



THE LOURDES WORD

FALL 2025 :
THE JUBILEE
YEAR OF HOPE



OUR LADY OF
LOURDES
CATHOLIC PARISH

Publication Volunteers:

Linda Abner
Pat Browne
Andrea Fleak
Bruce Oertel
Michele Oertel

Submissions:

Linda Abner
Bill Bakemeyer
Pat Browne
Andrea Fleak
Michele Oertel
Zoey
Myah
Reagan
Jamie
Eileen

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Straying neither right, nor left
Locked upon, as one with
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“In this year of hope, we are invited to be pilgrims of hope. First, we have to find hope for ourselves... Then, we can offer hope to others...”



Parish Mission Statement: We, the faith community of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, strive to live, share and be Christ in all we do.

The Jubilee Prayer

Father in heaven,
 may the faith you have given us
 in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother,
 and the flame of charity enkindled
 in our hearts by the Holy Spirit,
 reawaken in us the blessed hope
 for the coming of your Kingdom.

May your grace transform us
 into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel.
 May those seeds transform from within
 both humanity and the whole cosmos
 in the sure expectation
 of a new heaven and a new earth,
 when, with the powers of Evil vanquished,
 your glory will shine eternally.

May the grace of the Jubilee
 reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope,
 a yearning for the treasures of heaven.

May that same grace spread
 the joy and peace of our Redeemer
 throughout the earth.

To you our God, eternally blessed,
 be glory and praise for ever.

Amen



Hope

By Pat Browne

I confess that I sometimes find hope hard to come by. I watch the daily news, and see shootings happening on a nearly daily basis in my neighborhood and city. I hear of violence erupting all over our county with shootings occurring in our schools, churches, synagogues, mosques, places of employment, shopping centers, and political arenas. I visit social media sites and read hateful comments directed at perceived enemies. I hear of war that rages on without regard for lives lost and heartbreaking destruction. There seems to be no safe harbor. Peace seems an impossible dream, and I sometimes teeter on the edge of despair.

I can't think of hope without also considering despair. As a social worker in the field of mental health during my career and more recently as a Spiritual Director, I have met with many people who were struggling with discontent, fear and despair. Some succumb to despair over external situations in our world. Others find their own personal situations to be so overwhelming that their sense of hope erodes under their burdens. Buried under their pain and fear, they are unable to perceive the light.

I recently read something that speaks to the source of despair. In a piece by Fr. James Martin, he wrote, "if God's voice in our lives has a certain quality, so does the voice of the evil spirit. In general, it is a voice of despair and hopelessness.

This can manifest itself in various ways: incessant negativity, an over weening ego, a petulant way of looking at the world, and so on." So, if the source of despair is the evil spirit and hopelessness comes from listening to evil forces, we know that if we instead listen to the word of God, we can find hope.

Jesus promised us that the Holy Spirit would provide the gifts and virtues we need to sustain us through the difficulties we face in life. Through God's grace, we can put aside the negativity, ego and petulance that may at times befall us, and listen instead to the promises of Jesus that give us hope. In Romans 15:13, Paul says, "Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Spirit."

When I hear myself complaining, expressing negativity regarding the cares of the world, and focusing on my own desires, God has a way of guiding me back to knowledge of His goodness that brings me to a place of hope and joy. He may do this through witnessing the kindness of a stranger, or by showing me the many forces at work for the sake of the poor, or through a particularly strong feeling of connection with the Communion of Saints during Mass. He has a myriad of ways to shine the light of hope into my heart. All I have to do is listen and be willing to receive.



"CHRISTIAN HOPE ISN'T ESCAPE—BUT A COURAGEOUS CHOICE TO LOVE AND GIVE, EVEN IN SUFFERING. TRUE HOPE ISN'T EVASION; IT'S DECISION." -POPE LEO XIV

The Festival

By Linda Abner

'Midst all the music, laughter, lights and noise
 A child focuses on the Magic Wheel which
 Promises – for Just One Ticket! – to deliver a
 Delightful, delectable, decidedly desirable prize.
 She hopes! Stands on tiptoe, gives the wheel a
 Mighty whirl with all the strength
 Her little arm has in it.
 Her eyes follow the wheel, round and round
 Straying neither right, nor left
 Locked upon, as one with
 The spinning wheel
 She holds her breath – she is so excited!
 A slight smile touches her face, then as quickly
 Disappears – oh, the suspense!
 As she waits,
 And hopes.

