The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant searching for fine pearls.

Sunday, July 27, 2014
17 Sunday in Ordinary Time
...our mission is to love as Christ loved and to proclaim the Good News.
Summer Mission Appeal this Weekend

This weekend we welcome Brother Thomas Greer, SC from the Brothers of the Sacred Heart. Brother Greer will be sharing information about his life and work in the African countries of Kenya, Lesotho, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe, and asking for our prayers and financial support.

The Brothers of the Sacred Heart are religious educators who direct and staff schools and other establishments and minister to street children and AIDS orphans, and run agricultural projects in over thirty countries. Our donations will benefit young men who are preparing to enter religious life and needy students.

Thank you for your generosity to these missionaries.

Local Outreach Opportunities

Volunteer Opportunities In Our Area:
Volunteer at SJC Youth Catechesis Office
Help our YC office prepare supplies for the new school year! Any day: August 6 - 14 Any time: 8:30 am - 4:00 pm Monday through Thursday. Contact Janet Caschetta at jcascetta@stjohnofthecross.org to coordinate your service.

Volunteer at Helping Hand, Countryside
Volunteers are needed at Helping Hand in Countryside to help with assembling furniture, building shelves, cleaning and organizing classrooms, cabinets, and storage and organizing files. If you can help contact Carolyn Kline at 708-352-3580 x280. Volunteer hours are weekdays 8am-4pm, but evening volunteer hours could be arranged.

Volunteer for School on Wheels, LaGrange Park Area
Volunteer as a tutor for School on Wheels Adult Literacy/English as a Second Language program, a ministry of the Congregation of St. Joseph of LaGrange Park. Tutors are asked to teach one hour or more per week, during the hours of 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., or 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at locations in Brookfield, Cicero, Downers Grove, Hodgkins, Lombard, Villa Park, Summit, or Woodridge. No prior second language skills are needed, however, it is necessary to attend a two-day tutor training session from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturdays, August 9 and August 16, 2014, at the Congregation of St. Joseph Center in La Grange Park. Further information is available by calling (708) 482-5060 or (708) 482-5077.
Pope Francis has sent a message to the “Mexico/Holy See Colloquium on Migration and Development”, urging protection for tens of thousands of unaccompanied children who are migrating North from Central America and Mexico in increasing numbers.

In his message Pope Francis writes that globalization has rendered migration a “hallmark” of society today. Despite this, it is still seen as an emergency or as a circumstantial phenomenon.

Above all, the Pope’s thoughts go to “the tens of thousands of children who migrate alone, unaccompanied, to escape poverty and violence”. He says, “this is a category of migrants …who cross the border with the United States under extreme conditions and in pursuit of a hope that in most cases turns out to be vain”. He notes that the numbers of children undertaking this hazardous journey “are increasing day by day.”

Pope Francis calls for "the international community to pay attention to this challenge" and for measures to be taken by the countries involved. These include policies to inform the public of the dangers of the trip north and to promote development of the migrants’ countries of origin.

US authorities have detained some 57,000 unaccompanied minors since October, twice the number from the same period a year ago. Mexican authorities have picked up 8,000 child migrants in the first five months of the year, and more than half of them were traveling by themselves.

Addressing the Colloquium, Cardinal Parolin stated: "Whether they are traveling because of poverty, or violence, or with the hope of reuniting with relatives on the other side of the border, it is urgent to protect them and help them because their vulnerability is greater and they are defenseless against any abuse or misfortune."
Donations that Make a Difference

Help Catholic Charities West Suburban get backpacks on the backs of needy children in the community!

**Suggested Donations**
- New Backpacks
- Pens and Pencils
- Notebooks
- Glue, Scissors and Erasers
- College and Wide-Ruled Paper
- Rulers
- Folders
- Crayons and Markers

Backpacks will go directly to the children that attend our Annual Health Fair at St. Frances of Rome on August 9, 2014.

Backpacks can be dropped off in the church narthex or parish center in marked boxes before August 1st.

SJC Food Pantry Collection

46.5 million people live in poverty, the largest number seen in the 54 years for which poverty estimates have been published.

