December 1, 2013
First Sunday of Advent

Called to be Holy through Prayer, Service & Sharing
to Build Up the Kingdom of God

St. John of the Cross Parish
5005 S. Wolf Road Western Springs, IL 60558 • Parish Office: 708-246-4404 • stjohnoftcross.org
Dear Parishioners,

R.C.I.A. (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) is a journey of faith. This year we are blessed to be with nine candidates who, God willing, will be fully received into the Catholic Church at Easter. Christopher Ing and Christie Kenny are our catechumens to be baptized and receive the sacraments of initiation. Chris, Brett, Wendi, Bob, Keith, Nicole, and Katie, already baptized, will complete the sacraments of initiation and be received into the Catholic Church. With the help of the RCIA Team in our parish, our candidates have gone through the pre-catechumenate phase in which they have been learning to become acquainted with the Roman Catholic Church, hear the Good News of salvation from Jesus Christ, our Savior, and look within their lives to see connections to the Gospel story. Throughout this time they have been discerning if they truly desire to become Catholics at this time. The completion of this phase opens the next new phase and marks a new stage in this important journey of faith.

Last Sunday, November 24th at the 10:45 am Mass we celebrated the Rite of Acceptance into the order of Catechumens/Rite of Welcome. It is the first rite of the RCIA process. Those desiring to continue on to the second phase (the Catechumenate or Study Period) make a public commitment to accept the way of the cross. The worshipping community, our parish family, publically welcomed them and promised to support them in their ongoing journey of faith. Both the candidates (the baptized) and catechumens (the unbaptized) were signed with the Sign of the Cross to remind them of their commitment; they also received the Word of God to remind them that the Scriptures are the source of faith. The four ways in which the catechumenate period brings to maturity the initial faith that is manifested in the Rite of Acceptance and Welcome are: (1) catechesis, (2) liturgical rites, (3) community life, and (4) apostolic works.

With the help of their sponsors, catechists and the whole parish community our catechumens and candidates will continue to deepen their understanding of the Catholic teachings and find their place in our Parish. Let us welcome Christopher, Christie, Chris, Brett, Wendi, Bob, Keith, Nicole, and Katie in our community of faith and continue to pray for them in their journey.

Peace!
Fr. Fil Ngwila

Why was the beginning of Mass Different Today?

Today is the first Sunday of Advent, a season of waiting, stillness, reflection, and of expectation; a time when we are called to “Prepare the Way of the Lord,” as we look for the light of the coming Messiah and the fullness of the kingdom of God.

You may have noticed that at the beginning of Mass today we did not recite the usual “Lord, have mercy, Christ, have mercy, Lord, have mercy.” This part of Mass is called the Penitential Act when we recall our sins and place our trust in God’s abiding mercy. The presider may choose from 3 different options for the Penitential Act. The form we most commonly use at Mass is Form C, but many may also be familiar with Form A, which is the Confiteor. During this season of Advent we will be using Form B, one not as familiar to us, as a way to signal we are entering a new season and a new liturgical year.

Form B (Dialogue)
Priest: Have mercy on us, O Lord.
People: For we have sinned against you.
Priest: Show us, O Lord, your mercy.
People: And grant us your salvation.
Priest: May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life.
People: Amen.
Form B is completed by singing or reciting of the threefold repetition of the Kyrie, eleison (Lord, have mercy).
As Christmas draws near, you are invited to a quiet Morning of Meditation

St. John of the Cross: Doctor of Divine Love
*Presentation by Joyce Hajdukovic, SFCC, PhD
  *Periods of meditation  *Time for sharing
  All are invited: Those who meditate,
  Those who want to learn to meditate, and
  Those who want to know more about meditation.

Saturday, December 21, 2013
Hospitality 8:30 AM, Program 9-11:30 AM
Parish Center
Sponsored by the Christian Meditation group (wccm.org)
Freewill offering accepted  Reservations are requested, but not required. Contact:
Mary – 708-246-5108, or mary105105@gmail.com

Come Lord Jesus!
As we prepare our hearts for your coming during these holy days of Advent, open our eyes to recognize that you are already in our midst, in your Word, in the sacraments, and in all our brothers and sisters. Amen.

