27 Sunday in Ordinary Time
October 5, 2014
Respect Life Sunday
“...our mission is to love as Christ loved and to proclaim the Good News...”
from our Parish Mission Statement
Imagine yourself pausing in front of a design of great beauty. Your soul quiets and is filled with wonder and awe.

If art, created by man, can evoke such a response within us, how much more is the same wonder, reverence and respect due to each person we encounter, who was handcrafted by the very God who spoke the world into being?

Now think of an artist stepping back from a great work of art and admiring his or her creation.

When God created each of us, He did so with precision and purpose, and He looks on each of us with love that cannot be outdone in intensity or tenderness.

Moreover, the Lord invites each of us to behold ourselves and each other with the same wonder and awe.

No matter how the world might view us or others, let us treat each person as the masterpiece that he or she is.

“Even the weakest and most vulnerable, the sick, the old, the unborn and the poor, are masterpieces of God’s creation, made in his own image, destined to live forever, and deserving of the utmost reverence and respect.”

Pope Francis’ Day for Life Greeting

Pro Life Activities

40 Film on Abortion

The 40 film is coming to St. John of the Cross Parish Center on Monday, October 27th at 6:15pm. 40, one of the most compelling pro-life documentaries ever produced, is a thoughtful, compassionate film for educating adolescents and adults alike on abortion and the sacredness of all human life. Mark this date on your calendar now so that you can join us. Bring your jr. high or high school child with you. Admission is free. No registration needed.

Life Chain TODAY

Life Chain is an annual event on Respect Life Sunday. To show support for the sanctity of all human life, people of all ages and faiths gather for one hour in silent prayer along a major street, holding signs which are provided. SJC parishioners will gather at Ogden and Wolf and Ogden and Grand today, Sunday, October 5th from 2:30-3:30pm. Call our parish Respect Life Coordinator, Blanche Heaney with any questions at 708-246-7437.

40 Days for Life Prayer Vigil

Parishioners are invited to pray, fast and take part in this peaceful, prayerful prolife public witness at Access Health Center in Downers Grove. For more information go to http://40daysforlife.com/local-campaigns/downers-grove/ or call the Respect Life Office at 312-534-5355.
Richard Rohr Meditation

Any way we receive the Spirit is just as real and just as good as any other. God meets us where we are and makes a healing and expanding presence known to us in the exact way we are most ready to experience it. God fills our hearts in whatever measure we are open to the Spirit, just like any true Lover might desire to do.

And when grace does happen, we know that we did nothing to deserve it. It is God’s pure graciousness “or grace would not be grace at all” (Romans 11:6). It is what makes people fall in love with God. So be open to surrendering to such “radical grace.” God’s love is never determined by the worthy or unworthy object of love, but only by being true to who God is in himself. “We may be unfaithful, but God is always faithful, for he cannot disown his own self” (2 Timothy 2:13).

Prayer

Our prayer cannot be reduced to an hour on Sundays.
It is important to have a daily relationship with the Lord.
Pope Francis Tweet

Hear our prayers, O Lord, for our families, our Church, our nation, and our world. May our compassion for the poor and the needy, our service to our brothers and sisters, and our respect for all your people make us worthy tenants of your kingdom to come. In Jesus’ Name. Amen.

God of life and love,
You created us in your image
and sent your Son to bring us life.
Instill in us
a respect for all life
from conception to natural death.
Empower us
to work for justice for the poor.
Nourish us
that we may bring food to the hungry.
Inspire us
to cherish the fragile life of the unborn.
Strengthen us
to bring comfort to the chronically ill.
Teach us
to treat the aging with dignity and respect.
Bring us
one day into the glory of everlasting life.
Amen.
Year of Sacraments: Anointing

On Sunday, October 26th, we will have a special 12:30pm Mass for those who desire to receive the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. Following Mass there will be a reception for those who were anointed and their families and caregivers. Watch for more information in upcoming bulletins.

A Sacrament of Healing
We come before The Lord for healing. Like all sacraments, the Anointing of the Sick is a liturgical and communal celebration. The sacrament includes the following principle elements: the priest in silence lays his hands on the head of the sick or elderly person and prays over them. He then anoints their forehead and hands with the Oil of the Sick saying, “Through this holy anointing may the Lord in his love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit. May the Lord who frees you from sin save you and raise you up.”

