ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS PARISH

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD
DECEMBER 25, 2012
Merry Christmas!

On Christmas, during this season, in this coming year and for all time to come, the Savior is born again and again, birthed into light when love is at the root of all of our actions and relationships. Emmanuel comes when we live the gospel call to right relationship with God, each other and all creation... when we welcome strangers, feed the hungry and share our resources, listen patiently to others, build others up instead of tearing them down, reach out with gentleness, compassion and forgiveness and when we treat each person with respect and dignity. At St. John of the Cross Parish we willingly strive to help each other as followers on the path Jesus laid out for us.

This special Christmas bulletin is both a guide highlighting the numerous ministries and activities at our parish and an invitation to both new and old parishioners to become involved, taking advantage of the many spiritual, social, and outreach opportunities that support us in being witnesses and proclaimers of the Gospel. We are a strong, vibrant parish community fueled by the energy, enthusiasm, and commitment of many generous people who gather to pray, to learn, to serve, and to be Christ to others. Won’t you join us?

The parish is at your service as you live out your baptismal commitment. Please feel free to contact any of our staff members.

Today is born our Savior, Christ the Lord. Today is born our Savior, Christ the Lord.

Rev. David P. Dowdle, Pastor    ddowdle@stjohnofthecross.org
Rev. Joseph F. McDonnell, Pastor Emeritus
Rev. Filbert F. Ngwila, Associate Pastor   fngwila@stjohnofthecross.org
Deacon John and Mary Ellen Schopp
Senior Deacon Tom and Mary Kay McGorey
Senior Deacon Joe and Mary Pepitone

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Jessica Koch, Director of Music   jkoch@stjohnofthecross.org
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Join us at Mass

Many parishioners share time and talent to enrich our faith experience during liturgies. From altar servers and sacristans to communion ministers, lectors, children’s liturgy of the word leaders and choir members, there is a place for both the young and the old. The Arts & Environment committee keeps our church environment beautiful and inspiring, while the altar committee maintains the crisp clean appearance of altar linens. Our team of ushers welcomes all to services and tends to last minute needs transparently. Watch our website for details on how to volunteer your services to these or other ministries or call the parish center.
Sacraments of Initiation

Baptism
Parents or parents-to-be are invited to a Baptism Preparation Class to learn about the meaning and grace of the Sacrament of Baptism. Baptisms are celebrated on Sundays at 1:30 p.m.

First Eucharist and Confirmation for Youth
Our parish youth receive preparation for these sacraments in both our Parish School and Youth Catechesis Program.

RCIA for Adults
Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults is for those who have never been baptized, who have been baptized Catholic, but not completed the Sacraments of Initiation (Eucharist and Confirmation) or who have been baptized in another faith and wish to become Catholic. Weekly classes begin each fall.

Confirmation for Adults
Adults over 18 who have been baptized, received communion and are currently practicing their faith, but have not been confirmed may attend preparation classes held in February of each year.

Sacraments of Healing

Reconciliation
Private confessions are heard in church on Saturdays following the 8:00 a.m. Mass or by appointment. Evening Communal Reconciliation Services with private confession and absolution are held in Advent and Lent.

Anointing the Sick
This Sacrament offers the Lord’s healing, strength and peace to anyone who is seriously or chronically ill, hospitalized, or about to undergo surgery. Please contact the Parish Center if you wish to have someone anointed.

Marriage
Go to our parish website to learn all about getting married at St. John of the Cross. Some of the first steps include meeting with one of our priests, taking the Catholic Couple Check-up, and attending a Pre-Cana Promise retreat. You will find our Director of Music, Jessica Koch, to be invaluable for planning the music for your wedding. Jessica’s office is in the Parish Center.
Our parish has been welcoming people for over 50 years. As a parish member you will find many opportunities to learn, grow, give, and celebrate. More information on each ministry or volunteer opportunity can be found on the following pages and our parish website, www.stjohnofthecross.org.