Bring nonperishable food donations to our church narthex. During the month of July donations will be brought to our neighboring parish, St. Barbara’s food pantry in Brookfield. Thank you for helping us feed those who are hungry.

Come, Holy Spirit, and open our hearts, minds, and souls to your presence. Grace us with the strength to follow the examples of Jesus. Like Jesus, may the Spirit provide us with a voice to cry out for justice for the poor. Remind us that what we do to the least of those among us, we do to you.


Host Family & Student Coordinator Needed

The Council for Educational Travel, USA in Grand Rapids Michigan (www.cetusa.org) is seeking a volunteer family to host a 17 year old male high school student from Ecuador for the coming school year. The student, who would be attending a local public high school, speaks English, is Catholic, and has an excellent academic standing. Arriving in August, he would live with you and be a part of your family life. Students in the program arrive on the J-1 Visa program and have their own medical insurance and money for discretionary expenses.

The Council is also looking for a Coordinator in our community who would be responsible for helping to locate a volunteer host family and then monitoring and supporting the student during his stay. The Coordinator would receive a stipend of $800.

For more details please contact Karen Dake, Regional Director of The Council for Educational Travel, USA at Karen@cetusa.org or 1-888-238-8721.

Supply Brown Bag Lunches for BEDS: 8/1 and 8/15

Simple lunches are needed for BEDS Daytime Support Center. An ideal lunch would include a sandwich, chips or crackers, fruit (no apples) and one of the following, soft granola bar, pudding or jello cups. The number of lunches needed varies, but the general range is 12-15 lunches. Contact Laurie Smillie at smillie@sjc.pvt.k12.il.us to coordinate your service.
Are you satisfied with your faith? What are you seeking in this life? We all search for deeper meaning in our life; whether we know it or not, every action we take is driven by a desire to find purpose. Jesus Christ calls each one of us in a special way, inviting us into a lifelong relationship with Him that will transform the way we live and who we are at the very deepest level. He wants us to “Come and See.”

This fall we will begin again the process of the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults. This program is an opportunity for all those interested to explore the Catholic faith and enter into the process of coming into full communion with the Church. If you have ever thought about becoming a Catholic or if you know anyone who might be interested in learning more about our faith, consider this your personal invitation to come and see.

RCIA is about more than just learning the teachings of the Church; it is about prayer, practice, discovery and relationship. Jesus Christ extends the hand of peace to each one of us, calling us into His presence. This fall explore the Catholic Church and learn how transformative a relationship with Jesus Christ in a supportive community of faith can be. Come and see where Jesus Christ is staying. It will change your life.

Call Fr. Bill Vollmer at x120 for more information.

“The joy of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept his offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness. With Christ, joy is constantly born anew. ... No one should think that this invitation is not meant for him or her, since “no one is excluded from the joy brought by the Lord.” The Lord does not disappoint those who take this risk; whenever we take a step toward Jesus, we come to realize that he is already there, waiting for us with open arms. Now is the time...”

~ Pope Francis
What counts in life is not what we acquire, but what we become.

Some time ago a magazine ran a story about teenagers who belong to the Santa Clara Swimming Club. Every morning they get up at 5:30 and hurry through the chilly air to an outdoor pool. There they swim for two solid hours. After a shower and a quick bite to eat, they hurry off to school.

After school they return to the pool to swim for two more hours. At 5pm they hurry home, hit the schoolbooks, eat a late supper, and fall into bed exhausted. The next morning the alarm rings at 5:30, and they start the whole thing all over again.

When asked why she follows such a disciplined schedule, one girl said, “My only goal is to make the Olympic team. If going to parties hurts that, then why go? There is no such thing as too much work. The more miles I swim, the better. Sacrifice is the thing.”

Had Jesus lived now rather than in A.D. 30, today’s gospel might have been very different. Rather than talk about a pearl merchant who sacrificed all to buy a dream pearl, or a farmer who sold all to buy a field with a treasure in it, Jesus might have talked about a Santa Clara swimmer who sacrificed all to make the Olympic team.

Why? What connection is there between a pearl merchant, a treasure seeker, and a Santa Clara swimmer? What do these three people have in common?