What are the effects of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick?
The special grace of the sacrament unites the sick person to the passion of Christ, gives strength, peace and courage to endure sufferings of illness or old age, imparts the forgiveness of sins if the sick person was unable to obtain it through the sacrament of Penance, provides for the restoration of health and helps to prepare the person for passing over to eternal life.

Who may be anointed?
"The sacrament of the anointing is not a sacrament for those only who are at the point of death" (Catechism 1514). The sacrament of anointing is appropriate for those whose health is seriously impaired by sickness or advanced age. This includes persons who are seriously ill whether at home, in hospitals or in nursing homes, as well as sick children who are old enough to experience benefit from the sacrament. It could be physical, mental or emotional. The sacrament may be repeated if the person becomes ill again or if their condition becomes worse. A person may also be anointed before surgery.

Sources: Catechism of the Catholic Church, USCCB Catholic Catechism for Adults

Strong Catholic Parent

Family Connection
In an ideal household, family members know the rules and follow them consistently. Even the most conscientious among us, however, sometimes needs to be reminded of the rules and their importance. How we respond to such correction reveals our true character. In today's Gospel Jesus exposes the religious leaders for their failure to heed God's messengers. It is an opportunity for us to consider how we respond to those who are God's messengers today, calling us to correct our ways and return to the way of the Lord.

As you gather as a family, talk about some of the most important rules of your household. Consider how consistently family members follow these rules. How are family members reminded when rules are not being followed? How do they respond? In today's Gospel Jesus corrects the religious leaders through a parable telling them that they have not heeded God's messengers. Read Matthew 21:33-43. What are some of God's rules that we must follow? How do we respond to God's messengers today? Pray together as a family that you will heed God's messengers and follow God's ways. Pray together the Act of Contrition for the times when your family has not heeded God's word. Loyola Press.

Nurturing Your Child’s Spirituality

Upcoming Program at The Well
Children come to the planet as spiritual beings. Whether you are a parent, grandparent, or teacher, your role is about calling forth and naming children's experiences of the Sacred. In this safe, interactive circle we will explore and name our understanding of God moving within and among us so that we may do the same for the little people in our lives. Thursdays 9:30-11 am on Oct. 16, Nov. 20, Dec. 18, and Jan. 15. Cost: $15/session. Register at 708.482.5048. The Well is located at 1515 West Ogden Avenue in LaGrange Park.

"All of us must care for life, cherish life, with tenderness, warmth...to give life is to open (our) heart, and to care for life is to (give oneself) in tenderness and warmth for others, to have concern in my heart for others. Caring for life from the beginning to the end. What a simple thing, what a beautiful thing... So, go forth and don’t be discouraged. Care for life. It's worth it."
– from a homily in 2005 by Cardinal Bergoglio celebrating Aug. 31 feast of St. Raymond Nonnatus, patron saint of expectant mothers, newborns
Travel to France with Fr. Dees

I am delighted to invite you to join me on a journey to explore the history of France which stands at the crossroads of Europe. Our pilgrimage will take us to the heart of Catholic France as we visit the legacy of our faith present in the cathedrals and shrines of this “older daughter” of the Church. The dates for our pilgrimage are June 14th-26th 2015.

The highlight of our pilgrimage will be our visit to the Shrine of Lourdes with opportunities to bathe in the waters and walk in the candlelight processions. Along the way we will also visit Lisieux, the tomb and shrine of St. Therese, the Little Flower; Rouen, the place where St. Joan of Arc was martyred; and the noted Cathedral of Chartres and its famed stained glass windows.

For the fan of history we will also be visiting the Chateaux of the Loire Valley, the dramatic Normandy Coast and the D-Day Landing Beaches. We will see town and village life and end our trip with a visit to the capital, Paris. Along the way we will celebrate mass and into the life of Catholicism in this renowned country.

This pilgrimage will be in collaboration with my parish, Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Glenview, IL. **Space is limited** and June is coming quickly so please take this into consideration. More information is available for those who are interested; please pick up a trip brochure from the Parish Center. We will be having an information meeting on **October 8th at 7:00 PM** in the Parish Center Rooms 4 and 5. Please feel free to call me with questions at (847) 729-1525.