Adult Formation Ministries
Altar Committee
Altar Server
Art & Environment Committee
Baptism Preparation Team
Bereavement Minister
Career Networking Group
Children’s Choirs
Children’s Liturgy of the Word Leader
Choir Member
Communion Minister
Crossroads Teen Ministry Home Group Leader
Crossroads Teen Ministry Event Volunteer
Crossroads Advisory Board
Eucharistic Adoration Leader
Finance Council
Food Pantry Committee
Gardening Angels
Harvest Saturday Committee
Lector
Men’s Club
Minister of Care to Sick and Homebound
Mom’s Club
Outreach Advisory Committee
Parent Association
Parish Advisory Council
Parish Hospitality Committee
Prayer Shawl Ministry
Promise PreCana Team
Resurrection Choir Member
Respect Life Committee
Senior Club
Share Christmas Committee
Sharing Parish Outreach
School Advisory Board
Teachers Recognition Trust Fund Committee
Teen Choir
Welcome Committee
Wedding Coordinator
Women’s Club
Young Mothers’ Circle of Friends Club
Youth Catechesis YC Advisory Board
Youth Catechesis Teacher, Aide, or Office Help

Today is born our Savior, Christ the Lord. Today is born our Savior, Christ the Lord.
Outreach plays a significant role in parish life at St. John of the Cross. Every day of the year parishioners of all ages are called to continue the mission of Jesus Christ through involvement in many outreach efforts such as providing operational and financial support and building relationships with our six Sharing Parishes, assisting those in prison and their families, dropping off food in the church vestibule for area food pantries, collecting clothing, coats and school backpacks, and career networking for the unemployed. Parishioners also participate in our Harvest Saturday food drive (an annual event led by our Crossroads teens) and Share Christmas which provides food and gifts to thousands of families in the Chicago area. Volunteers also provide labor and construction materials for local outreach and out of state and Chicago area work tours. Go to our Outreach page on our parish website to see how you and your family can become involved!

It is more blessed to give than receive.

Let the heavens be glad and the earth rejoice; let the sea and what fills it resound;
Crossroads Youth Ministry welcomes our high school age parishioners! Our teens get involved in faith sharing in their small home groups that meet twice a month. Teens connect to a variety of service projects like our fall Harvest Saturday food collection, making Easter Baskets for children who otherwise would not receive any, and serving and cooking at the Inspiration Café.

Teens are also able to further deepen their faith via retreats and work tour service trips. If you know a teen that would like to get involved, encourage them to check out our Teen Space and meet Katie.

Teams of adult volunteers and teen leaders work together to plan and implement our activities. Current adults include home group leaders, parents of teens and parishioners with grown or no children. If you would like to support or mentor teens, please call or email Katie at kayes@stjohnofthecross.org

Announce his salvation, day after day.
Youth Catechesis is St. John of the Cross’ religious education program that partners with families in the faith formation of our parish children.

Our volunteer catechists foster and cultivate a love for Jesus through prayer, scripture lessons and active learning. Over 1100 children come to Youth Catechesis (YC) sessions that are designed to promote the understanding of the beautiful and rich traditions of our Catholic faith. YC incorporates drama, crafts, music, small group projects and classroom discussions to meet all the different needs of our students learning styles. Parishioners are welcome to stop by our YC office to register your children throughout the year. The YC office is located in the school building on the southeast corner. Please enter our entrance at 51st Street and Caroline Avenue.

Youth Catechesis provides educational and spiritual opportunities for all children and their parents to grow in wisdom and faith.
The mission of St. John of the Cross Parish School is to provide a safe, dynamic Catholic environment where faith is nourished and knowledge grows. We offer challenging educational experiences that foster success, promote unity and respect the individuality of each student. Our parish school prides itself on multi-generational Catholic traditions and achievements which empower our students to live. In 2012 our school was awarded the national Blue Ribbon Award for excellence.

