“I will praise God’s name in song and glorify him with thanksgiving.”

Psalm 69:30, NIV
Dear Parishioners,

Shortly after our school principal, Mrs. Kathleen Gorman, was hired, I told her I wanted the school to work towards both the Blue Ribbon for the whole school and NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) accreditation for the kindergarten and primary program. Check the first one off the list.

This week on Monday and Tuesday Mrs. Gorman, Mrs. Jackie Wehner (whom the faculty chose as their representative) and I traveled to our nation’s capitol to participate in the Blue Ribbon Award Ceremony. We gathered with this year’s 313 other recipients, five of whom were also from the Archdiocese of Chicago school system. When you hear those kinds of numbers you might be tempted to think that this award is rather common and it is not particularly difficult to achieve. Nothing could be further from the truth.

This year happens to be the 30th anniversary of the Blue Ribbon. Since it began in 1982, 7,110 schools have received this recognition. The key number to keep in mind is that there are 138,000 public and private, elementary and secondary schools in the country. For those of us who weren’t math majors, that means we are talking about 5% of all schools receiving this recognition over the past 30 years. All of this year’s recipients equal 0.2 of the total number of schools in the country. It boggles the mind. (Well, at least my mind is boggled! But you knew that already.)

The purpose of traveling to Washington to receive this distinction is to be able to network with over 600 of the best educators in the country. Fifty of the schools were private schools; the rest obviously were public schools. It was nothing less than inspiring to listen to schools that had 97% poverty rate for their student body to raise their test scores over five years to qualify as Blue Ribbon recipients. One school participating in The Early College High School initiative, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, has a very high percentage of poverty level students. They are the first generation in their families to earn entrance into college. Every person in the room was rightfully proud of what their students had achieved. Every institution represented has incredibly dedicated faculty. When it was time to have the plaques distributed and a picture taken with the head of the Blue Ribbon program, every one danced or waved or celebrated in some way as they made their way across the stage. The enthusiasm, the affirmation, the level of satisfaction in being involved in education was palpable.

Mrs. Gorman tells me that our school was able to qualify for this recognition in large part because of the hard work done by the faculty for the School Improvement Process (SIP) in 2011. That provided much of the documentation and articulation of our goals required by the Blue Ribbon. The application weighs student test scores heavily. Ms. Zita Wheeler, Mrs. Therese Craig and Mrs. Gorman began writing over last Christmas break, taking the SIP results and recommendations and applying them to the standards for the Blue Ribbon. As you can see from the previous statistics, the Blue Ribbon is quite selective. Congratulations to the administration for their work in submitting the rigorous application, to the faculty for their commitment in teaching the whole child and to the students for their superior performance in academic achievement.

And without the generous support of the parishioners, none of it would have been possible. My deepest appreciation goes to each and every one of you.

Peace,
Fr. David

P.S. Happy Thanksgiving to you and your families. Hope to see you at the 9:30 a.m. Thanksgiving Day Mass.
Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

For the past four decades, the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) has provided a way for the people in our parish communities to support programs that make a concrete difference in the lives of the poor. Your generous donations last year enabled CCHD to fund eighteen organizations in Cook and Lake Counties. These organizations coordinate programs that help to change the lives of those less fortunate by creating jobs, providing training for adults and educational opportunities for children, and helping to stabilize neighborhoods.

Inspired by Catholic social teachings, CCHD is committed to addressing the root causes of poverty. At the core of the CCHD mission is respect for human life from conception to natural death, recognizing that all human beings are created in the image and likeness of God and are endowed with certain inalienable rights.

Please make a special effort during this season of thanksgiving to give generously to the CCHD collection on November 17–18. Remember that your contribution to CCHD is not a hand-out, but a hand up, offering hope and help to low-income families and communities. Through your generosity, you share in Jesus’ mission—to bring good news to the poor…release to the captives…and to let the oppressed go free… (Luke 4:18).

Every dollar of CCHD funding comes from individual donors just like you. Your contribution—no matter the amount—does make a powerful difference. May God bless you for your support for those served by the Catholic Campaign for Human Development.

You and those you love are in my prayers; please keep me in yours.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Francis Cardinal George, O.M.I.

Archbishop of Chicago

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**Thanksgiving Day Mass Schedule**

Please consider starting Thanksgiving Day offering praise and thanksgiving to God! As Christians, as Americans who experience the great privilege of personal freedom, as a parish, as persons who have loving family and friends, we have many reasons to gather to give thanks. Join us this holiday by gathering with your parish family at **our 9:30 a.m. Thanksgiving Day Mass on Thursday, November 22** to give thanks to God for the many blessings in our lives.

