Called to be Holy through Prayer, Service & Sharing
to Build Up the Kingdom of God.
December 15, 2013
Third Sunday of Advent
Parish Advent Reconciliation Service: Tuesday, Dec. 17 at 7pm

Our parish communal celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation will be on Tuesday at 7pm in church. In this beautiful service we experience the gift of God's boundless mercy. Not only does it free us from our sins but it also challenges us to have the same kind of compassion and forgiveness for those who sin against us. We are liberated to be forgivers. We obtain new insight into the words of the Prayer of St. Francis: "It is in pardoning that we are pardoned."

At this communal service we prepare ourselves through the proclamation of the Word of God, prayers, songs, and a communal examination of conscience, after which 12 priests will be available to hear individual confessions. After silently praying a communal penance prayer, individuals may leave. Adults as well as children are welcome to attend.

Are you seeking to recover your friendship with God? Has it been a while since your last confession? No matter how long it has been or what your questions may be, we invite you to join us on a journey to rediscover the Sacrament of Penance.

Is it Reconciliation? Confession? Penance?
The Sacrament of Penance goes by many names. It is called the sacrament of conversion because in it we take the first step in returning to God from whom we have strayed. It is called the sacrament of confession because in it we disclose to a priest our sins and acknowledge God's holiness and his mercy towards us. It is called the sacrament of forgiveness because through the priest's absolution we receive God's pardon and peace. It is called the sacrament of reconciliation because in it we experience the love of God who reconciles. The terms are used interchangeably.

Act of Contrition
My God,
I am sorry for my sins with all my heart.
In choosing to do wrong
and failing to do good,
I have sinned against you
whom I should love above all things.
I firmly intend, with your help,
to do penance,
to sin no more,
and to avoid whatever leads me to sin.
Our Savior Jesus Christ
suffered and died for us.
In his name, my God, have mercy.

Extended individual confessions will be offered after the morning Mass on Saturday, Dec. 21 with the opportunity for private or face-to-face confession. Our parish offers the Sacrament of Reconciliation every Saturday throughout the year after the 8am Mass.

I forget how to go to Confession...
Before celebrating the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, prepare with an examination of conscience. An example follows on the next page.

The Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation typically includes the following steps:
1. The priest greets us, and we pray the Sign of the Cross. He invites us to trust in God. He may read God's Word with us.
2. We confess our sins. The priest may help and counsel us.
3. The priest gives us a penance to perform. Penance is an act of kindness or prayers to pray, or both.
4. The priest asks us to express our sorrow, usually by reciting the Act of Contrition.
5. We receive absolution. The priest says, "I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." We respond, "Amen."
6. The priest dismisses us by saying, "Go in peace."
We go forth to perform the act of penance he has given us.

If you are nervous or cannot remember the flow, just tell the priest and he will help you.
Examination of Conscience
An examination of conscience is the act of looking prayerfully into our hearts to ask how we have hurt our relationships with God and other people through our thoughts, words, and actions. We reflect on the Ten Commandments and the teachings of the Church. The questions below help us in our examination of conscience.

My Relationship With God
• What steps am I taking to help me grow closer to God and to others? Do I turn to God often during the day, especially when I am tempted?
• Do I participate at Mass with attention and devotion on Sundays and holy days? Do I pray often and read the Bible?
• Do I use God’s name and the names of Jesus, Mary, and the saints with love and reverence?

My Relationships With Family, Friends, and Neighbors
• Have I set a bad example through my words or actions? Do I treat others fairly? Do I spread stories that hurt other people?
• Am I loving of those in my family? Am I respectful of my neighbors, my friends, and those in authority?
• Do I show respect for my body and for the bodies of others? Do I keep away from forms of entertainment that do not respect God’s gift of sexuality?
• Have I taken or damaged anything that did not belong to me? Have I cheated, copied homework, or lied?
• Do I quarrel with others just so I can get my own way? Do I insult others to try to make them think they are less than I am? Do I hold grudges and try to hurt people who I think have hurt me?

