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It’s worth it. Make time for the Beloved Retreat!  
October 11-13, 2013

Experience ~ Inclusive ~ Love ~ Truth ~ Healing

We come up with a thousand excuses as to why we can’t take the time or spend the money to go on a retreat. Do we come up with the same excuses when we want to go to that special restaurant, sign our kids up for travel teams, make that unnecessary purchase at the mall or decide to make that home improvement? Will we remember what we ate at that restaurant or remember if our kids won, lost, or even played in the game? How long does the satisfaction of the unnecessary purchase or home improvement last until we realize we’ve picked the wrong color or chosen the wrong plans? Do any of these things bring lasting contentment and peace, or do they add chaos and stress to our lives?

“Beloved is a good name for this retreat but for men, I think a better title would be “you’re the man.” (It’s a guy thing!) I received an experience and made friendships I will value for the rest of my life. If you aren’t feeling truly fulfilled in your life, this is a great place to discover where to start looking.”

-Don Dvorak

Maybe you have never been on a retreat or have not been on a retreat since high school or PreCana. Maybe you are a regular retreat goer. Regardless of your retreat experience, making Beloved your “getaway weekend” this fall instead of “Vegas” may be one of the best decisions you will make for your personal and spiritual life.

“Before going on the Beloved Retreat, I had not been on a retreat since PreCana before I got married. I had the excuses to not go on Beloved, but finally decided to go and went with a blind eye having no expectations. I cannot count on one hand the number of times I have experienced feeling so much love, acceptance and sense of community among a group of people. What I took away from this experience is irrereplaceable.”

-Marie Gerken

Please consider joining us and prepare to call yourself Beloved.

Questions? Please contact Andrea Gagliani, agagliani@sbcglobal.net, 246-1520, Tiffany White, tfoxwhite@gmail.com, 246-8896, or Marianne Firlit, mgfirlit@stjohnofthecross.org, 839-0377

Please pick up a pamphlet at the exits of the church for more information and registration or go to the parish website.

Dear Parishioners,

Does summer officially end when school starts up again? If so, summer is over. Last Thursday we welcomed back all of our faculty and most of our 645 students to another school year. Pre-school won’t start until next week. There was much enthusiasm and energy and lots of smiles (and a few tears from little ones).

The maintenance staff has done another spectacular job getting the building in shape. KUDOS to our Plant Manager, Frank DiPompeo, and his crew of Joe, Martin, Richard, Clayton and the other Andy. They had some young bucks (with young backs) helping them: Tom Maney, Matt Mola, and Matt Pesch. (Andy Mola is responsible for the church, rectory and Parish Center building and does an outstanding job in and year out.) It’s a lot of linear feet and a ton of equipment that needs to be dealt with in order to have a clean and safe environment for the students to learn, study and recreate.

I also want to express my sincere appreciation to parishioner, Joel Yearian, who offered us free labor as he painted the walls of the Parish Center, which badly needed it. Once we get the carpet replaced (soon!) the place will really look great and the benefits of Joel’s labor will be more obvious.

As long as I am thanking people, allow me to express my sincere appreciation to the family of Dr. Albert and Mildred Vlazny. Two years ago the Vlazny Family made a very generous donation as an endowment to help needy school families. This school year the fund will generate $1,650.00 that will go to a family to help meet their obligation of tuition costs. Just so you know, tuition for a single child is $4,636.00 for the coming year. Go to the school website to see how quickly it adds up for more than one child, plus fees and untold school related expenses. As Catholic education continues to be more expensive every year, every little bit helps families take advantage of our wonderful school.

For those who might take a long weekend for Labor Day next weekend, that might be the end of summer. Whatever season you are in, may our gracious God fill you with his choicest blessings.

Peace,
Fr. David

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Invitation to Explore Becoming Catholic

Becoming Catholic (RCIA)
The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) is a process designed for those who are considering joining the Catholic Church by celebrating the sacraments of initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist) at the Easter Vigil. The process welcomes adults who have never been baptized and those who have been baptized in another Christian tradition, as well as adult Catholics who wish to be confirmed.

Each year people are welcomed into the church at St. John of the Cross Parish through the RCIA process. The RCIA is an engaging, dynamic, respectful, challenging and – ENJOYABLE journey. Fr. Filbert Ngwila and his RCIA team graciously host the RCIA on Tuesday evenings during the school year. If you would like to learn more about how you can become Catholic please contact Fr. Filbert Ngwila at fngwila@stjohnofthecross.org. Come September 17th at 7pm in church to learn more.
Like a mustard seed, the seed of faith will mature and flourish as we grow in our relationship with God.

