

89 OVERLOOK DRIVE  
MASTIC BEACH, NY 11951  
PHONE: 631-281-5743

Roman Catholic  
Shrine Church of  
**St. Jude**

WWW.STJUDEMB.ORG  
RECTORY@STJUDEMB.ORG  
FAX: 631-395-5786

“To the Greater Glory of God and the Salvation of Souls.”



### Celebration of the Eucharist

SATURDAY EVENINGS  
5:00pm Vigil Mass  
7:30pm Spanish Mass  
SUNDAY  
8:00am English & Italian  
9:30am Children's Choir  
11:30am Adult Choir  
5:00pm Youth Mass  
MONDAY, TUESDAY,  
THURSDAY AND FRIDAY  
9:00am Mass  
WEDNESDAY  
9:00am Mass  
Noon Mass  
SATURDAY  
8:30am Mass  
HOLY DAYS AS  
ANNOUNCED.

## Corpus Christi Sunday - June 10th 2012

**Pastor**  
Rev. Gregory Yacyshyn

**In Residence**  
Msgr. John Heinlein

**Senior Priest**  
Rev. James Leone

### Parish Office Hours

MONDAY, TUESDAY,  
THURSDAY, & FRIDAY  
9:00am-5:00pm

WEDNESDAYS  
9:00am-6:00pm

SATURDAYS  
CLOSED

SUNDAYS  
10:00am-2:00pm

CLOSED HOLIDAYS

**Deacons**  
Thomas Gillen  
Kenneth Geohan  
Mark Herrmann  
Joseph Simeone

### Useful Numbers

RECTORY  
281-5743

PARISH OUTREACH  
281-5634

RELIGIOUS  
EDUCATION  
281-2835

YOUTH MINISTRY  
281-5743

NURSERY SCHOOL  
395-3959

QUEEN OF APOSTLES  
SCHOOL  
878-1033

ST. VINCENT DEPAUL  
219-3542

**Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick**  
Available in danger of death or whenever there is a personal need, call the rectory for an appointment.

**Sacrament of Penance/ Confession**  
SATURDAYS  
4:00-4:45pm  
WEDNESDAYS  
2:00-2:45pm  
Also by appointment.

**Parish Outreach**  
MON., - THURS.  
9:00am-1:00pm  
LAST WED. OF MONTH  
5:00-7:00pm (Note:  
Closed Wed. in Jul/Aug.)  
CLOSED FRI., SAT., SUN.  
& HOLIDAYS

**Sacrament of Marriage**  
Couples wishing to be married should contact the rectory at least one year in advance to meet with one of the priests to make wedding arrangements. Pre-Cana is required for all couples.

**Sacrament of Baptism**  
Celebrated on most Sundays throughout the year. Please contact the rectory to set up an appointment with a member of the staff to arrange for the Baptismal preparation session and to set a date for Baptism.

### Devotions

MIRACULOUS MEDAL  
NOVENA  
Mondays after the  
9:00am Mass

ST. JUDE NOVENA  
Thursdays after the  
9:00am Mass

ADORATION OF THE  
BLESSED SACRAMENT  
Wednesdays  
12:30pm-1:00pm  
Benediction at 1:00pm

FIRST FRIDAY  
8:00pm-9:00pm  
Benediction at 9:00pm

THE HOLY ROSARY  
Monday through Friday  
at 8:30am; Saturdays  
at 8:00am

## Masses for the Week

SATURDAY, JUNE 9, 2012

5:00pm Rocco Leone †  
“54th Year Anniversary”

7:30pm Margaret Askin †

SUNDAY, JUNE 10, 2012

8:00am Michael Gordon †

9:30am Parishioners of St. Jude

11:30am Richard Rutkowski †

5:00pm Robert G. Stroh †

MONDAY JUNE 11, 2012

9:00am John Huber †

TUESDAY, JUNE 12, 2012

9:00am Luis Rivera †

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 13, 2012

9:00am Intention of Andrew Como

12:00 Saint Jude Guild:  
“Happy 14th Anniversary”  
Intention of  
Elizabeth Patricia Chiari  
June Registrant †