SJC Parish School offers 3 and 4 yr. old preschool, full and half day kindergarten and an accredited comprehensive academic curriculum for grades one through eight. We offer complete music, art, physical education and computer programs as well as Spanish for grades one to eight.

SJC Parish School is a vibrant Catholic community of parents, students and teachers, all dedicated to providing a premiere faith based education for our children. Visit our website to learn more about our Blue Ribbon school.
Faith is a constant gift from God. It is offered to us from before our birth over and over again in our lives. Faith is not something we acquire on our own initiative, but rather, it grows and deepens as we experience life. The adult learning programs such as you see below are simply tools to help us respond to God’s gift of faith. All offer opportunities to journey with one another in faith.

Advent and Lenten Sacred Scripture Books
Bridges of Contemplative Living Lenten Faith Sharing Groups
Beloved Retreats—New in 2013
Christian Meditation & Mornings of Meditation
Endow Women’s Study Groups
Eucharistic Adoration
Flourish Women’s Faith Sharing Group
Lenten Mission
Little Rock Scripture Study
Open Our Hearts Lenten Faith Sharing
Pillars Catechism Study—New in 2013
Praying the Labyrinth
Programs at The Well
Rediscover Catholicism Book Study—New in 2013
RCIA
Seasons of Hope Grief Support Group
Spiritual Direction
Spiritual Journaling
Scripture Study Groups
Sunday Scripture Study
Tuesdays with Mary Rosary Group
Women’s Club Annual Retreat

Let the plains be joyful and all that is in them!


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Ministry to the Sick & Homebound: Care ministers regularly visit parishioners who are ill in hospitals, care centers or at home. Due to patient confidentiality procedures, the parish is not typically notified of parishioner admissions to hospitals or care centers. If you are homebound, hospitalized or placed in a local care center, contact Fr. Fil at the Parish Center to have someone visit and bring Eucharist.

Bereavement Ministry: Our parish supports all parishioners who experience the loss of a loved one. If you have a death in the family and the funeral is at St. John of the Cross, a trained bereavement minister will call to offer prayerful support and to help plan the funeral liturgy. If the funeral is not at our parish, families are encouraged to contact the Parish Center office so that we may offer prayers at Mass and publish a remembrance in our weekly bulletin.

Healing from the Loss of a Loved One: Seasons of Hope is a six-week scripture-based program especially for those healing from loss. The program is offered in the spring and fall. The 2013 spring session will begin after Easter.

Caritas Fund: Using the Latin word for “charity” as its name, this fund provides emergency financial support to parishioners, who through unplanned circumstances face difficulty meeting a critical financial obligation. Confidential arrangements are provided on a case by case basis through the Pastor.

Counseling: If you or a family member is having difficulty dealing with this complex and stressful world in which we live, Holbrook Counseling Center of Catholic Charities can help. The Center, located in our Rectory, offers assistance that is confidential and convenient. For further information or to schedule an appointment please call Catholic Charities at 312.655.7725.

Respect Life: Leading the parish in prayer for the unborn and the elderly, inspiring others to speak out through legislative advocacy and pastoral care, and instilling a deeper appreciation for God, for life and for every person through the education of Catholic Social Teachings are the main focus points for this parish committee. To get involved contact parishioner, Blanche Heaney.

Mass Intentions
Monday, December 24
7:45 George J. Zurowski
4:00 John DenBesten; Norbert Mann
4:15 Mary Christine Karl; John Alvin Dicken
4:30 Elizabeth G. Purtell; James Purtell
6:00 Alice & Al Sobey
10:30 Joseph Scelsi; Robert E. Shannon & Ward Allen

Tuesday, December 25, The Nativity of the Lord
7:30 Bruno Shukis; Walter & Patricia Cebula
9:00 Franklin Smith, Sr.; Patrick Grogan & Kevin Gunnin
10:45 Bruno and Genevieve Ziemba
Ervin & Sophie Rozsypal
12:30 Joanne Costigan

