be alert
and ready,
for the Lord of
the house is
coming
Join us as we honor
Senior Deacon Tom McGorey
for 30 years of service
to St. John of the Cross Parish
Sunday, December 10, 2017
10:45am Mass
Reception following in the Parish Center
Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

On the Second Sunday of Advent, parishes throughout the Archdiocese will participate in the annual collection for the Retirement Fund for Religious, benefiting more than 32,000 elderly Catholic sisters, brothers and religious order priests throughout the United States.

Our senior religious are a treasure. Their dedication and hard work laid the foundation for Catholic schools, hospitals, and numerous social service organizations. Many continue in volunteer ministry today. Their ongoing prayer and witness enrich our faith in countless ways. Personally, I am grateful for the service of religious, past and present. Perhaps you also recall a sister or brother who made a positive difference in your life.

Most elder religious worked for years for small stipends, leaving a substantial gap in retirement savings. Rising health-care costs and decreased income compound the challenge to meet such day-to-day needs as medications and nursing assistance. The Retirement Fund for Religious offers financial support that helps religious communities provide loving care for older members while ensuring younger members can continue the good work of their elders.

In the past, the people of the Archdiocese of Chicago have led the nation in their generous response to this appeal. Though I understand you are asked to support many worthy causes, I invite you to contribute what you can at Masses the weekend of December 9-10. Most importantly, please pray for God’s continued blessing on all our women and men religious. Rest assured they are praying for you.

Wishing you every blessing during this Holy Season of Advent.

With kind regards I remain,
Sincerely yours in Christ,

Cardinal Blase J. Cupich
Archbishop of Chicago

Dear Parishioners,

And so it begins, again. The first Sunday of Advent, the first Sunday of the liturgical year, seems late this year. It usually is the same weekend after Thanksgiving. This year Thanksgiving was one of the earliest 4th Thursdays of November it could be. We say Advent has four weeks, but this year the fourth Sunday of Advent is December 24th, Christmas Eve. So the 4th week of Advent is really only a couple of hours. Please be aware there is no 12:15pm or 5:00pm for Sunday, December 24th. Christmas Eve begins at 4:00pm on Sunday. The full schedule will be mailed to you and you can also find it on the website.

Next week, the Second Sunday of Advent, we will also take time to honor our longtime parish deacon and friend, Deacon Tom McGorey, at the 10:45am Mass followed by a reception in the Parish Center. Over the years Deacon Tom has served our parish so well in so many ways. He was a volunteer plant manager with Fr. Joe; he and his wife, Mary Kay, did the scheduling for the Ministers of Care for years; he conducted a communion service three times a month at King-Bruwaert House in Hinsdale for years; and he has faithfully been the deacon at numerous Sunday liturgies and proudly baptized too many babies to mention. He also has served as an associate director of the Diaconate Program in the archdiocese for a long time, working with Fr. Ed Salmon and Deacon Charlie O’Donnell. Tom’s own health and the long illness and death of his beloved wife, Mary Kay, earlier this year have caused him to back away from ministry recently. If you are unable to attend but wish to write him a note you can drop it at the Parish Center.

It’s time to be alert and ready. Find the time to welcome the Lord in new ways this year.

Maranatha!
Fr. David

PS Thanks to all who donated coats for the Women’s Club Coat Drive. Your donations will help keep many people warm this winter.

Sacrament of Reconciliation
Parish Advent Reconciliation Service
Tuesday, December 12 at 7:00pm
A Communal Service of Reconciliation with individual confession and absolution will take place in church.

Individual Reconciliation
Saturday, December 16
Extended individual confessions will be offered on Saturday, December 16 following the 8:00am Mass, with the opportunity for private or face-to-face confession. Our parish offers reconciliation every Saturday throughout the year at 8:30am except on December 23 when there are no confessions.
For reasons lost in history, Cincinnati, Ohio, considers itself the chili capital of the world, with over 180 chili parlors within its city limits. The basic, most authentic form of Cincinnati chili is when it is served “three way,” that is, chili with spaghetti and cheese (one can go on to get it five-way but that is another story). This may be a terrible way to segue into a reflection on Advent but there is a connection. Advent celebrates the coming of Christ three ways.

First of all, during Advent we prepare for Christmas, the incredible conviction that in the conception and birth of Jesus God so loved the world that the divine has become one with us. Beneath the tinsel and shopping frenzy, those who believe understand we do have a reason for Christmas joy: God has embraced us.

As human beings we have become sacred, even in our frailty. Paul in this Sunday’s reading from 1 Corinthians reminds his fellow Christians of “the grace of God bestowed on you in Christ Jesus, that in him you were enriched in every way.”

