Dear Parishioners,

The great Feast of Christ the King has arrived. While some might speak of it as the end of the liturgical year, I think it is better understood as the culmination of the liturgical year. It is what the liturgy has been building toward since the first Sunday of Advent, 2012. While we have a three year cycle which emphasizes different Gospels in the readings, the rhythm of the liturgical year is always the same. We begin in preparation for the coming of Christ in the history of the people of Israel, in the present moment and for all-time.

Have you ever thought back over your life and tried to imagine how it might have been different if one or two facts were changed? Recently I was talking with someone who had a family member that was making a decision about what college they were planning on attending. The student had actually been offered a full ride at several universities, each of which is prestigious in its own right. In a way, she couldn’t lose, no matter where she decided to go to school, because she was sure to thrive and excel wherever she chose to attend. However, you can only go to one school at a time, so ultimately she has to choose which one of the excellent options would be hers. While academic success could be achieved at any of the schools, the final decision would change who her friends were going to be for four years and possibly for the rest of her life, who her husband might be, certain things that she would be a part of and/or excluded from because of the school she chooses, etc., etc.

Can you imagine your life without God being a part of it? Without faith? As impossible as that may seem, it also emphasizes why it is so important to remember how God and faith have been a part of your life. That is why Christ the King is so important a feast. It helps us to go back and review the year in which the birth of Christ, his life and teachings, his passion, death and resurrection and the life of his followers have had such an influence on who we are today.

How is your life, your faith, different today from what it was a year ago? Do you see growth or loss, newness or constancy, expansion or contraction? Or is one year too small a time frame to measure? Is the contrast clearer if you go back five years, or twenty? The rhythm of the liturgical year remains the same and the challenge remains the same year after year. But if we are not deepening our relationship with God, if we are not being stretched past our own smallness and limitations, our own prejudices and fears, then we are not participating in the mystery of divine love. Faith both challenges and comforts us. Pray to be open to being challenged or comforted. Pray to be a willing subject of Christ, the King.

Peace,
Fr. David

P.S. On Thanksgiving Day, Mass will be at 9:30 am. People bring such an amazing spirit of gratitude to that Mass that it is one of the best liturgies of the year, IMHO. The offertory collection on Thanksgiving days helps to fund the CARITAS SJC Needy Family Fund, which is used for financial assistance for parishioners who are experiencing particular hardships. Right now this fund is covering utility bills, mortgages, doctor bills, and many more household expenses like groceries and gasoline. Be assured your generosity to this fund directly impacts families who belong to SJC. On behalf of the beneficiaries, thank you from the bottom of their hearts. Also thanks for your generous support to the people of the Philippines and those in Illinois whose lives were so dramatically affected by last Sunday’s storms.

A smile, a nod, a simple good morning or evening… St. John of the Cross Parish strives to be a welcoming community to all. We are looking for parishioners to join our Greeter Ministry. Greeters come to Mass 15 minutes early to welcome people as they come into our church and then again after Mass as they leave. All that is required is a smile. Contact Elizabeth Russell-Jones at elizabethrussell-jones@stjohnofthecross.org to help out. We are especially looking for people to greet on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.
Thanksgiving Day Music
All singers in the parish are invited to join voices with all six of the choirs at St. John of the Cross as together we give thanks for our many blessings! Mass on Thanksgiving Day is at 9:30 a.m. on November 28. Please come for warm-ups and rehearsal at 8:30 a.m. on Thanksgiving morning. Happy Thanksgiving to all of you! I hope the day finds you surrounded by those you love and filled with all good things! Jessica

Christmas Music
This Christmas, all singers are invited to join one of the choirs at St. John of the Cross to help make the music at our Christmas Masses extra special! The commitment is minimal – attendance at only 4 weeknight rehearsals is required (Contemporary Ensemble meets on Thursdays; Traditional Choir meets on Wednesdays). Contact Jessica Koch for details by November 27: jkoch@stjohnofthecross.org or (708) 246-4404.

Vatican Survey: Pastoral Challenges to the Family in the Context of Evangelization
Pope Francis has called for an Extraordinary Synod to address the topic, Pastoral Challenges to the Family in the Context of Evangelization that will take place in Rome in October of 2014. The Holy See has asked bishops to share information about the topic as widely as possible and to provide a way for those Catholics who wish to contribute their comments and input to do so.