Come let us worship the Lord, the King who is to come.

WALKING THE PATH BEFORE YOU
SATURDAY, DEC. 7TH :1-4 PM
PAULA D’ARCY

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 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.

Come Walk the Labyrinth
Friday, December 13 from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m.
in the Mary Chapel

Walking the labyrinth is a physical meditation. It has only one path so there are no tricks or dead ends. There will be suggestions for meditation or you might consider a question in your life, a passage of scripture that you want to embrace or simply letting go of the business of the Christmas season. The Labyrinth is a small version of the Chartres Cathedral Labyrinth Pamphlets and fliers at the exits of the church are available for more information. Allow about 10-15 minutes for the walk. Please wear socks.

Come and experience this peace filled prayer this Advent.
Family Connection

Many of us feel the pressure early in the holiday season to be ready for Christmas. But today’s Gospel challenges us to be ready for something other than the gift-giving of Christmas.

Read together today’s Gospel reading. As a family, talk about what it means to be ready for the day of the Lord. One of the roles of the family, the domestic church, is to be a school of faith leading one another to salvation. Reflect together as a family on how your family helps one another to be better Christians.

Commit to one thing that your family will do this Advent season to help one another be better Christians. You might choose to write this commitment down and post it in a prominent place in your home, perhaps near your family’s Advent wreath.

Pray together that God will help you in this Advent commitment. Pray together the Lord’s Prayer or today’s Psalm.

How to Take Young Children to Mass

Article continued from last week’s bulletin...

- If a child cries or makes continual noise, it is best to calmly step out of the pew and take the child out of the main assembly until they have calmed down or are quiet. However, it is important to return to the worship space as soon as they are quiet, so that children do not begin to associate poor or disruptive behavior with a pass to get out of Mass. Just stand against the wall until it is appropriate to return to the pew. Our experience is that stepping out and returning even a few times is not nearly as disruptive as a crying baby and parishioners appreciate your consideration of their attempt to pray. Those that are parents understand completely.

After Mass

- Praise your children abundantly for their good behavior.
- If they need some improvement, mention briefly how they might do better next week and explain why. Let them know that you will help them by trying to remind them before the next Mass.
- Answer questions children have about Mass and encourage them to understand the liturgy and its place in our lives.
- For older children consider taking time to discuss the readings and the homily.

In taking our children to Mass we operate on the principle that we need to teach our children how to be in church as long as it does not distract others around us from their prayer. Some days are better than others, but the gift of passing on how we pray as Catholics is worth all of the challenges.

As parents, and leaders of our domestic church, we are responsible for forming our children in our Catholic faith. There is no more important experience to Catholics than the Mass, so it is crucial to help children understand and participate in liturgy as much as they are able. At times, it has seemed as though the only thing we accomplished at Mass was the exercise of standing and walking with a grumpy baby. But we also know that children do not remain little for long and they rise to our expectations. We will have plenty of opportunities to experience transcendent prayer at Mass when our children are teenagers or out of the house. For now, though, our primary job is to make sure they “get” what happens at Mass. We find that God has found ways to feed us, even on the most difficult of days with a teething toddler.

By Stacey and Josh Noem
To read the full article go to: www.stjohnofthecross.org

www.stjohnofthecross.org 12-01-13 page 4 praying ~ serving ~ sharing
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.

The First Week of Advent Prayers
Lighting the Advent Wreath
Dinner and bedtime are made even more special with this ritual. The family says the prayer as the candles on the Advent wreath are lighted.
The family prays: Father in heaven, our hearts desire the warmth of your love, and our minds are searching for the light of your Word. Increase our longing for Christ our Savior and give us the strength to grow in love, that the dawn of his coming may find us rejoicing in his presence and welcoming the light of his truth. We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord. Amen.

Advent Grace Before Meals
LEADER: Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord. ALL: Hosanna in the highest!
PRAYER: All-powerful God, increase our will for doing good that Christ may find an eager welcome when he comes to call us to his side in the kingdom of heaven, where he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. ALL: Amen.
LEADER: Lord, have mercy. ALL: Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
LEADER: Our Father . . . (Continue in unison.)
LEADER: Bless us, O Lord, and these your gifts which we are about to receive from your bounty; through Christ our Lord. ALL: Amen.
LEADER: May the King of eternal glory make us sit at his welcome table in heaven. ALL: Amen.