As has been our custom, the offertory collection will support our Caritas Fund which provides direct assistance to those in our own parish community in need.
Living the Gospel

Jesus says in this gospel, “Learn a lesson from the fig tree.” What are we to learn? That the annual greening of the fig tree is a harbinger of new life arising out of seeming deadness. That the annual gospel prediction of apocalyptic destruction is a harbinger that Jesus “is near.” Indeed, Jesus’ promise that he will be near at the end times is a promise already being fulfilled now. Life arising from deadness has already happened in Jesus. It is already happening in us. But this new life, while a free gift from God, requires patient waiting. Now is our time of waiting. Now is our time of patient renewal, patient growth, patient embracing of Jesus’ life and ministry as we eagerly await his final return in glory. The last verse of the gospel recommends constant vigilance: “But of that day or hour, no one knows.” Who are the elect? Those who are constantly vigilant, whose waiting is filled with hearing God’s word and becoming more and more open to the Christ who is always near.

At the end of time—and we know not the day or hour—this world as we know it will pass, Christ will come to judge all people, and the general resurrection will take place. Those of us immersed by baptism into the paschal mystery who surrender ourselves in everyday living to its rhythm of dying and rising can rest assured that we will be numbered among God’s elect. And, just as the Gospel constantly teaches us that when we surrender to the dying there is always new life beyond that dying (as in the annual cycle of the trees), so will there be resurrection for the elect beyond the final judgment. There is no need to fear Christ’s Second Coming. All we need do is surrender ourselves to living the Gospel. This is a small price to pay in this life in order to share in eternal glory.

Closing Prayers

May we experience growth in risen life as we open ourselves to the nearness of Christ.

May we find strength and hope in the promise of newness of life coming from dying to self.

Our Father . . .

For Reflection:

· Signs for me that Christ “is near” are . . . I feel Christ is far away when . . .

· This gospel helps me think about the end times in this way . . .

©Living Liturgy 2012

Readings for the Week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
<th>Christ the King</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ps 1:1-5, 3, 4 and 6</td>
<td>Ps 15:2-3а, 3bс-4аb, 5</td>
<td>Ps 150:1b-2, 3-4, 5-6</td>
<td>Ps 149:1b-2, 3-4, 5-6а</td>
<td>Ps 119:14, 24, 72, 103, 111, 131</td>
<td>Ps 144:1, 2, 9-10</td>
<td>Ps 93:1, 1-2, 5</td>
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Meditation by Richard Rohr

Your True Self is who you are in God and who God is in you. You can never really lose your soul; you can only fail to realize it, which is indeed the greatest of losses: to have it but not have it (Matthew 16:26). Your essence, your exact “thisness,” will never appear again in another incarnation.

You (and every other created thing) begin with a divine DNA, an inner destiny as it were, an absolute core that knows the truth about you, a blueprint tucked away in the cellar of your being, an imago Dei that begs to be allowed, to be fulfilled, and to show itself. As it says in Romans (5:5), “It is the Holy Spirit poured into your heart, and it has been given to you.”

John Duns Scotus (1265-1308), the Franciscan philosopher . . . called each soul a unique “thisness” (haecceity), and he said it was to be found in every act of creation in its singularity. For him, God did not create universals, genus, and species, or anything that needed to come back again and again to get it right (reincarnation), but only specific and unique incarnations of the Eternal Mystery—each one chosen, loved, and preserved in existence as itself—by being itself. And this is the glory of God!

Excerpted from Immortal Diamond: The Search for Our True Self.

Prayer: Who am I, God? And who are you?

Year of Sunday Mass: Question of the Week

For the past 2000 years, we have been awaiting the return of the Son of Man, waiting for Him to “send out the angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the end of the earth to the end of the sky.”

How would you live your life differently if you knew that today is the day and this is the hour when the Son of Man will be “coming in the clouds?” How can you use this time of waiting for the Second Coming to act as Jesus would in your daily and weekly relationships with God’s people?
In ordinary life, we don't usually sign or mark ourselves. At Mass, we do so several times. We trace the pattern of the cross or sign ourselves at the beginning of Mass, at the reading of the Gospel, and at the end of Mass for the final blessing. Something important is at work in this simple gesture.

The act of signing the cross on our bodies symbolically pulls us into intimate contact with the reality of the cross of Jesus. It is entirely understandable that we want to identify ourselves with the cross of Jesus. The cross, after all, has freed us from sin and death. It is the source of our new life in Christ. Of course, we take its image and impress that on our bodies in making the sign of the cross.