The instructions and the survey can be found on the Chicago Archdiocesan website, www.archchicago.org/vatican-survey/.

All responses received in the Archdiocese of Chicago will be sent to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in Washington, DC, who will pass on all collected response from dioceses throughout the country to the Secretary General of the Synod of Bishops in Rome.

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 28 to give thanks to God for the many blessings in our lives.

As has been our custom, the offertory collection will support our Caritas SJC Needy Family 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. Our offertory collections on Thanksgiving and Holy Thursday are directed to this fund, however donations can be made to the Caritas SJC Needy Family Fund throughout the year.

Parish News

Catholic Campaign for Human Development
Second Collection this Weekend: Go to our parish website to learn more about living at the poverty line. Click on the Serving picture.

Baptism Preparation Meeting Thursday, December 5
The next Baptism preparation meeting will be held Thursday evening Dec. 5 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.

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Advent... a little child shall lead them

Come and share a wonder-filled morning with scripture, singing, games and crafts with your child.

A family faith program designed for our Littlest Angels, Preschool children Ages 2-5. Parents or grandparents come too!

Saturday, December 14
10-11:30am
Parish Center

Dress comfortably—we'll be sitting on the floor.

This is the first of four preschool sessions for the Year of Strong Catholic Parents. Call YC office (708-246-6770) to register by December 11. This helps us prepare craft bags. Walk-ins also welcome.

Parish School News

Saint John of the Cross Parish School Collects Candy Wrappers
The St. John of the Cross Parish School continues to collect candy wrappers throughout the 2013-14 school year. This year’s Environmental Club committed to collecting at least nine pounds of candy wrappers. After the club meets its goal, the students will package them and send them to TerraCycle. TerraCycle exchanges each wrapper for a 2 cent donation to the school or charity of choice. Instead of keeping the funds, the students opted to donate the monies to organizations dedicated to reducing carbon from the atmosphere, adopting wildlife land, or planting trees. The more candy wrappers collected, the more powerful the donation. These wrappers will ultimately be recycled and used to make items such as pencil cases and lumber. This reduces the number of carbon emission into the air.

This Week at SJC
Monday, November 26, 2013 All School Thanksgiving Mass 9:15 a.m.
Wednesday, November 27, 2013 – Friday, November 29, 2013 No School
Solemnity of Christ the King

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

- We are children of God. If the Lord our God is King, and we are God’s children, then we must belong to a royal family. Make a crown out of construction paper for your table centerpiece. Every time a family member acts in a Christian way, have that person color a jewel on the crown. Hopefully by the end of the week, the crown will be filled with jewels of good acts.

- Pray the Lord’s Prayer together as a family. Place emphasis on the words “your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” Remind your family to be aware of God’s Reign in the world this week.

- The Church is called to be a sign of God’s Reign. Wherever there is violence, hatred, poverty and despair in the world, we are called to bring hope. Discuss with your family what each person is willing to do or willing to give up in order to help build the reign of God on earth, where you live.

- Say the Glory Be each evening as a prayer of praise for the kingdom of God.

How to Take Young Children to Mass

Sometimes at the end of Mass a parishioner comes up to us and says “Your three children are SO well behaved!” Our standard response is either, “Thank you. We work at it” or “Thank you, some days are better than others.” The “better” days are the product of years of articles and brochures we read on taking children to Mass. Here is the distilled wisdom we rely upon.

Before Church

- Make sure children are well-fed right before Mass.
- Beginning even with the smallest infants, dress them in some special clothing that they wear only for church or other special events. This does not have to be expensive and can be as simple as a nice pair of shoes. It helps them to identify what we do at Mass as different from everyday activity.
- Check your diaper bag to make sure it is stocked for any possible needs. Consider including a small toy or book that your child sees only on Sunday at Mass. These should be quiet and made of soft material so that they do not distract those around you from their prayer while they are being played with or in case they are dropped.
- Put on a fresh diaper or visit the bathroom right before walking out the door of your home or into the church.