God never tires of forgiving us
“How good it feels to come back to him whenever we are lost! Let me say this once more: God never tires of forgiving us; we are the ones who tire of seeking his mercy. Christ, who told us to forgive one another “seventy times seven” (Mt 18:22) has given us his example: he has forgiven us seventy times seven. Time and time again he bears us on his shoulders. No one can strip us of the dignity bestowed upon us by this boundless and unfailing love. With a tenderness which never disappoints, but is always capable of restoring our joy, he makes it possible for us to lift up our heads and to start anew. Let us not flee from the resurrection of Jesus, let us never give up, come what will. May nothing inspire more than his life, which impels us onwards!”

- Pope Francis

“The salvation which God offers us is the work of his mercy. No human efforts, however good they may be, can enable us to merit so great a gift. God, by his sheer grace, draws us to himself and makes us one with him. He sends his Spirit into our hearts to make us his children, transforming us and enabling us to respond to his love by our lives.”

- Pope Francis

Prepare the Way of the Lord

In the Bible to worship literally means to bow or bend toward, meaning to physically orient one’s body in the direction of the deity being honored. To worship God is to orient our lives toward him. When we sin, we direct our lives toward things other than God who alone is to be worshipped. To repent is to turn around or re-orient ourselves in the direction of God. The Sacrament of Penance is referred to as the sacrament of conversion because through it, the Holy Spirit gives us the grace we need to return to God from whom we have strayed. After we confess our sins in the Sacrament of Penance, the confessor gives us a penance to perform. The penance, also called satisfaction, can be a prayer, works of mercy, service to our neighbor, or voluntary self-denial. The penance is a reminder of our need to repair the wrong that has been done and to re-orient our lives in the direction of virtue. ©Loyola Press 2013
The gospel begins with John questioning who Jesus is, and concludes with Jesus extolling who John is. What makes John great is that he recognizes in “the works of the Christ” the person and presence of the Messiah—“the one who is to come.” This is exactly our Advent challenge: to see in the goodness around us the works of Jesus and the Presence of “the Christ.” Advent calls us to look deeper and then to trust what we see. Whom we discover depends upon what we see.

The mystery of the incarnation which we are soon to celebrate is primarily about Jesus’ ministry, summarized in Jesus’ response to John the Baptist. Jesus’ ministry is made concrete and visible in what he actually accomplished for the blind, lame, lepers, deaf, dead, poor, etc. Paschal mystery, Gospel living, means that we are charged to take up Jesus' ministry. We cannot ask people to take our word for it; our actions speak for us—or our non-actions. Either we take up Jesus’ ministry or we do not. Either people see Jesus in us, or they do not. We grow into witnessing to Jesus’ life and mission when we ourselves seek to answer the question, “Are you the one . . . ?” by personally encountering Christ in prayer and opening ourselves to recognizing him in our own and others’ good works. We cannot know someone whom we have never encountered. As we pass the midpoint of Advent and begin to look to our celebration of the incarnation, it would be good to take some extra, quiet moments each day; place ourselves in Christ’s Presence; and reflect on the day to see where Christ has been present to us in countless ways. Gospel living means that we, too, live so others can see the fruit of our good works. In this way Christ is becoming incarnate each and every day.

Closing Prayers:
May we proclaim by our good works that Jesus is the Savior present among us. May we faithfully seek to know more deeply who Jesus is.

For Reflection:
· The works which I have heard and seen that make me believe that Jesus is “the Christ” are . . .
· During this Advent, I hope to see . . .

Living Liturgy™ Sunday Bulletin

Let us pray for the grace of being open, open to being touched and healed by the power of God in Christ.

The Third Week of Advent

The following prayer can be used every day during the week. Dinner and bedtime are made even more special with this ritual. The family says the prayer as the candles on the Advent wreath are lit.

The family prays:

Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ever faithful to your promises and ever close to your Church: the earth rejoices in hope of the Savior’s coming and looks forward with longing to his return at the end of time. Prepare our hearts and remove the sadness that hinders us from feeling the joy and hope which his presence will bestow, for he is Lord for ever and ever.

Blessing the Manger

God of every nation and people, from the very beginning of creation you have made manifest your love: when our need for a Savior was great you sent your Son to be born of the Virgin Mary. To our lives he brings joy and peace, justice, mercy, and love.

