Saturday, December 15
Our Morning of Meditation begins at 8:30 a.m. with hospitality. At 9:00 a.m. Drs. Karen and Tim Pedigo will speak on Christ Jesus, Be Born in Us in the Parish Center.

Saturday & Sunday, December 15-16  Enjoy holiday cheer and hospitality after all Masses in the Parish Center and have an opportunity to sign up to take part in a 5 session Rediscover Catholicism book seminar and faith sharing series beginning the week of January 7th.

Tuesday, December 18
is our Parish Advent Reconciliation Service at 7:00 p.m. Scripture and song invites reflection and individual confession and absolution. 12 priests will be available. This hour long service is appropriate for families and adults.

Saturday, December 22
Private confessions will follow the 8:00 a.m. Mass. Additional priests will be available.

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

Christmas Vigil - Monday, December 24
4:00 p.m. Church
Children’s Choir  Carol Prelude 3:30 p.m.

4:15 p.m. First Floor School Multi-Purpose Room
Cantor, Flute  Carol Prelude 4:00 p.m.

4:30 p.m. Second Floor School Gym
Cantor, Trumpet  Carol Prelude 4:15 p.m.

6:00 p.m. Church
Cantor, Flute & Cello  Carol Prelude 5:45 p.m.

10:30 p.m. Church
Traditional Choir, Brass Quartet
Carol Prelude 9:45 p.m.

Christmas Day - Tuesday, December 25
7:30 a.m. Church
Cantor, Flute & Cello

9:00 a.m. Church
Contemporary Ensemble, Guitar, Drums, Instruments

10:45 a.m. Church
Traditional Choir, Trumpet, Flute, Cello

12:30 p.m. Church
(*This Mass begins 15 minutes later than the usual start at 12:15 p.m.)
5 Alive! Teen Choir, Guitar, Drums, Flute, Trumpet

** There will be no 5 p.m. Mass on Christmas Day

Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God
Monday, December 31, 2012—5:00 p.m.
Anticipatory Mass
Tuesday, January 1, 2013—10:00 a.m.
Holy Day of Obligation
A Gift for You: Re-Energize Your Faith Life!
Book Study and Faith Sharing Seminar at SJC

A Gift from SJC
St. John of the Cross Parish is pleased to share a copy of Rediscover Catholicism with our parishioners, and we invite you to participate in a 5 session Book Study—Faith Sharing Series beginning in January. There is no cost for the book or to participate in the Book Study. Get your book after Mass today!

Plus See Matthew Kelly Live
We also encourage you to take part in Matthew Kelly’s Passion and Purpose Live event at our parish on Feb. 2. Tickets are $39 per person and are available in the Parish Center and on our website. The ticket price includes all event materials and take-away items. We expect this to be a sell-out event so purchase your tickets early. Seating is limited.

Consider giving a gift of faith formation for Christmas! Invite your teen, sibling, spouse, parent, or neighbor to take part in our Rediscover Catholicism Book Study and to attend the Passion & Purpose Live event. These are 2 opportunities for you to be in conversation about our Catholic faith and its powerful impact in our lives.

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

Living the Gospel

John proclaims that we must “prepare the way of the Lord” by repenting. Isaiah and John both describe repentance as a leveling and a straightening out of the uneven and crooked shape of our lives. When the paths of our lives are not straight and smooth, we can at best move only tentatively as we sort out life’s entanglements. We cannot be free to enter wholeheartedly into our journey toward God. If our eyes are too closely focused on the rocks and crags of our lives, we cannot see the presence of God beckoning us toward smoother going. Isaiah’s image of a straight and smooth way is a metaphorical, descriptive definition of repentance. It is Isaiah’s (and Advent’s) way to call us to faithful living in right relationship with God. Smooth paths are those which increase our love for God and others, prompting us to bring others along the same smooth and straight path on which we are journeying toward final fulfillment with God.

The Liturgy of the Word challenges us to take the real events of our everyday lives—all the suffering and pain, all the anxiety and hopelessness, all the joy and peace—and see them as means to recognize the presence of Christ to us. These events are deeds enacted in love increased, knowledge shared, discernment embraced, righteousness integrated into the very fabric of our being. In this way we make our Advent something more than the preparation for a single-day feast of a birth. This is what Advent is all about—recognizing the presence of Christ in our lives as salvation already come because God’s Word has already been spoken to us. Christian living challenges us to stop our busyness long enough to hear that Word, to be overshadowed by the Word, to allow the Word to make straight and smooth our paths.

Closing Prayers

May we grow in right relationship with God and each other, embrace repentance, and allow God to lead us along straight and smooth paths.