At Church

- Sit up front. Over time it also helps them to understand what is most essential about Mass without the distraction of rows and rows of backsides between them and the altar.
- We physically hold our children in our arms during Mass. This helps in many ways. The children get a better view; as they grow and mature we can talk them through the stories and the actions; and we have a bit more control over their behavior. If an infant or toddler gets squirmy, often switching who is holding them is enough to calm them down. Otherwise we might play a quiet game of “point to the...candles, priest, altar, cross, etc.”
- During their two-year-old year, we begin to let our children stand for a portion of Mass or try sitting next to us quietly, instead of on our laps. Then when they turn three it is a special milestone to be big enough to stand, sit and kneel all on their own (although if they can’t see over the pew we have them stand during the kneeling portions of the Eucharistic Prayer).
- If an infant or toddler makes a little noise during Mass and settles down right away, try not to feel self-conscious. Most folks except for those closest to you do not even notice. And even if they do notice, give your fellow parishioners credit for being adults who can focus through a small distraction. By Stacey and Josh Noem

Article continues in next week’s bulletin or read the whole article on our website at www.stjohnofthecross.org.
Happy Thanksgiving

During this time of thanksgiving, we offer our humble gratitude to all the families of Youth Catechesis. Thank you for sharing your children with us. We appreciate the opportunity to minister to your children about Jesus Christ.

Let Us Give Thanks to the Lord

Praise His Name
Give Thanks
With Thanksgiving
Praise the Lord

YC Schedule

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Youth Catechesis Office

yc@sjcross.org * 708-246-6760
www.stjohnofthecross.org/yc
Monday thru Thursday 8:30am-4:00pm

Crossroads

National Catholic Youth Conference
Please pray for the group that is returning from the NCYC leadership conference. We look forward to hearing their exciting stories and experience the energy they bring back from Indianapolis.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Nov 24 Pizza party after 5pm Mass

For a complete calendar of Crossroad events for the year go to: www.stjohnofthecross.org/crossroads/events

The challenge of leadership is to be strong, but not rude; be kind, but not weak; be bold, but not bully; be thoughtful, but not lazy; be humble, but not timid; be proud, but not arrogant; have humor, but without folly. —Jim Rohn

Fenwick Open House
505 W. Washington Blvd., Oak Park
Sunday, December 1 from 1:00-3:00pm. Doors open at 12:30pm and formal presentation begins at 1:00pm. Great opportunity to hear from administration and meet teachers, coaches, and club moderators! ecomiskey@fenwickfriars.com (708)386-0127 x142

St. Laurence Open House
77th and Central in Burbank
Sunday, December 8, for 6th, 7th and 8th grade boys and their parents, between 10am and noon. Questions: Call 708-458-6900, x 252 or 237.

Katie Hayes: khayes@stjohnofthecross.org
Steve Foody: crossroads@stjohnofthecross.org

Happy Thanksgiving

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Less a matter of being saved from, than a matter of means: "you will be with me in Paradise." Salvation is less a matter of being saved from, than a matter of being saved for. Here is our strongest motivation to live a Gospel life: Jesus invites us to share in his eternal glory.

How is Christ a king? Not by sitting on a throne; he hangs on a cross. Not by amassing territory; he establishes a kingdom of mercy and forgiveness. Not by wielding power; he does not save himself. What makes Christ our King is that he gave himself for the salvation of others. Here is what it means for Christ to be King: he gave his life for others. Here is what it means for us to live under his reign: to give our lives for others, too, and hear Jesus say to us, "you will be with me in Paradise." This is why we persevere in following Jesus. This is why we are willing to empty ourselves for the sake of others . . . because by giving of ourselves we enter with Jesus into Paradise. By giving of ourselves we grasp that which we are saved for: eternal happiness in Christ's eternal kingdom.

Closing Prayers:
May we be faithful to the demands of Christ's reign and embrace others with openness and forgiveness. May we one day receive the fullness of life Christ promises to his faithful followers.

For Reflection:
Jesus has saved me for . . . Because of this, I . . . Knowing Jesus has saved me, I am opened to . . . I am free to . . .

Richard Rohr Meditation
"Wondering" is a word connoting at least three things:
- Standing in disbelief,
- Standing in the question itself,
- Standing in awe before something.

Try letting all three “standings” remain open inside of you. This is a very good way to grow spiritually, as long as the disbelief moves beyond mere skepticism or negativity.

When Scholastic philosophy was at its best (in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries), the development of an idea proceeded by what the great teachers called the questio (Latin, “to seek”). Our English word “quest” may come from that understanding. The systematic asking of questions opened up wonder and encouraged spiritual curiosity, ever refining the question itself instead of just looking for the perfect answer.