It makes sense to make the sign of the cross at Mass, because the Mass itself makes present the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross: This is my body which will be given up for you. Our gesture of signing and Jesus’s self sacrifice for us meet in the Mass we celebrate.

Celebrate the season with renewed spiritual growth and inspiration

St. John of the Cross is happy to offer Sacred Space for Advent and the Christmas Season 2012-2013. The books will be available after all Masses December 1 and 2 while supplies last. A $1 free will offering is suggested.

Using the simple six-step method first developed by St. Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Jesuits, the book is perfect for people on the go who want to grab a few moments to read, reflect, and pray in the midst of their busy days. With weekly themes, daily readings and prayers, and suggestions for a retreat day, Sacred Space for Advent 2012 - 2013 offers a simple way to prepare for Christmas in the midst of the year's most hectic season.

Pray the Labyrinth during Advent

Walk the Labyrinth and find a deeper place as you journey within. Friday, December 7 from 2:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

There is an easier way to give!

Making your offertory gift electronically is safe and convenient and is a more effective means of generating revenue for our parish.

Please consider giving online. It’s a win-win for you and our parish!
SJC has a gift for you! After all Masses on Saturday and Sunday, December 8 & 9 a copy of Matthew Kelly’s bestselling book, *Rediscover Catholicism* will be gifted to each parish family!

*By reading Rediscover Catholicism, explore how you can fulfill God’s call to become the best-version-of-yourself; learn how the Seven Pillars of Catholicism - Confession, Daily Prayer, the Mass, the Bible, Fasting, Spiritual Reading, and the Rosary can and should dramatically impact your life; come to know your essential purpose in life and be inspired to share the truth and wisdom of Catholicism with others.*

Take part in a 5 part book study and faith sharing series... *What does it mean to truly be Catholic? How can we actively participate in the mission of the Church? How can we renew and energize our faith lives? How can we engage our children and our fellow Catholics in their faith?*

Beginning the week of January 7th, the book seminar will run every other week for ten weeks in the Parish Center. Parishioners can choose from three different times: Tuesdays at 1pm and 7 p.m. and Fridays at 7 p.m. Each participant will receive a study guide which includes summaries for each chapter and small faith group sharing questions for reflection.

Confirmation candidates, high school teens and adults are welcome. There is no cost to participate. A wonderful opportunity for parents and their high school student to attend together! Or reach out to a neighbor and invite them to attend with you.

Enjoy holiday cheer and hospitality after all Masses on Saturday & Sunday, December 15-16 in the Parish Center and have an opportunity to sign up for the book study. Or you may register on our parish website home page.

See Matthew Kelly live at our church on Saturday, February 2 from 9:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m. For tickets go to our parish website or stop in the Parish Center. This will be a sell-out event so buy your tickets today!
“There’s a New World Coming!”
A day of Advent Refelction

with Diane Bergant

Saturday, December 1: 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Advent is a time of anticipation, but anticipation of what? The Sunday readings assure us that there is a ’new world’ coming. How might we prepare for it?

Join us for a morning of personal reflection and inner exploration as we prepare our spirits for the season.

COST: $30 / $40 for families

This program is co-sponsored with two neighboring parishes: St. John of the Cross and St. Francis Xavier.

Diane Bergant, CSA, is Professor of Biblical Studies at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. She is a prolific writer and editor currently working in the areas of biblical interpretation and theology, particularly issues of peace, ecology, and feminism.

As Christmas draws near, you are invited to a quiet Morning of Meditation

Christ Jesus, Be Born in Us

*Presentation by Karen Pedigo, PhD and Tim Pedigo, PhD

*Periods of meditation

*Lectio Divina

All are invited:
Those who meditate,
Those who want to learn to meditate, and
Those who want to know more about meditation.

Saturday, December 15, 2012
Hospitality 8:30 a.m., Program 9-11:30 a.m.

Parish Center

Sponsored by the Christian Meditation group (wccm.org)
Freewill offering accepted Reservations are requested but not required
Contact: Mary – 708-246-5108, or mary105105@gmail.com

Because our parish co-sponsors this program at The Well, the cost of attending is waived for all our parishioners. To reserve a seat just call the Parish Center. 246-4404.

