

Religious Education

Give your child the gift of faith!



CCD Family Newsletter January 14 - January 21, 2026



CCD This Week

Monday, January 19th
NO CCD (MLK Day)

Tuesday, January 20th
Lesson 9: *How do we celebrate God's forgiveness and healing?*



Gospel Reflection Sticker

Each week, all of our in-person CCD students will receive a sticker with an image relating to our Sunday Gospel reflection when they first enter the church. This week's sticker featured an image of a father bending down to speak to his child. **Each week, a great dinnertime follow-up question after CCD is: "Why did Mrs. Noll give you a sticker with X on it?"** The answer to this past week's question is: *Little children like to play on the floor with their toys. When they invite us to play with them, we usually get down on the floor so that we can interact with them on their level. In this Sunday's Gospel, we learn that Jesus did something - was baptized even though he had no need for Baptism since he was God and sinless - to show that he was interacting with us at our level.*



Next Week's Essential Question for Tuesday Lesson 9: How do we celebrate God's forgiveness and healing?

Lesson 9 asks the Essential Question "How do we celebrate God's forgiveness and healing?" The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick offers God's grace and comfort to those who are seriously ill or suffering. Through the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, we receive God's forgiveness. Moreover, we move forward with confidence that God loves us, even in our sinfulness. These two Sacraments of Healing assure us that God is with us at all times.



Homeschooling Connection

Week of January 18th

Lesson 12: How do we respond to God's love?

We had quite a few families transition to the homeschooling program with the start of the new year and thus new schedules. If you are new to the homeschooling program and have any questions, please reach out to Jen Noll. Pro tip for successful homeschooling: set aside a regular day and time each week to devote to religious education.



Thank You South Orange Police Department

Those of you who have attended Mass at OLS and looked at our Nativity set, probably noticed something very curious this Christmas season: the absence of Mary! No, Mary did not abandon new newborn baby - she was abducted on the morning of Christmas Eve. Thankfully, OLS's security cameras caught the thief in the act and, thanks to the efforts of the South Orange police department, our statue of Mary (quite an expensive piece of art actually) was recovered and returned to her rightful place next to her Son. Even though the Christmas season ended on Sunday, our parish's Nativity set will be kept up through February 2nd: The Feast of the Presentation of our Lord. Be sure to stop by and say a prayer to welcome Mary back.



Attention Sacramental Preparation Families

First Eucharist Parent Meeting

Thursday, January 22nd

1:00 pm or 7:00 pm

Via Zoom

A letter regarding the preparation program for First Eucharist was emailed to all parents earlier this afternoon. You can access it [HERE](#).



Empowering God's Children

2025-2026 Lessons

Thank you to those families who have already had the important conversations with their kids about this year's Empowering God's Children lessons: *Boundaries: You Have Rights!*, and *Secrets, Surprises and Promises*. Gold stars for such a quick response! You can access this year's two lessons at the links below:

Lesson 3 - Boundaries: You Have Rights!

[Grades K-2 Lesson Three](#)

[Grades 3-5 Lesson Three](#)

[Grades 6-8 Lesson Three](#)

Lesson 4 - Secrets, Surprises and Promises

[Grades K-2 Lesson Four](#)

[Grades 3-5 Lesson Four](#)

[Grades 6-8 Lesson Four](#)

After you have talked with your kids in whichever way that you feel is most appropriate given your family's individual dynamics and circumstances, please let us

know that you've participated in this important mission by completing this simple, 3-question survey by April 1st:

[Empowering God's Children Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement Google Form](#). Thank you!

A flyer for the Bereavement Ministry. The title is "Bereavement Ministry: A Support Group for Those Grieving". It is led by Deacon Walter Wiggins and other trained facilitators. The text explains that if a loved one has passed away, either recently or years ago, please join for a series of eight sessions. Each session includes information, grief support, and mutual sharing in a spiritual, confidential setting. The first meeting is on Sunday, January 18th, 2026, at Our Lady of Sorrows Church, 217 Prospect Avenue, South Orange, NJ 07079. The meeting is at 1pm-2:30pm, following the 11:30 Mass, and refreshments will be served. Pre-registration is required; interested parties should contact the group via email at bereavement@olschurch.com or inquire with Ministry Associate Stephanie at ministries@olschurch.com.

Bereavement Ministry:
A Support Group for Those Grieving
Led by Deacon Walter Wiggins and other trained facilitators

If a loved one has passed away, either recently or years ago, please join us for our series of eight sessions. Each session includes information, grief support and mutual sharing in a spiritual, confidential setting.