THURSDAY, JUNE 14, 2012

9:00am Marie Fumai †

FRIDAY, JUNE 15, 2012

9:00am Mary Thompson †

SATURDAY, JUNE 16, 2012

8:30am Miguel Ignacio †

5:00pm Father’s Day Remembrance

7:30pm Father’s Day Remembrance

SUNDAY, JUNE 17, 2012

8:00am Father’s Day Remembrance

9:30am Father’s Day Remembrance

11:30am Parishioners of St. Jude

5:00pm Father’s Day Remembrance

† Denotes Mass is for deceased

FOR THE SICK: Benjamin Archer, Joseph Buccilli III, Diane Buderer, Frances X. Butler, Anna Campagna, Hannah Chodkowski, Michael Cuervo, Anna Daly, Raymond Michael Dhyne, Robert A. DiFrancesco, Carol Franzone, George Gebhart, Nora Getchell, Charlie Gibilaro, Michelle Gonzalez, Ralph Guardi, Nikki Guinta, Catherine Hannon, Steve Herrbrandt, Donna Kilmer, Richard Kaminski, Carol LaCrocca, Cookie & Steve Landau, Maddi Lechner, Brian Loftus, Pat Longhitano, Joseph Marchetti, Melinda Martucci, Daniel Mascia, Robert McCloskey, Patricia Miller, Martin Minogue, Matthew Mockler, Joseph V. Mosca Jr., Chase Richard Musolino, Edward Pallan, Joe Palma, Christopher Frank Panzarella, Fairlie Pasfield, Abdul Rattu, Eugene Russo, Mary Saggio, Patricia Swenson, Pam Tyimoke, Mary Vazzana, Donna Zumrol

FOR THE DECEASED: Vito Branciforte, Karen Gilliland

FOR THE MILITARY: John Abel, Matt Corica, Joseph Competello, Michael Cuervo, Kenneth Drumm, Jr., Daniel Edwards, Daniel Engo, Michael Hickey, Jeffrey Holmes, Steven Kay, Richard Kruger, Chris Manakides, John Maresca, Joe Occhineri, Anthony Ochoa Jr., Katherine M. Onorato, Ramon Ortiz, Matthew Parenti, Rich Pinckney, Tory Pinckney, Gerard Posillico, John Redding, Jr., Eric Reilly, Vinnie Riveria, Randy Sanchez, Steven Schloesser, Carl Seaman, Don Skelton, Arlise A. Smith, Bobby Sosa, Derek Trabocchi, Timothy Weisner

## Important Information

The rectory office will be closed on Fathers Day Sunday, June 17th. The rectory will be closing at Friday, June 15th at 3:30PM and closed all day Friday, June 22nd.

## Alert! Alert!

It has come to our attention a family has been approaching parishioners as they leave Mass at various churches on Long Island. PLEASE DO NOT GIVE THEM MONEY. If approached tell them you will find a priest for them. We have our parish outreach which assists the needy of our community. ANY NEED FOR ASSISTANCE SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO OUTREACH.

## Faith Formation

**INTERESTED IN TEACHING THE FAITH?** You can volunteer for the Catechetical Ministry and help our children learn about our faith. We are also looking for security guards to work while classes are in session. For more information, please call 281-2835 for more details.

**HOME STUDY PARENTS:** Please come to the office during the month of June from Monday–Thursday, 9–5PM to pick up any work for your child that has not already been returned to you. Any work left in office after June will be discarded. Thank you.