Lord, bless all who look upon this manger; may it remind us of the humble birth of Jesus, and raise our thoughts to him, who is God-with-us and Savior of all, and who lives and reigns forever and ever.

Amen.

Readings for the Week

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<td>Num 24:2-7, 15-17a</td>
<td>Gen 49:2, 8-10</td>
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<td>Isa 7:10-14</td>
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<td>Ps 33:2-3, 11-12, 20-21</td>
<td>Ps 24:1-2, 3-4, 5-6</td>
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www.stjohnofthecross.org 12-15-13 page 4 praying ~ serving ~ sharing
To reach the goal of compassion we must not stop with the first gaze. It is the second gaze that we struggle and wait for most of our lives. In the first half of life, we have a critical mind and a demanding heart and a lot of impatience. These characteristics are both gifts and curses, as you might expect. We cannot risk losing touch with either our angels or our demons. They are both good teachers. The trials of life invariably lead us to a second gaze. This is the gaze of compassion and patience. Now we look out at life from a place of Divine Intimacy where we are finally safe and at home.

Only the second gaze sees fully and truthfully. The final surprise is that one’s supposed second gaze is actually God’s Eternal Gaze at you, which you have finally received like a long-awaited radio signal, and once you receive it, it just automatically bounces back to the Sender.

Adapted from Contemplation in Action, pp. 19-20
Lifelong Catechesis: Third Sunday of Advent

Family Connection

It is easy to look at our world and become discouraged by the apparent absence of God and signs of God’s salvation. Advent, however, is a season of hope, in which we acknowledge that salvation is both mysteriously present, even in our world, and yet to be fulfilled.

Read together today’s Gospel. Think about John’s question to Jesus: Are you the One? Jesus does not answer directly, but points to the signs of the kingdom present in his midst.

Together as a family, look through the newspaper for signs of hope that God is at work in our world. Pray that the world will know God’s salvation by praying together the Lord’s Prayer.


St. John of the Cross  Feast Day December 14

Introduce your kids to positive Catholic role models

John of the Cross was locked in a cell six feet wide and ten feet long for nine months, with no light except that which filtered through a slit high up in the wall. He later forgave the men who had imprisoned him. How could he do that? He explained, “Where there is no love, put love, and you will find love.”

John’s father had been disowned by his wealthy Spanish family when he married a poor weaver rather than a woman of equal economic status. Living in poverty proved to be too much for him, and he died shortly after John was born. John spent much of his youth in an orphanage, where he was clothed, fed, and given an elementary education. At the age of 17, he found a job in a hospital and was accepted into a Jesuit college. In 1563 he entered the Carmelite Order. Eventually he enrolled in another university, where he did so well that he was asked to teach a class and to help settle disputes.

When he met Teresa of Ávila and learned from her about the reform of the Carmelite Order, John decided to help with it. As part of this decision, he wore sandals instead of shoes and lived very simply in prayer and solitude. In 1577 the attitude toward the reform shifted.

John was caught up in a misunderstanding and imprisoned at Toledo, Spain. During those months of darkness in that little cell, John could have become bitter, revengeful, or filled with despair. But instead, he kept himself open to God’s action, for no prison could separate him from God’s all-embracing love. During this time he had many beautiful experiences and encounters with God in prayer. Later he would describe these experiences in poetry. In 1578 John escaped to southern Spain to join the reformed Carmelites. There he held leadership positions and wrote reflections on his experiences, which showed his deep spirit of prayer. When he became ill, he chose to go to the city of Ubeda, where no one knew him. It was there that he died.
Many couples when reflecting on their marriage speak of their sense of helping each other to heaven. They instinctively grasp St. Paul’s call to “a still more excellent way” in which their married love, which is God’s power alive within them, leads them to heaven.

As Christians, we understand this call to growth as a call to a holy, or virtuous, marriage. “Virtue” may sound like an old-fashioned word, but it lies at the heart of spirituality. A virtue is a stable part of one’s character that allows a person to perform good acts and to give his or her best (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 1803).

Couples, like individuals, acquire virtues through the repetition of particular practices and behaviors. They make the virtue their own by freely choosing to act in certain ways, every day. The question posed in our radio and TV spots, “What have you done for your marriage today?” is really an invitation to grow in virtue through a gentle word, a generous deed or an act of self-sacrifice.