Scholastic philosophy quickly degenerated when people rushed to supposed easy answers instead of remaining in the brilliance and humility of the questio or quest itself. We ended up with Thomists instead of the fitting silence of Thomas Aquinas himself. We ended up with Scotists who bored you beyond belief, instead of the joyful humility of John Duns Scotus.
Poet David Whyte says, “We may only get one chance in a lifetime to break the spell and break the promise that we will not speak in our own voice.”

Come and explore what it means to receive the road of life that is right before you and understand that this is, in fact, your path. Learn resistance to what is only creates struggle. There are other choices. If you want to live in a different relationship to life, then learn to receive the initiating experiences offered by the Soul.

Paula D’Arcy is a writer, playwright, retreat leader and conference and seminar speaker. In 2001 she established the Red Bird Foundation which supports the growth and spiritual development of those in need throughout the world, including men and women in prison. Among her best selling books are “Gift of the Red Bird,” “Waking Up to This Day,” and “When People Grieve.”

Because this program is sponsored by SJC the $40 cost to attend is waived for our parishioners. Please register by calling the parish center before Dec. 5th.

The Well Spirituality Center is located next to Nazareth Academy at 1515 W Ogden Avenue in LaGrange Park.

Prepare spiritually for the coming of Christ with this popular, easy-to-use annual guide. During the especially busy Advent and Christmas seasons, this little treasure offers brief, down-to-earth reflections that bring prayer and Scripture into everyday life in a thought-provoking and lasting way. Through Jay Cormier's insightful reflections on Scripture readings from the daily Mass, readers will grow in their understanding of the word of God. This book will help busy people achieve their goal of enriching their personal prayer life during the seasons of Advent and Christmas.

Books will be distributed after all Masses this weekend. A $1 free will offering is suggested. Or purchase the eBook for $0.99 on your Kindle or Nook. Or download the free Liturgical Press app from itunes and purchase the eBook for any iphone, ipad or android device. During the week, look for any extra copies of the book near the church exits.

Tuesdays with Mary Rosary...in the Morning!
Make the Rosary a part of your weekly Advent Prayer Plan...

When: Tuesdays December 3, 10 and 17
Time and Place: 9:05 a.m. in the Mary Chapel in church
Who: All ages welcome!
Why: You'll be out the door by 9:30--and ready to face the holiday craziness with a bit more of a peace-filled heart!
Note: There is No Rosary this Tuesday, November 26 because of the Parish School Thanksgiving Liturgy scheduled for 9:15 a.m. in church that day.

Hope to see you in December!
A PERSONAL RESPONSE TO GOD’S PRESENCE

Either you and I are more important than God or God is more important than we are. The answer is obvious, isn’t it? Further, if what God wants and does is more important than what we want or do, then more of our attention should be focused on what God is and does. Again, what God wants to say to us is more important for us than anything we may have to say to Him. And God does want to speak and communicate Himself to us.

When prayer becomes too self-centered, even if it is centered upon noble and holy desires, if the focus of our prayer is I, me, or my, we are going to be in difficulty.

Prayer is a personal response to God’s presence. This means that God first makes Himself present to us. Prayer is our awareness and acknowledgement of God’s presence. It is what God does to us, rather than anything we do. St. John reminds us that genuine love means first of all not that we love God (which may or may not be true), but that God first loves us. His love for us is more important than our love for Him. He wants and appreciates and is grateful for our love; but since His love for us is more important than our love for Him, His love deserves more of our attention.

It seems to me that there are three aspects of genuine prayer that we should keep in mind. First of all, if prayer is a personal response to God’s presence, then, the beginning of prayer is to be aware of that presence, simply to acknowledge it, to be able to admit: "Yes God my Father, You do love life into me. Yes, You love life and being into the things around me and into all that comes into my senses. You love talents and these longings into me. etc." The focus is on God and what God does.

I want to make a distinction. I know that the terms meditation and prayer are used interchangeable and that they are used differently by different authors. By religious meditation I mean thinking about God or what God does or about anything good, holy, or pious; but this is not prayer. When I am thinking about you, you are the focal point of my thoughts, but that is not communication with you. Prayer is a person-to-person communication with God. If I am thinking about God or the life of Christ and what he has done, that is holy, meritorious, good and helpful for prayer, but it is not essentially prayer.