**REGISTERING AND RE-REGISTERING YOUR CHILD FOR FAITH FORMATION CLASSES FOR THE 2012-13 SCHOOL YEAR IS IN PROGRESS.** Please go to our website (listed in front of bulletin) follow links to Faith Formation, and download the appropriate form. Then, follow the links to PARENT HANDBOOK and read the handbook online. Complete the forms AND SIGN THAT YOU READ THE HANDBOOK please make sure all your information on the form is correct. You can mail the re-registration forms to the office. If you are registering a new student, bring form into the office with the child’s original baptismal certificate. Please note the registration fee at the top of the forms and include with form. PLEASE DO NOT WAIT. CLASS AVAILABILITY IS BECOMING LIMITED!

## St. Vincent de Paul

Today as we celebrate the gift of the Body and Blood of Christ let us pray for those who are hungry, malnourished and starving. Is there a family you know who needs assistance? Please call the ‘Society of St. Vincent de Paul’ so that together we can help those who are hungry.

## Rosarian Annual Raffle Party

Mark your calendar for our Annual Raffle Party Friday, July 13th watch the bulletin for further details. \* Anyone wishing to donate a prize for our raffle party can do so by leaving it at the rectory marked “Raffle Party” or “Rosarians”. All donated items must be new.

Copies of the ‘Rosary Altar Society’ cookbook are for sale at the rectory. The cost is \$10. Checks can be made out to ‘St. Jude R.C. Church’. The proceeds will go to the ‘St. Jude Outreach’ and a donation towards the ‘St. Francis Statue’.

## St. Francis Statue—Eagle Scout Project

Thank you for your donation toward the St. Francis Prayer Card and Raffle. We raised \$635.00. Anyone wishing to purchase a St. Francis Card can do so at the rectory for \$2. The donations are going towards the purchase of a ‘St. Francis Statue’ that will be mounted a podium on the west side of the church. All donations can be placed in the regular collection basket, dropped-off or mailed to the rectory. Please be sure to indicate that your donation is for the ‘Eagle Scout Project-Statue’. Funds donated to the project are \$2,796.00 as of 6/5/12. (Cost for the statue approximately \$5,000.)

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True charity consists in doing good to those who do us evil, and in thus winning them over.

—Saint Alphonsus Liguori



# Properly Receiving Holy Communion

On January 30, 2011, the Very Rev. Fr. John Lankeit, rector of Ss. Simon & Jude Cathedral in Phoenix, Arizona wrote to his parishioners, addressing some abuses commonly observed, seeking to correct them. The following seven points are excerpted from his letter:

“Here are **7 common Holy Communion profanations** that I see all too frequently:

- Blessing oneself with the Host before consuming it. (The act of blessing with the Eucharist is called “Benediction” and is reserved to clergy).
- Receiving the Host in the palm of the hand, contorting that same hand until the host is controlled by the fingers, then consuming it (resembling a one-handed “watch-the-coin-disappear” magic trick).
- Popping the Host into the mouth like a piece of popcorn.
- Attempting to receive with other items in the hands, like a dirty Kleenex or a Rosary.
- Receiving the Host with dirty hands.
- Receiving the Host, closing the hand around it, then letting the hand fall to the side (as if carrying a suitcase) while walking away and/or blessing oneself with the other hand.
- Walking away without consuming the Host.
- Giving the Host to someone else after receiving (including animals)...yes, it happens!”

In addition to Fr. Langeit’s admonitions, I offer some additional direction. When one is presenting him/herself for the Eucharist, the Host should be received on the tongue, especially if one:

- Has an arm in a sling or cast, etc.; is carrying a baby, a hymnal, or any other item(s) that would prevent one from receiving the Most Holy Eucharist with both hands unoccupied or unobstructed and completely empty. (No single-handed receptions)
- Has bandaged hands/fingers
- Is wearing gloves
- Is an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion who has a pyx in their hand to bring Communion to the sick
- One has unclean hands or things written on their hands (sometimes seen among young people)