Wednesday, December 26
7:45 Tony Renzi; Michael Sterchele

Thursday, Thursday, December 27, St. John
7:45 Don McAuliffe; Randall Longueil

Friday, December 28, The Holy Innocents
7:45 Our Beloved Dead; Suzette Pertile
Matthew Flood & Jorge Paez

Saturday, December 29, St. Thomas Becket
8:00 Victor Kwit; Emory Hartmann
5:00 Dr. Silvio Morales; Janet Gosinski

Sunday, December 30, The Holy Family
7:30 SJC & Holy Cross Parishioners
9:00 Alvina Rizzo; Eleanor Verdin
10:45 Patricia Hamilton; Tony Urias
12:15 Norma Jean Corcoran; Anastasia C. Esposito
5:00 Eugene Garvy; Maureen Shannon

Italics—Living

Then shall all the trees of the forest exult.

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

Go to our parish website to For Reflections on the Gospel, Meditation, Ron Rolheiser, Readings for the Week and the parish schedule.
As 2012 comes to a close, we continue to acknowledge the many ways in which we have grown in faith and fellowship together throughout the whole year. We have socialized, prayed, witnessed and celebrated our faith in every season with every age.

We are continually humbled and thankful for all you do to support our parish with your time, talent, and treasure. We strive to be welcoming, living out our mission as a parish community loving God and one another. Each of us is called to discover, to grow, to be all God has asked us to be. Our parish is a blessing in our lives, providing for our families – every day – encouraging us to live our Catholic faith.

Our Parish Finance Council continues to promote online giving. Many of you already pay your bills or purchase things online. Making your donations electronically will work to your benefit as well as our parish’s. Go to our Giving page on our website www.stjohnofthecross.org to donate electronically.

Together let us join hands to make our parish be all that it can be.

A Gift from SJC

In December St. John of the Cross Parish shared a copy of Rediscover Catholicism by Matthew Kelly with our parishioners. Beginning in January all are invited to participate in a 5 session Book Study—Faith Sharing Series. There is no cost for the book or to participate in the Book Study. Go to our website to register.

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.
Parish Organizations

Men’s Club: Our parish Men’s Club provides ongoing opportunities for spiritual enrichment, service and fellowship. Activities include a cook-out, football party, speakers, and an annual Trivia Night. The men host a fish fry which benefits our Crossroads Teen Ministry and a pancake breakfast with the parish Scouts. Watch for great ways to become involved and enjoy camaraderie with fellow guys in the parish. Save the Date for Trivia Night on January 26, 2013.

Women’s Club: The Women’s Club brings together all the women of our parish for spiritual and social programs and outreach opportunities which enrich our lives and connect us to other women within our community and beyond.

New This Year:
Flourish: A women’s faith sharing group focused on the discovery of God’s plan for each of us! 9:00 to 10:30 a.m. in the Parish Center- January 9th and 23rd, February 6th and 20th, April 3rd and 17th
Luminaria fundraiser Watch for our sale again next year!

Save the Dates for these Upcoming Events
January Membership Drive
Cooking Night - January 30
Women’s Club Retreat - March 1-2
Garden Expo - April 24th
Flower Sale - May 2
Garage Sale - June 22-24

Be A Part of Women’s Club: Attend our retreats, spiritual and social events! Volunteer! Help is always needed at every level of involvement! Check out our Facebook page (SJC Women’s Club) and our parish website. Contact Maureen Chopp at 708-246-7280 or modanchopp@sbcglobal.net for more information or contact Co-Presidents Connie Madden & Jeannie Francis at sjcwomensclub.com.