The one thing they have in common is their total commitment to a dream. All three are willing to sacrifice everything for a goal they have set for themselves. In the case of the pearl merchant, it is to own the perfect pearl. In the case of the treasure seeker, it is to obtain a rare treasure. In the case of the Santa Clara swimmer, it is to make the Olympic team.

This leads to the point Jesus wishes to make in today’s gospel. Citizenship in God’s kingdom involves total commitment on our part. We cannot pursue it as we do a part-time job. We cannot work at it as we do a hobby. We must give ourselves to it 100%. We must make it the top priority in our life.

Being a Christian is like being a pearl merchant. Being a Christian is like being a treasure seeker. Being a Christian is like being a Santa Clara swimmer. It involves total dedication and commitment. But there is one big difference between a Christian and the other three. Paul refers to it in a letter to the Corinthians.

“Every athlete in training submits to strict discipline, in order to be crowned with a wreath that will not last; but we do it for one that will last forever” 1 Corinthians 9:25.

That is the difference. The pearl merchant’s prize, the farmer’s treasure, and the swimmer’s medal are all perishable.

When the merchant dies, his pearl will no longer have any value for him. When the farmer dies, his treasure will be as useless to him as the box he found it in. When the swimmer dies, her medal will be just another keepsake for her family or relatives. But when the Christian dies, the kingdom of God will shine brighter, and brighter and brighter.
Gospel Living

“The kingdom of heaven is like...” In these three parables, what motivates the actions of the person, merchant, and fishermen is that they have already come upon the extreme good which they seek: the treasure in the field, the pearl of great price, the catch of fish. So it is with us. We have already come upon the extreme good which we spend our lives seeking: the kingdom of heaven. The challenge is to give our all to attain it.

Advertising constantly whets our appetites for more and better goods. Notice the “s” on the end of good. We are not satisfied with one thing, we want many. With so many goods at hand, it is sometimes difficult to keep our sight on what is one good that is given to us already now, the one true treasure that leads to eternal satisfaction—being faithful disciples helping to make present God’s reign. What helps us keep the one good before us is growing in the realization that the goods of this world are passing, while the one good God offers us is everlasting. We must choose the eternity of risen Life over all things which die. This Sunday’s gospel suggests that living the Gospel is less something we actually “search” for and more something we live by responding to the great good we have already been given. If we are aware of our own dignity as members of the Body of Christ (given at baptism), then we can more easily treasure and uphold the dignity of others. If we are aware of the abundance of risen Life already given to us, then we can work in justice and peace to help others share in the goodness of that same Life. If we are aware of...

May we have the boldness and courage to seek the kingdom of heaven with all our hearts. May we have the wisdom to discern what is of lasting value.

Background

On the Gospel

Today’s Gospel concludes three weeks of readings from the 13th Chapter of Matthew’s Gospel. Throughout these three weeks we have heard Jesus teaching crowds about the kingdom of heaven, and we have heard Jesus interpret some of his teachings for the disciples. In this week’s Gospel, Jesus offers three more short parables.

The first two parables describe the great value of the kingdom of heaven. In the first parable, Jesus says that the kingdom of heaven is like a buried treasure that is worth possessing even if it means giving up everything else. In the second parable, Jesus proposes that the kingdom of heaven is like a pearl of great worth for which one will sell everything else to possess. These parables teach us that we are to place everything we value in the service of the pursuit of the Kingdom of God.

The third parable that Jesus proposes in today’s Gospel is different from the first two, but it is reminiscent of the parable of the sower heard in last week’s Gospel. The kingdom of heaven is compared to fishing with a wide net. After the fish have been collected, the good fish are kept and the bad fish are thrown away; so too, in the final judgment, will the wicked and the righteous be separated.

Today’s Gospel concludes with a curious statement about the scribe who understands the kingdom of heaven. Here a metaphor is offered: this scribe is like the head of a household who “brings from his storeroom both the new and the old.” The scribes referred to here are experts of Mosaic law. It is possible that Jesus is here instructing the early Christian community on how to proceed in the interpretation of Jewish law with respect to Jesus’ “new” teaching. Jesus' teaching about the kingdom of heaven does not replace the Jewish tradition; it interprets it in a different light.