No one brings all the necessary virtues into a marriage, and the virtues that spouses do bring need to be developed. So marriage is a “school for virtue,” in which spouses learn such virtues as forgiveness, kindness, and humility. It’s the work of a lifetime.

A holy marriage, one that is a communion of persons and a sign of God’s love, is made up of many virtues. Love, of course, is the more excellent way that includes all the virtues. As a couple grows in virtue they also grow in love. Hand in hand they walk the journey to holiness.

Set aside time to read and prayerfully discuss this article with your spouse.

By Archbishop Joseph Kurtz

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace,
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy;
O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
Amen.
This past November teen representatives from our parish traveled to Indianapolis for the National Catholic Youth Conference. It was an absolute blast! If you would like more information on NCYC, its nationally acclaimed speakers and thousands of participants please visit the NCYC website. We hope to see you in person for the future NCYC dates.

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

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

Dads and Daughters
What a fun Hoe Down they enjoyed before Thanksgiving! Lots of dancing and laughing was enjoyed!
Thank you to our YC Council for hosting the event and to all those that participated!

YC Schedule

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<td>FFC</td>
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<td>Jr Hi Groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Needs</td>
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<td>Sunday, Dec 15, Jan 12, 26</td>
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Youth Catechesis Office
yc@sjcross.org * 708-246-6760
www.stjohnofthecross.org/yc
Monday thru Thursday 8:30am- 4:00pm
**Outreach**

**BEDS Plus 2nd Annual Soup & Bread Event**

Join us for the second annual Soup & Bread fundraising event benefitting BEDS Plus on **Sunday, January 26, from 4 – 7 pm** at the Village Club of Western Springs, 4221 Lawn Avenue. Tickets are $25 per person and $50 per family (limit 5).

Savor soup dishes from popular local restaurants including Whole Foods Market™ Hinsdale, Now Serving Cafe & Catering, Sweet Tomatoes, Mattone Restaurant and Nickson’s. Choose from a wide selection of drinks. Enjoy live music from 4:30 – 6:30 pm by Sharon Speziale and Mark Dvorak.

It's a casual, fun Sunday afternoon event for the whole family!

Our mission is to help homeless individuals obtain stable, affordable housing and provide a continuum of professional services including emergency overnight shelter. BEDS Plus operates its nightly emergency shelters in seven community churches that serve southwestern Cook County. Our Support Center operates Monday through Friday, 10am – 2pm offering an expanded curriculum in addition to a nutritious lunch. Case management staff is available to assist individuals with health and mental health linkages, employment readiness programs, entitlement benefit enrollment and educational resources.

**For more information or to order tickets call 708-354-0858 x2   www.bedspluscare.org**

**Livestock for Life**

Give someone on your list
The Gift that Continues to Give

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.

Your
Name____________________________________
Address__________________________________
________________________________________
Number of Cards ____________

**Thanks from Catholic Charities**

Dear Parishioners,

On behalf of Catholic Charities, please accept our thanks for donating clothing on a monthly basis to benefit Catholic Charities West Regional Clothing Room. Every day, those in need turn to Catholic Charities for the most basic of necessities. Thanks to your help, more families will be able to dress their families.

A special thanks to the wonderful women that coordinate, collect and bring the donations and organize our clothing room as well. Thank you Karen Fedyk, Susan Mazur, Kelly Murphy, Molly Nocerino and Maureen King.

Our programs are fortunate to have the support of neighbors like you. Again thank you for partnering with us to improve the lives of the families in our community.

Sincerely,
Esmeralda Zepeda, Regional Services Director
School News

Parish School Prepares for Construction of Early Childhood Playground in Spring, 2014

Early childhood students at St. John of the Cross Parish School will have a new outdoor play structure this spring. The Village of Western Springs approved the construction permit in October and the school is developing plans for the installation of the small play area near the south side of the building adjacent to the 51st Street entrance.