Pillar Study II: The Sacraments
A twelve week study of the power, purpose and origin of the Sacraments through reflective discussion, dvd learning, and home study. Class meets on Tuesdays beginning September 10th at 1pm or 7pm in the parish center. $25 covers the cost of study book. To register drop off an envelope at the parish office marked Sacrament Study with your contact info and book fee enclosed.

Little Rock: Lands of the Bible
Participants will take a visual and spiritual journey to the Holy Land via video lecture and discussion. Eight Mondays beginning September 16th from 1pm to 2:30. Cost of materials is $10. Call Joan Roeder at 708-354-4862 to register.

Spirit Packed into Soul with Fr. Harry
Wednesdays from 9-11:30am beginning September 4th. Fr. Harry will offer a brief intro into the power of poems in all of life. Each session will include examples of the power and surprise of poems and reflection on the Sacred (Lectio Divina) in prose and poems. Participants are invited to bring a poem to memorize in whole or part and share what it means to you. Bring a note pad.

Flourish Faith Sharing for Women
Grow in faith and friendship every other Thursday beginning September 12th from 9-10:30am in the parish center. The first eight sessions will focus on scripture study using a dvd by Jennie Allen. (Here is a link to the study called “Stuck” http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KMzh11pVQ2g.) Book order and registration by August 26 to Sue Bidstrup at jsbidstrup@ameritech.net or Liz Williams at lisbethwill@sbcglobal.net

Meet Fr. Harry!
Retired just 4 years ago, Fr. Harry Bonin has been helping out at weekday Mass at our parish for the past year. Fr. Harry, who was ordained in 1965, holds a Master of Arts in Voice, a Master in Social Work and a STL. He has been a parish priest in the Chicago area and taught music and language at Quigley for many years. In fact, Fr. David was once a student of Fr. Harry!
Divorce & Beyond Support Group at SJC

When a marriage ends it is more than a separation of two people. It is a death of an important part of their lives. The grieving process of a divorce is unique to each individual. A divorce signifies the failure of a relationship, not that the individuals themselves are failures.

Divorce and Beyond is a program designed to offer support, fellowship and respect to our brothers and sisters experiencing or having completed divorce. Come share and know that others have gone through the same things as you. Know that you are loved and welcomed as part of our parish family.

Three trained parishioners will help you through the journey of initial stress, anger and guilt to ultimate forgiveness, happiness and growth. The sessions will cover experiences and emotions that divorcing people go through and will discuss activities for making divorce a growing experience.

Everyone is very welcome to this eight week support group, no matter where you are in the divorce process. It is important to know you are not alone. Participants are encouraged to attend all eight sessions.

Friday evenings from 7-9pm in the parish center: Sept. 13, Sept. 27, Oct. 11, Oct. 25, Nov. 8, Nov. 22 , Dec. 6th and Dec. 20.

Program book is $10. To register, drop off money and your contact info to the parish center office in an envelope marked Divorce & Beyond by Sept. 9. Any questions, contact Ann Marie at 708-784-9311.
Reflections for 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reflecting on Living the Gospel

Entering the narrow gate to salvation is not guaranteed by privilege or tradition (those who perceive themselves to be first), but guaranteed by openness to the in-breaking of the Messiah (those who perceive themselves to be last). The gate is narrow because the way is difficult—journeying with Jesus leads to Jerusalem and the cross. The strength needed to persist on this journey comes from reclining “at [his] table in the kingdom of God.” Followers of Jesus feed on the Food he gives us to strengthen us and overcome any difficulties or fears. We cannot claim merely eating and drinking with Jesus as our “ticket” to heaven. We must recline at the table with him, remain in his presence, and become transformed into his presence for others. In other words, we must live what we have become: we must be Eucharist for others.

Usually parents barely have begun a long trip with the children when they begin the chant, “Aren’t we there yet?” Sometimes this is our chant, too, on our paschal journey. We want the dying to be over. We want the risen Life which comes from knowing who Jesus is, journeying with him, and being faithful to him. In God’s good time, that will come. In the meantime, we are to walk with him to Jerusalem. Part of discipleship is to be faithful to the everyday “plodding” of our paschal journey. If we try and rush it, we will miss opportunities—graced moments which bring us closer to salvation. Discipleship requires consistent and faithful decisions so that Jesus gets to “know us” on the way. Then we are invited to be his guest at his table. Then we find ourselves numbered among the first. More is required for salvation than eating and drinking—ultimately, we must share in Jesus’ passion and death by eating and drinking his Body and Blood now.