But there is another dimension to Advent and it is also apparent in the readings for this Sunday. We reflect on the final destiny of our human family—the end of the long future when the God of love and mercy will bring the world to its completion. We Christians speak of this as the “second coming of Christ.” We believe that history has a purpose and meaning. The ultimate future is not one of defeat and destruction but of renewal and completion.

We are urged to live lives of hope and integrity, lives worthy of the future to which God is calling us. Paradoxically for us as Christians, in the midst of a season when the secular world around us tries to pump up joy (and spending), we are also called to repentance, to resolve to change our lives in the direction that God calls us. Isaiah prays that God will mold us into new human beings, worthy of God’s love: “O Lord, you are our father; we are the clay and you the potter; we are all the work of your hands.” The psalm response from Psalm 80 earnestly prays, “Lord make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved.”

And there is a third dimension to Advent that celebrates the coming of Christ neither in the distant past or the unknown future, but in our everyday lives. We believe the promise of the Risen Christ in the final words of Matthew’s Gospel: “I will be with you always, until the end of time.” Christ will never abandon us and comes to us often in mysterious and unanticipated ways in the midst of our ordinary experience.

Finding courage and strength when we are facing serious illness; receiving Christ’s wisdom and comfort in the understanding words of a spouse or friend; being able to summon up patience and forgiving love when exasperated by a wayward child; allowing ourselves to be moved by someone’s desperate need for our help; finding the strength to turn away from degrading others by indulging in pornography or coarse ways of speaking about other human beings.

The Gospel reading is from Jesus’ final discourse to his disciples in the Gospel of Mark. We will be hearing selections from this Gospel throughout the Sundays of the coming year. Mark’s Gospel was most likely written for the Christian community in Rome, at a time when it was still reeling from the persecution it had suffered under Nero.

There is a no-nonsense atmosphere in this Gospel, as in today’s reading. Jesus tells his disciples to “stay awake,” be “alert.” Be ready to respond with courage and faith when we face the challenges of everyday life. We should be alert and ready, for the “Lord of the house is coming.” This Advent we are urged not to be morally “asleep” but awake and poised to be authentic followers of Jesus and to respond with love and justice to whatever challenge life may bring to us.

“The season of Advent, which we begin again today, restores this horizon of hope, a hope which does not disappoint for it is founded on God’s Word.”

—Pope Francis, Angelus, Dec. 1, 2013


About the Author: Donald Senior is president emeritus, chancellor and professor of New Testament studies at Catholic Theological Union, 5401 S. Cornell Ave. in Chicago.
Advent Offerings

SJC Sponsored Advent Programs at The Well in LaGrange Park Free for SJC Parishioners
Call the Parish Center to Register

Jack Shea & Kathy Sherman, CSJ: Seeing Haloes During this Advent morning of reflection, Jack will share his poetry and Kathy her songs, opening our hearts and bringing us into Christmas memories we may have forgotten and experiences we may have overlooked. Saturday, December 9, 9am-noon. Cosponsored by SFX and SJC; free to parishioners.

The Shock of Advent, Pat Bergen, CSJ As we are drawn more deeply into Advent and Christmas something wonderful is beginning to dawn on us. When it comes to light, everything changes. If you can’t figure out what is happening in the world and you are tired of walking around in the dark, join us! Offered twice: Monday, December 18, 7-8:30pm and Tuesday, December 19, 9:30-11am. Cosponsored by SFX and SJC; free to parishioners.

Oplatki Traditional Christmas wafers are available in the Parish Center office for $2 per package.

An Online, Interactive Retreat for Women ~ Advent: An Invitation to Intimacy with God — Dec. 3-24, 2017 Join the School Sisters of Notre Dame in taking time to nurture your relationship with God this Advent, using reflection materials provided by Sister Carolyn Sur, SSND. Deepen your personal reflection and prayer by interaction with a spiritual companion, a sister with whom you will be paired to meet with weekly by phone, skype or in person. To RSVP or for more information, contact Sister Stephanie Spandl, SSND, at sspandl@ssnd.org or 651-278-4498, or visit ssnd.org/events/advent-retreat-2017 for more details.