Fr. Elliott Dees

Ministers of Care Needed at Hines VA Hospital

Hines VA Hospital located near Loyola University Hospital in Maywood is in need of additional Ministers of Care to bring the Eucharist and pray with veterans. If you would like to volunteer please call Fr. Bill Vollmer at the Parish Center office at x120.

Chicago Catholic Scripture School

All adults are welcome to come to a class to see if CCSS is right for you! Classes are held in the Parish Center on Wednesday evenings from 7-9pm. Parishioners in the class say it is “life changing learning.” Learn more about the program at [www.catechesis-chicago.org/ccss](http://www.catechesis-chicago.org/ccss).

Spirituality of John of the Cross Group

**Wednesdays 3-4pm**

**Starts October 15th**

Beginning on Wednesday, October 15th through December 10th all are invited to learn about the life and spirituality of our parish patron, St. John of the Cross. We will meet in the parish center from 3-4pm every Wednesday afternoon to learn and discuss. On Sunday, December 14th at 10:15am, the feast of St. John of the Cross, our study will culminate with a special celebration of his life. For more information and to register call Sister Joyce at 708-599-2954.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

The next meeting for the Prayer Shawl Ministry will be on **Wednesday, October 8th** from 1-2:30pm in the Parish Center. All knitters and crocheters are welcome to join us in making prayer shawls at our monthly meeting. You can also make a prayer shawl at home and drop it off at the parish center for this ministry. To request a shawl for someone who is ill or experiencing the difficulties of life, or for further information, call Sheila 246-7836 or Mary 246-5108.

Grief Support at The Well

**In a Circle of Women We Are Born Again**

The Well offers a grief support group for women on Wednesdays from 6:30-8 pm **Oct. 8, 22; Nov. 5, 19; Dec. 10.** Journeying with others through the experience and pain of grief has the potential for healing. Come share your stories, your struggles, your heart with others who are walking the same path. Together we will create a safe and confidential circle of trust and deep listening as we companion one another through the grieving process and nurture one another into new life. Limited to 8 participants. Cost: $20.00/session. Register at 708.482.5048 The Well is located at 1515 West Ogden Avenue in LaGrange Park.

Consider the Priesthood

All high school and college men are invited to join Bishop Manz and Chicago area priests and seminarians for Evening Prayer, Conversation, and Dinner on Sunday, **Oct. 19th at 5:30pm** at St. Cletus Parish. RSVP to Fr. David or Fr. Bill.
**Career Networking**

How to Use Story Telling to Improve Your Interviews

On Thursday, October 16 from 7-9 pm when Jim Waszak will focus on an interviewing challenge...knowing how to tell your story and how to answer behavioral style, open ended questions using stories. Key insights covered this evening will include how to demonstrate your skills rather than just name them, how to be comfortable on interviews, and the best technique for answering questions. St. Cletus Education Building (Room 201), 700 West 55th Street in La Grange.

**Career Transition Workshop**

Week 3, Tuesday, October 7: Dennis Hamilton will help you craft your all important “Elevator Speech.” Time will be allowed to practice your personal statement with fellow attendees. First Presbyterian Church of La Grange, 150 South Ashland Avenue from 7-9pm. Please enter church on Catherine Avenue. For further information, contact Susan Sedler at sqsedler@aol.com.

**Community Faith Event**

St. John of the Cross Parish will be featured in a program spotlighting all churches in our town on Sunday, October 26 at 4pm at the First Congregational Church of Western Springs, 1106 Chestnut St. Learn about each faith community and how they have influenced life in the Village. Refreshments will be served and attendees will have an opportunity to view historical photos and documents from each church’s archives. The event is sponsored by the Western Springs Historical Society.

**ATTENTION: All 6th, 7th, and 8th Grade Students**

Trying to decide which Catholic High School to attend?