Though the official, universal Catholic norm is still for reception of the Most Holy Sacrament on the tongue, if Holy Communion is to be received in the hand it should be so done in the following manner: **While in line, the communicant reverences (makes a bow) to the Sacrament while the person in front of them is receiving. When the priest, deacon, or extraordinary minister says, “The Body of Christ,” the communicant responds, “Amen,” and puts out their tongue and receives; or puts out their hands as flatly as possible (one hand under the other); the Sacred Host is placed on the flat palm. The communicant then steps aside (so the next person can receive), immediately places the Host on their tongue with the other hand, and returns to their place in the congregation. (*Intinction* - the dipping of the Host into a chalice of the Precious Blood – is not permitted for the faithful to do by themselves.)**

St. Cyril of Jerusalem (315-386) gave instruction for the way the faithful should receive: “*They should make a throne of their hands, laying the right upon the left to form a throne for the King, forming at the same time a cross. This symbolic gesture, so fine and so profound, is what concerns him: The hands of man form a cross, which becomes a throne, down into which the King inclines himself. The open, outstretched hand can thus become a sign of the way that a man offers himself to the Lord, opens his hands for him, that they may become an instrument of his presence and a throne of his mercies in this world.*”

Presenting oneself to receive with hands that are curled, cupped, held down low to the body; held side-by-side and/or with open fingers... make it difficult for the one distributing to therein place the Sacred Body of our Lord. It also increases the danger of the Sacred Host falling to the floor. Please also remember that no communicant should ever “pluck” the Host themselves from the fingers of the one distributing.

One is never required or forced to receive our Lord in the Holy Eucharist; so if one is unsure of whether they should present themselves or not in the Communion procession, it is probably best to err on the side of not receiving. The inside front cover of the missalette / hymnal has a useful guideline issued by the U. S. Bishops for the reception of Communion in the Catholic Church. (And no one should **ever** be chewing gum in church if they intend to receive Holy Communion.)

Unfortunately, I have experienced numerous abuses in the reception of Holy Communion. **Occasionally, parishioners find Hosts in the pews or on the floor!!!** Please, please, please be vigilant: should you see someone not consume the Holy Eucharist, immediately alert the priest or deacon; or you may even take the Host back from them yourself and bring it to the priest or deacon. This is a very serious issue.

We cannot be too wary of abuses that can occur, either through ignorance or with evil intentions. Truly, there are practitioners of devil worship and of the occult who seek to obtain the Sacred Body of our Lord for use in so-called “black masses.” The main goal of this heinous act is to commit desecration and blasphemy towards God. Let us always remember that **the Holy Eucharist is the Real Presence of Jesus Christ**; so when we come to receive Him into our souls, may our demeanor, actions, and love be displayed accordingly.

In Christ,  
Fr. Greg

## Father's Day Remembrance Envelopes

Fathers day is June, 17th. The remembrance envelope received in your mailing packages should be returned no later than June 15th. Additional envelopes are available in the church vestibule. All offering envelopes can be placed in the collection baskets or dropped off at the rectory. Your intentions will be remembered in our Fathers Day Remembrance Masses on June 16th & 17th. Fathers's Day cards can be purchased in the rectory for \$1.

## Lighthouse Catholic Media "FEMININE GENIUS" BY COLLEEN

**CARROLL CAMPBELL** Building upon Blessed Pope John Paul II's writings about "The Feminine Genius," Colleen Carroll Campbell discusses the uniqueness of the makeup and vocation of women from God. She uses the lives of several female saints to help women recognize and use their gifts to live out their faith as Christians in the modern world. Author and columnist Campbell hosts EWTN's Faith and Culture program.

## Shrine of Our Lady of the Island

A 'Total Consecration to the Blessed Virgin Mary' according to St. Louis Marie de Montfort will be conducted by Deacon Cody Miller starting Monday, June 18th thru Thursday June, 21st from 7:30-9:30PM. Come, join us for a renewal of your heart to Our Blessed Lady. For additional information, call 631-325-0661.