Archbishop’s Christmas Concert Sunday, December 10@ 2-3pm at Holy Family Catholic Church, Chicago Join Cardinal Blase J. Cupich and The City Lights Orchestra conducted by Rich Daniels for the Annual Archbishop’s Christmas Concert. The concert will feature sacred as well as secular favorites such as "Holy Night," "Sleigh Ride," "White Christmas" and "I'll be home for Christmas." In addition, Cardinal Cupich will read the Christmas Gospel according to Luke accompanied by the orchestra. The soloists will be Suzanne Palmer and Paddy Homan. Both Suzanne and Paddy have appeared internationally and will be sure to help you find the spirit and meaning of the Christmas season with their voices! No tickets necessary. This is a free concert. Kid Friendly.

Advent Taizé Prayer @SJC: Tuesday, December 19 at 7pm Sing, Listen & Be Silent See the back of today’s bulletin for more.
Background on the Gospel

Today we begin the season of Advent, which marks the start of a new liturgical year for the Church. The readings for Sunday Mass are arranged on a three-year cycle. Each year features a different Gospel—Matthew, Mark, or Luke. Readings from the Gospel of John are interspersed throughout all three years. With this year’s first Sunday of Advent, we begin Cycle B of the Lectionary, which focuses our attention on the Gospel of Mark. This week and next week, our readings from Mark’s Gospel present two important Advent themes: the Lord’s return at the end of time and John the Baptist’s preparation for Jesus.

Today’s Gospel is taken from the end of Mark’s Gospel, the chapter that immediately precedes Mark’s account of Jesus’ Passion. Having been questioned repeatedly by the scribes and the Pharisees, Jesus is now questioned by his disciples—Peter, James, John, and Andrew—who want details about his prediction of the destruction of the Temple. Jesus answers with many warnings about the difficulties that the disciples will face.

Today’s passage comes at the conclusion of Jesus’ warnings to his disciples. Jesus emphasizes the need for watchfulness. The Son of Man will come without warning; only the Father knows the exact hour. The disciples must not be caught unprepared when this time comes.

Scholars believe that Mark’s Gospel was written around the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70. Mark’s audience consisted of Christians who were living in difficult social and political times, times of conflict. They were likely beginning to face persecution as followers of Jesus. In this difficult time, it helped to recall that Jesus had foretold of such difficulties. Early Christian communities took courage from Jesus’ warning to remain alert and watchful, and they found in his words a way to persevere through suffering.

Today’s Gospel reminds us that Advent is about more than our preparation for the Church’s celebration of Christ’s birth at Christmas. Advent is also about preparing ourselves for Christ’s return in glory at the end of time. Like the disciples and the faithful in Mark’s community, we must also stay alert and watchful. Our faithfulness to God, through the good times as well as the difficult times, shows us to be ready for the coming of the Son of Man. 

Living the Gospel

We are plunged into the First Sunday of Advent with a reading from Mark 13. Jesus speaks about the coming end time, encouraging Peter, James, John, and Andrew (and us) to be watchful, to be prepared, and to recognize the signs of the times. The passage concludes this ominous chapter with the key word “watch” that occurs in each but one verse. “Watch” is an appropriate word with which to begin our Advent season. We are to be prepared for the Lord’s coming, not knowing precisely when that will be. We, like the gatekeeper, keep watch in the evening, at midnight, at dawn, and in the morning. Like the early disciples, we know not when he comes, but that he is coming. Many novelists have written books using this chapter to discern precisely when the end time will be. Though Scripture clearly states that nobody knows the day or hour, these charlatans claim to know the month and year, and you can too if you buy their books!

Today we read this passage from Mark 13 not as a code book to discern the exact “when” of the end time, while wondering what the “desolating abomination standing” is and when that might occur. Rather, we recognize that Mark wrote at a time when the early Christians expected Jesus’ imminent return. Still, we can discern the signs of our own times and recognize the Lord’s coming, perhaps not in an apocalyptic sense, but in the Christmas incarnation. That is, Jesus, the Word of God, comes to us in flesh and blood. Jesus is the incarnation of God, and he comes to us sacramentally in the Eucharist. Each generation seems to say the end is near. While we are looking to the sky for signs of the end time, the Lord is in our midst in weakness and vulnerability. ©Living Liturgy

Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception

On December 8, we celebrate the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which references Mary’s conception in her mother’s womb without the stain of Original Sin. An essential part of God’s plan for the mother of his Son was that she be conceived free from Original Sin. “Through the centuries the Church became ever more aware that Mary, “full of grace” through God, was redeemed from the moment of her conception” (CCC, no. 491). In anticipation that she was to bear the Son of God, Mary was preserved from the time of her conception from Original Sin. We call this the Immaculate Conception. No sin would touch her, so that she would be a fitting and worthy vessel of the Son of God. The Immaculate Conception does not refer to the virgin conception and birth of Christ, but rather to Mary’s being conceived without inheriting Original Sin. 