Closing Prayers:
May we courageously walk with Jesus to Jerusalem and the cross.
May we be strong enough to enter through the narrow gate of faithful discipleship.
Our Father . . .

For Reflection:
· When my journey to salvation gets narrow and challenging, I tend to . . . Jesus then . . .
· What sustains me most on my journey to Jerusalem is . . .

Alleluia, Alleluia.

Eucharist is presence encountering presence—mutuality, vulnerability. There is nothing to prove, to protect, or to sell. It feels so empty, simple, and harmless, that all you can do is be present. In most of Christian history we instead tried to “understand” and explain presence. As if we could.

The Eucharist is telling us that God is the food and all we have to do is provide the hunger. Somehow we have to make sure that each day we are hungry, that there’s room inside of us for another presence. If you are filled with your own opinions, ideas, righteousness, superiority, or sufficiency, you are a world unto yourself and there is no room for “another.” Despite all our attempts to define who is worthy and who is not worthy to receive communion, our only ticket or prerequisite for coming to Eucharist is hunger. And most often sinners are much hungrier than the so-called saints.

Question for Children: How do you show that you are a follower of Jesus?
Question for Youth: Jesus tells us that being His disciple will be very hard. Of all the things that Jesus tells us about the way that we are to live our lives, what is the hardest thing for you to do? Why?
Question for Adults: As you wrestle with today’s Gospel, what signs do you see in your own life that you are “with God.”

Meditation by Richard Rohr

Christ is the bread, awaiting hunger.
— St. Augustine

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Adapted from Eucharist as Touchstone (CD, MP3)

Readings for the Week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
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<td>1 Thess 1:1-5, 8b-10 Ps 149:1b-2, 3-4, 5-6a and 96 Matt 23:13-22</td>
<td>1 Thess 2:1-8 Ps 139:1-3, 4-6 Matt 23:23-26</td>
<td>1 Thess 2:9-13 Ps 139:7-8, 9-10, 11-12ab Matt 23:27-32</td>
<td>1 Thess 3:7-13 Ps 90:3-5a, 12-13, 14 and 17 Mark 6:17-29</td>
<td>1 Thess 4:1-8 Ps 97:1 and 2b, 5-6, 10, 11-12 Matt 25:1-13</td>
<td>1 Thess 4:9-11 Ps 98:1, 7-8, 9 Matt 25:14-30</td>
<td>1 Thess 1:1-5, 8b-10 Ps 149:1b-2, 3-4, 5-6a and 96 Matt 23:13-22</td>
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Maternity ward nurses know that when one infant cries, the other infants soon join in. This is life's earliest example of empathy—identifying with the feelings of others. Empathy is the foundational building block of all morality. It enables us to "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Parents can nurture empathy in their children by asking, "How do you think Robby felt when you called him that name?" or involving them in acts of charity toward others. The most powerful tool parents have in teaching empathy is modeling empathic behavior with people they meet or talk about. Jesus says that we will be judged according to how we responded to those who are hungry, hurting, and in need. Empathy enables us to respond to the needs of others. —Tom McGrath

Choose one of the following activities as a way to further reflect on the Sunday readings:

- Play one of your family's favorite games. As a reminder, outline the rules to the game before you begin. When you have finished playing it, play it again, but announce that there will be no rules. When you are finished, relate this to other rules in life and what life might be like if we had no rules. Talk about how rules help us live as God's children.

- Plan a family meal to celebrate a culture different from your own. Talk about how God loves all people of all cultures. Prepare foods and use table decorations to represent the culture of your choice. Involve all family members in preparing and serving the meal.

- Discuss with your family the need for discipline in your home. Review the family rules in light of the Christian call to live as children of God. Ask if any rules should be added. List any new family rules on a sheet of paper and place them on the refrigerator.

- Create a prayer space in your home and place a globe or map of the world in the center of the space. Invite family members to reflect on how God loves all people from all parts of the world. Have each family member write a short prayer for world peace on a sheet of paper and place it near the globe or map. Read the prayers out loud and finish by offering each other a sign of peace. —Our Sunday Visitor 2013
News & Notes

SJC Men’s Club BBQ
All men of the parish are invited to our annual summer BBQ and Bags Tournament on Friday, September 6th at 6:00 pm on the lawn east of the parish center. Food & beverages will be provided by the Club. Please bring a friend, lawn chairs and competitive spirit! The Men’s Club will also host its 5th Annual 2-Man Team Bags Contest, so be sure to bring along your favorite bags partner to participate and enjoy the competition! The Bags competition will begin at 6:30 pm and requires a $10.00 Entry Fee. Please RSVP if you plan to attend the BBQ to either Barrett Long at longbarrett@hotmail.com or John Cisek at johncisek@netscape.net. Also, please let us know if you plan to participate in the Bags Contest. Enjoy an evening of fellowship, food and fun at SJC!

