan. Ambrose liked to think of them as Jonah in the whale, meditating on his errors. In a letter to his sister he said that Jonah is also a sign of Christ in the tomb, and so he had great faith in the penitents' future proclamation of the Resurrection with their reclaimed status in the assembly.

The sacrament of penance has a long and difficult history. The Church sometimes struggles with how best to be faithful to the image of an all-forgiving God. Once a very public rite with publicly visible participation on the part of the penitent, it became in time a very private matter. By the fourteenth century, when a prayer of absolution and a laying on of hands was still required in sacramental confession, theologians were saying that even that was too much liturgy. All that was required was confession itself, and the sacramental words Ego te absolvo, or "I absolve you." In 1614 the Council of Florence tried to flesh out this bare skeleton, requiring that if possible the priest should wear a stole, that the confession should be in church, and that there be questions about the person's state in life, occupation, and last confession. This is the first time the Church recommended that the penitent and priest be separated by a grill, thereby eliminating the ritual laying on of hands once so central to the sacrament, substituting the priest's raised right hand in blessing. This is the rite that remained in force until the sacrament became the subject of very stormy debates at the Second Vatican Council, leading to a major reform in 1974 that is still only partially received.

The confessional is a familiar setting in literature and drama. Everyone from Dostoevsky and Shakespeare down the line to Seinfeld has used the sacrament to tragic or comic effect or to reveal aspects of character otherwise hidden. All of this theater, from world classics to slapstick, has had a numbing effect on our own expectations, and has skewed how the culture looks at us and our struggle with sin and forgiveness, hope and healing. Yet the artists are on to something. The reconciliation chapel is a place where hearts are laid bare, where honesty is the watchword, and people confess their deepest needs. It is also a place of rebirth, or at least realignment. It is, like the baptismal font, a place where something dies, and where something else is born. Today, although literature has barely caught up, the place is usually not the dark and gloomy cabinet of old; rather it is a chapel that speaks of peace, serenity, and the comfort of a welcome home. People in one parish were astonished recently to see their children skipping with delight as they left the place of their first confession. We have to wait a bit for world literature to catch up with this reality, but at least we can experience the joy of penance, the thrill of a new beginning, the assurance of God's love.

Worldwide Marriage Encounter

The Super Bowl is nothing compared to the Super Marriage relationship you can have after learning the tools for communication on a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend. **Military families**, are you getting ready to deploy? Is your family trying to reconnect after deployment? Marriage Encounter offers tools of communication that have kept many military marriages strong and happy throughout the ups and downs of military service. Contact your local chaplain or call Mike and Janet Turco at 973-427-7016 or 609-335-6880.

"Where God is denied, and people live as though he did not exist, or his commandments are not taken into account, the dignity of the human person and the inviolability of human life also end up being rejected or compromised."

Pope Saint John Paul II, Gospel of Life, no. 96

COVER SHEET

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