SJC Mass times are at 7:45am, 9:15am and 6:30pm

On this First Sunday of Advent we recall, “No ear has ever heard, no eye has ever seen” greater wonders than what God has done for us. You, O Lord, are the Potter and we are the clay, the work of your hands. Shape us in your ways of justice and mercy, form us in your peace, and craft us in your love. Amen.
Pope Francis Prayer for the Immaculate Conception

O Mary, our Immaculate Mother,
On your feast day I come to you,
And I come not alone:
I bring with me all those with whom your Son entrusted to me,
In this city of Rome and in the entire world,
That you may bless them and preserve them from harm.

I bring to you, Mother, children,
Especially those who are alone, abandoned,
And for this reason are tricked and exploited.
I bring to you, Mother, families,
Who carry forward life and society
With their daily and hidden efforts;
In a special way the families who struggle the most
For their many internal and external problems.
I bring to you, Mother, all workers, both men and women,
And I entrust to you especially those who, out of need,
Are forced to work in an unworthy profession
And those who have lost work or are unable to find it.

We are in need of your immaculate gaze,
To rediscover the ability to look upon persons and things
With respect and awareness,
Without egotistical or hypocritical interests.
We are in need of your immaculate heart,
To love freely,
Without secondary aims but seeking the good of the other,
With simplicity and sincerity, renouncing masks and tricks.
We are in need of your immaculate hands,
To caress with tenderness,
To touch the flesh of Jesus
In our poor, sick, or despised brethren,
To raise up those who have fallen and support those who waver.
We are in need of your immaculate feet,
To go toward those who know not how to make the first step,
To walk on the paths of those who are lost,
To find those who feel alone.

We thank you, O Mother, because in showing yourself to us
You free us of all stain of sin;
You remind us that what comes first is the grace of God,
The love of Jesus Christ who gave his life for us,
The strength of the Holy Spirit which renews all things.
Let us not give in to discouragement,
But, trusting in your constant help,
Let us engage ourselves fully in renewal of self,
Of this city and of the entire world.
Pray for us, Holy Mother of God!

Lord God, we adore you
because you have come to us in the past.
You have spoken to us
in the Law of Israel.
You have challenged us
in the words of the prophets.
You have shown us in Jesus
what you are really like.
Lord God, we adore you
because you still come to us now.
You come to us
through other people
and their love and concern for us.
You come to us
through men and women
who need our help.
You come to us
as we worship you with your people.
Lord God, we adore you
because you will come to us at the end.
You will be with us
at the hour of death.
You will still reign supreme
when all human institutions fail.
You will still be God
when our history has run its course.
We welcome you,
the God who comes.
Come to us now
in the power of Jesus Christ our Lord.
- Caryl Micklem, "Contemporary Prayers for Public Worship"

All-powerful God,
increase our strength of will
for doing good
that Christ may find
an eager welcome
at his coming and
call us to his side
in the kingdom of heaven,
where he lives and
reigns with you
and the Holy Spirit
one God, forever and ever.
Amen.
Sign-Up for Share Christmas continues this weekend in the church narthex. You can sign up to give:

- An unwrapped gift for a child (infant to 18 years old)
- A food gift card from Jewel or Walmart for a Christmas meal
- Gift cards for families from Sears, Walmart, Kohl’s, Target or JC Penny
- Food and gift cards for a Christmas meal and presents for a family

Bring your gifts to the Parish Center on December 4, 5, or 6 from 9am until 5pm. They will be delivered to grateful recipients at Blessed Sacrament Church, St. Agatha, BEDS Plus, and Little Brothers/Friends of the Elderly, St. Gall Parish, St. Thomas of Canterbury, Helping Hand, and SJC.

For your convenience our parish Scrip reps will be available in the church community room for you to purchase food and gift certificates. Cash, checks or credit cards (Visa, MasterCard, Discover) will be accepted. A 3% convenience fee will be applied to credit card purchases.

Providing food and gift cards allows our recipients to select the sizes and colors that best meet their needs and choose food that they like and can eat. Gift cards should be from Jewel, Walmart, Kohl’s, JC Penny or Target. You can also choose to purchase an unwrapped gift for a child aged newborn to 18. Donations can also be made on our parish website. Click on the Giving Tab and go to Special Collections-Share Christmas. Your donations will be used to buy Share Christmas food and gift cards.