Bible Study in Joliet Diocese
The Biblical Institute opens a NEW Year 1 site at Saints Peter and Paul Parish, Naperville, Fridays 9:15-11:15 a.m. New students are also welcome to join the ongoing group for Year 2 at Notre Dame in Clarendon Hills, Wednesdays 7-9 p.m. For more information go to: www.dioceseofjoliet.org/or call 815-838-6475. Come and see if the program is for you: Saints Peter and Paul Ministry Center in Naperville: August 27th 9:30-11:00 a.m.

Choir News
Traditional Choir rehearsals begin Wednesday, September 4, and Contemporary Ensemble rehearsals begin Thursday, September 5. New members are invited to try us out by attending our first rehearsal without further obligation. Contact Jessica Koch, Director of Music, to find out more!

Children’s Choir News—Start up Dates!!
Did you know that St. John’s has 2 choirs available to all children in the parish? Cherub Choir serves children in grades 1-3 and practices on Wednesdays from 3:45 – 4:30 in the church. The start date is Sept. 11th with registration and a brief meeting at 4:20. Youth Choir serves students in grades 4-8, and practices on Thursdays from 3:45-4:30 pm in the church. The start date is Sept. 12th with registration and a brief meeting at 4:20. Questions? Contact Ann Bourjaily-Maney at bourjman@sbcglobal.net.

Mom’s Club
Gather with other moms and kids in our parish. Friday, Aug. 30 at 9:30 a.m. in the parish center. All Welcome!

Who
All Parents, Coaches, Room Parents, any Volunteer in the parish who has regular contact with children. Sign up now as seating is limited.

What
Protecting God’s Children Workshop includes two thirty minute videos and discussion

When
August 28 Evening 6:30-9:30 pm
September 18 Evening 6:30-9:30 pm
September 24 Morning 9am-Noon
September 24 Evening 6:30-9:30 pm

Where
St. John of the Cross Parish Center

How
You will need to register for this training by going on-line to the internet site for Virtus Training at www.virtus.org Click on the “registration” on the left side, choose “begin the registration process” and then choose “Chicago, IL”

Why
We are all affected by the abuse of children by representatives of the Church and society. In response the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops provided guidelines for the safety of our children in their Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. These recommendations have then been translated into an action plan by Cardinal George. Every employee and volunteer who has regular contact with children is required to attend a training session of Protecting God’s Children. These workshops will inform and inspire participants to be part of the solution and to help keep our youth safe from harm.

Position Open
SJC has an opening for an adult babysitter at our Sunday morning babysitting service in the Garden Room of the Rectory. This is a paid position. Hours are 8:45am-noon. The children range in age from 1-5 years old. If you are interested, please call Rita Forster at 246-4519.

Parents: Did you know SJC offers free babysitting during the 9am and 10:45am Sunday Masses. No reservations. Just come to the Rectory Garden Room. Ring the bell.
The great story told in Scripture, the story of God’s love for humankind, begins with God at work as Creator, maker of all that is: “In the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth. . . (Gn 1:1). Among God’s creatures are human persons: “The Lord God formed man out of the clay of the ground and blew into his nostrils the breath of life (Gn 2:7). God not only creates human beings, however, but also bestows on them the divine image and likeness (Gn. 1:26). As part of this resemblance to God, people are called to cooperate with the Creator in continuing the divine work.

Stewardship of creation is one expression of this. The divine mandate to our first parents makes that clear. “Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things that move on the earth” (Gn 1:28). Subduing and exercising dominion do not mean abusing the earth. Rather, as the second creation story explains, God settled humankind upon earth to be its steward—“to cultivate and care for it” (Gn. 2:15).

God created the world, but entrusts it to us. Caring for and cultivating the world involves:

- Joyful appreciation for the God-given beauty and wonder of nature;
- Protection and preservation of the environment;
- Respect for human life—shielding life from threat and assault, doing everything that can be done to enhance this gift and make life flourish;
- Development of this world through noble human effort—physical labor, the trades and professions, the arts and sciences—work.