The Well is located at 1515 West Ogden Avenue in LaGrange Park. For more info go to www.csjthewell.org
SJC Clubs

The SJC Men’s Club invites all men of the parish to an exhilarating morning with
Fr. Richard Simon
Catholic Apologist and Scripture Scholar, well-known as “Reverend Know-It-All” and co-host of Relevant Radio's program, Go Ask Your Father, Saturday, December 1st, 9:00-10:30 a.m.
Light morning refreshments will be served.

Moms of Young Children
All are welcome!
Fridays 9:30-11:00 a.m.
in the Parish Center

Friday, November 23
We will not meet because of the Thanksgiving Holiday.

Friday, November 30
We are excited to welcome Megan Albee, a local Zumba instructor and President of the Western Springs Neighbors and Newcomers Club to participate in this month's Physical Friday. Megan will be teaching a 30 minute, child-friendly Zumba class for Moms and their young children!

Friday, December 7
Relieve some of the holiday stress with a morning dedicated to organizing your to-do's! Please bring your shopping lists, menu plans, recipes, or Christmas cards to address. Moms will spend a quiet hour preparing for the Christmas season. Childcare will be provided.

Friday, December 14
We will celebrate Moms' Club Christmas in the Thomas Ford Library Community Room. Join us with your little ones for a celebration to wrap up 2012!

Please contact Colleen Whittingham at whitting910@yahoo.com if you have any questions.
Please contact Ellen Twomey at ellenkoz@yahoo.com if you would like to be added to the email list.

advent by candlelight

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 28TH • 7-10 P.M. • $10 PER PERSON

THIS YEAR WE INVITE YOU TO SIMPLIFY THE HOLIDAYS and make meaningful WHAT’S MOST IMPORTANT Speaker Nancy Polacek will offer inspiration to help you make the most of your advent season!

TABLE COORDINATORS NEEDED
Your role will be to provide a special, holiday touch to one table using linens, candles and other centerpiece decorations - we suggest keeping it simple and sharing this responsibility with the women at your table. (Note: dishes, flatware and stemware will be provided this year for all tables. The Women’s Club will also provide coffee, soda and dessert. For more detailed information please contact Jeannie Francis at jeanniefrancis@gmail.com or 773.551.0239.

RSVP BY NOVEMBER 21ST TO RESERVE YOUR SEAT
name: ____________________________________________
phone: ____________________________________________
email: ____________________________________________
I am coordinating a table: please circle YES NO
IF YOU HAVE A TABLE/SEATING PREFERENCE, LIST HERE: ____________________________
______________________________________________
______________________________________________

MAIL YOUR RSVP + $10/PERSON (CHECKS PAYABLE TO SJC WOMENS CLUB) TO: Connie Madden • 5335 Woodland Avenue • Western Springs IL 60558 • 708.417.2012

Please contact Martin Hughes (mhhughes@amertech.net), Sue Biddstrup (jsbiddstrup@amertech.net) or Jackie Tisa (jakketisa@gmail.com)

Visit www.stjohnofthecross.org
Crossroads

**CALENDAR EVENTS:**
- Nov. 18 Home Groups Meet
  Freshmen Experience 6-7:30 p.m. in PC
- Dec. 2 Home Groups Meet
- Dec. 9 Soph & 4th grader service
  3-4:30 p.m. in PC
- Home Groups meet

**Crossroads Youth Ministry Registration CONTINUES!**
Parents of high school teens log onto our website at www.stjohnofthecross.org/crossroads

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**PARENTS OF TEENS:**
CHECK OUT OUR UPDATED ONLINE SUPPORT FOR YOU!

Parent volunteer Steve McGee is going to post ways for you to bring faith conversations from home groups into your family time!

www.stjohnofthecross.org/crossroads on the PARENT TAB

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**MANY THANKS TO OUR HARVEST SATURDAY EFFORTS!**

Our team of leaders has planned for months and gave so much extra time to ensure this day was successful:
- Wendy Duquette, Katie & Tom Pruitt, Kim Sarros, Maggie Long, Katie & Molly McAuliffe, Anna Rafaelli!

Our home group leaders & parents who recruited drivers & teens to get onboard for this amazing day!

Our high school teens & Jr. high confirmation candidates who arranged schedules to be present!

Our parishioners & community members who donated lots of food & carried us in prayer!

**THIS IS AN AWESOME TEAM EFFORT—thanks to everyone as you helped get a ton of food to those who are hungry for it!**

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**THE FACTS:**
- 3 groups of freshmen teens will begin meeting in small groups
- 2 sets of leader couples are on board & have been in training during our Freshmen Experience
- 1 more couple needed! Two single adults, a married couple with or without children, the combination does not matter!