Family Connection
Like the person who found the buried treasure and the merchant who acquired the pearl of great price, we seek to find the signs of the kingdom of heaven in our lives. In fact, we even work to bring about God's kingdom in our actions and in our words. We pray that our family values reflect our pursuit of the kingdom of heaven. As Jesus’ disciples, we place everything we value in the service of the pursuit of the Kingdom of God.

As you gather as a family, talk about what your family values. Make a list together of those things that your family considers most important, such as family, friends, faith, trust, and love. Place this list before you as you read today's Gospel in its shorter form, Matthew 13:44-46. In these parables, Jesus teaches us that it is worth giving up even valuable things in order to possess the kingdom of heaven. Look at the list your family made and talk about how these things are important to the kingdom of heaven. What has your family given up to make these values important in your life? As Jesus’ disciples, we place everything we value in the service of the pursuit of the Kingdom of God. Pray together for God's kingdom by praying the Lord's Prayer.

Know the Words
A rainy day teaching project for your children can center on the names and use of articles used at Sunday Mass. Have the kids look up the terms on your home computer and next Sunday have a contest to see who can spot the most sacred items on the list. Many of these liturgical articles have names with roots in the ancient languages of Latin and Greek. After Mass, give your kids a tour of our church.

Alb
Altar
Ambry
Ambo
Chalice
Chasuble
Ciborium
Cincture
Corporal
Decanter
Font
Lectionary
Purificator
Sacramentary
Sacred Oils
Sacristan
Sacristy
Sanctuary
Stations of the Cross
Tabernacle

Other sacred articles used at funerals and other occasions:
Aspergillum
Censer
Monstrance
Pall
Pyx

Saint Philomena: August 11

Saint Philomena was a martyr who gave up her life at the age of thirteen. She was born in Corfu, Greece and her name means “loving friend.” Very little is known about her life because she died so young and so long ago. Some people have noted that Philomena was a Greek princess. Philomena is the patron saint of babies, infants, and youth death/sickness. In the year 1802 someone discovered, at the catacomb of Saint Priscilla on the Via Salaria, the remains of a young girl. Her grave was covered in stones, symbols, and writing. She also had a vial of dried blood above her grave. The symbols and writing pointed out that the girl was a martyr named Philomena. Her body was soon forgotten about because there was so little known about her. During this time there were many miracles attributed to her tomb which started to make people recognize her tomb again.

One miracle due to Saint Philomena is one of a blind child. A mother and her child were at church and went outside beside Philomena’s tomb. The child was blind due to smallpox and it was said to be incurable. There was a lamp burning next to her tomb. The mother reached her fingers into the oil of the lamp and smeared it onto her child’s eyes. They both began to shout with joy as the child could now see. Saint Philomena had God’s grace to give up her life for God at the age of thirteen. She lived a short, but meaningful life, and she will now always be remembered for her bravery. She is admired and loved by many. Her feast day is August 11 and there is a shrine dedicated to her in Briggsville, Wisconsin. C. Sullivan
This weekend’s story on St. Philomena was written by one of our high school student receptionists, Clare Sullivan, during some downtime this summer. Do you have a favorite saint? Email a short write-up to us about your saint and why you chose him or her. We’d love to print your saint story. Send an email to mjmartin@stjohnofthecross.org

Richard Rohr Meditation

Our “myth” is the symbol system out of which we think and operate. It is largely unconscious and pre-rational, which is probably why the word “myth” (ineffable or unspeakable) is used, even if commonly misunderstood. Everyone has a myth, even those who fear the word. We have to have our myth because it creates a sometimes livable world and it provides the frame of reference necessary for sanity—or insanity if we have a destructive one. Myths create a habitable and meaningful world for us.

In contrast, a parable confronts our world and subverts it. It does not create but re-creates our destructive and illusory myths. It has a hard job, and so it usually does not call for discussion, debate, or questioning. Parable is not God-as-information. Rather it is God-as-invitation-and-challenge. A parable calls us to insight and decision. A parable doesn’t lead us to more and more mental analysis; it’s either a flashing insight or it’s nothing. It calls us more to decision and change of perspective.