As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God’s varied grace. (1 PT 4:10)

Gracious and loving God, you are the giver of every good gift. You have entrusted each one of us with talents to use to build your kingdom here on earth. Help us to appreciate the many talents among us. Weave those talents into a tapestry of care, that we may care for all of creation and know the many wonders of your presence. When we are tempted to hide our talents, strengthen us to give ourselves completely to you. Amen.
It has been a busy summer at the Welcome Center in the Parish Center. We have welcomed 40 new families to our faith community during June, July and August.

Please help us in welcoming our newest members:

Jill and Chester Jankowski and Family
Rebecca Broderick and Family
Courtney and Michael Shishman and Family
Carolina and Frank Monroy and Family
Amelia Larrazolo and Moises Rangel and Family
Cynthia Brasic
Stephanie Zaher
Molly and Andy Schaller and Family
Jennifer and Ken Zaugh and Family
Irina and David Gust and Family
Erika and Darius Bikulcius and Family
Amy and Michael Hillsman and Family
Ann and Tim Weithers and Family
Kelly and Charles Machaj and Family
Jennifer and Jeff Metz and Family
Jennifer and Richard Berner and Family
Philip and Cassie Nederhouser and Family
Deborah and Michael Spencer and Family
Sheila and Ryan McNaughton and Family

The 2013-2014 school year kicked off on Thursday with the annual tailgate party. After students entered the building with their teachers, parents continued to socialize at the Parish Center with coffee and donuts provided by the Parent Association.

This year, the school welcomes Mr. James O'Keefe as the new Assistant Principal, Miss Ferrell in the 3rd grade, and Mrs. Mannebach joins the 5th grade team as a science teacher. Also joining the school is Mrs. Schulte to our CORE Program and Mrs. Stillo will assist Miss Hansen in the 4 year old PM Preschool Program.

The faculty and staff look forward to a wonderful 52nd year of providing a solid Catholic education to our children.

SHARE YOUR SPIRIT WITH OUR NEW MEMBERS

Are you happy being a member of St. John of the Cross? Would you like to share your knowledge and enthusiasm with our new members? Why not be a Host Family! The commitment would be to contact the new family 3 times in 3 months.

Please touch base with Elizabeth Russell-Jones at 708.246.4404 x 155 or erussell-jones@stjohnofthecross.org for more information.

Elizabeth Russell-Jones
Welcome Center Coordinator
CALENDAR EVENTS:
Aug. 25 DOS mtg 10am
Sept. 8 DOS mtg 10am
Sept 8 6pm Kick-off Party for ALL TEENS: Dodgeball games!
Sept. 14 Kickball game 3:30pm

PRAYER REQUESTS:
- For all the changes and adjustments that a new school year brings to our teenagers & their families—that everyone shares the excitement and nerves and joys with open communication!
- In gratitude for an amazing gathering of parents last weekend who love and care for their teenagers—your conversation and enthusiasm to draw teens to faith encourage each other!
- For our leaders that they may share their LE-AD-ER-SH-IP as teens and focus on P.L.U.S. as adults!

WANTED: ADULT AND TEEN LEADERS on Fall Ministry Teams:
Welcome our newest high schoolers during their Freshmen Experience for the fall semester! Lead our confirmation candidates on their Day of the Spirit Retreat Day Saturday Oct. 26th. Become a home group leader for our freshmen!
Details about these positions and our new leadership board can be found on our website at www.stjohnofthecross.org/crossroads/descriptions For further information contact Katie Hayes at 708-246-4404 khayes@stjohnofthecross.org or Christopher Zurowski teen retreat coordinator, 708-724-0419

Katie will be the guest on the Echoing God's word radio program, airing on Aug. 28 at 9:30 a.m. on 950 AM radio! Be sure to listen in. Great job Katie!
In August, we welcomed the following children into our Catholic faith through the sacrament of Baptism.

Manuel Marcus,  
son of Daniel and Christine (Oswald) Blanco

Connor Daniel,  
son of William and Lauren (Dillon) Ellsworth

Alexis Rose,  
daughter of Matthew and Andria (Guerin) Dmytryszyn

Lucy Harrigan,  
daughter of Sean and Julie (Harrigan) Dwyer

Noah Charles,  
son of Jeff and Catherine (Novotny) Barten

Jackson Brandon,  
son of Brandon and Natalie (Moten) Calvert

Luke Joseph,  
Son of Nathan and Susan (Kruse) Wilda

Callie Mary,  
daughter of Brad and Beth (Scouffas) Mann

Cooper John,  
son of Casey and Jenna (Crowther) Fraher

Bryce Alexander,  
son of Brian and Maritza (Perez) Mitchell

Jack Martin,  
son of Daniel and Rebecca (Battaglia) Broderick

Wyatt Dallas,  
son of Dallas and Meghan (Gallagher) Fox

May we remember your light today when we see the radiant sun, a burning candle, or a shining lamp. Jesus, our light, we praise and thank you. Shine on us forever.  
John 12:46

We are looking for volunteers to help with our parish Baptism Program!