Prayer is when "He" becomes "You", when I say, "Yes, God my Father, You love life into me," When I say to myself, "God loves life into me," that is meditation. Do you see how I am using the words? When there is a You-I relationship with the Father, Son and Spirit, I call this response genuine prayer. If there is a consideration of what He is and does, but not a You-I relationship, it may be helpful, good and holy, but it is not essentially prayer.

The basis or first step in prayer is for me to wake up and to face reality; to realize that He is present to me, that He loves breath and being a share of His own divine life and all my capacities into me, and to be able to say, "Yes, God my Father, You do love all this into me. Yes, Jesus my Brother, You do. Yes, God my Spirit, You do." That is to pray. If in the few minutes that we have during the times of private prayer, we do nothing else but merely make ourselves aware of the God who is already making Himself present to us, that experience in itself is profound prayer; it is fruitful prayer; it is even the beginnings of mystical prayer. This is a genuine opening up to God who communicates Himself to us if we only give him the opportunity.

There is a difference between persons and things. God is present to things; God saturates things with His presence, because He loves life and being into them. But there is no acknowledgement on the part of non-personal things; they are incapable of prayer. You and I, however, because we are persons, can acknowledge that presence; and that is the first step in prayer.

The following are excerpts from an article written by Rev. Armand M. Nigro, S.J. It is printed with permission from Loyola Press © Copyright 2013 Loyola Press, Chicago, USA. www.LoyolaPress.com
What Makes Marriage Work?

Communication

What is the one indispensable ingredient for making marriages work? Family life educators usually answer: communication. This is good news, because effective communication can be learned. Skills such as active listening, using “I” statements, paying attention to my feelings and those of my spouse, and learning tips for “fighting fair” make marriage easier. Some couples use these skills intuitively because they saw them modeled in their own upbringing. Others can learn them through classes, workshops and reading.

Of course, the hardest part of communicating usually comes when there is disagreement between the two of you.

Commitment and Common Values

Some ingredients, if missing, can doom a relationship from the start. Two primary ones are commitment and common values.

Commitment bonds a couple together when you are tired, annoyed, or angry with each other. Sometimes, remembering your vows can prompt you to push past these problems and try to forgive and start again.

Common values are important. If you aren't together on basic values such as children, honesty, fidelity, and putting family before work, no amount of learning or effort of the will can resolve the conflict. For example, constant tension will result if one spouse wants to live simply while the other wants life’s luxuries.

Spirituality/Faith

You might not consider yourself a spiritual person; however, anyone who seeks the deeper meaning of life, and not a life focused on personal pleasure, operates out of a spiritual sense. For many this desire is expressed in commitment to a specific faith tradition. Here one joins with others to worship God and work for the common good.

Although being a person of faith is not essential to making your marriage work, it’s a bonus. Certainly good people throughout the ages have had happy marriages and not all of them have been religious. But it helps to have faith principles to guide you and a faith community to encourage your commitment.

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Did You Know...

Couples who stay married and happy have the same levels and types of disagreements as those who divorce. The difference stems from how they handle disagreements. “It’s about behaviors – or best practices.” (The Emerging Field of Marriage Education, Diane Sollee, Coalition for Marriage, Family & Couples Education, www.smartmarriages.com/fish.html)

SJC Saintly Senior Club
Luncheon & Lively Entertainment
Friday, December 6th
11:30am

Get in the Christmas Spirit at our annual Christmas get together. It’s a great way to make new friends and keep the old! Our luncheon will start with a lovely hors d’oeuvre table and be followed by a delicious buffet of 2 meat entrees and all the trimmings, all topped off with homemade dessert. Wine, beer, pop, coffee and tea are included.

RSVP by Monday, December 2. Tickets are $15 for members and $20 for nonmembers or guests.

Name:_________________________________
Phone: ________________________________
Number Attending: _______________________
Amount Enclosed:________________________

Yes I’d like to join the Saintly Senior Club.
Member dues is $10 each year.
Name:________________________
Address:________________________
________________________
Phone:________________________

Questions? Trudy Schmitt at 246-1619
Volunteer Tutors Needed
Feel good by doing good! School and Tutors on Wheels, the free adult English literacy program of the Congregation of St. Joseph needs volunteers to tutor adults who live in the Darien area on Mondays at Lace Elementary School at 75th St. and Cass Ave. in Darien, Ill. Volunteers needed only one hour a week. Enjoy the health benefits of volunteering!
Attend a free orientation on Saturday, December 7, 2013 from 1:00 pm-5:00pm at Indian Prairie Library, 401 Plainfield Rd., in Darien. (Conference Room). All are welcome. Call (708) 482-5085 to sign up.