First meeting: Sunday, January 18th 2026
at Our Lady of Sorrows Church
217 Prospect Avenue, South Orange NJ 07079
(we will gather in the Lower Church)
1pm-2:30pm
(following the 11:30 Mass)
Refreshments will be served.

Pre-registration is required: if you are interested in joining us or hearing more about the group, please contact us via email at bereavement@olschurch.com or inquire with our Ministry Associate Stephanie at ministries@olschurch.com.

New Bereavement Support Group Forming

If you are carrying the pain of losing a loved one, whether the loss is recent or from years past, you are not alone. Our parish Bereavement Ministry warmly invites you to a caring, faith-centered support group beginning this Sunday, January 18. Led by Deacon Walter Wiggins and trained facilitators, these confidential sessions offer a safe space for prayer, reflection, and shared support rooted in our Catholic faith. The group meets from 1:00–2:30 pm in the Lower Church at Our Lady of Sorrows, following the 11:30 Mass. Pre-registration is required; please see the flyer for details and contact information.



Did You Know that OLS Has a Scouting America Troop?

Tomorrow evening, BSA Troop 99 will be hosting an evening of friendship and games to kick off the new year. If your daughter is between 11 and 17 years of age and is looking for a new activity, you are encouraged to RSVP and then stop by Thursday evening to give it a try. (Girls in 5th grade who aren't quite yet 11 are still eligible to attend.) Sorry for the late notice, we just received the flyer!



Saint / Feast of the Week

St. Sebastian, *Martyr*

Feast Day: January 20th

Patron of: Athletes

Attributes in Art: arrows, loincloth, pillar/tree, and often a heavenly gaze or an accompanying angel

St. Sebastian, a third-century Roman soldier and Christian martyr, is remembered for his courage, discipline, and unwavering faith in Christ. Serving in the Roman army during a time of persecution, Sebastian lived his Christian faith with integrity and quiet strength, even as it placed his life at risk. He is often depicted as an athlete-like figure, enduring physical suffering with remarkable perseverance, which is why he is honored as the patron saint of athletes. His life reminds us that faith and strength, both physical and spiritual, are meant to work together in the service of God.

For families today, especially those with children involved in sports, St. Sebastian offers a meaningful model. Young athletes face pressures to win, to fit in, and sometimes to compromise values for success. St. Sebastian teaches children that true strength comes from character: perseverance, self-discipline, respect for others, and trust in God. Parents can encourage their children to look to St. Sebastian as a guide for competing with integrity, responding to challenges with courage, and remembering that their worth comes not from trophies or scores, but from being loved by God.

At home, families can apply St. Sebastian's example by praying together before games or practices, reflecting on sportsmanship, and discussing how faith can shape attitudes both on and off the field. His witness invites parents to help their children see sports as an opportunity to grow in virtue, teamwork, and humility. By looking to St. Sebastian, families are reminded that when faith guides effort and perseverance, even everyday activities, even sports, can become a path to holiness.



***St. Sebastian, Patron Saint of Athletes,
pray for us!***

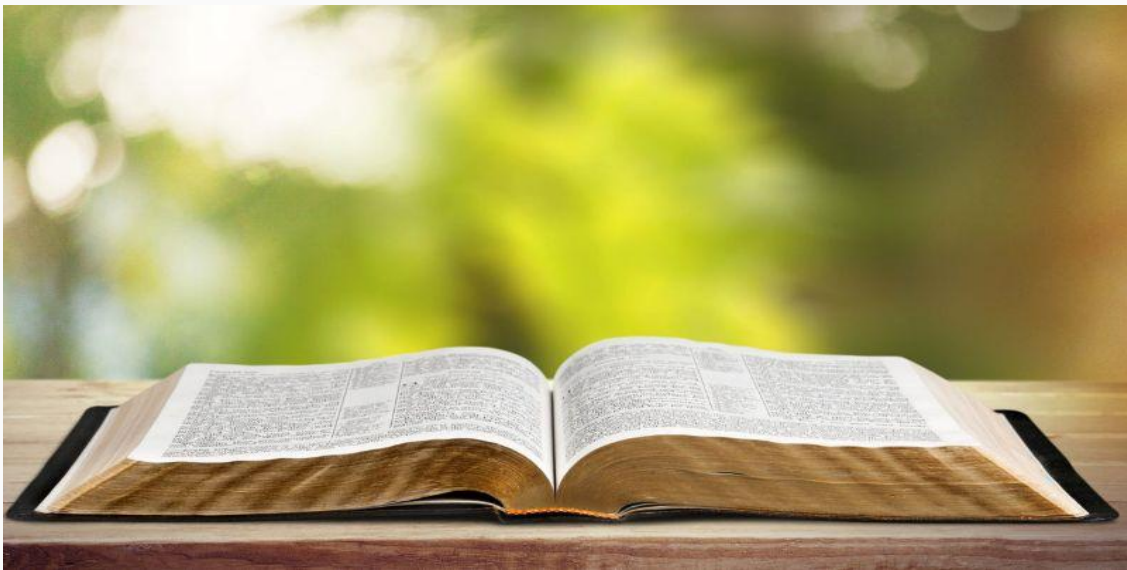
*You were a soldier of Christ, strong in body and spirit,
and your faith never wavered.*