We are looking for parents to be a part of our Baptism Team. Please consider being a part of this most important ministry that welcomes and celebrates the miracle of life. The baptism team is frequently the face of the parish for the very first time as couples bring their baby to be baptized.

One baptismal couple a month (the first Thursday at 7:00 pm) facilitates the preparation sessions so that you would only do about two or three sessions a year. Being present on the Sunday when the baptisms take place, welcoming the families, assisting the priest or deacon, assuring all is in readiness is a very important aspect of this ministry as well.

You will be trained and have all aspects of the ministry explained to you before making a commitment. Come and learn the theology of baptism and the richness of the baptism liturgy that you will help parents to understand.

Please call Fr. Filbert x120 for information on how you can become involved.

Baptism Preparation Meeting

The next Baptism preparation meeting will be held Thursday evening, September 5th at 7 p.m. in the Parish Center. Godparents as well as new babies are most welcome to attend with parents. Please call the Parish Center if you are coming or if you have any questions.
Dear Friends,

I am writing this letter of enthusiastic and heartfelt gratitude on behalf of all the boys and girls of Off the Street Club who are well equipped out at Camp Mathieu this summer thanks to the remarkable response made by your parish members and the Western Springs community in donating twin bed sheet sets, new pillows, towels, clothing items, toothpaste/brushes, mosquito repellent and various other items to help supply our camp.

We are grateful for all of these donations and inspired by the many years of steadfast care and friendship the wonderful families of St. John’s have shown for the children of Off The Street Club, now in its 113th year here on Chicago’s troubled west side. Every at-risk boy and girl whose lives are directly impacted by your compassionate generosity sends their love and deep appreciation.

Along with our most sincere thanks, I am joined by Arnett Morris, our Associate Director, the rest of the staff, and especially the kids, in wishing you and your families many blessings.  

Ralph Campagna, Director

Outreach

Operation Support Our Troops Annual Parishwide Collection: Sept. 6th-16th

Donation Boxes in Church and Parish Center

The mission of Operation Support Our Troops IL is to supplement the basic provisions provided to American soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan and overseas. The packages we send include packaged treats and toiletries that our troops cannot easily obtain. Top Ten Items Needed at This Time:

1. Individual cold drink mix packets (Gatorade, Propel, etc)
2. Slim Jims/Jerky
3. Crackers (16 oz or less)
4. Nuts (20 oz or less)
5. Cereal/breakfast bars
6. Flyswatters/fliestrips
7. Sunscreen (8 oz or less, no aerosol please)
8. Antibiotic or anti-itch cream
9. Toilet paper
10. Insect Repellent Wipes or Spray (8 oz or less, no aerosol)

Please do not donate glass items, larger sizes than listed or expired items. No pre-packed boxes can be accepted. Thank you for helping us support our troops!!

Questions: Contact Debbie Pusinelli (708) 246-6760 ext 251

Volunteer at Buddy’s Place

Buddy's Place is looking for volunteers to help support grieving children and their families in a variety of ways, including Greeters and Group Facilitators. The required 24 hour training is scheduled for August 26, 2, 28, 29 and Sept. 3, & 5 from 5:00pm - 9:00pm in Western Springs. If you are interested, please contact Kelly Huggins, Buddy's Place Director, at 708.995.3750 or at buddysplace@pillarscommunity.org.

St. Hospice Seeks Volunteers

St. Thomas Hospice seeks volunteers. You do not need to be a professional to do hospice work. What you do need is a listening ear, a supportive, non-judgmental attitude and a desire to make a difference in the lives of terminally ill patients and their families. Class will meet for 9 consecutive Tuesdays from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. beginning Tuesday, September 3 ending November 5. If interested, please call Barb Zerby, Coordinator of Volunteer Services at 630-856-6998.

Misericordia Family Fest

All are invited to the 33rd annual Family Fest on Sunday, September 8th from 11-6 at Misericordia’s Campus at Ridge & Devon in Chicago. There will be live entertainment, children’s games, kiddie rides, free parking, auctions & raffles, and food & drinks. All proceeds support Misericordia’s programs for children and adults with developmental disabilities. For info and tickets, call 773-273-2768.