May we live Advent in such a way that our repentance leads to new life.

Our Father . . .

Living Liturgy 2012

Meditation by Richard Rohr

Advent: Learning How to Receive

If Jesus is the archetype of what the gift is and how a gift is given, Mary is the archetype of how a gift is received.

The amazing thing is that the Scripture says nothing especially positive about Mary. No credit rating is stated; it doesn’t say she prayed a lot or regularly went to the temple. No heroic anything. Mary seems to know she is nothing according to her own Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55). She clearly knows and fully accepts she stands under the total mercy of God. Mary knows she did not earn this. It was all mercy, mercy, mercy. Divine choice says something about the chooser much more than the one who is chosen. In the spiritual world, all worthiness is given. Our only job is to fully and freely receive. Mary was a supreme receiver station.

From an unpublished talk given in Tucson, Arizona

Prayer:

Teach me to be receptive.

Year of Sunday Mass: Question of the Week

How is Eucharist my bread for the journey, nourishment for the “desert” times of my life?

For Reflection:

· My daily living is along a smooth path and opens up for others the way to the Lord when I . . .

· Repentance means to me . . .

Readings for the Week

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www.stjohnofthecross 12/9/12 4
KNOW THE MASS, ONE WORD AT A TIME

It makes perfect sense. Before we drink, we must pour what we are to drink. At Holy Communion, when we drink from the chalice, we know there has been a prior ritual action of preparation, the pouring of wine that includes a drop of water symbolizing the union of the humanity and divinity of Jesus. We also know from Jesus’ words of institution that what we drink has been poured in another sense.

In Jesus’s name, the priest says, “Take this all of you, and drink from it, for this is the chalice of my blood, the blood of the new and eternal covenant, which will be poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.” Take and drink what has been poured into this chalice. Take and drink what has been poured out on the cross for your salvation. When we drink from this chalice, we know we can only do so, because the suffering and self-sacrificing love of Jesus has first been poured out for us.

Second Collection
Annual Religious Retirement Fund
This year’s annual appeal for the Retirement Fund for Religious asks parishioners to share in the care of religious women and men who dedicated their lives to education, health care and social service ministry.
This special collection will be taken up today. Thank you for your generosity.

Blessing the Manger
(Each prayer is said as the figure it names is placed in the manger scene.)

Bless this manger, O Lord, a sign of your love for us in Christ.

(Blessing Mary and Joseph)
Bless this household of faith as you blessed Mary and Joseph.

(Blessing the angel)
Bless these Advent days; guide the world with your angel messengers.

(Blessing the shepherds)
Bless our daily work; may it always point the way to Christ.

(Blessing the animals)
Bless all earthly humbleness: fill the world with your presence.

(Blessing the Magi)
Bless all who seek you; make your Church a true witness.

(Placing the Christ child)
God of all joy and peace, hear the prayers we offer today and each day.
God among us, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Second Sunday of Advent:
Lord Jesus, you are the one announced by John, for whom the world is waiting.

Think of a nearby river and imagine you are going there to preach the salvation of God. People might question you especially if you stay at the river, sleep there and eat only what you can find or catch with your hands. If no one comes, you will preach to the birds. But if they do come, perhaps out of curiosity to see the spectacle, you will baptize them in the waters of repentance and wash them clean so that they can receive forgiveness of their sins.

John the Baptist was incredibly brave to do what God called him to do. He did it so that the ancient scripture of Isaiah would be fulfilled.

Today’s Gospel calls each of us somehow to go down to the river and preach. It calls us to be a herald’s voice in our modern-day desert of apathy. It calls us to be highway builders through difficult terrain, leveling mountains, filling valleys, making for others a straight, smooth path so that by our lives we can lead them to see the salvation of God.
CALENDAR EVENTS:
Dec. 9 Soph & 4th grader service 3-4:30 p.m. in PC
Home Groups meet
Dec. 21 All Kairos Christmas Reunion 6 p.m.
Jan. 4-6 Frosh-Soph Retreat

PARENTS OF TEENAGERS
Here’s a conversation starter for you and your teen:

How does our family keep Christ in Christmas?
More specifically, how do we honor Advent, the season of preparing and waiting for the Christ child to be born?

When you focus on the hows and the whats you will see the importance of the whys so much more boldly!