Jesus is never afraid to put things in a hard parabolic way. He seems to even prefer this method (Matthew 13:3, 34). Jesus is not afraid of using a word or idea that’s likely to be misunderstood (I wish I had that courage!). He puts his truth out there; and dealing with it is the listener’s problem (which is actually to respect the listener’s spiritual intelligence). Jesus is saying, in effect, “Struggle with what I’m saying!” In general, Jesus doesn’t spend a great deal of time qualifying his point and making sure everybody understands it clearly.

As Rainer Maria Rilke might later describe it, “Be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart and try to love the questions themselves. Do not now seek the answers, which cannot be given you because you would not be able to live them. And the point is to live everything. Live the questions now.” (Rilke, Letters to a Young Poet, 1934)
You can make all the difference!

Donating Electronically: Parishioners are encouraged to make their offertory donations from their bank account through our online giving program on our parish website. Go to stjohnofthecross.org and
1. Click on the Sharing Picture, then
2. Click on the words, Sunday Offertory, on the left side.
You can schedule your donation to arrive at SJC on a weekly, monthly, quarterly or annual basis, and you can change or stop your donation with the click of your mouse.

Giving electronically from your bank account (instead of using a credit card) is less costly for the parish which absorbs the credit card fees.

E-giving is easy and convenient and helps our parish budgeting by providing a consistent revenue source and increased efficiency in recording of donations. You will receive an email acknowledgment each time you donate.

Some parishioners prefer to fill out a paper form which can be downloaded from our website and then mailed to the parish center. Paper forms are also available at the parish center.

We are ready to help you and answer any questions that you may have about your donations. We can also make any changes over the phone to your e-giving plan in the parish center office. Please call MJ x123 at the parish office with any changes or questions.

“OLD” ACH to Online Giving: Years ago parishioners donated to the parish by filling out a paper form with their bank account information, directing our bank to automatically withdraw their donation on a weekly or monthly basis. If you donate through this “old” program, you are asked call MJ, and we will switch you over to the newer online program. If you are not sure which program you are in, give a quick call and MJ can look it up. 708-246-4404 x123.

Plan Ahead: St. John of the Cross Parish would be honored to be remembered in your will or other long term giving plans. Call MJ for information.

Thank you for your generosity to our parish.

Jesus commanded His followers to go, proclaim the Gospel and bring the Good News to all.
We are seeking faith-filled men and women to do just that with Youth Catechesis students. Catechists receive support, training, resources and planned lessons.
Some adults have no children in our program, but are answering a call to pass on faith.

All Adults and High School teens are also welcome to join our ministry!

Youth Catechesis (YC) has 21 classes:
Sunday, 10:15-11:30 am
Monday 6:15-7:30 pm

There are also small groups that meet in homes 15 Sundays for Confirmation Preparation during 7th and 8th grade.
You are invited to pray about answering God’s call through volunteering to be a Catechist Catechist’s Aide Small Group Leaders
Please call the YC office or email jcaschetta@stjohnofthecross.org

The benefits you will receive are Out Of This World!!

Youth Catechesis Office yc@sjcross.org * 708-246-6760 * www.stjohnofthecross.org/yc
God of all creation, we are made in your image and are signs of your love. Bless these children who were given new life as your adopted sons and daughters through the waters of Baptism. May they grow up to know your name and give you praise. Bless the mothers and fathers of these children. Fill them with your strength so that they will be models of faith for their children, nurturing and teaching by word and example to know you and walk in your love. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Our parish community prayerfully supports and congratulates the following families who had their child baptized last Sunday! Pictured from the left are: Liam Joseph with parents Joseph and Noreen Smrz, Leila Marie with parents Darren and Jamie Linton, Abner Bradley with parents Benjamin and Kristin Ekelund, and Ava Grace with parents Stephen and Nicole Balsavich.

Preparing for Infant Baptism

As part of collaborative efforts across the parish that are focused on strengthening and supporting the vocation of all Catholic parents, we have developed new resources for parents bringing their infant for baptism.

What do I need to do to have my baby baptized?