St. John of the Cross Parish School will be hosting a Catholic High School Fair for all parish junior high students on Tuesday, October 7th from 7:00PM-8:00PM in Hynes Hall in the the SJC Parish School. Representatives from 16 Catholic High Schools (Benet, Brother Rice, Fenwick, Immaculate Conception, La Lumiere, Marist, Montini, Mother McAuley, Mount Carmel, Nazareth, Queen of Peace, St. Ignatius, St. Joseph, St. Laurence, St. Rita and Trinity) will be available that evening and are anxious to meet 6th, 7th, and 8th Grade students and parents. Also, flyers explaining the Reverend Joseph McDonell Catholic High School Scholarship Fund will be available. Questions regarding the SJC High School Fair may be directed to Mrs. Kathleen Gorman, Principal, at (708)246-4454.

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Please help us welcome our new members to the St. John of the Cross Parish faith community:

Vera and Ernest Schalansky and Family
Denise and David Kent and Family
Kellene and Matt O’Connell and Family
Kelly and Paul Rogan and Family
Diane and Lawrence Fritz and Family
Carri Anne and Ryan Manning and Family

If you would like to register to become a new member, please contact Elizabeth Russell-Jones in the Welcome Center. For more information call 708.246.4404x155 or erussell-jones@stjohnofthecross.org

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October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Two parishes in our area (Divine Infant and St. Francis Xavier) have Domestic Violence Ministries that are committed to raising awareness of the problem of domestic violence and offering support and access for help to those who have experienced any type of violence in their lives.

If you need immediate help, call the 24 hour Pillars Domestic Violence Hotline -- 708-485-5254 to receive advice and access to shelter, counseling, and legal advocacy.

The Domestic Violence Outreach Ministry of St. Francis Xavier Parish in LaGrange would like to invite you to a Mass of Healing at their church on Tuesday, October 7 at 7pm.
Background on the Gospel

In today’s Gospel, Jesus once again speaks to the priests and elders with a parable. In this parable, the landowner leases his vineyard to tenants and sends his servants to collect the portion of the harvest that the tenants owe to him. Several times the servants are sent to collect payment, and each time they are beaten and killed by the tenants. Finally, the landowner sends his son to collect his rent. The tenants, believing that they will inherit the vineyard if the landowner dies without an heir, plot together and kill the landowner’s son.

After telling the parable, Jesus questions the chief priests and elders about what the landowner will do to the wicked tenants. They all agree that the landowner will kill the wicked tenants and give the land to new tenants who will pay the rent.

In telling the parable, Jesus is clearly drawing upon Isaiah 5:1-7, which is today’s first reading and one that the priests and elders would have known well. Jesus doesn’t, therefore, have to explain the symbolism of the parable; the Pharisees would have understood that the vineyard represented Israel, the landowner represented God, the servants represented the prophets, and the bad tenants represented the religious leaders. Yet Jesus nonetheless explains the meaning of the parable for his audience: the Kingdom of God will be taken from the unbelieving and given to the faithful. The chief priests and elders have condemned themselves with their answer to Jesus’ question.

Today’s Gospel has a parallel in Mark 12:1-12. There are some notable differences, however. In Matthew’s version, the religious leaders condemn themselves; in Mark’s Gospel, Jesus answers his own question. Matthew names the religious leaders as Pharisees and chief priests. Clearly this Gospel shows the tension that was mounting between Jesus and the Jewish religious leaders who thought that his message was dangerous. Matthew’s Gospel was written about 70 years after Jesus’ death and reflects the conflicts and tensions found in the Christian community for whom Matthew was writing. Many biblical scholars believe that the tension between Matthew’s community and their Jewish neighbors can also be heard in today’s reading.

This Gospel reminds us of the importance of listening to God’s word. God speaks to us in many ways—through Scripture, through our Church tradition, in our Church’s teaching, and through modern-day prophets. Are we attentive and receptive to God’s word to us through these messengers? Loyola Press 2014.

Living the Gospel

The “chief priests and the elders,” by their own words, align themselves with the tenants in the parable—these Jewish leaders are unfaithful and ultimately they, too, kill the One God sends into the vineyard. Even more, they seal their own death when they answer Jesus that those violent tenants will be killed. The death of the “chief priests and the elders” will be that “the kingdom of God,” the vine of life, will be taken away from them. Those who are faithful and accept the Son receive the Life only God’s kingdom can bring. They receive the very Life of God.