We largely remain oblivious to the deeper movement within us of the unfolding of time, unaware that in the midst of daily, mundane activities—like eating, drinking, marrying, grinding at the mill, etc.—God’s work of salvation is drawing nearer. Thus, time is not a “container” of mundane events, but is advancing toward something new—Christ’s definitive coming and the fullness of salvation.

Humans have been both unfaithful and faithful to God’s ways; have not paid attention, have paid attention to God’s instructions; have not been awake, have stayed awake to God’s comings. The people in the days of Noah did not know that the flood was coming; Jesus’ hearers did not know when the Son of Man would come. We, however, do know that Jesus has come, has taught us the way of faithfulness, has brought us salvation. We need only to “stay awake.” Our belief in Christ’s Presence compels us to “stay awake” by conforming our lives now to the ways of God. It is meeting God on “the mountain of the Lord” that brings us to faithfulness. Staying awake, vigilance, is about faithfulness. It is about coming to the Lord, welcoming him into our hearts, encountering his instructions to us. All of this unfolds in the ordinary circumstances of our daily living as we welcome not only our family members but also the poor and needy into our Christmas preparations, as we extend our love and care for our family and friends to those who are alone and without family, as we root out whatever robs us of the kind of serenity and silence that enable us to prepare for Christ’s coming. Yes, Gospel living is a matter of staying awake in order that we may come to God.

Closing Prayers
May we “stay awake” and anticipate the coming of Christ by the goodness of our lives.

May we travel our Advent journey with new conviction about seeking God’s Presence in all we do.

For Reflection:
· For me, Jesus’ command to “stay awake” means . . .
· challenges me to . . .
· assures me of . . .
· What moves me from unfaithfulness to faithfulness is . . .
· from not paying attention to God’s instructions to paying attention is . . .

Lifelong Catechesis: First Sunday of Advent

Readings for the Week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
<th>2nd Sunday of Advent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Advent Waiting
Waiting in line can be one of two experiences. See if you identify with the examples below:

First Example: Waiting in Dread
You’re standing in line at the post office or the grocery store, waiting for your turn. You’re tapping your foot and keep looking at your watch. You don’t want to be in this line. Before long, you begin to think, “Oh, I can’t wait for this to be over!” Often times, the other people in line with you feel the same way! No one speaks to anyone else. Clearly few are enjoying the experience; the impatience or irritability you feel might even be visible on your face. Such an experience of waiting in line can seem isolating, almost lonely.

Second Example: Waiting in Excitement
Now think about the times when you waited in line at an amusement park, to buy tickets to see your favorite baseball team, or to hear your favorite band. In these instances, the waiting is much different. People are excited and you might even be talking to some of them about the ride you’re getting ready to experience, the sports team that you love, or the band you’re about to hear. This second example is the kind of waiting we are called to in Advent.

Waiting in Joyful Hope
At Mass, after praying the Lord’s Prayer, we hear “... as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.” This prayer reminds us that during Advent, we wait in joy, in hope, and in anticipation for the wonderful event we are about to experience—the feast of Christmas, the coming of Christ into our lives in new ways, the return of Christ in glory at the end of time. As the Church, we wait during Advent and look forward to celebrating the fact that God loves us so much that he sent his Son into the world to save us. This waiting is far from empty; rather, it is full of the hope that God promises us as we prepare for Christ in the feast of Christmas.

D. Todd Williamson is the Director of the Office for Divine Worship
Rock Solid Marriages
What helps a marriage grow?
Many things: shared spiritual values, healthy intimacy, recreational activities—even caring for a beloved pet!
While it’s easy to focus on the challenges and obstacles to married love, it’s harder to identify and utilize the many opportunities for growth. Each day presents opportunities to do something positive for one’s marriage, whether it’s a heartfelt goodbye kiss in the morning, a shared prayer before bedtime, or a spirited game of tennis. Day by day couples build a strong marriage by recognizing and acting upon these invitations to growth. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Prayer for Marriages
We thank you, O God, for the Love You have implanted in our hearts. May it always inspire us to be kind in our words, considerate of feeling, and concerned for each other’s needs and wishes. Help us to be understanding and forgiving of human weaknesses and failings. Increase our faith and trust in You and may Your Prudence guide our life and love. Bless our Marriage O God, with Peace and Happiness, and make our love fruitful for Your glory and our Joy both here and in eternity. Amen.