**PLEASE KEEP THE PRAYERS & INVITATIONS COMING!**
708-246-4404 OR khayes@stjohnofthecross.org

Our Frosh Soph IDENTITY RETREAT hit its minimum #s so we are grateful it will continue!

Now our goal is to bring as many teens as possible who want to:
- have a fun weekend trying new things (ropes course, ping-pong vs. Fr. Filbert, climbing wall, tub hill)!
- Meet new people & spend time with old friends (invite your friends to join you)
- Start the year off focusing on the important things (Jan. 4-6 is the retreat!)

If you want to see what it is like you can see a video on our Crossroads FE group. If you’re not a member ask Katie McAuliffe to be added so you can get all our updates!

Registration at: www.stjohnofthecross.org/crossroads/retreats

The team of leaders is SO excited to share this experience with you!
Youth Catechesis

Youth Catechesis 7th and 8th graders came to the campus on November 4th and 5th to “buddy up” with the Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grade students. They did crafts, talked about what they are thankful for and enjoyed Praise and Worship with all the students in 3rd through 6th grade. It was a fun filled day!

Youth Catechesis Office
yc@sjcross.org  * 708-246-6760  * www.stjohnofthecross.org/yc

Sunday during class  ~  Monday 8:30am-7:00pm  ~  Tues thru Thurs 8:30am- 4:00pm

YC Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classes K-6</th>
<th>10:15-11:30 a.m.</th>
<th>Sunday, Dec 2, 9, 16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FFC</td>
<td>Noon to 1:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Sunday, Dec 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Home Groups and Special Needs</td>
<td>Noon to 1:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Sunday, Dec 2, 16</td>
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The students began the week by holding a prayer service recognizing our veterans in honor of Veteran’s Day. This was a beautiful ceremony for all.

Our sixth graders had an exciting week. Our 6th graders are studying Egypt. One of the components of the unit came in the science lab as they were seen mummifying oranges.

They were also busy with the technology in our building. The group had a great time combining physics and technology to design their own roller coasters.

In their art classes, they studied 3-D art, by creating their own puppets.

Upcoming Dates:
November 19  Blue Ribbon Presentations Gymnasium  9:15 – 9:30 a.m.
November 21  Thanksgiving Break Begins -  12:00 dismissal
November 27  Parent Association Meeting - Parish Center, 9:00 a.m.
Your baking help is needed! Cookies are needed for the Nurses Association to distribute at the LaGrange Christmas Walk and also for the Helping Hand Craft Fair Fundraiser & the Helping Hand client party.

**Bake for LaGrange Community Nurses Association**

The Community Nurse Health Association provides primary healthcare and supportive services to more than low income families in the western suburbs.

**Bake for Helping Hand**

Helping Hand Center is a not-for-profit community-based agency in Countryside that serves approximately 500 children and adults with mild to severe developmental disabilities.

**Deliver cookies to the Parish Center vestibule between November 28 through November 30th on the tables labeled Cookie Donations. Thank You!!**

**The Gift That Keeps Giving**

Help our brothers and sisters at our Sharing Parish, Holy Cross, in Jinja, Uganda. Your donation supplies a hen, goat or pig (and training) to a specially selected family. The animal provides income for the family and the church.

You may use our new on-line giving option with your credit card or drop off a check to the Parish Center. We will mail you a Gift Card. Each gift is $40.

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Jane Kalebi, Katungami Centre widow, got 4 pigs, produced 6 piglets (1 died). Now has a total of 8 pigs.

Caroline Kapere, Bugembe Centre disabled, got 3 goats, produced 3 kids and now has 6 goats.
Musical Notes

**Time for Joy!**
The Tower Chorale

Friday, November 30, at 7:30 p.m. and Saturday, December 1, at 8:00 p.m.

Illuminate the holidays with a burst of joy that is bound to raise your spirits! Let the Tower Chorale ring in your holiday season with pure joy, under the enjoyable direction of Patrick Godon. Hear sacred and secular Christmas songs accompanied by a brass quartet and Dennis Zimmer on both organ and piano. Delight in our special guests, St. John of the Cross Children’s Choirs, directed by Jessica Koch and Ann Bourjaily-Maney. The concerts are **Friday, November 30, at 7:30 p.m. and Saturday, December 1, at 8:00 p.m. at St. John of the Cross.** Tickets are available from singers or at the door: $18 Adults, $15 Seniors/Students, Children 10 & under Free. Doors open 30 minutes before the concert. Members of the church who are singing in the concert are: Marty and Kathy Daley, May Fox, and Betsy Spiering.