**New This Year:** At Sign-Up, along with the names and ages of your recipient(s), you will receive a blank card that will be delivered along with your gift. We invite you to write a warm, personal note in the Christmas card, decorate it as you can, and make a point to pray for your recipient(s) daily. It may not be within our power to change the situation of those helped by Share Christmas, yet your encouragement, prayers, Christmas wishes and gifts let them know that they are not alone or forgotten. Thank you for participating in this work of mercy.

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*Share Christmas has been a beautiful annual tradition at our parish for over thirty years. Through Share Christmas, generous parishioners make Christmas special for thousands of individuals in the Chicago area who would otherwise not have gifts to open or be able to share a Christmas Day meal with their family.*
Outreach

Thank you from the Archdiocese of Miami

ARChDIOCESE OF MIAMI
Office of the Archbishop

Dear Father Dowdle,

Thank you and your parish community for your generous donation of $16,307.27 to the Archdiocese of Miami to support our efforts to provide disaster relief and assistance to those affected by recent Hurricanes in the Keys, Caribbean and the islands. Hurricanes Irma and Maria have wrought physical destruction and human misery to many. At the very least, these storms created an inconvenience for almost everyone and a world of pain for too many. I thank God that we survived and I pray for those who did not and for those who mourn them.

God can bring good out of evil. Indeed, the many acts of solidarity—of neighbor helping neighbor—are eloquent witness to what God’s Providence inspires in the hearts of men and women of good will. Strengthened in faith, we will not be overcome by any adversity but will overcome evil—whether physical or moral—with good. God bless you!

Thank you also for your willingness to support our recovery efforts and your desire to partner with a specific community in our Archdiocese to help further. I have asked the CEO of our Catholic Charities in the Archdiocese, Deacon Richard Turcotte, to reach out to your Director of Outreach directly to coordinate.

Thanks to your generosity, the Archdiocese of Miami, through its Catholic Charities and other entities, is able to reach out to those devastated by the storm to assist them in their time of need. I am humbled by and grateful for your support.

Be assured of my continued prayers for you and your family.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Thomas G. Wenski
Archbishop of Miami

Through the wonderful generosity of a parishioner, St. John of the Cross Parish delivered 180 turkeys last week to grateful recipients at Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation, Kolbe House, St. Barbara, St. Mark, St. Gall, Refugee Resettlement, Pilsen Community Church, Beds PLUS and within our own parish community. Pictured above is Ed Usonis readying the turkeys for distribution and below some of the grateful mothers from Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation Mother’s Circle. Our YC students (pictured on the next page) made beautiful Thanksgiving Day cards for each recipient. Thank you!!

Mary, Star of the Sea, We ask your intercession for our brothers and sisters, who have weathered too many storms and borne too many hardships. Be near them in their time of trouble. Comfort all whose homes have been washed away. Console all who have lost loved ones. Fill those who wait in fear and uncertainty with your peace. We pray for a spirit of perseverance, especially for those who have emerged from the storm as caretakers and victims; Be a shining beacon of hope as they begin the journey of recovery. And stand us firm beside them in solidarity. We ask this in the name of Jesus, your Son. crs
Men of the Parish: Join Us!
SAM Gathering with Fr. Bill - December 6

The next gathering in the Spirituality Among Men (SAM) series for this season will be Wednesday, December 6 at 7:00pm in the Parish Center. Our guest speaker will be our own Father Bill Vollmer, Associate Pastor of SJC! Our topic will be: “Evangelization and the Mass – We’re Working on It!”

Fr. Bill will share his thoughts on the on-going process of evangelization that we are called to, and how the Mass is a source of strength for each of us. “We are different every time we hear God’s word.” Come, listen and share your experiences with the men of the Parish as we discuss the interaction between the Mass, evangelization for ourselves and the people whose lives we touch at home, at work and in our communities.

A Surprise for Sr. Josephine!

Every Monday morning for many years our Sr. Josephine would stop in the Parish Center office to check the convent mailbox before attending Spiritual Journaling. All too often Sister would complain that, “No one writes anymore.” So since she has moved and is dearly missed by SJC, we decided to fill her mailbox with Christmas cards from all of her friends at SJC. She will love hearing from you. Keep it a secret!

All are encouraged to send Sr. Josephine a Christmas card to her new home at Casa San Carlo:

Her new address is:
Sr. Josephine O’Brien
Casa San Carlo
420 N. Wolf Road
Northlake, IL 60164

Light the way for family & friends this Christmas ...
Begin a holiday tradition your children will love!

LUMINARIA KIT FUNDRAISER

Each Luminaria Kit is $10 and includes 5 white bags, 5 long burning candles (10+ hours) and enough sand to assemble your luminaries. Free home delivery for Seniors!