The good news of this gospel is that the kingdom will survive no matter how the “tenants” act because the cornerstone is Christ. This provides a metaphor for our own living. No matter in what shape the vineyard of our own lives is—which we need pruning or we seem to be in a dry desert—if we keep our eyes on Christ as the cornerstone of our own lives we will be fruitful, enjoy being tenants in God’s kingdom, and receive the Life God offers us. It is not for us to judge who is worthy to receive the produce of God’s vineyard. God cares for the vineyard of the lives of anyone who hears God’s word and is faithful to the life Jesus showed us how to live. We are nurtured by God’s word, fed at God’s table, helped by the commandment of love. All we need to do is let God tend us and bring us to produce good fruit. All we need to do is be faithful; God will take care of the rest. God gives us mercy and compassion, forgiveness and love. God gives us a share in God’s very Life. It is this produce of life that we want to protect and nurture, ridding our lives of violence so that our hearts are always turned toward God. ©Living Liturgy 2014.
Oktoberfest Luncheon
Friday, October 10th

11:30am Parish Center
Cost: Members $15,
Nonmembers $20
R.S.V.P.’s due tomorrow—
Monday, October 6th

Enjoy a delicious, authentic
German luncheon.
Wine, beer, and soft drinks included.
A lively entertaining program follows lunch!
This is a great opportunity
to connect with other seniors in our parish.
Hope to see you there!
Any questions,
call Trudy Schmitt at 708-246-1619.

RSVP Today!
Name: ______________________________
____________________________________
Phone: ______________________________
Email: _______________________________

Senior Club Dues $10 per person
_____ Number of Members
_____ Amount Enclosed

October 10 Oktoberfest Luncheon
($15 Senior Club Members-$20 Nonmembers)
_____ Number Attending
_____ Amount Enclosed
_____ Total Enclosed

The Women’s Club would like to thank all those who
joined us at the Mother & Son Campout last Friday!
We hope you and your son(s) had a great evening!

Also, thank you to all the volunteers and Denise
Schullo and Jeanne Conkin for coordinating this fun
event! We look forward to next year’s Mother &
Daughter Campout!

Women’s Club Membership
This weekend is our annual membership drive for the
Women’s Club. Throughout year the Women’s Club
sponsors many social events, spiritual enrichments
and fundraisers. The fundraisers help the Women’s
Club support over 25 local charities as well as attend
to the needs of our own parish community. Our
annual dues of $10 help to offset our costs and
continue to provide great programs at a lower cost. As
a woman of the parish, we invite you to become an
active participant in the SJC Women’s Club.

Please join us at the Parish Center for coffee and
donuts following the 9am and 10:45am Mass
today, Sunday 10/5, to learn more about
membership and our upcoming events.

For more information or to learn more about the
Women’s Club, please email us at
SJCWomensClub@gmail.com or visit us online at
www.stjohnofthecross.org/st-john-of-the-cross-womens-club/
“We are called to reach out to those who find themselves in the existential peripheries of our societies and to show particular solidarity with the most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters: the poor, the disabled, the unborn and the sick, migrants and refugees, the elderly and the young who lack employment.”

Sharing their Gifts
Several wonderful cooks in our parish have donated their time and talent by making dinners that are delivered to the young people at Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation in Chicago. Precious Blood, one of our sharing ministries located in the poverty stricken Back of the Yards community in Chicago, reaches out to youthful offenders, victims, and at risk youth with support, encouragement and healing. Pictured to the left in the parish center kitchen are Ada Novi and Anna Maria Brotto who recently made 25 pounds of rigatoni and meat sauce for PB. Before that it was lasagna. Other parish cooks such as Chris Scriba have donated 10 pounds of cooked chicken for Precious Blood. Thank you also to Anna Maria for sharing her famous lasagna with our parish center staff.

Have a couple of hours to volunteer each week?
Here is an opportunity close to home.

Our Lady of Charity Parish School in Cicero is a short 15 minute drive from SJC. Help as a classroom aid in Kindergarten through Grade 3 once a week from 8:30-10:30am. Get a friend and volunteer together. This is a terrific opportunity to help others. No experience necessary. Bring your smile. Call Diane Harken at 708-246-2383 to help.