Join the Contemporary Ensemble for Christmas!

Lend your voice to the Contemporary Ensemble during the season of Advent and Christmas and help make our Christmas 9:00 a.m. Mass extra special!

The commitment is minimal – only 4 Thursday evening rehearsals starting **November 30, from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m.** in the Church. No further commitment is required. Singing on the Saturdays during Advent is optional. For details, contact Jessica Koch: jkoch@stjohnofthecross.org or (708) 246-4404.

**Strings of Faith Christmas Concert**
**Benefitting Christ in the Wilderness**

**Congregation of St. Joseph Center in LaGrange Park**

**Sunday, December 9, 1:15 p.m.**

**Free Will Offering**

Enjoy an afternoon of Christmas inspired music benefitting Christ in the Wilderness. Located on 80 acres of rolling hills in Stockton, Illinois, this hermitage retreat center offers you the opportunity to take a break from all of the busyness and stress of life, and to unwind in silence and solitude.

We will have a Silent Auction, Bake Sale and Mystery Gifts as part of the festivities.
(proceeds support Christ in the Wilderness)
**Free Will Offering**

**More fun and refreshments** after the concert at The Congregation of St. Joseph
1515 W. Ogden Ave., La Grange Park
708-354-9200

**Schedule:**
1:15 PM Visit, bid on Silent Auction items, buy Mystery Gifts and purchase bakery and jellies
2:00 p.m. Concert by Strings of Faith
3:00 p.m. Visit, enjoy refreshments, continue bidding and buying all sorts of gifts and goodies
3:45 p.m. End of Auction, collect auction items and other goodies.

**Christ in the Wilderness**
7500 Randecker Rd., Stockton, IL 61085
www.citwretreat.com * citw@dishmail.net * 815-9477-2476

**A place for silence, solitude, prayer and reflection where all are welcome.**

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**Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the new born King!”**
Sexuality - Its Power and Purpose

We are all powerfully, incurably, and wonderfully sexed, this is part of a conspiracy between God and nature. Sexuality lies right next to our instinct for breathing and it is ever-present in our lives.

Spiritual literature tends to be naïve and in denial about the power of sexuality, as if it could be dismissed as some insignificant factor in the spiritual journey, and as if it could be dismissed at all. It cannot be. It will always make itself felt, consciously or unconsciously. Nature is almost cruel in this regard, particularly to the young. It fills youthful bodies with powerful hormones before those persons have the emotional and intellectual maturity to properly understand and creatively channel that energy. Nature's cruelty, or anomaly, is that it gives someone an adult body before that same person is adult in his or her emotions and intellect. There are a lot of physical and moral dangers in a still-developing child walking around in a fully adult body.

Further, today this is being exacerbated by the fact that we reaching puberty at an ever younger age and are marrying at an ever-later one. This makes for a situation, almost the norm in many cultures, where a young girl or boy reaches puberty at age eleven or twelve and will get married only about twenty years later. This begs the obvious question: How is his or her sexuality to be emotionally and morally contained during all those years? Where does that leave him or her in the struggle to remain faithful to the commandments?

Admittedly, nature seems almost cruel here, but it has its own angle. Its dominant concern is to get each of us into the gene pool and all those powerful hormones it begins pouring into our bodies at adolescence and all those myriad ways in which it heats up our emotions have the same intent, it wants us to be fruitful and multiply, to perpetuate ourselves and our own species. And nature is uncompromising here: At every level of our being (physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual) there is a pressure, a sexual one, to get us into the gene pool. So when you next see a young man or woman strutting his or her sexuality, be both sympathetic and understanding, you were once there, and nature is just trying to get him or her into the gene pool. Such are its ways and such are its propensities, and God is in on the conspiracy.

Of course getting into the gene pool means much more than physically having children, though that is deep, deep imperative written everywhere inside us that may be ignored only in the face of some major psychological and moral risks. There are other ways of having children, though nature all on its own does not easily accept that. It wants children in the flesh. But the full bloom of sexuality, generative living, takes on other life-giving forms. We have all heard the slogan: Have a child. Plant a tree. Write a book. There are different ways to get into the gene pool and all of us know persons who, while not having children of their own and neither writing a book nor planting a tree, are wonderfully generative women and men. Indeed the religious vow of celibacy is predicated on that truth. Sexuality also has a powerful spiritual dimension.