Pre-baptism sessions are now offered for all parents whether it is your first child being baptized or a subsequent child. The sessions are offered on the fourth Sunday of each month at 1:30pm (noon during the summer). It is our expectation that both parents will attend this session. Feel free to bring your new baby and invite the godparents too. The session which runs under 2 hours is designed with input from parents like you who are eager to provide an environment that will foster faith in Jesus Christ. Parents are asked to register to attend a pre-baptism session.

Simply call the parish center front office during regular business hours (9am-4pm). One of our full-time staff members will take all the necessary information and answer any questions you may have.
Free Resume Review
Interfaith Career Network invites you to join on Saturday, August 2 from 9-11 am. Come in for a helpful 20-minute one-on-one conversation with a HR, or other search related professional for some ideas and suggestions that may enhance or refresh your resume. Looking for some helpful job search strategies? Need some coaching with your elevator speech? This is a terrific opportunity. We hope to see you at St. Cletus Education Building (Room 201), in La Grange. Please use the flagpole entrance. www.interfaithcareernetwork.org.

Golden Wedding Anniversary Mass
The Golden Wedding Anniversary Mass will be held on Sunday, September 14, 2014 at 2:45pm at Holy Name Cathedral downtown. Couples married in 1964 who are interested in attending should contact the parish center office. More information is available online at www.marriagenadfamilyministries.org or by calling 312-534-8351.

Grow Closer to God
Spiritual direction encourages you to explore a closer relationship with God. In the midst of a busy life, many people find it difficult to notice God's action in their daily affairs. Yet, at the deepest level, all of us long for a more conscious experience of God's presence and love.

In spiritual direction, you reflect deeply on the experiences of your daily life. Gradually, as you contemplate, you may begin to recognize God's presence and grace in your life. You may come to realize how God's spirit is truly with you every day and everywhere. You discover that God has been waiting for you to seek this closer relationship.

People come to spiritual direction for a variety of reasons, including to: identify and trust your own experience of God, integrate spirituality into your daily life, discern and make difficult choices, and share your hopes, struggles and losses.

At St. John of the Cross Parish, Marianne Firlit is a certified Spiritual Director. To make an appointment contact her at mgfirlit@gmail.com or call the parish center.

Used Uniform Sale
Gently used parish school uniforms will be for sale in the parish center on August 11 from 2-8pm and August 12 from 9am-noon. All proceeds support the Art in the Classroom Program. Questions? Wendi Mulcahy at 312-513-2622 or wendimulcahy@yahoo.com.

Focus on the Sacraments

During the coming year, the fourth year of the Archdiocesan Strategic Plan, we will focus on the purpose and meaning of the Sacraments. Look for articles, programs and resources throughout the year across our parish ministries that will provide foundational teachings that will refresh your knowledge of our faith, enabling you to grow in holiness and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

YEAR OF SACRAMENTS • ONE WORD AT A TIME
Hear

Every celebration of the sacraments begins with a proclamation of God's Word from the Bible. We may take this for granted, but we need to understand why and how God's Word is essential in our celebration of the sacraments.

The Word of God tells us the most important truth of our lives. God's Word, in the first place, tells us what God has done for us in Jesus Christ who died and rose for us so that we would be free of sin and death. Secondly, God's Word tells us what God's plan is for us, what is the promise and the hope that God offers us.

Once we hear and accept what God has done for us in Jesus Christ and once we hear the future God offers us, then we are ready to celebrate the sacraments. We are ready to meet the living and saving Lord Jesus. We are ready to embrace God's promised future.

Sacraments as Efficacious
One reason why it is tricky to speak of the sacraments as signs is that signs ordinarily do nothing more than give us information. But these are no ordinary signs. The sacraments are signs that perform an action; they do what the sign says. The water of Baptism says "washing," and the Sacrament of Baptism washes away sin. That water also says "life," and the Sacrament of Baptism gives life. The oil of anointing says "health," and the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick heals. The bread and wine of the Eucharist say "food," and the Sacrament of the Eucharist feeds us. We can speak of the sacraments as signs as long as we keep in mind that something real takes place, something that goes far beyond the communication of information. There is an encounter in each sacrament with God, and the person as well as the entire community is changed in some way.
Few thinkers have influenced me as profoundly as Robert L. Moore. Who is he? He's a scholar who has spent almost 50 years studying human energy from the perspective of psychology, anthropology, and spirituality. Few scholars are his equal in linking human energy, even when it is raw and grandiose, to the image and likeness of God inside of us. He merits an audience.