Sometimes hope seems lost
 But we continue
 Going through the motions
 Praying, trying
 Even though our efforts seem empty, wasted
 Futile
 We remind ourselves of times

When hope was answered
 Tell ourselves God is present, even when
 Unseen, unheard
 We claim Scripture, hold it in our hearts
 “*Hope does not disappoint.*”
 Hope does not disappoint (...*He gave her back her
 son...*
*your daughter is healed...*)
 But Jesus never said “*Your hope has saved you,*” rather,
 “*Your faith has saved you.*”

I wish
 We all could have the unwavering faith
 That perfects hope (*I believe, Lord, help my unbelief!*)
 I wish our hopes
 Could be as easily met
 As an innocent, trusting Festival child's who,
 Watching the spinning wheel slow, and stop
 And land on the coveted prize
 Grasps the Nerds, or Snickers, or Laffy Taffy in her
 hand
 And skips away
 With never a doubt in her mind.



Artwork submitted by
 Bill Bakemeyer

Student Submissions: Young Hearts, Growing Faith

The Lourdes Word is proud to feature the writing and perspectives of OLL students. We thank them for allowing us to showcase their creativity and insight.

What does Hope mean to you? How have you had Hope or seen it in your life?

H Hope means to me that God is coming to help me. Like something good thing will happen. Knowing that I'm going to be O.K. I hop for all my friends and family to be O.K. I hope for every thing is going to be O.K. I hope I going to a marine biologist.

P

E

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-Eileen, Grade 5

What does Hope mean to you? How have you had Hope or seen it in your life?

H What hope means to me is to have faith in something like hoping that you get a sandwich for lunch and I hope that I am never homeless and hope is sign of faith hope and till you can't hope no more.

P

E

“ What hope means to me is to have faith in something like hoping that you get a sandwich for lunch and I hope that I am never homeless and hope is sign of faith hope and till you can't hope no more.

Jamie, Grade 5

“...THE WORLD NEEDS MESSAGES OF HOPE: YOU ARE THAT MESSAGE, AND YOU MUST CONTINUE TO BRING HOPE TO ALL.”- POPE LEO XIV TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF THE JUBILEE OF YOUTH

H Hope this school year is fun
and get good grades and good
at math.

O Our country is safe and that
our family and homeless in the
street are safe.

P Pray for the people that do not
have a home that God gives them
joy and love by nice people.

E Earn God's Love, Joy, Hope, and Holy
Spirit and that everybody in the
world is happy.

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grades and good at math.

Our country is safe and our family and
homeless in the streets are safe.

Pray for the people that do not have a house
that God gives them joy and love by nice
people.

Earn God's Love, Joy, Hope, and Holy
Spirit and that everybody in the world is
happy.

-Myah, Grade 5

H Hope means a lot to me.
I hope when my friends or family
are sick or hurt, I hope when something
happy and exciting is around the
corner, and the event goes well. I hope
the Lord is with me when I die
and go to heaven. Hope really does
mean a lot to me and those are
some reasons why.

P I've seen hope in some ways. When
Eileen got sick I hoped she would be
okay and she did get better. When
it was my birthday party, I hoped it
wouldn't be chaos, and it wasn't. And
when my little sister died, I hope God
was with us and he was. Those
are some ways God gave us hope.

E

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hope.

-Reagan, Grade 5

“I PLEAD WITH YOU — NEVER, EVER GIVE UP ON HOPE; NEVER DOUBT, NEVER TIRE AND
NEVER BECOME DISCOURAGED. BE NOT AFRAID.” - ST. JOHN PAUL II

What does Hope mean to you? How have you had Hope or seen it in your life?



What hope means to me, Hope means a very powerful wish. Something that can be shared of just for you. Hope can



lift yours and others spirits. Hope can give you motivation to do something good for the world



How I have experienced hope in my life, my hope motivates me and my family to do good things for the

world. We hope for something like, all people get food, so we



donate food to food boxes. In my hope motivates, hope loves, and hope cures. And that's what I wish for the world, Hope.

“

What hope means to me. Hope means a very powerful wish. Something that can be shared or just for you. Hope can lift yours and others spirits. Hope can give you motivation to do something good for the world.

How I have experienced hope in my life. My hope motivates me and my family to do good things for the world. We hope for something like, all people get food, so we donate food to food boxes. In my hope motivates, hope loves, and hope cures. And that's what I wish for the world, Hope.

-Zoey, Grade 5

”



**WE HAVE THIS HOPE
AS AN ANCHOR
FOR THE SOUL,
FIRM AND SECURE.**

Hebrews 6:19

The Needy Need Hope

By Michele Oertel

For several years, our mailbox continues to show us the increased and diverse needs of the needy. A variety of religious and secular organizations on behalf of people in need solicit funding for medical issues, for basic necessities, for the pre-born, for families, for veterans, for addicts, for the imprisoned, for Christians, for non-Christians, for some type of physical/mental/emotional/spiritual advocacy--locally and worldwide. The common denominator for all such requests for assistance ultimately centers on hope.