## Catholic Charities' Senior Housing

St. Anne's Gardens, 80 Second Ave., Brentwood, is now accepting applications for openings in their senior residence. Space is limited. This lovely 100-unit facility built in 2000 offers senior citizens safe and affordable housing with on-site laundry, picturesque gardens and picnic area, and easy access to local merchants. There is a full-time building manager, who lives on the site. Catholic Charities' Commodity Supplemental Food Program is available monthly for income-qualified residents. To apply for yourself or someone you love, please call Mary Robinson to set up an appointment at 631-952-5411.

## McGann-Mercy Alumni Theatre Group to Perform "Noises Off"

The 'McGann-Mercy Theatre Group' will present the comedy, "Noises Off!" Which depicts the behind the scenes antics and shenanigans of a traveling theatre troupe. Several Mercy alumni will be joining the cast, making this the inaugural performance of the 'McGann-Mercy Alumni Theatre Group.' Running from Thursday, June 21st through Saturday, June 23rd in the school auditorium, the show starts at 7:30PM. Tickets are \$8 per person and can be purchased at the door. 'Bishop McGann-Mercy High School' is located at 1225 Ostrander Avenue in Riverhead. For more information, call 631.727.5900, ext. 10.

## Stroke Prevention Screenings

**10 MINUTES THAT CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE!!!** On Thursday, June 21st from 9AM-3PM, 'St. Jude R.C. Church' (Parish Center), will be hosting stroke prevention screenings, sponsored by 'Precision Screening Plus', Long Island's first and only locally owned and operated 'Stroke Screening Company', serving the community since 2001. Unlike other companies, we give immediate results and pictures. Licensed ultrasound technologists will perform four non-invasive, painless ultrasound exams to determine your risk of stroke, aneurysm, peripheral arterial disease and osteoporosis. All carotid artery Doppler exams are reviewed by our board certified intervention radiologist. Your physician cannot order these tests without clear evidence of symptoms. Ironically, most people who suffer from a stroke or aneurysm never show signs or symptoms that a major catastrophe is about to occur. Individual tests are \$50, any 3 for \$120 and all 4 for \$140. Please call 'Precision Screening Plus' at 516-221-6543 to set up an appointment or if you would like any additional information.

## Catholic Men's Ministry

'St. Jude Catholic Men's Ministry' meets the second and fourth Tuesday of the month at 7PM in the parish center. All men are welcome to attend.

## The Legion of Mary

Meets on Friday's at 10:30AM in the parish center 1st floor classroom, we welcome anyone who may wish to join us.

## Our Lady of Perpetual Help Celebration

Save the date!!! (Nap tann ou!!!) The 'Haitian-American Apostolate Ministry' of the 'Diocese of Rockville Centre' will be celebrating the Eucharist on honor of the Patroness of Haiti, 'Our Lady of Perpetual Help' (Selebrasyon Peyi DAYITI, 'Manman Pèpetyèl Sekou') Saturday, June 23rd at 7PM. 'Shrine of Our Lady of Perpetual Help' located at 210 S. Wellwood Avenue in Lindenhurst. The presider/celebrant is Most Rev. Bishop John C. Dunne, D.D. The homilist: Father Eden Jean Baptiste Choir: "La Lumiere du Monde" from 'St. Boniface' in Elmont. Candles with holders for street procession will be available for a \$1 donation. Information/pou enfòmasyon please call: 516-678-5800 xs/233/407 or email: HAAM@drvc.org.

## Ice Cream Social Fundraiser

The 'Saint Theresa Circle/Squirettes of Mary' will be holding their 1st Annual Ice Cream Social. It will be held on Monday, June 25th at 7PM at the 'Knights of Columbus Hall' in Mastic. The cost is \$3 per bowl with a choice of ice cream flavors and toppings. All proceeds will go to help the Squirettes raise money for their new council. For additional information or if you would like to reserve a table. Please contact Susan at 729-3711.