The Philippines Need You
Catholic Relief Services (CRS) is the international humanitarian agency of the Catholic community in the United States. Founded in 1943 by the U.S. bishops, the agency provides assistance to 130 million people in more than 90 countries and territories To support CRS and respond to this emergency in the Philippines, please make a donation which can be sent to: ATTN: Typhoon Haiyan Philippines Emergency Appeal Catholic Relief Services 3525 S. Lake Park Ave. Chicago, IL 60653
You can also donate online! Go to our parish website to link to:
www.ChicagoPeaceAndJustice.org/PhilippinesRelief

Career Network
Interfaith Career Network (ICN) offers many tools to assist job seekers, but we need your assistance to provide the most important element in a job search which is open positions. If you are a hiring manager or aware of open positions at your company, send the information to jkennedy1333@ameritech.net or tom_rohan@yahoo.com. Any and all postings are welcome. ICN job seekers are at all stages of their career, in every industry, and with a broad spectrum of education and experience. All job postings will be communicated to the 400 member ICN Yahoo group. Ideally it will be a WIN/WIN for your company and a qualified job seeker in your community.
If you have any questions or for additional information you may also contact Judy Kennedy at 708.352.8943 or Tom Rohan at 708.772.4231. Lastly, to learn more about ICN please visit us at www.interfaithcareer-network.org.

Livestock for Life
Give the gift that keeps giving! Each year parishioners help our brothers and sisters at our Sharing Parish, Holy Cross, in Jinja, Uganda through the Livestock for Life Program. 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 with the form below to the Parish Center. Each gift is $40.
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!

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, St. Agatha, as well as families in our own parish community.

Join in on the fun! Sign up for Share Christmas runs for 3 weekends beginning this weekend, November 23-24 after all Masses and continues through the December 7-8 weekend. Sign up will also take place on Thanksgiving Day after the 9:30am Mass. For your convenience our parish Manna reps will be available in the church community room for you to purchase food and gift certificates.

What can I buy?
- An unwrapped gift for a child (infant to 18 years old)
- A food gift card from Jewel 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 Sharing Box and direct your donation to the Special Collections link to choose Share Christmas. Your gifts will be used to purchase food and gift certificates.

Drop off Days are December 9 & 10 between 9:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. at the Parish Center. The gifts will then be delivered to the parishes on Saturday, December 14th. 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.

Find us ready Lord...not standing still.
Find us working and loving and doing your will.
Find us ready Lord...faithful in love and building the kingdom that’s here and above!

www.stjohnofthecross.org 11-24-13 page 12 praying ~ serving ~ sharing
Handling Resentment in our Lives

Many of us, I suspect, know about the work of the renowned anthropologist, Rene Girard and the dissemination of his insights through the work of his student, Gil Bailie. With gratitude to them, I pass along one of their insights, an invaluable look at how we try to handle resentment in our lives.

When astronauts journey into space, their capsules are equipped with a machine that gets rid of the carbon monoxide they produce as they breathe. If that machine breaks down, they're in trouble, as was shown in the movie Apollo 13. Traveling inside a space capsule is possible only if there's a machine constantly getting rid of the carbon monoxide being produced.

That's also true for our human journey. All groups constantly produce the suffocating gas of resentment and jealousy. Resentment is present inside of virtually every human community and family because, as Girard puts it, we're "mimetic", which means, among other things, that we always want what others have. This inevitably creates tension, resentment, jealousy, and conflict. It's no accident that two of the Ten Commandments have to do with jealousy.

What's the machine inside human life that tries to rid us of the carbon monoxide of jealousy and resentment? Anthropologists tell us that we try to rid ourselves of tension by scapegoating. How does scapegoating work and how does it get rid of tension?