Recently, I had the privilege of attending an Institute at which he keynoted. I share with you a couple of his insights:

Our growing anxiety and our need to build "an arc" so as not drown in it:

Our lives today are awash with anxiety and this is wreaking psychological and spiritual havoc everywhere. We are being assailed by "unregulated anxiety" and, as this anxiety is rising, our capacity to handle it is simultaneously going down. This is causing, in his words, a "pan-tribal regression", that is, we are seeing most everywhere groups huddle together in paranoia and self-protection. And what are the consequences of this?

Studies have shown that when we feel threatened our capacity to listen to each other begins to shut down, even biologically. In brief, when we feel anxiety our brains instinctually move towards a more primitive place, namely, towards the reptile, more cold-blooded, part of us. This is further compounded by the fact that we have less cultural and spiritual vessels to help contain our anxiety. Many of our former cultural and spiritual rituals to deal with anxiety have either deteriorated or died. Hence, it is no surprise to see so much paranoia and violence in our world today. We are drowning in anxiety and lack the psychological and spiritual resources to deal with that. This, for Moore, can be called "Noah's flood" in our time, the world is drowning in anxiety and we need to learn to build a "spiritual arc" (an "inner psychic temple") in order to not drown and, like Noah, help preserve life on this planet.

But, Moore warns, this won't be easy. We are still very much in a state of denial and, ironically, at one level that denial is actually healthily protecting us. As Moore puts it, if we punch through our denial and other defense mechanisms without first building an inner psychic temple, we can fall into psychosis because we can be overwhelmed by our archetypal energies. Our defense mechanisms are needed, at least for a while, to help safeguard our sanity. Fundamentalism is one of those safeguards: People are turning to rigid ways in order to try to remain sane.

On our fear of God, our attempts to block off God from our lives, and our naïve religion:

We have many defense mechanisms against the "numinous", but that is understandable. When we are standing before God and trying to access that energy it is somewhat akin to a person standing before an electrical wire carrying 200,000 volts and trying to plug in a coffee maker. That's an image for our struggle to try to access and contain Godly energy. We are constantly pressured by this energy, from within and without, and need, inside of us, to construct a psychological chalice, a holy grail, an inner temple, to consciously hold our God energies. This psychological chalice is too the cup of the Eucharist.

Beyond that, we must also ask the question: Why is there such a resistance in us regarding being aware of the great presence? Why our habitual refusal of the awareness of God? Why do we prefer to walk alone, without God? For Moore, this is really a key part of the mystery of iniquity: We habitually shut out a gracious God, preferring darkness to light.

On the difference between science and theology:

The difference between science and theology is the difference between a jet-engine and a rocket-engine. A jet engine needs oxygen and can only fly to a certain height; it has to remain inside our atmosphere. A rocket engine is powered in such a way that it can fly outside of the atmosphere.

On how we are to build an inner psychic temple:

We all have amazing potential, but are forever shooting low. It is possible to learn to walk in the way of beauty, to live elegantly because we are already sitting in radiance. There is a radical compassion already inside of us, but we must "awake" to it. We are already living in a huge love. The road home must already be home. And so we need to be really suspicious whenever we feel alone, because we are never alone. When we are feeling lonely we are being tricked.

What are some steps towards living the way of beauty and compassion? In brief:

Cut through your denial, recognize what you lack. Eliminate "the waffle" from your life, learn to hold the tension, balance opposites, and consciously (through prayer) try to abide in the Great Presence. Employ a "holy fierceness" in doing that.

Few spiritual writers exhibit Moore's combination of depth and balance. He merits an audience.

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
Pictured below are SJC teens who served on our Day of the Spirit Team last year. This year we have another awesome bunch of high school teens who are willing to meet 5 times & give a Saturday (Oct. 25) to help our 8th graders better understand and feel the joy and love of God through their preparations for confirmation. This team is in need of a few high school boys & 2 adults. Contact Katie Hayes to join this awesome retreat team!

