

# St. Mary Roman Catholic Church

10-08 49th Avenue

Long Island City, NY 11101

Hours: Mon-Fri 9 to 12, 1 to 5pm

718-786-0705

Email: [stmarylic1008@gmail.com](mailto:stmarylic1008@gmail.com)

Website: [stmary-lic.org](http://stmary-lic.org)

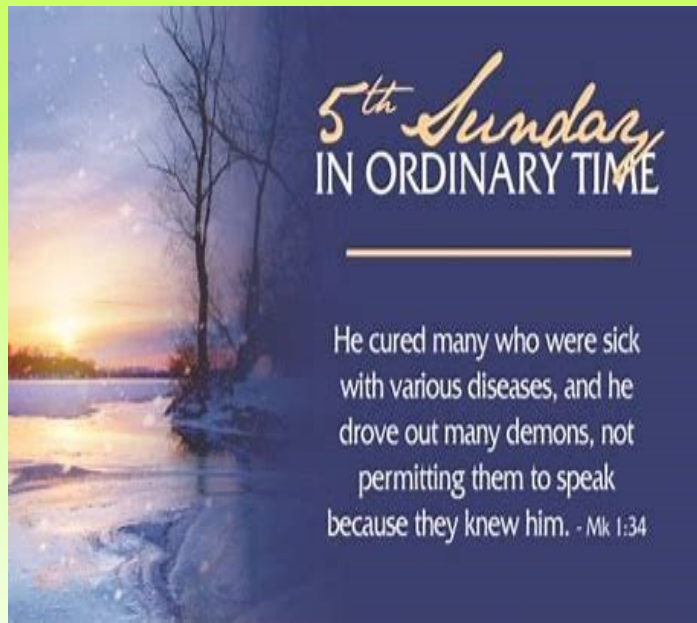
## St. Joseph Center/Religious Education

10-15 49th Avenue

Long Island City, NY 11101

917-832-6104

Email: [dre.stmarylic@gmail.com](mailto:dre.stmarylic@gmail.com)



## Parish Staff

### **Pastor**

Rev. Christopher J. Turczany

### **Director of Music**

Dr. Justin Bischof

### **Director of Religious Education**

Giovanna Varlese

### **Assistant Director of Religious**

Lisete Alfonso

### **Director of Maintenance**

Ray Rychalski

### **Administrative Assistant**

Marie Gabrielle Diharce

## Schedule of Masses

### **Masses:**

Saturday 5:00 pm

Sunday 9:30 am and 12:00 pm

Monday-Thursday: 12:15 pm

**National Holidays:** Mass at 9:00 am

**Confessions:** Saturday 4:00 pm to 4:40 pm

**Anointing of the Sick:** First Saturday of the month at the 5:00 pm evening Mass.

## February 4, 2024 Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

### **RCI Program:**

Are you interested in becoming a Catholic, or are you a baptized Catholic seeking to complete the Sacraments Initiation?

For an application or any questions, please send an email to [dre.stmarylic@gmail.com](mailto:dre.stmarylic@gmail.com)

or call 917-832-6104.

### **Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament:**

Wednesday 11:00 am to 12:00 pm

### **Baptism:**

4th Saturday of the month at 1:30 pm. For courtesy please arrive fifteen minutes earlier.

Please call the Rectory for an appointment with the Pastor.

### **Weddings:**

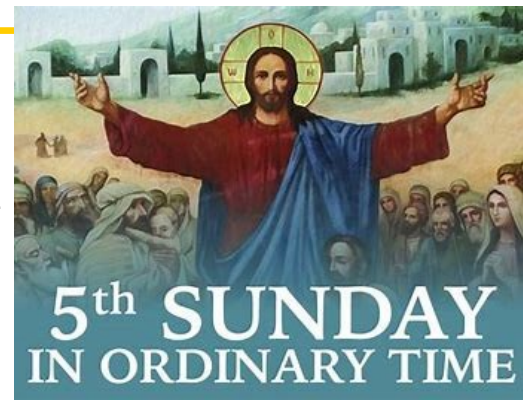
Arrangements should be made at least six months in advance in prior to the wedding date. Please call the Rectory for an appointment with the Pastor. All couples are required to attend the online Pre-Cana and present the certificate when completed.