Mom’s Club: All mothers and their young children gather for friendship, fun, support, learning, and ministry. This group meets most Friday mornings in the Parish Center. Contact: Colleen at whitting910@yahoo.com or Ellen Twomey at ellenkoz@yahoo.com to be added to our mailing list.
Parish Organizations

The Parish Advisory Council (PAC) was established to support implementation of our Parish Vision and Mission Statement. The Council serves to assist, represent and discern parish needs as an advisor to the Pastor. The PAC also fosters communication among parish staff, volunteer leaders and parishioners. Council members include the Pastor, Associate Pastors, Parish Deacons, Pastoral Staff, Representatives from each Consultative Body, active Ministerial Committees, the Archdiocesan Parish Council Representative, four appointed Apostle parishioner members and four elected at-large parishioners. The importance of sharing thoughts and plans across parish groups and pastoral staff is important and valuable two-way communication. Elections for the PAC are held each May. Go to our parish website to learn how you can become involved. Chairperson: Karin Teglia

He shall rule the world with justice and the peoples with his constancy.

The Finance Council is a consultative body providing advice and recommendations to the Pastor concerning the stewardship of the parish’s fiscal and temporal resources. This role includes conducting long-range financial planning to support the mission of the parish. Council members are appointed by the pastor. Chairperson: Lisa DenBesten

The Parish School Advisory Board is an advisory group to the Principal and the Pastor, with the Principal serving as the Executive Officer of the Board and providing guidance to the board in educational matters. The board relates to the parish Finance Council as directed by the Archdiocesan policy and procedures; relates to the school faculty and staff through the Principal; and represents its constituents (parents, guardians and parishioners). This board meets monthly and has elections every spring. Chairperson: Brian Murphy

The Youth Catechesis (YC) Advisory Council serves the catechists and families in the Youth Catechesis religious education program. Members work in collaboration with the Pastor and YC Director to provide leadership, vision and counsel in the direction of the YC Program. Elections are held in the spring. Chairperson: Michele Snorewicz

Seniors Club: Active seniors meet four times a year for a themed luncheon: Octoberfest, Christmas, Valentine’s Day, and St. Patrick’s Day.

Ladies Bridge: Ladies meet to play bridge and share conversation the first Wednesday of each month at noon. Call the Parish Center with any questions.

SJC Family Fest is coming once again to our parish grounds. Mark your calendar for June 27, 28, 29 & 30, 2013. All interested in joining the planning committee can contact Dan Madden at 708-246-4363.

FUN ~ FOOD ~ ENTERTAINMENT ~ CARNIVAL ~ RAFFLE
New Parishioners
New parishioners are invited to register at the Parish Center office or on our parish website (www.stjohnofthecross.org). Welcome gift bags containing our directory, other introductory parish information, and a keepsake SJC Christmas ornament are given to each new family. NEW in 2013 is WELCOME! where new parishioners are matched with a member of the Welcome Team giving the new parishioner a sense of connection to their new faith community.

Parish Center
The Parish Center office is located just south of church. Our front doors face Wolf Road. 5005 South Wolf Road, Western Springs, Illinois 60558 708-246-4404

Office Hours
Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m.
Saturday 9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.
Sunday 9:00 a.m.-6:30 p.m.
After hours, if there is an emergency or an immediate need for a priest, please call the main office number and follow the voice prompt. A priest will respond as quickly as possible.

Mass Intentions
An important part of our Catholic tradition is to pray for those who have died. Requests that a particular loved one be remembered at Mass can be arranged at the Parish Center Office. Sympathy cards are available if you wish to notify the family that a Mass will be offered at our parish. Occasionally people will request that a Mass be said for the living on an anniversary or birthday. A Mass intention stipend of $10 is requested.

Prayer Request List
Parishioners who are ill or who have a family member who is ill may request to have the person remembered on the prayer request list. Only immediate family members may place names on the list. The person will be remembered in a special intention at Sunday Mass and will be remembered in prayer in the bulletin. Call the Parish Center.

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Thank you to parishioner Denise Pozen Photography for many of the photos we used in this special bulletin and on our website. Contact the Parish Center for copies.

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Today is born our Savior, Christ the Lord. Psalm 96
Merry Christmas to you and your family!

St. John of the Cross Parish ~ 708-246-4404 ~ www.stjohnofthecross.org
SJC Christmas bulletin