Consider this example: Imagine going out for lunch with a number of your colleagues or co-workers. There will be, as is always the case, some personality conflicts and tensions among us. But we can have a harmonious and even fun-filled lunch together. How? By talking about certain people who aren't there, whom we all dislike, whom we all consider eccentric or difficult, and whom we all judge to be a negative or eccentric presence. And so we talk about them: how terrible the boss is, how difficult a particular colleague is, how eccentric one of our co-workers is. In doing that, in highlighting how different or negative to us someone else is, we make our own tensions with each other disappear for that moment. That's the essence of scapegoating. We create community with each other by projecting our tension onto someone else. By exiling that person from our community we create community with each other; but our unity is then based upon what we are against rather than upon what we are for.

All groups, until they reach a certain level of maturity, do this. And we do the same thing to cope with tension in our private lives. It works this way: We get up some morning and, for a myriad of reasons, feel out sorts, weighed down by a mixture of free-floating frustration, anxiety, and anger. So what do we do? We find someone to blame. Invariably we will soon pick someone (in our family, at our place of work, or a politician, or a religious figure) on whom to place that tension. Someone whom we consider difficult, or ignorant, or politically wrong, or morally corrupt, or religiously bad will soon bear the weight of our tension and resentment.

Moreover, not only will we project our tension onto someone, we will invariably "sacralize" the indignation we feel, that is, we will project our tension and anger onto that other not just because he or she is different from ourselves or because we consider him or her difficult, ignorant, or lazy, but especially because we feel ourselves as morally superior to him or her: we're right and he's is wrong; we're good and she's bad. Thus our resentment towards that person as a holy resentment, necessary for the cause of God, and truth, and goodness. Such are all crucifixions, hangings, and excommunications.

That's the normal human machine to rid ourselves of resentment inside our communities and inside ourselves. Jesus was crucified precisely because a community did this to him, and did it to him for holy reasons.

But, the ultimate victim of scapegoating, Jesus, invites us to something higher, and he models that for us in the way he died. Jesus took away tension by transforming it rather than by transmitting it. What Jesus does for us is comparable to what a water-purifier does. A water-purifier takes in water containing dirt, toxins, and poisons. It holds the impurities inside of itself and gives back only pure water. Jesus, as the Lamb of God, took away our sins and purified us in his blood not by some divine magic but, precisely, by absorbing and transforming our sin. Like a water-purifier, he took in hatred, held it, transformed it, and gave back love; he took in jealousy, held it, transformed it, and gave back affirmation; he took in resentment, held it, transformed it, and gave back compassion; and ultimately, he took in murder, held it, transformed it, and gave back forgiveness. That's the Christian design for taking tension and resentment out of our lives.

And, as Soren Kierkegaard suggests, we shouldn't just admire what Jesus did here, we should imitate it.

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.
Bake
for LaGrange Community Nurses Association & Helping Hand

Each year St. John of the Cross Parish volunteers bake cookies for the Nurses Association to distribute at the LaGrange Christmas Walk and also for Helping Hand’s Craft Fair Fundraiser and the Helping Hand client party.

Please deliver your cookie donations to the Parish Center between December 3rd through December 5th. You may place them on the tables labeled Cookie Donations in the foyer. Thanks!!

More information on each organization:

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

More than 3,000 west suburban residents turn to Community Nurse every year. Our patients are our neighbors, local small business owners and families in temporary crisis. Our patients are employed but their employers do not offer medical insurance. Our patients have jobs, sometimes two, and still have to choose between rent, food and medical care. We are here to help keep our community healthy.

For over fifty years, Helping Hand has been committed to the mission of assisting people with disabilities to become more independent.

Call for volunteers

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.

Being unwanted, unloved, uncared for, forgotten by everybody, I think that is a much greater hunger, a much greater poverty than the person who has nothing to eat.

Mother Theresa

www.stjohnofthecross.org  11-24-13  page 14  praying ~ serving ~ sharing

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

LUMINARIA KIT FUNDRAISER

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

Order Deadline: Sunday, December 8th
Pick-up Date: Sunday, December 15th from 1:00 to 3:00 in the Parish Center

Order online at www.stjohnofthecross.org

To order with cash or check, complete the form below and return with payment to the SJC Parish Center by 12/8. Make Check payable to SJC Women's Club.