Following are some heartstring-pulling excerpts from some of the recent mail related to hope:

*Some might be tempted to despair. But we do not need to live as if we have no **hope**. "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7).*

*"...and **hope** does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us." (Romans 5:5).*

*"May the God of **hope** fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in **hope** by the power of the Holy Spirit." (Romans 15:13).*

*Children are living lives of pain. You can bring them **hope**.*

*For millions of children in India...they've never seen a Bible...never heard the name of Jesus... never known the **hope** you hold in your heart every day.*

*The Jewish people see their own peril...where can they turn? They need the **hope** of the Messiah and the comfort only He can bring... We must do all we can to share Jesus.*

*Imagine sitting across from someone who feels like their marriage is falling apart. They're searching for **hope**, but they aren't sure where to turn. Now imagine the moment their heart softens because they hear something real -- something rooted in Jesus -- that gives them courage to keep going.*

*As you stand in prayer and generosity, you become a beacon of light in the darkest of times. Every package of food, every bottle of water, every prayer offered opens the door to share the love and **hope** found in Jesus.*

*Wheeler Mission gave me my life back. Now I have **hope** and want to live. I have a whole new future, just like God promised.*



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The Needy Need Hope (cont from pg8)

*Project **HOPE** needs your emergency help.*

*Do you remember the old neon signs on motels that illuminated the words: "No Vacancy?" In modern technology and reservation systems, it now reads "no availability" or "sold out." Seeing these words causes feelings of disappointment and a loss of **hope** that there is a safe place for us...physically and spiritually.*

*City of **Hope** needs your help.*

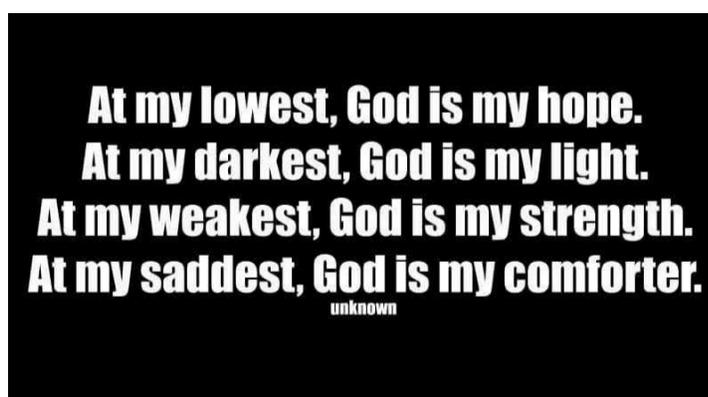
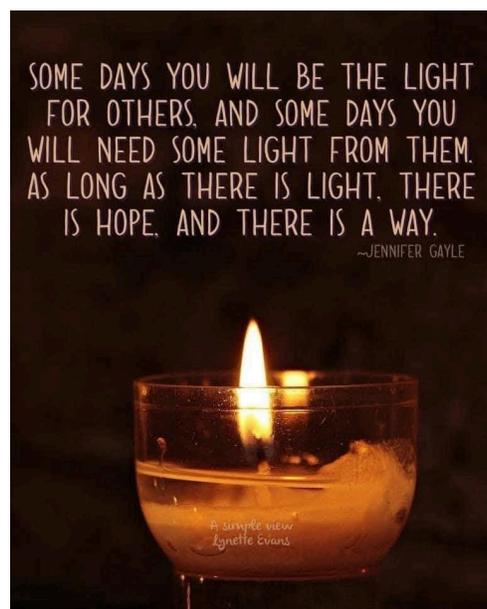
*We need your help to mobilize millions of other believers to pour out to the God of **Hope** and be filled with the **HOPE** and **PEACE** that only He can provide.*

*The Society of St. Vincent de Paul chapter in Indianapolis "Neighborhoods of **Hope**"*

embodies its mission to serve vulnerable people with charity and justice, meeting both immediate needs and offering a path toward more hopeful and self-sufficient future through various programs and services, including Love Your Neighbor Center and the Changing Lives Forever program.

*We can bring the **hope** of Jesus to light this Christmas.*

While all such requests can be somewhat overwhelming to those of us being solicited to help, I can only imagine the overwhelming effort to provide resources to the overwhelming number of people with overwhelming needs. My simple prayer for the needy is for lack of despair and for hearts full of hope in our Lord and Savior.