**Funerals:** Monday through Saturday

**February 4, 2024**

**Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

We gather on this midwinter day, as we do each Sunday, to celebrate the meal that Jesus left us so that we could be nourished by him as we continue our journey to the kingdom. We give praise and thanks to God for this opportunity, even as we acknowledge our failings, our sinfulness and our need for God's mercy. Let us lift our voices in song and prayer to our God.



**Mass Intentions For The Week**

**Saturday, February 3, 2024**

5:00 pm Father Christian Thedoro

**Sunday, February 4, 2024**

9:30 am Mrs. Luizzi

12:00 pm Hilba Carazo

**Monday, February 5, 2024**

12:15 pm Joseph John McCarthy

**Tuesday, February 6, 2024**

12:15pm Rosa D'Amato

**Wednesday February 7, 2024**

11:00am Blessed Sacrament

12:15pm Joan Kelly Doyle

**Thursday February 8, 2024**

12:15pm Mina Asaad

**Friday, February 9, 2024**

NO MASS

**Saturday, February 10, 2024**

5:00pm People of the Parish

**Statistics January 27-2024  
and January 28-2024**

1/27-5:00 pm	87
1/28-9:30 am	130
1/28-12:00 pm	128
<b>Total Count</b>	<b>345</b>

1st Collection	\$1,628
2nd Collection	\$ 728

**Pray for the sick,**

Jean Willison, Michelle Yashita, Pat Gamble,  
Camille Sollis, Maria Vessillo, Teresa Ortiz,  
Joe Sullivan, Martha Catel, Jimmy O'Neil,  
Robert Keegan, Joan Pacheco,  
Madelaine Sullivan, Mary Roedner

**Pray for the Deceased**

Joseph Vessillo  
Christopher A. Polizzi, Nicholas Correa,  
Ines Cano, Sal Caiaccia, Emily Loiacono,  
William F. Marsh, Antonio Natale,  
Antonio Magri, Stella Bonilla,  
Albert Setford, Rosa D'Amato

**Purgatorial Intentions**

Anthony DeFelica, Evarito Sipin, Frank Carrado,  
Yolanda Sipin, Genevive Roeder, Pasqual Cafiero,  
Robert Rohan, Tommaso Valesse, Leonardo An-  
tonio, Donna Vova, Vincenza Rios,  
Mildred Schifano

**Join us in Indianapolis!**

**Diocese of Brooklyn**

**July 17-21, 2024**

**Diocesan Pilgrimage Led by Bishop Robert Brennan**



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Peter's Way Tours  
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Information or  
To enroll online



# UN Human Rights Commissioner: From tech to ceasefires, a call for dignity and peace

**Following an audience with Pope Francis, the United Nations' High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, stresses the importance of respecting international law and human rights, expressing concerns about the impact of technology on conflicts, calling for a ceasefire in the Middle East, and condemning the death penalty while advocating for a world based on human rights and dignity.**

**By Francesca Merlo**

There are rules that apply in war, an international law that should be respected, even as violence is perpetrated. "Unfortunately, these rules are not respected."

A "champion" of the cause

Volker Türk, the United Nations' High Commissioner for Human Rights, talks about the importance of respecting International Law but also International Human Rights Law. But for this, the world needs to realise the right to peace.

This formed a topic of conversation between the High Commissioner and the Holy Father during their meeting on Friday, 26 January.

"The Holy Father is a champion of the Human Rights cause in the world," Mr. Türk told Vatican News.

"We discussed the conflicts ravaging our world, and we discussed the dangers of artificial intelligence," he says. "We know that when you have social media platforms and generative artificial intelligence combined, this could actually have a negative impact on the democratic space because you will have the spreading of false news, fake news, of disinformation, of hate speech, and it's really important to counter that."

History vs AI-But this technology goes further than affecting speech and information. It makes age-old conflicts worse, creating paradoxical situations.

"We see wars that go back to 19th-century thinking," says Mr Türk, making reference to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Likewise, if we look at what is happening in the Middle East, "if it's combined with technology, the ability to do harm is multiplied."