But, with that being admitted, we may never be naïve to its sheer, blind power. Dealing with the brute and unrelenting power of our sexuality lies at the root of many of our deepest psychological and moral struggles. This takes on many guises, but the pressure always has the same intent: Nature and God keep an unrelenting pressure on us to get into the gene pool, that is, to always open our lives to something bigger than ourselves and to always remain cognizant of the fact that intimacy with others, the cosmos, and God is our real goal. It is no great surprise that our sexuality is so grandiose that it would have us want to make love to the whole world. Isn't that our real goal?

As well, sexuality wreaks havoc with many people's church lives. It is no secret that today one of the major reasons why many young people, and indeed people of all ages, are no longer going regularly to their churches has to do, in one way or the other, with their struggles with sexuality and their perception of how their churches view their situation. My point here is not that we and the churches should change the commandments regarding sex, but that we should do a couple of things: First, we should more realistically acknowledge its brute power in our lives and integrate sexual complexity more honestly into our spiritualties. Second, we should be far more empathic and pastorally sensitive to the issues that beset people because of their sexuality.

Sexuality is sacred a fire. It takes it origins in God and is everywhere, powerfully present inside creation. Denial is not our friend here.

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser, theologian, teacher, and award-winning author, is President of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, TX. He can be contacted through his website www.ronrolheiser.com.
This Week at SJC

Monday, November 19
9:30 a.m. Senior Club Planning Meeting
10:30 a.m. Step 11 Christian Meditation
1:00 p.m. Little Rock Scripture Study
2:30 p.m. Eucharistic Adoration
2:30 p.m. Spiritual Journaling
5:30 p.m. Finance Meeting
7:00 p.m. Crossroads Basketball Coaches Meeting

Tuesday, November 20
9:30 a.m. Focus on Sunday Scriptures Group
1:30 p.m. Sr. Josephine’s Bible Study
7:00 p.m. RCIA
7:00 p.m. School Board Meeting

Wednesday, November 21
9:30 a.m. Bible Study 3
2:00 p.m. Christian Meditation
7:30 p.m. Christian Meditation

Thursday, November 21, Thanksgiving Day
9:30 a.m. Mass

Friday, November 22, No School

Saturday, November 24
7:00 a.m. Christian Meditation
2:00 p.m. Baptisms

Thanksgiving & Weekend Parish Center Office Hours

Thanksgiving Day – Parish Office Closed
Friday, Nov. 22 - Parish Office Open from 9-3 p.m.
Saturday and Sunday—regular office hours.

Building Trust, Restoring Hope
The VA and Catholic Church Partner to Heal Veterans and Their Families

Panel Discussions with Clinicians regarding:
☐ Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
☐ Brain Injury
☐ Suicide Prevention

Also, a panel discussion with Veterans

Gather at 8 a.m. for a continental breakfast
Day begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 4 p.m.
Lunch is provided    Cost: FREE

Tuesday, January 15
RSVP by Jan. 7
St. Emily Parish
1400 E. Central Rd., Ste 101
Mt. Prospect, IL  60056

Thursday, January 31
RSVP by Jan. 21
Catholic Theological Union
5401 S. Cornell Ave.
Chicago, IL  60615

RSVP to Jennifer Wimunc
jwimunc@archchicago.org or call 312-534-5262

Visit www.stjohnofthecross 11/18/12 15
Each Luminaria Kit 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 9th

**Pick-up Dates:** Sunday, December 16th from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
Or 23rd from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. in the Parish Center

**Order online at www.stjohnofthecross.org**

To order, complete the form below and return with payment to the SJC Parish Center by 12/9. Make checks payable to SJC Women’s Club.

Last Name: ____________________________ First Name: ___________________
Email: ____________________________ Phone: ____________________________
Pick-up Date: please circle one       December 16        or         December 23

Luminary Kit(s) x $10 = Total Due ______________

Each kit contains 5 bags, 5 candles and enough sand to assemble the luminaries

☐ Seniors check here for FREE Delivery!

Address For Delivery:__________________________________________

Sponsored by the SJC Women’s Club in partnership with Village True Value Hardware. Questions? Please contact Katie Pruitt at iboilers@gmail.com or 708-822-9427.

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**SJC FAMILY FEST is coming!**

**Summer 2013**

**June, 27, 28, 29 & 30**

**Fun • Food • Entertainment • Carnival • Raffle**

Want to help with the planning? Contact Dan Madden at 708-246-4363.