“Among the vulnerable for whom the church wishes to care with particular love and concern are unborn children, the most defenseless and innocent among us. Nowadays efforts are made to deny them their human dignity and to do with them whatever one pleases, taking their lives and passing laws preventing anyone from standing in the way of this.

...Precisely because this involves the internal consistency of our message about the value of the human person, the church cannot be expected to change her position on this question... It is not ‘progressive’ to try to resolve problems by eliminating a human life...”
– Pope Francis’ Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium #213-214
Beginning this week, teachers in grades 4th-8th began teaching with IPads. Each student received their own IPad with the necessary applications and software to enhance their learning experience. Both students and faculty are very excited to be using the latest technology.

This Week at SJC
Monday, October 6  All School Liturgy 9:15 a.m.
    One School, One Book Assembly 2:30 p.m. Gym
Tuesday, October 7  Parent Association Meeting 9:00 a.m.
    Parish Center
    High School Information Night 7:00 p.m. School
Thursday, October 9 Grandparent’s Day Grades 1-4
    9:30 – 11 a.m. School
Friday, October 10  Out of Uniform Day

St. John of the Cross Parish School
Invites You to Our
Open House
October 15, 9:30am—11:30am
and October 16, 1:30 pm—3:00 pm
708 51st Street, Western Springs
RSVP 708-246-4454

7th grade small groups united for team building activities beginning with prayer and filled with fun!
Check out St. John of the Cross’s Facebook page for more pictures

St. John of the Cross Parish School
708 51st Street, Western Springs
708-246-6760 * www.stjohnofthecross.org/yc

Youth Catechesis Office
yc@sjcross.org  * 708-246-6760  * www.stjohnofthecross.org/yc
Hours : Mon-Thurs 8:30am-4:00pm, open Sunday mornings and Monday evenings during class
Recent events at SJC. Go to our parish website photo gallery for more great pictures!!
Calendar of Events
October 5
Identity Retreat Team meeting—noon
Day of Spirit Team meeting—noon
Freshman meet in the Parish Center from 6-7:30 pm
Home Group Meetings for Sophomores, Juniors and Seniors.
October 8
Leader Team collaboration meetings from 7-9pm in the Parish Center

Identity Adventure Retreat
There is still time to register for the Freshman/Sophomore Identity Retreat which takes place January 2-4, 2015. Enjoy a weekend of outdoor winter fun, reflection and prayer at Dickson Valley Camp in Newark, IL.
Register today at www.stjohnofthecross.org/crossroads/retreats/
Activities such as tubing, rock wall climbing, volleyball, basketball and more await you at the Identity Adventure Retreat.

Couples Needed to Lead Freshman Home Groups
Bring your unique gifts and skills to the Crossroads Youth Ministry! Home Group leaders open their homes to a group of approximately 15 high school students twice a month. We will provide you with all the resources you will need to facilitate the 1 1/2 - 2 hour meetings.
As a Home Group leader, you will have the opportunity to see how the lives of our youth are changing, while sharing your wisdom and real-life experiences to help guide them on their faith journey.
Home Group couples can be married, friends, siblings, neighbors, or a parent & child (over 21). If you would like to lead a Home Group but don’t have a partner, let us know and we will try to partner you with someone else who is drawn to our ministry.
Contact Katie Hayes at 708-246-4404 or khayes@stjohnofthecross.org, to learn more about becoming a Home Group Leader.
Pictured below is a group of our parish Freshman teens and Home Group Leaders, Katie & Tom Pruitt, with their class of 2014 Group (bottom picture).
Several years ago, at retreat, an elderly monk shared with me about the ups and downs of 50 years of monastic life. At the end of this he said to me: “Give me some hints on how I should prepare to die! What should I do to make myself more ready for death?”

The heaviness of such a question is enough to intimidate a person with a spirituality deeper than my own, and when it’s asked by someone twice your age whose heart seems already deeply charitable, faith-filled, and wonderfully-mellowed through years of quiet prayer, then perhaps the best answer is silence. I wasn’t so naive as to offer him much by way of an answer, his trust in me notwithstanding.

But it’s a good question. How do we prepare to die? How do we live so that death does not catch us unaware? What do we do so that we don’t leave this world with too much unfinished business?