Mary & Terry Stadler, parents of 5, grandparents of many, both work and both LOVED being home group leaders so much that now they are serving as our Home Group Coordinators and are looking for awesome couples to accompany our teens. This ministry will positively affect you as a person, with your spouse and your family. Allow the goodness of teens’ desire to connect with their peers & God to happen by saying YES to the call for home group leaders.

Contact Mary at stadler2@hotmail.com to get all the details! Not all leaders are couples---we want adults who care about their faith & who are willing to listen to teens!

Please pray for our group traveling to OLPH in Kentucky this week, for their health and safe trip.

Pray for our Sick

Mass Intentions

Monday, July 28
7:45 Dolores Williams; Tom Baer

Tuesday, July 29, St. Martha
7:45 Our Beloved Dead; Bob Cosgrove

Wednesday, July 30, St. Peter Chrysologus
7:45 Alice & Al Sobey; Genevieve Ziemba

Thursday, July 31, St. Ignatius of Loyola
7:45 Chester Kowal; Tom & Ted Baer

Friday, August 1, St. Alphonsus
7:45 Frank Piszczor; Tony Adolf

Saturday, August 2, St. Eusebius
7:45 Raymond & Irene Russell; Andy Perez & Ramon Perez
5:00 Robert McNulty; David Gibbons

Sunday, August 3, Eighteenth Sunday Ordinary Time
7:30 Nena Perez; Baby Isaiah
9:00 Lester Boldebuck; Markey Foley Ringwood
10:45 Dr. Tony Sweeney; Angelia Baumer
5:00 Teresa Cullen; Jack Callahan, Sr.

Italics—Living

This Week at SJC

Monday, July 28
9:30 a.m. Senior Club Planning Meeting
10:30 a.m. Christian Meditation Step 11
2:00 p.m. Spiritual Journaling
2:30 p.m. Eucharistic Adoration

Tuesday, July 29

Wednesday, July 30
2:00 p.m. Christian Meditation
7:30 p.m. Christian Meditation

Thursday, July 31

Friday, August 1

Saturday, August 2
7:00 a.m. Christian Meditation

Sunday, August 3
1:00 p.m. Ad Altare Dei Scout Meeting

Italics—Living

Pray for our Beloved Dead

Joseph Robin, husband of Virginia
Margaret Mary Woods, sister of Patrick Woods
Elidia Zuniga, mother of Hermilo, Maria, Francisco, Oscar, Gloria, Delia, Norma, Ruth, Hector and Daniel
Matthew Porebski, son of Lois Porebski and Thomas (Darlette) Porebski, brother of Michelle and Melinda

Blessed are you, Father
Lord of heaven and earth;
for you have revealed
to little ones
the mysteries of the kingdom.
Alleluia, alleluia.
CHURCH NAME & NUMBER —
Saint John of the Cross    #9239

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5005 S. Wolf Road
Western Springs, IL 60558

PHONE —
708-246-4404

CONTACT PERSON —
MJ Martin 708-246-4404 x123 or Mary Beth Drafz x121
(Shirley is out of the office.)

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SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS —
The St. John of the Cross Parish Beloved Retreat is for both men and women of our parish. It will be held on October 17—19, 2014 at the Carmelite Center in Darien. The weekend, led by Terry Nelson-Johnson, will be filled with prayer, listening, reflection, and discussion that invites a greater awareness of God's great love and encourages us to be more and more like the One who knows us so well. Come and be filled. Come and discover your belovedness.

Retreat Dates: Friday, October 17 at 7pm through Sunday, October 19 at 2pm
Location: Carmelite Center in Darien
Register online or by dropping an envelope at the parish center with your contact information with a check for $100 (down payment).
Register by July 31 to receive a $30 discount per person
Per Person Cost: Private Room $280 or Shared Room $230 per person before discount
Partial Scholarships are available through Fr. David
Questions: Marianne Firlit at mgfirlit@gmail.com or Andrea Gagliani at agagliani@sbcglobal.net
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