Order Deadline: Sunday, December 10
Pick Up Date: Sunday, December 16 or 17 from 9am-1pm in the back hall of the Parish Center. Kits will be labeled with your name.
Order online at www.stjohnofthecross.org

To order by cash or check (made out to Women’s Club) with payment to the Parish Center by 12/10.

Name: ____________________________

Phone: ______________ Email: ____________________________

__________Luminary Kits x $10 - Total Due ____________

Senior Address for Delivery: ________________

Sponsored by the SJC Women’s Club
in partnership with Village True Value Hardware.
Please contact Julie Misarti at juliemisarti@gmail.com or 773-294-9099
Your compassion and care helped to make the Women’s Club Annual Coat Drive a huge success! This year 420 coats were collected, sorted and distributed to Kolbe House, Precious Blood, Mary Queen of Heaven Parish, Sharing Connections, Beds Plus, St. Vincent DePaul, and children at the Ella Flagg Young School in Chicago. Without your donations and support we would not have been able to help so many in need of warm coats this winter. You have made a difference!! We’d like to share some of the thank you notes from grateful recipients.

Thank You from Sharing Connections:
Lorna is a mom of three children who gathered the courage and escaped from a very abusive husband. She recently moved from Texas with three pairs of clothing for each of her children – and that was it. She just found a factory to work at but feels so unprepared because she does not know what to wear as she does not have clothes – and didn’t have a coat for her or her children. Thanks for the donations gathered, she and her children now will be warm this winter. In addition, with two of her children enrolling in school, they will now be able to have pride when being with peers – warm and ready to start over.

Thank You from the Kolbe House:
We were able to relieve a great burden for eight families, plus a couple of others with some of the extra coats sent. I remember one mom telling me how her 5-year-old’s coat was hitting him halfway past the elbow. Another woman is the matriarch of three generations and helps care for some of her grandchildren and great-grandchildren, one of whom is locked up at Cook County jail right now. She tried on one of the extra women’s coats and was delighted nearly to tears. She said it would become her going-out coat, because it was too nice to be used every day. Your generosity has made these smiles—and relief—possible. I hope my words are doing some justice to the gratitude that we felt from the families as they picked up their coats.

Here are some pictures from the Coat Drive. Pictured are:

Ginny Grecco with a fun coat,
Shawn Sweeney with thankful women from Mary Queen of Heaven,
and working at Coat Sorting Sunday.

Thank you to the Coat Drive Coordinators/Social Welfare Chairpersons:
Kelly Eikum and Pam Kenny
St. John of the Cross Parish congratulates the following families who had their infants baptized on November 19 by Deacon Rich Voytas, assisted by Baptism Team Leaders, Meg and Frank Munaretto. Pictured from the left are Peter and Stephanie Grasso with Brynn Nicole, Jessica and Jeremy Dulle with Elin Anne, Matthew and Beth Duhig with Gavin Matthew, and Lindsay and Matthew Dowling with Claire Elizabeth.

Join Us!

Christmas Fun for Everyone!

Today, Sunday, December 3 at 2pm
School Multi-Purpose Room

The SJC Moms Club invites your family to an afternoon filled with all things Christmas! We will have cookie decorating, crafts, hot cocoa, and a special holiday movie. Plus, Santa will be there to take a memorable Christmas photo! Please bring an unwrapped toy to donate to Toys for Tots.

See you there!
Family Style Preschool:  
December 9  
Bake the cookies…  
Hang the lights…Wrap the presents…  
FREEZE  
We’re waiting for Jesus!!

On Saturday, December 9 preschoolers and their parents will celebrate the Season of Advent and prepare to welcome baby Jesus at Christmas. Join us in the Parish Center on Saturday 10:45-12:00 noon for crafts, games, songs and Bible stories.

New Families: Call the Parish Center office at 708-246-4404 to register for the FAMILY STYLE PRESCHOOL series, which includes the Advent session plus 2 more: February 17-Lent and the joyful celebration of Easter and April 21-Caring for God’s creation.

YC Classes
Sunday 10:15-11:30am - Dec 3, 10, 17
Monday 6:15-7:30pm - Dec 4, 11, 18
Adapted Catechesis - Sun 9:00-10:00am - Dec 3, 17
Family Faith Connections - Noon to 1:30pm - Dec 3
7th and 8th gr Small Groups - Dec 3 - all 7th gr in homes;
- Dec 3 - 8th gr on campus 6:30-8:30
- Dec 17 - 7th and 8th gr in homes

YC students made beautiful Thanksgiving cards that were given to families who received a turkey from SJC.