## National Youth for World Youth Day

Journey to Rio de Janeiro for 'World Youth Day 2013' with the 'Diocese of Rockville Centre' from July 20-29, 2013 "Go and make disciples of all people." Matthew 28:19 For information on how join this powerful pilgrimage please contact Marianne Sheridan at 516-678-5800 ext. 615 or e-mail msheridan@drvc.org.

## Wanted Web Designer

The 'Tabor Retreat Center' seeks a talented Web Designer to revamp/modernize our Web site. The ideal candidate would have the requisite knowledge and experience, as well as be willing to donate his/her professional services or work for a small stipend. If interested, please call 516-536-3004 or email taborretreat@jno.com. (www.taborretreatcenter.org) .

## Family and Life Conference

We need Catholic judges for the 2012 'National Youth for Family and Life Conference' held at 'Hofstra University' on August 3rd-5th. We are looking for guest to volunteer judge our competitions such as a Band, Dance, Original Song, T-Shirt Design, Banner Design, Sketch, Photography, Spoken Word and Film. We only ask the judges to be qualified in any of these fields and have a passion for encouraging Catholic Youth in their talents. If you have any questions please contact the competition heads Kyle Mefferd 702.768.0817 or Dana Del Rosario 917.251.3297.

## Visiting Nurse Service & Hospice of Suffolk, Inc.

The 'Visiting Nurse Service and Hospice' will be having their Bereavement Retreat for families with children that have lost a loved one this year. The weekend, held out in Montauk, October 20-21, is a unique experience for families to explore different ways to develop their own rituals of remembrance. The Montauk setting allows for memory work, physical movement and mindfulness. The \$100 fee includes meals and may be waived should it cause financial difficulty. For further information please call Andrea Fierro, 'LMSW Bereavement Coordinator' at 631-930-9316. Screening required by appointment. The retreat is not suitable for children under 4.

## Vacation Bible School - Registration Time Is Here!

The camp will take place from: Monday August 6th thru Friday the 10th.

TIME: 9AM to 12PM PLACE: Parish Cente WHO: Children age 5 to 12 years

The fee is \$30.00 per camper. (Cash or checks)

Registration forms with payments can be returned to the rectory during business hours. Deadline for registration is July 8th. Time is needed to order supplies and plan special events. A volunteer will be at all Masses on weekend of June 23rd & June 24th for anyone wishing to register their child/children. We are looking forward to seeing your children there!

### Vacation Bible School 2012

Camper Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade in September: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Special Needs or Alerts: (ex. Allergies): \_\_\_\_\_

Paid: \_\_\_\_\_

cash /check #: \_\_\_\_\_

## Mass Attendance

	SATURDAY		SUNDAY				
	5pm	7:30	8am	9:30	11:30	5pm	Total
May 13	315	135	256	332	385	130	1553
May 20	294	130	200	322	355	160	1481
May 27	294	130	200	322	355	160	1481
June 3	316	135	229	312	350	145	1487

## Weekly Collections

June 3rd	\$10,205.95
Religious Retirement	\$2,625.00

## Catholic Ministries Appeal

2012 Goal	\$56,200.00
Pledges as of 6/5/12	\$62,515.00
Number of Donors	200
Payments as of 6/5/12	\$39,525.00

We have reached our pledge goal. Thank you for your generous support of the CMA Appeal. God Bless You!!!!