The school offers three and four year old preschool programs as well as full and half day kindergarten. The new play structure will offer the children a safe and secure outdoor play space. Socialization and organized play are important components of the early childhood curriculum. The outdoor play area also fulfills a requirement for program accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. The school plans to pursue the accreditation process once the play structure is installed.

School administrators are reviewing plans for the physical layout of the play structure. (Proposed structure shown in photo) Installation will begin in March and should be completed in April of 2014. A ribbon cutting ceremony is planned for April 2014 during the “Week of the Young Child.” The new play structure will be financed through contributions from the school's capital improvement fund as well as donations and sponsorships from current and former school families.

The school is excited about this enhancement to school facilities! If you have any questions about our new early childhood play structure or would like to contribute to this project, please contact Kathleen Gorman, Principal, at 708.246.4454 or Gorman@sjc.pvt.k12.il.us or Mr. Tom Olk, School Advisory Board Member, at tom.olk@ftnfinancial.com.

Our music classes are actively preparing for our Christmas pageant. Each year, Miss Pechous plans a beautiful pageant focusing on the birth of Jesus. This year, our 1st and 2nd grades will present, “Guess Who’s Coming to Bethlehem?” Many of the students will portray animals that have heard that a new baby has been born, but they don’t know who the baby is or what he looks like until the angels come to tell them that it is the Baby Jesus. Our 3rd and 4th graders will tell the story of Jesus’ birth using traditional Christmas songs.

Not only do our younger children present a pageant, but our school choir spent Friday morning caroling for the residents at Bethlehem Woods. This experience is one that our kids really enjoy and look forward to each year.

This Week at SJC

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<td>Kindergarten Christmas Play</td>
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<td>Wednesday, December 18</td>
<td>Pre School Christmas Program</td>
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<td>Thursday, December 19</td>
<td>Grades 1-4 Christmas Pageant</td>
<td>Gym</td>
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<td>Friday, December 20</td>
<td>Out of Uniform Day</td>
<td>All Day</td>
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Misguided Loyalties

Anyone familiar with the life and writings of Simone Weil will, I am sure, agree that she was a woman of exceptional faith. She was also a woman with an unwavering commitment to the poor. But, and this may seem anomalous, she was also exceptional and unwavering in a certain resistance she had towards the institutional church. During her lifetime she longed for daily Eucharist, even as she resisted baptism and membership in the church. Why?

It wasn't the church's faults and failings that bothered her. She was a realist and accepted that every family and institution has its infidelities, flaws, and sin. She had little problem forgiving the church for its shortcomings. Her resistance to full genuflection within the institutional church had its root instead in a particular anxiety she felt before any social institution, that is, she saw how an uncritical patriotism or misguided loyalty often leaves individual members of an institution unable to see the sins and shortcomings within that institution. For instance, fiercely patriotic citizens can be blind to the injustices done by their own countries and deeply pious people can be constrained by their loyalty to the church so as to turn a blind eye on the church's faults, as was the case with many saints who supported the Crusades and the Inquisition. Blind loyalty to country, church, family, or anything else, Weil believed, becomes a form of idolatry.

She's right. Blind loyalty can easily become idolatry, despite its sincerity and high motives. It might seem wrong to criticize loyalty, but we can be too loyal, loyal to the point where our loyalty blinds us from seeing the real harm sometimes being done by those to whom we are uncritically giving that loyalty.

We are all familiar with certain axioms which each in their own way, would have loyalty trumping everything else: My country, right or wrong! The church, love it or leave it! A family's dirty secrets need to remain inside the family; they're nobody else's business! But these axioms, with their naïve and uncritical call for loyalty to one's own, are neither wise nor Christian. Both human wisdom and Christian discipleship call us to something deeper.

All families, all countries, and all churches have their sins and shortcomings, but we show our love and loyalty when, instead of blinding our eyes to those faults, we instead challenge ourselves and everyone within that circle to look at and correct those sins and shortcomings. We can learn lessons here from Recovery and 12-Step programs. What they have learned through years of experience in dealing with dysfunction of every kind is that the loving thing to do in the face of sickness, inside of any group or relationship, is to confront that pathology. To not confront it is to enable it. Real love and real loyalty do not remain uncritical. They never say: This is my family, my country, or my church - right or wrong! Instead, when things are wrong, they tell us to show love and loyalty not by protecting our own, but by confronting what's wrong.