ANNUAL BENEFIT DINNER for Bishop Abramowicz Seminary

On Sunday, Sept. 8, 2013, the annual benefit dinner for Bishop Abramowicz Seminary will take place at the Westin O’Hare Hotel in Rosemont. The evening will start with Cocktails and Silent Auction at 5:00 pm followed by dinner at 6:00 pm. Tickets are $175 per person. For tickets and reservations call Camille Kopielski 847-394-2520.
Rationalizing our Anger and Moral Indignations

I have come to set the earth on fire and how I wish it were already blazing. ... Do you think that I have come to establish peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division. From now on a household of five will be divided, three against two and two against three. This saying of Jesus is one of the most misunderstood teachings in all of scripture and, because of this, from the time of Jesus’ birth until this very day, we have been able to cloak a lot of our lack of charity, lack of respect, bitterness, and hatred inside the mantle of prophecy, claiming that the divisions we cause are the divisions to which Jesus is referring when he said he is bringing fire to the earth. But we are wrong. Why?

First, the fire that Jesus passionately longs to bring to this earth is not the fire of division and polarization, but the fire of the Holy Spirit, the fire of Pentecost, namely, the fire of charity, joy, peace, goodness, understanding, and forgiveness. And this fire unites rather than divides. Moreover, in answer to his question: "Do you think that I have come to establish peace on earth?" the answer is: absolutely, without doubt. Jesus came precisely to bring peace to this earth, as the angels proclaim at his birth, as his entire ministry attests to, and as he powerfully witnesses to in his death. Jesus came to bring peace to the world; no one may doubt that.

Then how does division enter? And why does Jesus tell us that his person and teaching will bring about polarization, hatred, and division? If the fire that Jesus brings to this earth is meant to unite us, why does it so often divide us?

It is not Jesus’ message that divides; it is how we react to that message that divides. We see this already at the time of his birth. Jesus is born, and some react with understanding and joy, while others react with misunderstanding and hatred. That dynamic has continued down through the centuries to this very day when Jesus is not only misunderstood and seen as a threat by many non-Christians, but especially when his person and message are used to justify bitter and hate-filled divisions among Christians and to justify the bitterness that invariably characterizes our public debates on religious and moral issues. Jesus still divides, not because his person and message are one-sided, divisive, or hate-filled, but because we too often use them in that way.

In effect, from the time of his birth until today, we have perennially used Jesus’ to rationalize our own anger and fears. We all do it, and the effects of this are seen everywhere: from the bitter polarization within our politics, to the bitter misunderstandings between our churches, to the hate-filled rhetoric of our radio and television talk-shows, to the editorials and blogs that demonize everyone who does not agree with them, to the judgmental way we talk about each other inside our coffee circles. We are all venting, mostly unhealthily, but forever under the guise of bringing the fire of love and truth to the planet. However, if the truth be told, more often than not, the fire we are bringing is more the fire of Babel than of Pentecost. Our moral fevers invariably bring about more division than unity.

Several years ago, for example, I was at a clergy meeting at which each of the priests present was asked to state publicly what he felt was the salient gift that he brought to his ministry. One of the priests, who had a long history of being a problem-child to both his bishop and his parishioners, self-confidently described himself in this way: "My gift is that I'm an agitator! I stir things up! I don't let people get comfortable. I bring Christ's fire! I'm prophetic!" He was certainly right about the agitation, the discomfort, and the fire. His bishop had no end of phone calls attesting to that. But there was a lot of skepticism as to his being a prophet. His approach to things and his rhetoric too much resembled that of an ideologically-driven talk-show host who divides the world up too-neatly between angels and demons, absolute right and absolute wrong, and has a too-facile division as to who is on God's side and who is on the devil's side. That kind of talk is mostly bitter, hate-filled, one-sided, and high divisive, but it justifies itself under the banner of truth and love, self-proclaiming itself as prophetic.

Daniel Berrigan rightly suggests that a real prophet makes a vow of love, not of alienation. It is easy to get this in reverse, and we frequently do.

Granted, there is a fire that divides, even while remaining the fire of love and Pentecost. But it is as fire that is always and everywhere respectful, charitable, and inclusive, never enflaming us with bitterness, as does so much of our contemporary religious and moral rhetoric.