A Habit of Hope
Have you ever noticed that the holidays bring out the worst in our worrying? Several years ago I went through a dark period of illness and distress. As soon as one difficulty passed, another took its place. By the beginning of Advent I had fallen into a fretful habit of “What if-ing.” “What if the new medication doesn’t work?” “What if I have to cancel that work project?” “What if I still feel like this on Christmas—how will I get the dinner done, the house cleaned?”

“Look,” my husband said one day, “I know it’s hard to have hope sometimes. But living in the future steals today. Can’t you decide not to start sentences with What if?”

As an Advent offering, maybe I could. “The Lord is good to those who hope in him, to those who are searching for his love” (Lamentations 3:25). As days passed and I practiced tossing What-if’s out of my head whenever they intruded, I was surprised at how often I wasted perfectly good hours by worrying about something that hadn’t happened yet—and might never. I realized that when my own store of hope was used up, there always seemed to be someone around (maybe an earth angel?) who could show me the rainbow hidden from my view. Although I endured miserable moments and it took discipline not to return to the old pattern, eventually I stopped focusing on the fearful future.

Today I look back upon that period with astonishment, for not one of my worries ever came to pass. A waste of energy, yes, but also a lesson. As St. Paul reminds us, “Hoping for what we cannot see means awaiting it with patient endurance” (Romans 8:25). Each Advent, as I wait for the Child who brought us the hope that never fades, I give thanks.

What are your hopes for the coming year?

In the midst of the busy Christmas season, slow down to enjoy Advent waiting with a simple daily prayer practice:
Answer two simple yet profound questions: Where have you found God today? and Where do you need to find God today? During this Advent, focus on finding God in different ways, such as in holiday traditions, seasonal surprises, or encounters with others.
Parish News

**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](http://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.

---

Easy to Find...
Under News & Notes, you will find a link to the survey on our parish website home page.
[www.stjohnofthecross.org](http://www.stjohnofthecross.org)

---

**Luminaria Kit Fundraiser**

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

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

**Order Deadline:** 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](http://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 Checks 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: _______________________________________

---

*Sponsored by the SJC Women’s Club in partnership with Village True Value Hardware*

Please contact Katie Pruitt at [ilboilers@gmail.com](mailto:ilboilers@gmail.com) or 708-822-9427 with questions.
We have a lot to be thankful for at SJC! This month many of our classes worked on celebrating what we are thankful for. Our first and eighth grade buddies teamed up to collaborate and design their own turkeys. Both our first and eighth grade students really enjoy our buddy program. It allows the first graders to be mentored by an older student and it gives the older student the ability to be a positive influence in a younger child’s life.

Our Kindergarten class had the opportunity to illustrate pictures of what they were thankful for and they proudly displayed them in our hallways. The illustrations are beautiful as children are thankful for everything from their families to their pet frogs.

In our third grade, the students are thankful for the gift of literature. Each third grade student portrayed their favorite literary character from their October book of choice as a turkey. The turkeys displayed many colorful feathers and coats.

**This Week At SJC**
- **Monday, December 2**
  - Grade 8 Graduation Pictures 9 a.m. School
  - Pre K – Grade 7 Picture Retakes
  - Advent Prayer Service 2 p.m. Gym
  - Christmas Service Projects 2:15 p.m. School
  - Confirmation Parent Meeting 6:30-7:30 p.m. Parish Center
- **Tuesday, December 3**
  - Secret Santa Workshop All Day Parish Center
- **Wednesday, December 4**
  - Secret Santa Workshop All Day Parish Center
  - Band & Choir Concert 2 p.m. & 7 p.m. Gym
- **Saturday, December 7**
  - 2nd Grade First Reconciliation 11:30, 12:30 and 1:30

**Praise the Lord!**
*Children at YC also learn about the Lord Jesus through Praise and Worship.*

Mr. Jim Clauer leads our students in song. Upbeat, high energy songs of praise that we use during our YC Masses throughout the year. Plan on joining us on December 15th for our next YC Mass. They also learned some Advent songs, to sing along during Mass with.