Visit www.stjohnofthecross
Eternal Rest Grant unto These, O Lord
Terrence Gannon, brother of John Gannon
Colette Kowalik,
sister of Michael Kowalik and Joan O’Brien
Ronald Schalla,
sister-in-law of Joan & Larry Coleman

Lord Hear Our Prayer
Pray for our Sick

God of love, ever caring, ever strong, stand by us in our time of need.
Watch over _____ who is sick,
Look after him/her in every danger, and grant him/her your healing and peace.
We ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Angie Babicz
Melissa Beacom
Tracy Bucciarelli
Garth Christie
Connie Crane
Ashley Davis
Mary Sue
Donohue
Kimberly Edwards
Karen Hult
Ruth Ilg
Tom Jass
Emily Johanss
Lois Corrine
John Johnson
Helen King
Rita Koziol
Ray Kula
Cathy Laskey
Greg LaValle
Yvonne Lowry
Chick Meehan
Moon Meehan
Marie Miller
Joan Nicholson
Tommy Niemeyer
Jean Onesto
Greg Palaschak
Terry Peterson
Fabian Saldana
Rita Saldana
Bob Sturenfeldt

Mass Intentions
Monday, November 19
6:30 David Korinek
7:45 Frances Albertson; Genrose Hlavin
Tuesday, November 20
6:30 Bridget & Anthony McVady; Rita & John Tiberi
7:45 William Albertson; Joseph McDonnell, Sr.
Wednesday, November 21, Presentation of Mary
6:30 Joe Racki
7:45 Jack McDonnell; Mr. Bennett
Thursday, November 22, St. Cecilia
7:45 David V. Yu; Robert Plechaty
Friday, November 23, St. Clement
7:45 Our Beloved Dead; Mary Louise Ayala
Saturday, November 24, St. Andrew Dung-Lac
8:00 Joanna Misantoni Vesper; Joseph Piszczor
5:00 Kevin Gunnin & Patrick Grogan
Robert Plechaty; Franklin Smith
Sunday, November 25, Christ the King
7:30 SJC Parishioners &
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parishioners
9:00 Phil James; Mark Kosielski
10:45 Maureen Murtough; Menchie Pesch
12:15 Patrick Grogan; Louis Skwarek
5:00 Allison Hiatt; Michael Brady

Catholic Charities Stands Ready to Address
Immediate Community Needs Left by Hurricane Sandy in the US
To support our efforts and help restore desperately needed hope, please call 1-800-919-9338 or visit our website at www.catholiccharitiesusa.org to see how you can help.

Donations for the Caribbean can be sent to:
Attn: Emergency Hurricane Sandy
Catholic Relief Services
3525 S. Lake Park
Chicago, IL 60653

Wedding Banns
Jason Lane & Sonia Sujka

Trying to get in touch with us? More info is on our website: www.stjohnofthecross.org

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SUNDAY DATE OF BULLETIN — November 18, 2012

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS —
Sign up for Share Christmas begins this weekend in the church narthex.

Our gifts are delivered to the following grateful recipients in the Chicago area: Blessed Sacrament Church, Little Brothers/Friends of the Elderly, St. Thomas of Canterbury, Santa Maria Addolorata, St. Thaddeus, St. Mark, as well as families in our own parish community.

What can I buy?
- An unwrapped gift for a child (infant to 18 years old)
- A food gift card from Jewel, Dominick’s, or Wal-Mart for a Christmas meal
- Gift cards for families from Sears, Wal-Mart, Kohl’s, Target or JC Penny
- Food and gifts cards for a Christmas meal and presents for a family

Please note, providing gift cards for our recipient families allows them to select the sizes and colors that more closely meet their needs. Similarly, providing food cards lets them choose food based on their ethnicity, family preferences and health/allergy concerns. Whether you choose to provide a store bought individual gift, or a gift or food card, know that your generosity will make all the difference in Christmas for our grateful recipients.

Donations can also be made on our parish website at www.stjohnofthecross.org. Click on the Giving Tab and direct your donation to Share Christmas. Your gifts will be used to purchase food and gift certificates.

Drop off Days are Tuesday and Wednesday, December 4th and 5th from 9 a.m.- 7 p.m. in the Parish Center. The gifts will then be delivered to the parishes on Saturday, December 8th. If you have a van or small truck or if you are free to help load and deliver, please call us. Questions can be directed to Lolly Maloney at 630-261-5675 or lolly_maloney@comcast.net or the Parish Center.

The Share Christmas experience at St. John of the Cross Parish is a strong and beautiful tradition that will fill your heart with joy as you make someone else’s Christmas special. Join us in making a difference in our world.