Last Name: __________________________ First Name: __________________________
Email: __________________________ Phone: __________________________

 _____ 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: _______________________________________________

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Please contact Katie Pruitt at ilbalers@gmail.com or 708-822-9427 with questions.
Eternal Rest Grant unto These, O Lord
Scott Hayn, father of Kelly and brother of Tom, Greg, Don and Terry
Sally Hawkins, mother of Janet Schwartz, grandmother of Allison and Melissa
Demetrio Maguigad, husband of Zenaida and father of Donna, Zandrah, Suzarah, Demetrio & Jacob
Joseph Naponiello, brother of Mary Jo Noonan

The Lord is King; he is robed in majesty.
(Psalm 93)

Mass Intentions
Monday, November 25
7:45 Larry Hanson; Thomas Baer
Tuesday, November 26
7:45 Our Beloved Dead; Dorothy Surdyk
Wednesday, November 27
7:45 Don McAuliffe; Joseph Santagata
Thursday, November 28
9:00 David V. Yu; Frank & Anne Swiatek
Friday, November 29
7:45 Marie Capellani; Joseph Frank
Saturday, November 30
8:00 Miroslav and Ingrid Chybik; Thomas Siragusa
5:00 Jack Polivka; Julian & Lotti Pieszko
Sunday, December 1, First Sunday of Advent
7:30 George Poullet; Robert Pieranunzi
9:00 Steve Ryan; Mark LaFond
10:45 Paul Stmetz; Gene Miley
12:15 SJC & Kolbe House Parishioners
5:00 Therese Jurkacek; Kyra Martyn

Pray for our Sick
Frank Accardi
Dale Alm
Paul Cervony
Madeleine Cronin
Terry Cullen
William Dwyer
Melissa Morrissey Eldredge
Mark Giaigrande
Karen Hult
Barbara Jacob
Dee Kennedy
Kelly Kennedy
Rosie King
Kay Knowles
Fr. William Mannion
Mary Ann Matysik
Maddie Mayer
Vickie McNally
Jay Meehan
John Munch
Nancy Olin
Baby Meghan Hope Pacyna
Marion Pascale
Bob Piteras
James Reilly
Rick Reimer
Dan Santucci
Teresa Schaefer
John Shea
Charles Sugrue
Guy Thomas
Baby Kameron Walters
Mary Catherine Warren
Pam Wilson

This Week at SJC
Monday, November 25
10:30 AM Step 11 Christian Meditation
1:00 PM Little Rock
2:00 PM Spiritual Journaling
2:30 PM Adoration
Tuesday, November 26
9:05 AM Rosary
9:15 AM School Mass
9:30 AM Focus on Sunday Scriptures
1:00 PM Sacraments Study
7:00 PM Sacraments Study
7:00 PM RCIA
Wednesday, November 27
2:00 PM Christian Meditation
7:30 PM Christian Meditation
Thursday, November 28
9:30 AM Thanksgiving Day Mass
Parish Center Closed
Friday, November 29
Parish Center Open 9-Noon
Saturday, November 30
7:00 AM Christian Meditation

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

Italics—Living
Rev. David P. Dowdle       Pastor       ddowdle@stjohnofthecross.org
Rev. Joseph F. McDonnell   Pastor Emeritus  fngwila@stjohnofthecross.org
Rev. Filbert F. Ngwila     Associate Pastor john.schoop@newhemispheres.com
Deacon John Schopp         Deacon         bbright@stjohnofthecross.org
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Jessica Koch               Music          mjmartin@stjohnofthecross.org
MJ Martin                  Operations     erussell-jones@stjohnofthecross.org
Elizabeth Russell-Jones    Welcome
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• Meal Preparations
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• Family Respite

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All women of the parish are invited to a festive evening

advent by candlelight

featuring speaker, Marianne Firlit, who will offer inspiration on how to make the most of your Advent Season! Join us for a memorable evening in the Parish Center with old friends and new!

Thursday, December 5th 7-10pm • $10 per person

Table Coordinators for 8 or 12 are needed. As a coordinator add a special holiday touch using your linens, candles and centerpiece decorations - keep it simple and share in the responsibility with the women at your table. (Note: dishes, flatware and stemware will be provided in addition to coffee, soda and dessert)

For details and to reserve your table

Contact:
Connie Madden at
crm0517@sbcglobal.net or

RSVP by November 27th 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 and $10 per person (checks payable to SJC Women’s Club) to:
Connie Madden • 5333 Woodland Avenue • Western Springs, IL 60558 • 708.417.2012