**FUN! SONGS! PRAISE! CHRIST!!**
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.

Volunteer to be a Home Group Leader

Be a key part of the Crossroads community and welcome a Crossroads home group into your life. The impact you will make on these teens is immense and invaluable. During high school teens experience lots of spiritual and moral growth that lays the foundation for adulthood.

“Never could we have imagined how this experience would draw us closer as a couple, and how it would ignite our individual and marital spiritual lives.” -Brian and Deb Nickoloff

“If a brother or sister has nothing to wear and has no food for the day, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, keep warm, and eat well,’ but you do not give them the necessities of the body, what good is it?” (James 2:15-16)
Parish News

Retirement Fund for Religious Collection December 8th

Support elderly religious. A parishioner writes, “As a Catholic school student from grades K-12, I was formed to be the person I am by many religious brothers and sisters, and I am forever grateful.” Show your appreciation for the senior Catholic sisters, brothers, and religious order priests who made a positive difference in so many lives. Please give generously to next week’s collection for the Retirement Fund for Religious.

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.

Vocations

“They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks…”

(Isaiah 2:1-5)

If you think that God is calling you to serve the Lord of the harvest as a priest, sister of brother, contact Fr. Francis Bitterman, fbitterman@archchicago.org or at 312-534-8298, or go to www.ChicagoPriest.com. For information on religious life contact Sr. Elyse Ramirez OP at 312-534-5240 or eramirez@archchicago.org, and for the Permanent Diaconate program contact Deacon Bob Puhala at 847-837-4564 or bpuhala@usml.edu.

There is no greater calling than to serve your fellow men. There is no greater contribution than to help the weak. There is no greater satisfaction than to have done it well. -Walter Reuther

Baptisms

In November we welcomed the following children into the Christian community through the sacrament of Baptism.

Gianna Lynn, daughter of Richard & Sandra (Zanghi) Munizzo
Kathryn Mary, daughter of Michael & Marleen (Quane) Coglianese
Beck David, son of Joseph & JoEllen (Heiny) Berni
Robert Thomas, son of Theodore & Lindsay (Hoyt) Wulf
Olivia Joy Schmidt, daughter of William & Jeanine (Zanghi) Schmidt
Owen Frain, son of Robert & Susan (Blaha) O’Byrne
Nora Lily, daughter of Robert & Susan (Blaha) O’Byrne
Mollie Ann, daughter of Stephen & Dayanara (Reyes) Hurn
Ryan Cyrus, son of Michael & Armin (Hamidi) Radak
Emma Donovan, daughter of Matthew & Jodi (Donovan) Speiser
Edward James, son of Patrick & Anne (Shmidt) Flavin
Ella Jane, daughter of Burton & Susan (Uckerman) Podczerwinski
Grace Elaine, daughter of Anthony & Jennifer (Dietz) Castillo
Emma Margaret, daughter of Daniel & Kristen (Napleton) Hrones
Mary Elyse, daughter of Colleen (Roach) and Christopher Narbone

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
The Therapy of Family, Community and Church

Thirty years ago, Philip Rieff wrote a book entitled, The Triumph of the Therapeutic. In it, he argues that the widespread need for private therapy today exists mainly because community has broken down. In societies where there are strong communities, he contends, there is much less need for private therapy, people can more easily live with or work out their problems through and within the community.

If Rieff is right then the answer for at least some of the problems for which we seek professional therapy today is fuller participation within community life, including church life, rather than private therapy. We need, as Parker Palmer suggests, the therapy of a public life.

What is meant by this? How does community heal and strengthen us? In caption, community (life beyond our private selves and private intimacies) is therapeutic because it draws us outside of ourselves, gives us a steadying rhythm, helps us feel ordinary, and connects us with resources beyond our private helplessness.