The best legacy children can receive from parents is faith.

YC: Excellence in Religious Education
Dear Parishioners,

The first Sunday of Advent allows us each to pause and to think about our new Church year beginning and what's to come in just a few weeks with Christ's birth. Our youth ministry, while in the middle of the school year, is also experiencing new beginnings. Katie Nicholson and I are planning for the logistics of new ministry formats in the coming years, and in order to do this we need additional adults to join our team. As you ponder the birth of Christ, please ponder the possibility of serving with our high school teens...these are young adults who in the coming four to six years will decide whether or not they want to stay connected to our beautiful, wonderful, loving Church.

Now is the time we can make an impact and make a difference to help them build their relationship with Christ and a lasting foundation of faith. Contact Katie Nicholson or myself to see how you can support our teens!

Katie Hayes

Katie Hayes, Director of Youth Ministry
khayes@stjohnofthecross.org

Katie Nicholson, Crossroads Coordinator
knicholson@stjohnofthecross.org

Identity Retreat –
Last Chance to Register!

High school freshmen and sophomores are invited to join St. John of the Cross, St. Cletus, and St. Francis Xavier youth ministries for their Identity Retreat, January 12-14. This retreat weekend gives teens the opportunity to reflect on their choices, transitions, and relationships with others and with God while having lots of fun!

Our group will depart from St. Francis at 6pm Friday and travel by bus to Dickson Valley Retreat & Conference center in Newark, IL. We will return on Sunday to the SJC Parish Center and attend the 12:15pm Mass. Parents are invited to join us for Mass and lunch afterwards. We will conclude by 2pm. Register on the Crossroads website.

Take Time to Make a Note on your Calendar...

- On December 8 there will not be a 6:30am Mass for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. A 6:30am Mass will be celebrated at St. Cletus that day.
- Mass times for the 4th Sunday of Advent, Sunday, December 24 are at 5:00pm Saturday Anticipatory Mass, 7:30am, 9:00am, and 10:45am. There will not be a 12:15pm Mass or 5:00pm Mass for the 4th Sunday of Advent. See the full Christmas schedule on our website or watch for the schedule in your mail.

The Week Ahead

Monday, December 4
9:30am Spiritual Journeying
10:30am Step 11 Christian Meditation
1:00pm Little Rock Scripture Study
2:30pm Adoration Church
6:15pm YC Classes
7:00pm Boy Scouts

Tuesday, December 5
9:00am Parent Association Meeting
9:05am Tuesdays with Mary Rosary
7:30pm Christian Meditation

Wednesday, December 6
9:30am Wednesday Morning Bible Study
2:30pm Christian Meditation
3:30pm St. John of the Cross Study Group
3:45pm Cherub Choir Rehearsal
7:00pm School Band and Choir Concert
7:00pm Men's Club
7:30pm Traditional Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, December 7
7:00pm Divorce & Beyond Support
7:30pm Contemporary Ensemble Rehearsal
7:30pm SAM Core Group Meeting

Friday, December 8
Feast of the Immaculate Conception
No 6:30am Mass Today

7:45am Mass
9:15am School Mass

6:30pm Mass

Saturday, December 9
7:00am Christian Meditation
10:45am Family Style Pre-School
11:30am Adaptive Catechesis Confirmation

Sunday, December 10
10:15am YC Classes
11:45am Senior Deacon McGorey Reception
12:00pm Crossroads Frosh-Soph Retreat
1:30pm Baptism
4:00pm YC BEDS Meal Preparation
Pray for Our Sick
Ginny Beutell
Kathleen Carpenter
Crystal Deters
Fr. David Dowdle
Lynn Freking
Kathleen Gros
Thomas Halm
Kay Holden
Karen Hult
Virginia Jakubczak
Cathy Laskey
Erin Lively
Carol Martin
Palma Martorano
Marty McGuire
Michael McNamara
Abby Meehan
Rosemary Morrissey
Olivia Murphy
Alice Myers
Deacon Pablo Perez
Geno Pesce
Terry Pepin
Frank Pipal
Marie Principe
Joe Pustejovsky
Rachael Schopp
Julie Schurba
Cathy Siciliano
Claudine Snow
Brooks Tonn
Don Vollmer
Sharon Wildman

Mass & Reconciliation Schedule & Intentions

Monday, December 4 St. John Damascene
7:45am Muriel Albertson; Our Beloved Dead

Tuesday, December 5 Advent Weekday
7:45am Marie Heraty; Deceased Members of the Maier & Gora Families