That's in fact the biblical tradition of the prophets, exactly what the prophets did. They loved their people and were fiercely loyal to their own religious tradition, but they were not so blindly loyal so as to be uncritical of the real faults inside that religious community. They were never constrained by false loyalty so as to be blind to the sins within their own religious structures and remain muted in the face of those faults. They never said of their religious tradition: Love or leave it! Instead, they said: We need to change this - and we need to change it in the name of loyalty and love.

Jesus followed in the same path. He was faithful and loyal to Judaism, but he was not silent in the face of its faults and wrongdoings in his time. In the name of love, he challenged everything that was wrong. He taught, and taught strongly, that blind religious loyalty can be idolatry. He would be last person to teach that loyalty and love mean never criticizing your own. Indeed, he de-literalizes the meaning of family, country, and church and asks us to understand these in a higher way. He asks: Who is my mother and who are my brothers and sisters? And he goes on to say that these are not to be defined by biology, country, or religious denomination. Real family, he says, is made up by something else, namely, by those who hear the word of God and keep it, irrespective of biology, country, or religion. Consequently biology, country, and religion must be criticized and opposed whenever they stand in the way of this deeper union in faith and justice.

Blood may be thicker than water. But, for Jesus, faith and justice are thicker than blood, country, and church. Moreover, for him, genuine love and loyalty manifest themselves in a commitment to challenge things that are wrong, even when that means seeming to be disloyal to one's own.

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.
Vocation Awareness

“I send my messenger ahead of you to prepare your way before you.” Are you called to be sent by Jesus as a priest, sister or brother? If you have ever considered a vocation to priesthood, contact Fr. Francis Bitterman, fbitterman@archchicago.org or at 312-534-8298, or go to www.ChicagoPriest.com. Or 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. 

Women’s Club Cooking Night!

SAVE THE DATE…
Wednesday, January 22nd
7:00-9:00pm
in the Parish Center

Mary Gail Bennett of Deliciously Yours in Burr Ridge will return to share a new menu with us! Don’t miss out on this fun and delicious evening!

Details to Follow . . .
This Week at SJC

Monday, December 16
10:30 a.m. Step 11 Christian Meditation
2:30 p.m. Eucharistic Adoration
2:30 p.m. Spiritual Journaling

Tuesday, December 17
9:05 a.m. Tuesday’s Rosary with Mary
9:30 a.m. Focus on Sunday Scriptures
7:00 p.m. Parish Advent Reconciliation Svc

Wednesday, December 18
11:30 a.m. Ladies Bridge
2:00 p.m. Christian Meditation
7:00 p.m. CRHP Spiritual Director Training
7:00 p.m. Boy Scout & Cub Scout Meetings
7:30 p.m. Christian Meditation

Thursday, December 19
9:00 a.m. Flourish
2:15 p.m. Market Day Pick-up
7:00 p.m. CRHP Spiritual Director Training
7:00 p.m. Boy Scout & Cub Scout Meetings
7:30 p.m. Christian Meditation

Friday, December 20
7:00 p.m. Divorce and Beyond

Saturday, December 21
7:00 a.m. Christian Meditation
8:30 a.m. Morning of Meditation
8:30 a.m. Extended Confession in church

Wedding Banns
Georgann Grecco & Bob Mecozzi

Stir up our hearts, O Lord,
to prepare the ways
of your only-begotten Son,
that through His coming we may be worthy
to serve You with purified minds.
Who lives and reigns, with God the Father,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, world without end.
Amen.