The first thing that needs to be said is that anything we do to prepare for death should not be morbid or be something that distances or separates us from life and each other. We don’t prepare for death by withdrawing from life. The opposite is true. What prepares us for death, anoints us for it, in Christ’s phrase, is a deeper, more intimate, fuller entry into life. We get ready for death by beginning to live our lives as we should have been living them all along. How do we do that?

John Shea once suggested that the kingdom of heaven is open to all who are willing to sit down with all. That’s a one-line caption for discipleship. In essence, the single condition for going to heaven is to have the kind of heart and the kind of openness that makes it possible for us to sit down with absolutely anyone and to share life and a table with him or her. It that is true, then the best way we can prepare to die is to begin to stretch our hearts to love ever wider and wider, to begin to love in a way that takes us beyond the natural narrowness and discrimination that exists within our hearts because of temperament, wound, timidity, ignorance, selfishness, race, gender, religion, circumstance, and our place in history.

We prepare to die by pushing ourselves to love less narrowly. In that sense, readying ourselves for death is really an ever-widening entry into life.

John Powell, in his book, Unconditional Love, tells the story of a young student who was dying of cancer. In the final stages of his illness, he came to see Powell and said something to this effect: “Father, you once told us something in class that has made it easier for me to die young. You said: ‘There are only two potential tragedies in life, and dying young isn’t one of them. These are the two tragedies: If you go through life and don’t love and if you go through life and you don’t tell those whom you love that you love them.’

When the doctors told me that my cancer was terminal, I realized how much I’ve been loved. I’ve been able to tell my family and others how much they mean to me. I’ve expressed love. People ask me: ‘What’s it like being 24 years old and dying?’ I tell them: ‘It’s not so bad. It beats being 50 years old and having no values!’”

We prepare ourselves for death by loving deeply and by expressing love, appreciation, and gratitude to each other. Jesus says as much. When the woman at Bethany poured an entire bottle of expensive ointment on his feet and dried his feet with her hair, he commented on her lavish expression of affection and gratitude by saying: “She has anointed me for my impending death.” What he meant should not be piously misinterpreted. He wasn’t saying: “Since I’m soon to die, let her waste this ointment!” He was saying rather: “When I come to die, it’s going to be easier because, at this moment, I am truly tasting life. It’s easier to die when one has been, even for a moment, fully alive.”

What makes it difficult for us to die, beyond all the congenital instincts inside of us that want us to live, is not so much fear of the afterlife or even fear that their might not be an afterlife. What makes it hard to die is that we have so much life yet to finish and we finish it by loving more deeply and expressing our love more freely.

Had that old monk cornered Jesus and asked him the same question he asked me, I suspect, Jesus might have said: Prepare for death by living more fully now. Work at loving more deeply, less discriminatingly, more affectionately, and more gratefully. Tell those close to you that you love them and death will never catch you like a thief in the night.”

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 web site www.ronrolheiser.com
Congratulations!
Our parish community prayerfully supports and congratulates the following family who had their child baptized last Sunday! Pictured are Peter & Colleen de Keratry with Charlotte Grace.

Infant 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 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.

THE SJC MEN’S CLUB INVITES ALL PARISH MEN TO OUR ‘SMOKER’

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15TH
6:30PM
AT THE CASA DE MONTECRISTO
IN COUNTRYSIDE (1332 WEST 55TH STREET)

PIZZA AND COLD REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED.
YOU ARE WELCOME TO BYOB, BUT BEER WILL BE AVAILABLE.

RSVP TO DAN MONTGOMERY AT TDM30550@GMAIL.COM
312.952.1435

BILL BRIGHT AT BBRIGHT@STJOHNOFTHECROSS.ORG
708.246.4404 X132
This Week at SJC

Monday, October 6
9:30 a.m. Spiritual Journaling
10:30 a.m. Step 11 Christian Meditation
1:00 p.m. Little Rock Scripture Study
2:30 p.m. Eucharistic Adoration
7:00 p.m. Boy Scouts

Tuesday, October 7
8:45 a.m. Tuesdays with Mary Rosary
9:00 a.m. Parent Association Meeting
7:00 p.m. Music Ministries Evening of Reflection
7:00 p.m. RCIA
7:00 p.m. YC Council Meeting