Tom, Katie, Jane & Molly Pruitt, Chris Marquette, Katie Hayes, Mary & Terry Stadler

What a joy it was to share this amazing conference with our awesome ministry leaders. We celebrated the first Sunday of Advent mass with over 2400 adults who bring Christ to the youth of our church. This weekend provided us a chance to join in song, dance, conversations, reflection, listening to inspiring keynotes and time to talk through what we want for our youth...enlivening our service to our teenagers. I am grateful beyond belief & excited to see how our youth ministry will continue to grow. We will share personal reflections over the coming weeks. ~Katie Hayes
Our students began the holiday season this week in a very beautiful way. In the beginning of the week, an all class Advent prayer service was held. After the prayer service, the students adjourned to their classrooms and participated in an all school service project. Each student gave gifts of winter hats, winter gloves, scarves, socks, and art supplies. Each child in the entire school prepared one individually-wrapped gift which also included a hand-made card and a few pieces of holiday candy. In all, over 600 gifts were prepared for Share Christmas.

Recipients of this year’s service project include St. Thaddeus, St. Barbara’s, St. Thomas of Canterbury, Our Lady of Charity, St. Mark’s, Kolbe House, Little Brothers/Friends of the Elderly and Blessed Sacrament.

Many of our students decorated ornaments to hang on our trees in downtown Western Springs and our student council spent time decorating the trees.

Finally, please join us as we celebrate the feast of St. John of the Cross at our all school liturgy on December 14. Bishop Manz will be celebrating the Mass with us and Sr. Mary Paul, our superintendent, will be addressing our students. This will be a wonderful celebration.

**Upcoming Dates:**
- December 10: Advent Prayer Service Gym, 9:15-10 a.m.
- December 14: All School Liturgy Church, 9:15 a.m.

**YC Schedule**
- Classes K-6: 10:15-11:30 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 9, Dec 16
- 6:15-7:30 p.m. Monday, Dec 10, 17
- FFC: Noon to 1:30 p.m. Sunday, Feb 3
- Home Groups and Special Needs: Sunday, Dec 16

**Year of Sunday Mass**

During the Year of Sunday Mass YC will celebrate five Masses at the 9:00 a.m. Sunday Mass. Children will be active participants in the Mass - Join us December 9th at 9:00 a.m. Mass

Watch throughout the year as YC celebrates the Year of Sunday Mass!
Outreach

Volunteers are needed to wrap gifts at the Chicago Ridge Mall as a fund raiser for Aunt Mary’s Storybook Project. Through this project new books are sent to the children of prisoners, the forgotten victims of crime and imprisonment, with a CD of the parents reading the stories to the children.

Your help is needed at our fund raising gift wrapping stations. We need help wrapping Christmas gifts and inviting shoppers to participate. The cost to the shoppers for the gift wrapping is a donation to Aunt Mary’s Storybook Project. We would welcome shoppers from your church to utilize our gift wrapping service, as well as volunteer.

Volunteer a couple or more hours. Whatever your schedule allows. This is also a great opportunity for our youth service hours. Our gift wrapping tables are just in front of Kohl's in the mall which is located at 95th and Ridgeland.

Times are:
12/8 & 9: Sat: 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Sun: 11 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
12/15 and 16: SAT: 9 a.m. - 10 p.m. SUN: 9 a.m. - 10 p.m.  
12/21, 22, and 23: all days 9 a.m. - 10 p.m.  
12/24: Monday: 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. (8-10 volunteers for all hours)

To volunteer contact Jana Minor at jmminor1986@sbcglobal.net  630-406-8184  
or Jenny Acosta at jxacosta@gmail.com  815-228-3894

Our web site is www.cjtinc.org  Aunt Mary’s Storybook Project is a program of Companions, Journeying Together, Inc

Kolbe House Cares!
Last week Deacon Pablo of Kolbe House had to turn down a request for a pair of men’s jeans or pants……..there were simply none left in the Kolbe House ‘closet’ to give. Imagine. Can you fit one more item on your To Do list this week? New or gently used men’s jeans or casual pants are urgently needed at Kolbe House. All sizes are welcome – particularly 34, 36 & 38 waists and length of 30 or 32. Drop off boxes are in the church narthex or the Parish Center entry hall. Your generosity is much appreciated. Thank you!

LIVESTOCK FOR LIFE
Give someone on your list
The Gift that Continues to Give

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. Please complete the form and return it to the Parish Center with your check for $40 made out to SJC. We will mail you a Gift Card.

Gift for:______________________________________________________________
Given by:____________________________________________________________
Send Gift Card to:____________________________________________________

www.stjohnofthecross.org  12/9/2012  9
In a lecture recently, I made the point that Jesus shocked people equally in both his capacity to thoroughly enjoy his life and in his capacity to renounce it and give it up. It was one and the same Jesus who, at a lavish supper with a woman at his feet bathing him in perfume and affection, could tell his uncomfortable hosts that he was thoroughly enjoying the moment without a trace of guilt and who could tell the same people that the deepest secret of life is to give it all up in self-sacrifice without a trace of thought for yourself.