Mass Intentions

Monday, December 16
7:45 Sally Gage; Bob McNulty

Tuesday, December 17
7:45 Coretta Spalo; A. George Zurowski

Wednesday, December 18
7:45 Joseph Santagata; Kevin Ryan

Thursday, December 19
7:45 Dorothy Surdyk; Gloria Oechsel

Friday, December 20
7:45 The Williams Family; Kathleen O’Flaherty

Saturday, December 21, St. Peter Canisius
8:00 The Ryan Family; Barbara Mann
5:00 Dec. Members of Parker/Weber Family; Robert Plechaty

Sunday, December 22, Fourth Sunday of Advent
7:30 George Poulet; Barbara Mann
9:00 Sisty Greifenkamp; SJC & St. Mark Parishioners
10:45 Ramon Sanchez; Julia Tarpinian
12:15 Lawrence Hickey; Galvin/Grogan Families
5:00 Eileen Dempsey; Dorothy Meech

Italics—Living

Pray for our Sick

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<tr>
<th>Frank Accardi</th>
<th>Vickie McNally</th>
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<td>Mitch Allen</td>
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<td>Mary Catherine Warren</td>
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<td>Kay Knowles</td>
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<td>Fr. William Mannion</td>
<td>Ron Ziemba</td>
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<td>Mary Ann Matysik</td>
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<td>Maddie Mayer</td>
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Italics—Living

Wedding Banns
Georgann Grecco & Bob Mecozzi

Stir up our hearts, O Lord,
to prepare the ways
of your only-begotten Son,
that through His coming we may be worthy
to serve You with purified minds.
Who lives and reigns, with God the Father,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, world without end.
Amen.

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

Rev. David P. Dowdle                   Pastor                        ddowdle@stjohnofthecross.org
Rev. Joseph F. McDonnell               Pastor Emeritus                Contact Fr. Joe through the Parish Office
Rev. Filbert F. Ngwila                 Associate Pastor              fngwila@stjohnofthecross.org
Deacon John Schopp                    Deacon                         john.schopp@newhemispheres.com
Bill Bright                           Outreach                       bbright@stjohnofthecross.org
Janet Caschetta                       Youth Catechesis               jcaschetta@stjohnofthecross.org
Jim Clauer                            Worship                        jclauer@stjohnofthecross.org
Kathleen Gorman                       School Principal              gorman@sjc.pvt.k12.il.us
Katie Hayes                           Crossroads                     khayes@stjohnofthecross.org
Jessica Koch                          Music                          jkoch@stjohnofthecross.org
MJ Martin                             Operations                     mjmartin@stjohnofthecross.org
Elizabeth Russell-Jones                Welcome                       erussell-jones@stjohnofthecross.org
Christmas Eve - Tuesday, December 24
4:00 p.m. Church
Children’s Choir                      Carol Prelude 3:30 p.m.
4:15 p.m. First Floor School Multi-Purpose Room
Cantor, Flute, Trumpet               Carol Prelude 4:00 p.m.
4:30 p.m. Second Floor School Gym
Cantor, Flute, Trumpet               Carol Prelude 4:15 p.m.
6:00 p.m. Church
Cantor, Flute & Cello                Carol Prelude 5:45 p.m.
10:30 p.m. Church
Choir, Brass Quartet                 Carol Prelude 10:00 p.m.
Christmas Day - Wednesday, December 25
7:30 a.m. Church
Cantor, Flute & Cello
9:00 a.m. Church
Ensemble, Guitar, Drums, Instruments
10:45 a.m. Church
Choir, Trumpet, Flute, Cello
12:30 p.m. Church
This Mass begins 15 minutes later than the usual start at 12:15pm
5 Alive! Teen Choir, Guitar, Drums, Instruments
There will be no 5 p.m. Mass on Christmas Day

Holiday Mass Schedule
We will have our regular weekend Mass schedule on Saturday and Sunday, December 28-29, the Feast of the Holy Family. Our regular daily Mass will be at 7:45 a.m. on weekdays and 8:00 a.m. on Saturdays on December 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 30, and 31 and January 2, 3, and 4.

Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God
New Year's Eve and Day
Tuesday, December 31 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday, January 1 10:00 a.m.

Sacrament of Reconciliation
Tuesday, December 17
Reconciliation Service
A Communal Service of Reconciliation with individual confession and absolution will take place in the church at 7:00 p.m.

Saturday, December 21
Individual Reconciliation - 8:30 a.m.
Extended individual confessions will be offered on Saturday, December 21, with the opportunity for private or face-to-face confession. St. John of the Cross offers the Sacrament of Reconciliation every Saturday throughout the year at 8:30 a.m.

After December 22nd there will be no babysitting in the Garden Room until Sunday, January 5th.