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.
Eternal Rest Grant unto These, O Lord
Dr. Cesar Giannotti, husband of Martha and father of Gioia
Joan Padden, sister of Roe Lawinger
Dr. Drew Starsiak, former parishioner

Pray for our Sick
Dutchie Adamenas
Eve Baron
Paul Cervony
Terry Cullen
William Dwyer
Melissa Morrissey Eldredge
Bernadine Gordus
Janet Harrington
Karen Hult
Barbara Jacob
Allison Kazragis
Shirley Kazragis
Joe & Rosie King
Fr. William Mannion
Olga Theresa Matusik
Baby Maddie Mayer
Jay Meehan
Vickie McNally
Harry Milani
Baby Meghan Hope
Pacyna
Rick Reimer
Teresa Schaefer
Charles Sugrue
Guy Thomas
Baby Kameron Walters
Mary Catherine Warren
Pam Wilson
Elizabeth Witek

Mass Intentions
Monday, August 26
7:45 Ignacy Sakowicz; Special Intention
Tuesday, August 27, St. Monica
7:45 Ellen McGowan; Rosemary Sullivan
Wednesday, August 28, St. Augustine
7:45 Donald Gallagher; Thomas H. Wooldridge
Thursday, August 29, The Passion of St. John the Baptist
7:45 Michael Turlek; Roche Williams
Friday, August 30
7:45 Genevieve Ziembka; Bill Caplice
Saturday, August 31
8:00 Gene Figliulo; Raymond Cochran
5:00 John Den Besten; Edward Cervony
Sunday, September 1, 22nd Sunday Ordinary Time
7:30 Donald Gallagher
Kolbe House & SJC Parishioners
9:00 Bill Moore; Dr. Robert Strzyz
10:45 Steve Sagat; Beatrice O’Grady
5:00 Len Mancione; Gerald Godlewski

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Items for your Calendar
- On Labor Day, Monday, September 2, there will be a special 9am Mass. There will not be a 7:45am Mass or Adoration.
- The 12:15 Mass returns on Sunday, September 8, the weekend after Labor Day.

Wedding Banns
Claire Linehan & Mark Peterson

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

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Ministry Spotlight: YC Catechist

Our Youth Catechesis Program is taught by parishioners who generously volunteer their time and share their faith with our parish children. Currently there are openings for teachers in many grades. Here are some answers to FAQ about being a YC Catechist at SJC.

- You do not need to have a child in the program to volunteer. In fact, many older parents and grandparents have loved teaching in our program.
- Classes of 10-18 children are taught by 2 adults: a volunteer teacher and a classroom aide, or two Co-Catechists.
- There are 21 - one hour and fifteen minute class sessions during the school year.
  - Two days/times are offered - Sunday mornings from 10:15-11:30am and Monday evenings from 6:15-7:30pm. You may choose either day to volunteer.
- Classes begin September 15 or 16.
- While teachers and aides do not need a teaching degree or special certification, they do need to be practicing confirmed Catholics and complete the Protecting God’s Children-Virtus Workshop.
  - The Workshop is offered right at SJC—see today’s bulletin for details.
- Lesson plans and other materials are provided by one of the three Catechetical Coordinators. They are also on-hand during class time to help in any way.
- Catechists often enjoy sharing faith so much that they choose to pursue catechetical certification in the Archdiocese of Chicago.

This is a wonderful opportunity to make a difference and impact our parish youth by sharing your faith and values. If this sounds like something you might be interested in, please contact Janet Caschetta, Director of Youth Catechesis at jcaschetta@stjohnofthecross.org or 708-246-6760.

I will begin my 10th year teaching Old Testament to 6th graders in the YC program at SJC. During those years, I have seen students’ confidence in the love and mercy of God, their awe at the majesty of God and their relief when they hear that God is everlastingly faithful. These delights, which count among the most enriching of my life, are more than reason enough for me to continue to volunteer as a catechist. They are, however, only the beginning of the benefits I receive. There is no better way to learn the faith oneself than to teach it to a child. Their questions are probing, their concerns are genuine, they yearn to know the truth about God and themselves. Teaching yields a harvest different from and far greater than anything you expect. You begin with the noble intention of helping to form the faith of your students, and find to your delight that you reap the benefit of a deeper, better informed and more fervent love of Christ and His Church. Do consider offering your time and talents in this enriching apostolate. Madonna Muscarello

If I can do it with three kids, a full time job and numerous other community commitments...anyone can! It brings more fulfillment than nearly anything I do! Laurel Schumm

I love the YC program and its organization and preparedness. The students want to “know the church” and “know the Gospel” and I enjoy helping them discover our faith. Joe Haberkorn

Last year’s YC was a lot of fun. I like receiving the lesson plans and all of the additional activities to do were very helpful. It was a great experience as a high school teen to share my faith. Margaret Swinehart

Thoughts from your neighbors...