After the lecture, a young man came up to me and questioned me about the first prong: How could Jesus give himself over to that kind of enjoyment and pleasure? My answer: Precisely because of the other part, his capacity to renounce. One relies on the other, like the two wings on an airplane. Jesus had a shocking capacity to enjoy life because he had an equally shocking capacity to give it up. That is also true of many other aspects of Jesus' life and ministry: He could condemn sin, but love the sinner; be fiercely loyal to his own, even as he shocked them in his love of those outside their circle; and he could walk in the greatest freedom anyone has ever known, even as he acknowledged that he did nothing on his own.

And that kind of complexity, that kind of capacity to hold near opposites together in a healthy tension, is one of the marks of greatness. Great people do exactly that. Let me offer some examples:

Dorothy Day, soon to be canonized a saint, stood out for exactly that reason: she carried both the non-negotiable Gospel-demand for social justice as well as the non-negotiable Gospel-demand for proper morals and proper religious practice. She was radical and pious. Usually we do not see the same person leading both the peace march and the rosary. Dorothy did both. Most of us can't. We can do one or the other.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin's writings continue to inspire people across every type of divide for the same reason. He had the capacity to hold together, at one and the same time, two seemingly competing loves. He was born, he says, with two incurable loves and sensitivities: a love of God and a sense of the other world that he could never betray and an equal love for this physical world and its facticity and beauty. Both were undeniably real to him, both took his breath away, and he tried to live in a way so as to not betray either of them, despite the tension this created in his life. It gave his writings a rare depth. Most other writing, secular or religious, honors only one of those poles to the denigration of the other.

We see the same kind of complexity in the writings of Therese of Lisieux. On the one hand, her focus is radically otherworldly, the vision of someone who sees this world as ephemeral, flimsy, and of little value. Yet, at the same time, she shows herself as almost unhealthily attached to the good things of this world, the love of family, of nature, of beauty. Therese could write eloquently about wanting to die and leave behind this shadowy film we call life and at the same time feel resentful if she wasn't receiving daily affirmations of love from her family. And she saw no contradiction here because there isn't any. Both are healthy, when they are held together.

St. Augustine offers another example. He wrote more than six thousand pages and, within those pages, he said things that have helped trigger anything from negative feelings about sex to forced religious conversions; but he also said things that laid the roots of most orthodox Western theology for the past seventeen hundred years. He was able to hold a lot of things in tension. Sadly, we are not his equal and instead pick and choose pieces of his thought to the detriment of his overall vision.

Carlo Carretto, the Italian spiritual writer who died recently, also stood out for his capacity to hold seemingly contrasting truths in tension. It is rare to see in the same person his particular combination of piety and iconoclasm, his fierce loyalty to the church and his strong criticism of it. For him, the two depended upon each other. One is healthy only because the other is also there.

Great minds and great persons properly honor complexity. Nowhere is this clearer than in Jesus. He carried all truth, in all its complexity. Unfortunately, we, his followers, are not up to the master. That's why there hundreds of different Christian denominations today. That's also why there are liberals and conservatives both in our churches and our society. We find it easier to carry smaller pieces of the truth than to carry the tension of being loyal to its bigger picture.

But simplicity and clarity aren't always our friends.

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.
Choose and Cut Your Christmas Tree
Marmion’s Abbey Farms
850 Butterfield Road, Aurora, Ill

Marmion Farms has expanded their farm this year in hopes of creating a better experience for families. We offer free hot chocolate on the weekends, free sleds for families to use and wood burning warming fires to help chase the chilly winter air. We’ve added a new barn warming station and a seasonal store along with our freshly made donuts. 100% of the money earned from the Christmas Tree Sales helps finance the ministries of the Monks of Marmion Abbey.

Call 630-966-7775 for more information.

Christmas Wafers (Oplatki)
The Christmas Wafers (Oplatki) have arrived. If you would like to purchase them, please come to the Parish Center. Each envelope (three per envelope) is $1.50.

