



OUR LADY OF THE LAKE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Love God. Love Others. Make Disciples of Jesus Christ.

THIRTIETH SUNDAY
IN ORDINARY TIME
OCTOBER 25, 2026

Bringing Our Gifts to the Altar

"Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy, and I will praise you with the harp, O God, my God."

Psalm 43:4

There was a remarkable surprise when we opened the original marble altar that has been in our church since 1956. Let me explain...

The original altar, with the tabernacle on it, has always stood against the back (north) wall of our sanctuary. Before the Second Vatican Council (1962–65), Masses were celebrated with the priest standing at the altar *ad orientem*, meaning "facing liturgical east." Traditionally, churches were built with the altar at the east end, toward the rising sun, reminding us of the Resurrection of Our Lord. Sometimes people describe this as "the priest standing with his back to the people," but it's more accurate to say that the priest and people faced the same direction in worshipping God.

Following Vatican II, the common practice became for the priest to stand *versus populum*, or "facing the people" (*General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, 299). This emphasizes that the altar is both an altar of sacrifice and a table for the Eucharistic meal, where the priest acts *in persona Christi*, "in the person of Christ," as at the Last Supper. Either orientation expresses something important about our worship, but here at OLL we follow the well-established norm since Vatican II. After the Council, a simple wooden altar was built at OLL to allow the priest to face the people.

Our church renovation has given us an opportunity to reconsider which altar we should use. The original marble altar is ornate and substantial, as it should be. Therefore, I asked Archbishop Alexander Sample for permission to move it away from the wall so that it can once again serve as our one-and-only main altar. (Incidentally, the side altar on the right will remain, while the one on the left will be moved to our new Adoration Chapel, making room for the wheelchair ramp.)

Now about the surprise...

As contractors were dismantling the original altar, they discovered a rusted old tin box concealed inside. When I opened it, I found a little notebook in which the pastor at the time, Fr. James E. Crowe (1949–1965), had written:

May 2, 1956

The enclosed names placed in this altar have by their donations made possible the erection of this altar. Our thanks and prayers are offered to God for all who helped and sacrificed for this altar. May God bless and reward them.

– Fr. Crowe, Pastor

Page after page listed parishioners' names and their donations, mostly women, perhaps members of the Altar Society. Most gifts were \$5 to \$10, equivalent to approximately \$60 to \$120 today. What a wonderful

connection to our parish history! Those parishioners made sacrifices to build a beautiful church for future generations. Now, seventy years later, we have the opportunity to do the same.

As we continue our *Building Our Faith – A Sacred Presence* campaign, we want to encourage every parishioner to make a gift toward our newly remodeled church, no matter how small. Even little children can participate and become part of our history. We will place the names of all donors into that same tin box, alongside the original notebook, and return it to the altar.

In a Catholic church, the altar holds the place of greatest prominence because it is at the center of our Eucharistic Liturgy. How fitting that, within this altar of Eucharistic Sacrifice, we will enshrine the names of those whose own sacrificial gifts helped make its renewal possible.

Please join us in becoming part of the continuing history of this amazing parish!

– Fr. John Kerns, Pastor



A 2024 photo of our original marble altar. While disassembling it for relocation, construction workers found a tin box inside.



BECOME A PART OF HISTORY BY PARTICIPATING IN THE

TIN BOX CAMPAIGN



Help us in the home stretch of our “Building Our Future — A Sacred Presence” capital campaign and become a part of history! Each donor’s name will be printed in a booklet which will be stowed in a tin box and placed inside the altar as a sort of “time capsule” honoring the generosity of of our parishioners. There is no minimum donation requirement, and all ages are encouraged to participate!

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

Make a donation of any amount to the “Building Our Future” capital campaign by using the QR code above or visiting ollparish.com/bof. There is a box on the online giving form for you to list the names how you would like them to appear in the booklet. The last day for contributions to the Tin Box campaign is December 31, 2026. The names of all those who have previously donated to the campaign will also be included in the booklet.