*Help us to be strong in our bodies, minds, and souls as
we play our sports.*

*Grant us the courage to do our best, to play fairly, and
to be good examples to others.*

*Give us strength to endure challenges, humility in
victory, and grace in defeat.*

*May our athletic endeavors bring glory to God and
help us grow in faith and virtue. Amen"*



In the Liturgy of the Word, the Church feeds the people of God from the table of his Word. Previewing the readings before Mass is then a bit like looking over the menu before you get to a restaurant: you have a better idea of what you can expect so that you can enter into the experience more fully prepared. And like a good discussion during a meal, discussing the readings and how they can be applied to your family's daily life helps your family to truly go out and proclaim the gospel after leaving the church.

Here are a few resources to help your family delve deeper into the Liturgy of the Word:

[The Second Sunday in Ordinary Time](#)

[Loyola Press: Sunday Connection](#)

[Sadlier: This Week's Liturgy](#)

[3-Minute Video on the Meaning of the Lamb of God](#)



Mark 10 Mission Little Liturgies

I'm delighted to share with you the following Mark 10 Mission videos for children.








[Behold Jesus: The Lamb of God \(ages 4-8\)](#)

[Behold Jesus, the Lamb of God and Adoring Him in the Eucharist \(ages 8-12\)](#)

KIDSCALENDAR

JANUARY 2026



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
Word of the month: Baptism Baptism makes us children of God and members of God's family, the Church.				SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD NEW YEAR'S DAY  1		SAINTS BASIL THE GREAT AND GREGORY NAZIANZEN, BISHOPS AND DOCTORS OF THE CHURCH 2	THE MOST HOLY NAME OF JESUS 3
THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD Q What were the gifts given to the child Jesus? (SEE JANUARY 10) Matthew 2:1-12 4	SAINT JOHN NEUMANN, BISHOP 5	SAINT ANDRE BESSETTE, RELIGIOUS  6	SAINT RAYMOND OF PENAFORT, PRIEST 7	A Gold, frankincense and myrrh 8	9	10	
THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD Q What did the Spirit of God look like? (SEE JANUARY 17) Matthew 3:13-17 11	12	SAINT HILARY, BISHOP AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH 13	14	15	SAINT ANTHONY, ABBOT A A dove.  17	16	
SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME Q What did John the Baptist call Jesus? (SEE JANUARY 20) John 1:29-34 18	19	SAINT FABIAN, POPE AND MARTYR SAINT SEBASTIAN, MARTYR A The Lamb of God 20	SAINT AGNES, VIRGIN AND MARTYR  21	DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE LEGAL PROTECTION OF VIOGIN CHILDREN  22	SAINT VINCENT, DEACON AND MARTYR SAINT MARIANNE COPE, VIRGIN 23	SAINT FRANCIS OF SALES, BISHOP AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH 24	
THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME Q What was Jesus' first word when he preached? (SEE JANUARY 30) Matthew 4:12-23 or 4:12-17 25	SAINTS TIMOTHY AND TITUS, BISHOPS 26	SAINT ANGELA MERICI, VIRGIN 27	SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS, PRIEST AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH  28	29	A "Repent" 30	SAINT JOHN BOSCO, PRIEST  31	

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[Catechist Magazine January Calendar Download](#)

Catholic Trivia

Question:

When Mary visited Elizabeth after learning from the angel Gabriel that she was to bear Jesus, John the Baptist leapt in his mother's womb. What does this moment teach us about John the Baptist's role in God's plan?



- A. He would later become a great teacher of the Law
- B. He was chosen by God even before birth to prepare the way for Jesus
- C. He would perform many miracles during his ministry
- D. He was destined to be one of the Twelve Apostles

Correct Answer: B - He was chosen by God even before birth to prepare the way for Jesus (Even before he was born, John points to Christ, reminding us that God calls each person for a purpose!)

Joke of the Week

Q: Why did John the Baptist take off his shoes before going into the waters of the Jordan River?

A. He wanted to save soles!

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[Our Lady of Sorrows Website](#)