Wednesday, October 8
8:30 a.m. Fr. Bonin’s Opera Study
9:00 a.m. Bridges
9:30 a.m. Bible Study
1:00 p.m. Prayer Shawl Ministry
2:00 p.m. Christian Meditation
7:00 p.m. Crossroads Home Group Leaders Meeting
7:00 p.m. Chicago Catholic Scripture
7:00 p.m. France Trip Meeting, Fr. Elliott Dees
7:00 p.m. RCIA Planning Meeting
7:30 p.m. Christian Meditation

Thursday, October 9
9:00 a.m. Flourish
7:00 p.m. Faith Sharing

Friday, October 10
11:30 a.m. Senior Oktoberfest Luncheon

Saturday, October 11
7:00 a.m. Christian Meditation

Sunday, October 12
4:00 p.m. BEDS

Mass Intentions

Monday, October 6, St. Bruno
7:45 Alexander Sobey; Gloria Oechsel

Tuesday, October 7, Our Lady of the Rosary
7:45 Larry Dougherty; Joseph Kusper

Wednesday, October 8
7:45 Muriel Albertson; Francis E. Napleton

Thursday, October 9, St. Denis
7:45 Nick Tepavchevich; Maier & Gora Families

Friday, October 10
7:45 Our Beloved Dead; Cosmo Fornaro

Saturday, October 11
8:00 Bill Alberts; Coretta Spalo
5:00 John Fash; Robert McNulty

Sunday, October 12, 28th Sunday Ordinary Time
7:30 Dennis Callaghan; Bruno & Delfia Neri
9:00 Genevieve Obrazut; Mildred Kwt
10:45 Deceased Members of Monnchio Family; Silviano Gomez
12:15 John Joseph; William McMahon
5:00 Tom O’Hallaren; Giselle Cynthia Jenulis

Pray for our Beloved Dead

Mary Catherine Warren, mother of Julie, grandmother of Katie
David Thonn, father of Bill, grandfather of Karen Bloomfield and Laura Thonn
Leonard Martyn, mother of Pamela Martyn-Nemeth
Patrick Collins, father of Margaret Hynes, grandfather of Sophie, Rita and Bridget Hynes
Donna Venezia, niece of Carol Martin

Pray for our Sick

Richard Baruth
Tara Bassi
Mike Belpedio
Irene Gutsell
Karen Hult
Jeanine Jasica
Lucine Kasis
Theresa Anne Keanini
Steven LaVoie
Tom McGorey
Linda McMahan
Donald J. Martin
John C. Martin
Christine Moran
Alexander Obi
Erika Peterson
William J. Voller

Italics—Living

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. William J. Vollmer, Associate Pastor
bvollmer@stjohnofthecross.org
Deacon John Schopp, Deacon
john.schopp@newhemispheres.com
Bill Bright, Director of Outreach Ministries
bbright@stjohnofthecross.org
Janet Caschetta, Director of Youth Catechesis
jcaschetta@stjohnofthecross.org
Jim Clauer, Director of Worship
jclauer@stjohnofthecross.org
Laura Dragich, Reservations Coordinator
ldragich@stjohnofthecross.org
Kathleen Gorman, School Principal
gorman@sjc.pvt.k12.il.us
Katie Hayes, Director of Crossroads Teen Ministry
khayes@stjohnofthecross.org
Jessica Koch, Director of Music
jkoch@stjohnofthecross.org
MJ Martin, Director of Parish Operations
jmjmartin@stjohnofthecross.org
Elizabeth Russell-Jones, Welcome Coordinator
erussell-jones@stjohnofthecross.org
St. John of the Cross Parish Invites You to Our

Father-Daughter
Luau
Friday, October 17th
7-9pm Parish Center

$35 per family includes:
Pizza, Snacks, Desserts, Drinks,
Music/Dancing,
Flower Leis, and a Memorable Photo!

To register, mail your check or drop off to the YC Office
Watch for your Evite and
Purchase Tickets at the Door

Don’t forget your Hawaiian shirt and grass skirt!

Please bring a canned good to donate to those in need.

Hosted by the SJC YC Council