## Scripture Readings

MONDAY, JUNE 11, 2012 *Saint Barnabas, apostle*  
ACTS 11:21B-26; 13:1-3 • MT 5:1-12

TUESDAY, JUNE 12, 2012 *Weekday*

1 KGS 17:7-16 • MT 5:13-16

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 13, 2012 *Saint Anthony of Padua, priest and doctor of the Church*

1 KGS 18:20-39 • MT 5:17-19

THURSDAY, JUNE 14, 2012 *Weekday*

1 KGS 18:41-46 • MT 5:20-26

FRIDAY, JUNE 15, 2012 *Most Sacred Heart of Jesus* HOS 11:1, 3-4, 8C-9 • EPH 3:8-12, 14-19  
• JN 19:31-37

SATURDAY, JUNE 16, 2012 *Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary* 1 KGS 19:19-21 • LK 2:41-51

SUNDAY, JUNE 17, 2012 *Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time* EZ 17:22-24 • 2 COR 5:6-10 • MK 4:26-34

## Altar Bread and Wine

The altar bread and wine for the week of June 11th have been donated:

In memory of Mr. & Mrs. William Doyle Sr.

## Altar Flowers

Most weeks are available  
June through October.

## Baptisms

Adriana Elizabeth Vargas, Christopher James Patanjo, Logan James Wood, Parker Ryan Edwards, Tenley Ann Hubert  
God bless them and their families!

# RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

*understanding the basics ▪ defending a right*

## *Speaking for the Church: Our Shepherds (6 of 7)*

Our Catholic faith is clear: Christ is present in his Church. What seems to many a mere institution is in fact a holy people. It is a mystical body that has Christ as its head. It is a pilgrim people that journeys to the Father. By baptism, it is us. And by Christ's design, it is hierarchically ordered. This order, like any good order, ensures unity, vitality, and growth. Out of love, the Lord Jesus gave us, his body, overseers to teach, govern, and sanctify. Striving to be faithful imitators of Christ the Good Shepherd, those overseers, the bishops, lay down their lives in service so that God's people may be built up and Christ proclaimed.

This basic teaching of our faith is important to remember amid the current conversation surrounding the HHS mandate. After all, there are many voices in the debate, even in the Catholic fold, and the tendency today is to treat the voice of the bishops as one among many. To do so though is to forget their Christ-given place among us. Bishop Murphy reminds us that the bishops speak for the Church. "There are many opinions among Catholics," he says, "but if you want to know what the Church teaches and what her faith demands, ask the bishops who, alone as the successors of the apostles in union with the pope, are the ones who can be trusted to offer, not an opinion, but the authentic teaching of the Catholic Church."

To assist them in their role as shepherds of the flock, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops formed an Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty in September 2011. The committee was charged with identifying threats made towards religious freedom and addressing the profound impact those threats would have on the faithful. Archbishop-designate William Lori of Baltimore was named as chair. Under his leadership, its members have worked closely with national organizations, charities, ecumenical and interreligious partners, and scholars to form a united and forceful front in defense of religious freedom for every American. Since January 2012 the committee has clearly articulated the specific ways in which the HHS mandate poses serious threats to America's heritage of religious freedom and has shown how the mandate's regulations impact Catholic institutions.

Recognizing the importance of educating the faithful in this matter, the committee has provided on its website various resources and legislative updates to help Catholics around the country stay informed. Most recently, the committee has issued a guiding document entitled *Our First, Most Cherished Liberty: A Statement on Religious Liberty*. In that statement, the overall sentiment is made clear in the opening lines: "We are Catholics. We are Americans. We are proud to be both...To be Catholic and American should mean not having to choose one over the other."

*"As a community of faith, we must commit ourselves to prayer and fasting that wisdom and justice may prevail and religious liberty may be restored."*

BISHOP WILLIAM MURPHY

## PRAYER

*Almighty God, Father of all nations, for freedom you have set us free in Christ Jesus (Gal 5:1).*

*We praise and bless you for the gift of religious liberty, the foundation of human rights, justice, and the common good. Grant to our leaders the wisdom to protect and promote our liberties; By your grace may we have the courage to defend them, for ourselves and for all those who live in this blessed land.*

*We ask this through the intercession of Mary Immaculate, our patroness, and in the name of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, with whom you live and reign, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*