"And we have a very clear position on lethal autonomous weapons," continues Mr Türk. "Lethal autonomous weapons are absolutely contrary to human rights law and they should not be used. They should be forbidden."

Mr Türk reiterates the importance of constantly insisting on the normative framework that needs to be put in place. He thinks back to the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. "That was a promise for the world," he says, but today we have over 50 situations of violent conflict.

Dehumanisation on both sides-Speaking of the situation in the Middle East, Mr Türk describes the war between Hamas and Israel as "an unmitigated tragedy".

We cannot unsee the horrific attacks perpetrated by Hamas on 7 October, he says, noting that there are still hostages being held captive in Gaza. Neither can we unsee that since that day, "we have seen an incredible amount of counter-reaction by the Israeli army that has now led to over 25,000 killings, 70% of which were of women and children".

In Gaza in these months, we have also seen the denial of humanitarian assistance, which simply "doesn't come in the way that it should."

We have also seen a warning of starvation. "I still have colleagues on the ground who tell me that they have lost their family members. And we hear that almost every day," says Mr Türk.

The need for a ceasefire

What is incredibly sad is to see the way in which both sides dehumanise each other, says Mr Türk, and "I hope that those waging this war will come to their senses."

This war does not only affect Israel and Palestine, "we can already see the tensions with Lebanon, and what is happening in the Red Sea, along with broader tensions in the region."

The world cannot afford yet another war that is broader than what we see today, warns Mr Türk. It is clear that "we need to have a ceasefire."

"

Forgotten" conflicts-As the gaze of the international community focuses on conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East, many others go unnoticed, despite them causing some of the biggest and most atrocious violations of human rights. Situations like Haiti, with its gang warfare, or Sudan, Myanmar, and Syria. "These places are almost no longer in the news, and what worries me is that within conflict and violence, here too there is an inherent dehumanisation of the other, and the long-term consequences of war are terrible."

Mr Türk clarifies that all violations of human rights always have a harmful effect. "We don't want violations to occur under any circumstance," but there are certain violations that can be considered worse than others.

"That's why we talk about atrocity crimes, for example. We talk about crimes against humanity. We talk about war crimes. We talk about genocide. And there are very clear legal definitions attached to them. That is also why we have the International Criminal Court that looks specifically at atrocity crimes, war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide."

The fight against the death penalty

Turning to the United States, Mr Türk mentioned the execution of Kenneth Smith on 25 January. The death row inmate in the state of Alabama was the first person to die via nitrogen gas. The execution lasted about 22 minutes, and Smith appeared to remain conscious for some time. The man had already undergone his first execution attempt on 17 November 2022 after being subjected to lethal injection, which he survived because the executioners had failed to find the vein.

"It's cruel. That's clear. There's no other word for it," says Mr Türk. "Frankly, the death penalty should not have any place in the 21st century."

Mr Türk was referring not only to the US but all other countries that are yet to abolish this so-called form of punishment.

"The state should not exercise that power in that way. It's not what is appropriate in this century. And we should really overcome it. I can only call on all those who have any influence over those who want to see this continue to occur that they use that influence to stop this practice once and for all."

A slippery slope-"In my position as High Commissioner for Human Rights, we know that even smaller violations can lead to more serious ones over time," says Mr Türk, adding that this is a slippery slope and we need to be aware of the beginnings of that slippery slope so that we prevent them from happening. As over 60 countries approach general elections in the year 2024, the hope is that voters in all these countries take this vote very seriously, that they participate in the elections, "and that they take into account whether the parties' programmes include respect for human rights."

This, Mr Türk emphasises, is very important, "because we also see in parties a tendency towards extremism, a tendency towards dehumanisation of other people in the question of refugees, the protection of refugees, the protection of migrants."

My hope, he adds, is that "if political parties are trying to promote an attitude that is not in conformity with human rights, the electorate takes this into consideration."

The beginnings of a better world-"*The old world is dying. The new one is slow to appear. And in this twilight, monsters are born.*"

Volker Türk concludes by quoting Antonio Gramsci. This is the period of monsters, he explains.

"But we already see the beginnings of a better world, of a world that is fundamentally based on human rights, that is fundamentally based on respect for human dignity." There is hope, he concludes, and we would be nowhere without that.