It's not too late to order Market Day for December pick up. Please note the date change for orders due is Thursday Dec. 13th and pick up is Monday Dec. 17th, 2:30-3:30 p.m.!
This Week at SJC

Monday, December 10
9:30 a.m. Senior Club Planning Meeting
10:30 a.m. Step 11 Christian Meditation
10:30 a.m. Secret Santa, Parent Association
2:30 p.m. Eucharistic Adoration
2:30 p.m. Spiritual Journaling
3:30 p.m. Girl Scout Registration

Tuesday, December 11
8:30 a.m. Parent Association Meeting
9:30 a.m. Focus on Sunday Scriptures Group
1:30 p.m. Sr. Josephine’s Bible Study
3:30 p.m. Tuesdays with Mary
3:30 p.m. Girl Scouts
7:00 p.m. RCIA
7:00 p.m. Teacher Recognition Trust

Wednesday, December 12
9:00 a.m. Women’s Club
1:00 p.m. Prayer Shawl Meeting
2:00 p.m. Christian Meditation
7:00 p.m. Christian Meditation, New Era Meeting
7:30 p.m. Christian Meditation

Friday, December 14
11:30 p.m. Senior Luncheon
7:00 p.m. Cub Scouts Movie Night

Saturday, December 15
7:00 a.m. Christian Meditation
8:30 a.m. Morning of Meditation
9:00 a.m. Luminaria Set Up
5:00 p.m. Rediscover Catholicism Book Study and Hospitality

Sunday, December 16
Rediscover Catholicism Book Study Registration and Hospitality after all Masses

Luminaria Kit Fundraiser

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

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 Today, 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.
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, andgrant him/her your healing and peace.We ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Mass Intentions

Monday, December 10
6:30 Rose Scwicksup; Robert McGuire
7:45 Estella Cronk; Dorothy Pelko

Tuesday, December 11, St. Damasus, I
6:30 Brian Donovan
7:45 Margaret Albertson; Joseph Piszczor

Wednesday, December 12, Our Lady of Guadalupe
6:30 Joanne Lewis; Patrick McNamara
7:45 Klen-O’Sullivan Families; Mary Schauffer

Thursday, December 13, St. Lucy
7:45 Margaret Kirtley; Helen Nolan

Friday, December 14 St. John of the Cross
7:45 Special Intention; Rita & John Tiberi

Saturday, December 15
8:00 Our Beloved Dead; Sharon Haggerty
5:00 Muriel Albertson; Margaret F. Ullmayer

Sunday, December 16 Third Sunday of Advent
7:30 Chester Miller; Peggy Abhalter
9:00 Henry Spetter; Janet Florcza
10:45 SJC & Kolbe House Parishioners
12:15 Clyde Masters; Joanna Costigan
5:00 A. George Zurowski; Eugene Garvy

Italics—Living

Angie Babicz
Melissa Beacom
Tracy Bucciarelli
Garth Christie
Connie Crane
Ashley Davis
Mary Sue
Donohue
Kimberly Edwards
Karen Hult
Ruth Ilg
Tom Jass
Emily Johans
Lois Corrine
Johnson
Helen King
Rita Koziol
Ray Kula
Cathy Laskey
Greg LaValle
Yvonne Lowry
Chick Meehan
Moon Meehan
Marie Miller

Joan Nicholson
Tommy Niemeyer
Nancy Olin
Jean Onesto
Greg Palaschak
Terry Peterson
Barbara Redling
Fabian Saldana
Kathie Saldana
Rita Sheilhouse
Bob Sturenfeldt
Christian Zacher

As we review our Annual Report at this time ofyear, we continue to acknowledge the many waysin which we have grown in faith and fellowshiptogether throughout the whole year. We havesocialized, prayed, witnessed and celebrated ourfaith in every season with every age.

We are continually humbled and thankful for all youdo to support our parish with your time, talent, andtreasure. We strive to be welcoming, living out ourmission as a parish community loving God and oneanother. Each of us is called to discover, to grow,tobe all God has asked us to be. Our parish is abliss in our lives, providing for our families –every day – encouraging us to live our Catholicfaith.

Our Parish Finance Council continues to promoteonline giving. Many of you already pay your bills orpurchase things online. Making your donationselectronically will work to your benefit as well as ourparish’s. Go to our Giving page on our website

Together let us join hands to make our parishbe all that it can be.
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$500 to $5,000
• Cars • Vans • SUVs • Trucks
$50 Donated to Parish at Closing
708.516.8888
Join us for our Saintly Senior Club Annual Christmas Luncheon*
Friday, December 14th 11:30 a.m.
SJC Parish Center

Please RSVP to the Parish Center by Monday, December 10

Name: _____________________________
Phone: ____________________________
Number of Reservations: ________
Amount Enclosed: _____________
Cost: Members $15
      Nonmembers $20

Questions?
Call Trudy Schmitt at 246-4696.

*Enjoy a festive luncheon of roast beef, baked ham, mashed potatoes, sweet potatoes, butter beets, coleslaw, kolacky, and beverage.
“We 2” will entertain!
Be sure to come!