Simply put, to participate healthily within community and family takes us beyond the pathology and fragility we so often sense within the recesses of our own souls. Community steadies us. It has a rhythm and regularity that helps calm and make ordinary the feelings of disorientation, depression, paranoia, and obsession which can wreak havoc in our private lives. Participation in community gives us clearly defined things to do, regular stopping places, and regular events to structure and steady us. This is a commodity that no therapeutic couch can provide. Beyond this, community links us to resources that can empower us beyond our own helplessness. What we dream alone, remains a dream. What we dream with others can become a reality.

This may seem abstract, so let me try to illustrate it: While doing doctoral studies in Belgium, I was privileged to be able to attend the lectures of Antoine Vergote, a renowned psychologist and doctor of the soul. I asked him one day how one should handle emotional obsessions, both within oneself and when trying to help others. His answer surprised me. He said something to this effect: "The temptation you might have, as a priest and a believer, is to simplifyistically follow the religious edict: 'Take your troubles to the chapel! Pray it all through. God will help you.' It's not that this is wrong. God and prayer can help. But obsessional problems are mainly problems of over-concentration - and over-concentration is broken mainly by getting outside of yourself, outside your obsession. So, to break an obsession, get involved in public things - from entertainment, to politics, to work. Get outside of your closed world. Enter more into public life!"

He went on, of course, to distinguish this from the simplistic temptation to simply bury oneself in distractions and work. His advice here is not that one should run away from painful inner issues, but that solving one's inner private problems is also, and sometimes massively, dependent upon outside relationships, both of intimacy and of a more public nature.

Thus, for example: For 16 years I taught at a theological college. Many is the emotionally unstable student, fraught with every kind of inner pain and unsteadiness, who would show up at that college and slowly get emotionally steadier and stronger during his or her time there. That new strength and steadiness came not so much from the theology courses themselves, but from the rhythm and health of the community life within the college. These students got well not so much from what they learned in the classrooms but by participating in the overall life of the college itself. The therapy of community life helped heal them. How?

The rhythm of community, its regular interaction, its demands, it common prayer, its regular church meetings, and regular duties and responsibilities within a community or family not only nurture the soul, they keep us sane and steady. Private therapy can sometimes be helpful in supplementing this, namely, that program, rhythm, public participation, the demand to show up, and the discipline of the community bell have kept many a man and woman sane, not to mention relatively happy.

More specifically for us as Christians: The therapy of community life also means the therapy of an ecclesial life, church life. We become emotionally well, steadier, less obsessed, less a slave of our own restlessness, and more able to become who and what we want to be by participating within the life of the church. Monks, with their monastic rhythm, have long understood this, namely, that program, rhythm, public participation, the demand to show up, and the discipline of the community bell have kept many a man and woman sane, not to mention relatively happy.

Regular Eucharist, regular prayer with others, regular church meetings, and regular duties and responsibilities within a community or family not only nurture the soul, they keep us sane and steady. Private therapy can sometimes be helpful in supplementing this, but church life, with its regular rhythms and demands, can help provide a steadiness that's not available on a therapist's couch.

Ron Rolheiser
website: www.ronrolheiser.com
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
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 708.417.2012.**

---

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

Mass Intentions
Monday, December 2
7:45 Patricia Collins; Kevin Ryan

Tuesday, December 3, St. Francis Xavier
7:45 Richard Kennedy; Allen Hosticka

Wednesday, December 4, St. John Damascene
7:45 Alfonso Velasquez-Arana; John Koczwar

Thursday, December 5
7:45 Filomena Swietek; Marie Heraty; Beecher Bell

Friday, December 6, St. Nicholas
7:45 Frances Rydzewski; Larry Hanson

Saturday, December 7, St. Ambrose
8:00 George & Muriel Mackel; Walter Persperin
5:00 Robert Plechaty; Gene Harris

Sunday, December 8, Second Sunday of Advent
7:30 Robert Pieranunzi; Judi Urban
9:00 Paul Rose & Sam Messina; John DiMonte
10:45 Gene Miley; Ramon Sanchez
12:15 Bob Harazin; Edward O’Malley
5:00 SJC & Holy Cross (Uganda) Parishioners

Italics—Living

Let us go rejoicing to the house of the Lord.
(Psalms 122)
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 this weekend after all Masses. 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!