"GOD'S LOVE CALLS US TO MOVE BEYOND FEAR. WE ASK GOD FOR THE COURAGE TO PUT ON FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE AS WE GO OUT INTO THE WORLD AND BECOME THE WORD IN BODY AS WELL AS SPIRIT." - POPE FRANCIS

Don't Let Your Hope Be Stolen

By Andrea Fleak

As we came into the last weeks of 2024, I became more and more apprehensive about what this new year would bring. I saw the changes that were ahead in many parts of life, and there was some fear and uncertainty about how it all would unfold. Around Christmas, Fr. Rick spoke in a homily about the Holy Year of Hope. I remember thinking how appropriate that theme was.

As we started 2025, I decided I wanted to do something. There is a quote by Franklin D. Roosevelt, "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself." I didn't want to live in fear of what might come to be and focus solely on the negativity in the world. Science has shown that practicing gratitude and seeking to name blessings has a positive effect on the brain, potentially reducing fear and anxiety. So, each night, I started writing down moments as I reflected on my day—moments when there was something good, moments I could see God at work, and moments of hope amidst the change and uncertainty. They were not big things, but mostly the ordinary, everyday things: seeing a beautiful sunrise or sunset; moments in nature; conversations and moments with my family, colleagues, or friends; moments at Mass; sharing my faith with others; and watching others encounter faith for themselves—each moment reminding me of God's presence.



This year of hope isn't just about finding hope for ourselves. Pope Francis wrote, "get up, therefore, and set out as pilgrims of hope, because, just as Mary did with Saint Elizabeth, we too can bring news of joy, generate new life and be artisans of brotherhood and peace."

Pope Francis was calling us to go out and spread hope to others. But how do we spread hope? The lyrics to "The Servant Song" give us a glimpse of how. There is one particular line that stands out to me:

*I will hold the Christ-light for you
In the nighttime of your fear
I will hold my hand out to you
Speak the peace you long to hear*

The imagery in these words makes me think of a person in a dark room, perhaps someone who is afraid or facing something difficult, feeling like their world is a little upside down. Maybe it is a sickness for themselves or a loved one, maybe it is grief over losing someone, a job, or a sense of normalcy in their life. Perhaps it is financial or family stress, and they're not really sure how they are going to hold it all together. Whatever it is, it is like a "nighttime of fear" where all around them looks dark like the night.

Continued on page 11

*Artwork submitted by
Pat Browne*

Don't Let Your Hope Be Stolen (cont from p10)

Then there is the other person performing an action. First, they are holding the Christ light. I think of the “Christ light” as a candle like the ones we see during baptisms. Candles are powerful sources of light, especially in the dark, and the Christ light is no different. Who is Christ? One who offered us love, hope, peace. The Christ light illuminates these things, illuminates Christ.

Next, the person is holding their hand out. I think of the art image that depicts Jesus holding His hand out to Peter to walk on the water. It seems like an invitation to something else— maybe to trust or to community.

Lastly, the person is speaking words that need to be heard. It doesn't say the person had all the answers, just that they offered peace they longed to hear. Maybe it is as simple as “You are not alone in the difficulties and fear. I am here with you. If you let me, perhaps we can

find a way forward together.” Maybe the peace that they need to hear offers hope and solidarity.

After Pope Francis's death, I saw a quote by him in a news article— “ don't let your hope be stolen.” Looking around the world, there are many places to see people hurting, afraid, and in need of hope. At times, maybe we are those people in need of hope. In this year of hope, we are invited to be pilgrims of hope. First, we have to find hope for ourselves. We need to look at how God is acting in our lives, where do we see Him and know of His faithfulness. Then, we can offer hope to others through the words we share as encouragement and understanding, through the silence of empathetic listening, by sharing our faith and praying for and with others. Finding and sharing hope doesn't have to be in the big moments; sometimes we can hear God and find hope in the quiet, small, everyday moments if we allow ourselves to be open and look for them.



The Lourdes Word is an attempt for us, the followers of Christ, to reflect publicly on our faith journey. Each edition has a specific theme. Contained in this issue are reflections on “The Jubilee Year of Hope.”

We invite parishioners of Our Lady of Lourdes to share reflections, stories, or artwork for the next edition of our publication. The theme is *Stewardship: Giving of Our Time and Talent*.

Some questions to consider as you create:

How do you give of your time and talent?

Where do you see God working through your gifts?

Submit writings or artwork to Andreasleak@hotmail.com. We look forward to celebrating the ways God works through the gifts of our parish community!