Wednesday, December 6 St. Nicholas
7:45am Frances Rydzewski; Edward Hoffman

Thursday, December 7 St. Ambrose
7:45am Marie Walsch; George & Muriel Mackel; Mike Reidy

Friday, December 8 Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
No 6:30am Mass Today
7:45am Deceased Members of the Cosgrove Family; Mike Reidy
9:15am School Mass
6:30pm Thomas Stack; Richard Sandowski

Saturday, December 9 St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin
8:00am Dianne Kassis; Dorothy Wawrzyniak
~ Reconciliation Follows Mass ~
5:00pm Timothy Schick; Patrick Carmody

Sunday, December 10 Second Sunday of Advent
7:30am Christopher Delia & Bernice Wisniewski; Andrea Vlcek
9:00am Deceased Members of the Manfredini & Ori Families; Louise Krajenka
10:45am Brian Donovan; Jack Johns
12:15pm Bill Beauchamp; Dorothy Portner
5:00pm Dolores Rafferty; Kate Rohaly

Pray for Our Loved Ones Serving Our Country
Staff Sgt. Steven Foody, son of Sandra Foody
Sergeant Sebastian Grabacki, son of David & Jan Grabacki
Sr A Joshua Tischler USAF Pararescue, grandson of Betty & Frank Madler & Mary Tischler
Lance Corporal Daniel Pett, nephew of Kathryn Stimetz
Capt. James Maicke, grandson of Phil & Mike Maicke
Sgt. Robert Marburger, son of David and Kathleen Marburger
Staff Sgt. Larry Waszak, grandson of Bruno and Barbara Gacek
Petty Officer 3rd Class Mathew Strafaci, grandson of Sandra & Jim Strafaci
Lance Corporal David Strafaci, grandson of Sandra & Jim Strafaci
Seaman Emily Strafaci, granddaughter of Sandra & Jim Strafaci
Sgt. Michael Grabarek, relative of the LeFevour and Schillaci families
PFC Michael Frazee, grandson of Kay and John Johnson
Spc. Douglas Junius, grandson of Ann Junius and son of Sue Junius
PFC Kevin Lawinger, grandson of Roe and Bob Lawinger

Pray for Our Beloved Dead
John Sintich, father of Natasha and Silvano, grandfather of 1
Ellen Mae Healy, sister of Michael Hennessy
Alice Hogan, mother of John, Michael, Thomas, Mary Jo Cox and Robert, sister of Mary Flynn, grandmother of 19
Martha Attaway, mother of Ann Linehan, grandmother of 4
Joseph Wilson, father of Karen Phissen, Patrick, Katie Durbin, and Kevin, grandfather of 7
Laura Jean Shutock, daughter of Shirley & Leo Wyrembek
Catherine Wiest, cousin of Sheila Gallagher
Diana Marshall, mother of Roland and Damian, grandmother of 5
Alice Gill, mother of Tracey DiSanto

Pray for Our Sick
Rev. David P. Dowdle, Pastor
ddowdle@stjohnofthecross.org
Rev. William J. Vollmer, Assoc Pastor
bvollmer@stjohnofthecross.org
Deacon John Schopp, Deacon
john.schopp@sbcglobal.net
Bill Bright, Director of Outreach
bbright@stjohnofthecross.org
Janet Caschetta, Director of YC
jcascchetta@stjohnofthecross.org
Kathleen Gorman, Principal
gorman@sjc.pvt.k12.il.us
Katie Hayes, Dir of Crossroads
khayes@stjohnofthecross.org
Jessica Koch, Director of Music
jkoch@stjohnofthecross.org
MJ Martin, Director of Operations
mjmartin@stjohnofthecross.org
Katie Nicholson, Crossroads Coord
knicholson@stjohnofthecross.org
Steven Weigand, Pastoral Assoc
sweigand@stjohnofthecross.org
Advent Taizé Prayer

Tuesday, December 19
7pm in Church

Taizé prayer, a contemplative, candlelit prayer service, has its roots in the tiny village of Taizé, located in the eastern part of France. Since 1940, Taizé has been home to an international ecumenical monastic community whose prayer for peace, reconciliation, and unity is the center of their life. Today, visitors of all ages from many and diverse countries and religious traditions go to Taizé in pilgrimage to experience peaceful communion with God and with one another.

Taizé prayer consists of simple, repetitive music interspersed with scripture readings and long periods of silence. The repetition of mantra-like musical phrases draws us into deep meditative prayer, to a space where we invite God’s voice to speak deep within us. Instruments such as flute, oboe, and cello help to elevate the music and create a truly prayerful environment.

Sing, Listen & Be Silent