Vatican News





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**St. Mary's**  
 10-15 49<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
 Long Island City, NY 11101  
 917-832-6104

We encourage parents to attend **every Sunday Mass at 9:30 a.m.** alongside their children.

Following the Mass, we invite parents to let their **kids explore and grow in their faith** by attending our

**Catholic faith classes for all ages**, which commence at **10:30 a.m.**

**If you have any questions, please reach out to:** May God bless you and your family abundantly.  
 Yours in Christ, Giovanna Varlese, Director.

**Giovanna Varlese 917-832-6104 dre.stmarylic@gmail.com**



**St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church**  
**Pledged the Amount \$ 30,034**  
**For "The Annual Catholic Appeal 2024"**

- ⇒ Goal: \$17,344
- ⇒ Pledged: \$30,034
- ⇒ Received: \$1,760



**ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS**

In person AA Meetings  
 held in St. Mary's Church Basement,  
 gather Mondays at 7:00 pm  
 Wednesday meetings take place via Zoom at 7:30 pm  
 For more information, please visit the website:  
**Licgroupsaa@gmail.com**  
 Live Hotline from 9:00 am-2:00 am at 212-647-1680  
 Monday-Sunday

**Oh sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth**  
**St. Mary Parish Choir**  
**Sunday Mass at 12:00 pm**  
**Rehearsal in the Church 11:15 am - 11:40 am**



Our Parish Choir helps lead the congregation in song (along with our Cantor) at the Sunday Noon Mass every week.

Do you like to sing? If so, we would like to hear from you!

There is a painless and quick audition with Dr. Bischof our Director of Music to sing through a hymn and discuss the Parish Choir commitment.

To sign up for an audition, please contact Dr. Justin Bischof at **646-206-7638** or **justin@justinbischof.com**.

# **ASH WEDNESDAY** **February 14, 2024**



- 12:15 pm Mass with distribution of Ashes
- 3:00 pm Prayer Services with distribution of Ashes
- 7:30 pm Mass with Distribution of Ashes

## **Fasting and Abstinence during Lent**

Lent is the time before Easter during which the faithful abstain and fast in remembrance of the ultimate sacrifice Jesus made on Calvary. It is a 40-day time of preparation before Easter, the memorial of the death and resurrection of Jesus. There are two main ways that Catholics use to focus on growing closer to God during the Lenten season: abstinence and fasting.

### ***Abstinence***

Abstinence is the act of “doing without” or avoiding something. For example, someone may abstain from chocolate or alcohol by not consuming them. Particular days of abstinence during Lent are Fridays, Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. As canon law states, Catholics over the age of 14 are expected to abstain from the eating of meat on Ash Wednesday and all Fridays throughout the Lenten Season (Canon 1250 - 1253).

During Lent, Catholics are also encouraged to undertake some sort of personal penance or abstinence. Examples include giving up sweets, a favorite TV show or not listening to the radio in the car on the way to work. Giving up these things isn't some sort of endurance test, but these acts are done to draw the faithful closer to Christ.

For example, a person may give up his favorite TV show, but if he simply turns the television to another channel, the Lenten penance really does not mean as much. Instead, the person should consider devoting the spare time to prayer or perhaps his family.

As always, when considering acts of penance that are stricter than the norm, it is important that the Catholic would speak with a priest or spiritual director. Any act of penance that would seriously hinder one's health or the health of others would be contrary to the will of God.

### ***Fasting***

Fasting is the act of doing with less. In the Catholic Church, those ages 18 - 59 must fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday (Canon 97). On such days, those fasting may eat one full meal, as well as two smaller meals, sufficient to maintain strength. However, together, the smaller meals should not equal a full meal.

Eating between meals is not encouraged, but liquids are allowed.

It is important to understand that the Church excuses certain people from these obligations. Examples include those who are frail, pregnant or manual laborers. The Church understands that certain people are not able to commit to the Lenten fast.

The time of Lent, through fasting and abstaining, may be an important reminder of what it means to suffer. This small suffering should not be with misery but with great joy as we better understand the incredible sacrifice that Jesus Christ made for humanity.



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