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

The Epiphany of the Lord
January 4, 2015
Dear Parishioners,

Congratulations— you have survived another holiday season. I hope your family gatherings were filled with laughter and love, kindness and patience. The stress of the holidays can be overwhelming at times, yet can you imagine if we just skipped it all? What if there were no decorating, no outdoor lights, no gift giving and receiving? What if we did not make an effort, sometimes an enormous effort, to gather with family and friends? What would we be like if we just gave in to the dark and cold and chose instead to isolate or hibernate or avoid each other as much as possible?

An essential part of the Christian message of salvation is that we are freed from what looks and feels like being trapped by things beyond our control. By celebrating the birth of Christ at precisely the darkest and coldest time of the year (in our hemisphere, at least) even the world of nature is defeated by the power of a transcendent love and hope. The death of nature in the depth of winter is symbolic of the physical death we each will experience. We learn from the outside/external what is of the inside/internal. By experiencing life on the human level we are transported to a life beyond the boundaries of time and place, because of Christ. While all around us is death, we take the time to celebrate the birth of one baby. The colder and darker it gets the more important it is that our lives are in harmony with the source of the light of the world. Sometimes we need dramatic reminders that the world is bigger than our issues, our problems, our successes. Hopefully these past holidays were the best kind of life-giving drama rather than the exhausting kind of drama that happens all too frequently.

Whatever the challenges of the holidays as we celebrated them were, it would be more challenging if we didn’t celebrate them at all. Take a moment to think of all the good things that happened over the past several weeks. Were you able to share a special moment with an individual that is a precious memory? Did you see a small child with sparkling eyes as a gift was opened? Were you drawn closer together just by sharing food and wasting time together? Put another way, did you meet the Christ in all the busyness of the holidays? Who was it that revealed Christ to you? How did you manifest Christ’s presence to others?

So this year, quickly after the first of January, we find ourselves in church yet again. Now we gather to celebrate the Epiphany. The birth of this Christ is not just for holy people or privileged people or greedy people. The extravagance of our God is that the light is for all the people. Our faith is not some kind of exclusive club that only people who think like us and act like us and look like us can belong (whoever ‘us’ is). Ours is a faith that includes every person, especially the ones we don’t like, or get along with or want to be with. If it were any other way we would just be kidding ourselves that this is from God.

I remember very clearly going back to school after the Christmas break when I was in grade school. The question from everyone was always the same: what did you get? The inevitable comparison of length of lists and extravagance of some parents lasted briefly, but long enough that I can recall that frequently uncomfortable moment all these years later. Now the focus isn’t so much on the getting as it is on the giving. And the focus on the giving has nothing to do with things that come wrapped in pretty paper with bows.

‘Epiphany’ is about God being revealed to all people in all times. The reason we do everything that we do is to draw ever closer to God. God is always inviting, initiating contact, seducing. It is up to us to respond, to see through the eyes of faith, to live in the fullness of the light.

Now that is something to celebrate!

Peace,

Fr. David
Thank you to the many parishioners who helped us prepare and celebrate our 9 liturgies on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day!

We would like to recognize Heidi Drescher, Church Art & Environment Coordinator, and her team who decorated our church as well as the school gym and school multi-purpose room. Transforming the school spaces into worship spaces is no easy task, and each year Heidi and her team do a beautiful job. Our maintenance men also play an important role behind the scenes, especially Andy Mola, who not only assisted Heidi and her team, but also worked with Frank DiPompeo making sure everything was set for the Christmas Masses. As Plant Manager, Frank coordinates the ordering and setup of chairs, staging, sound equipment, parking and many other behind the scene tasks every year. Thank you to all!

Serving the many who come to Mass on Christmas would not have been possible without the help of our many liturgical ministers. Thank you to our ushers, greeters, sacristans, communion ministers, lectors, and servers.

A big note of appreciation also goes to Jessica Koch, our Director of Music, Ann Bourjaily-Maney, and the choirs, cantors, instrumentalists and accompanists. We thank each of you for sharing your time and gift of your ministry with our parish.

Thank you again to all who made the Christmas Masses so inspiring and beautiful. It wouldn’t be possible without you.

Jim Clauer
Director of Worship

Let us draw from the crib the joy and deep peace that Jesus comes to bring to the world. Pope Francis @Pontifex · Dec 31

Through the wonderful generosity of a parishioner, greeters handed out a special Christmas gift book to every family who came to Mass at our parish on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day: Walking with Pope Francis: 30 Days with the Encyclical The Light of Faith. If you did not receive a book, stop by the parish center while quantities last.
Background on the Gospel

The visit of the Magi occurs directly before the story of the Holy Family's flight into Egypt. Matthew's Gospel tells a version of Jesus' birth that is different than the one in Luke. Of the actual birth of Jesus, Matthew tells us little more than, "When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod . . . " The story of the census is found only in Luke's Gospel, but we hear about the visit of the Magi only in Matthew's Gospel.

We know little about the Magi. They come from the East and journey to Bethlehem, following an astrological sign, so we believe them to be astrologers. We assume that there were three Magi based upon the naming of their three gifts. The Gospel does not say how many Magi paid homage to Jesus. In Matthew's Gospel, they represent the Gentiles' search for a savior. Because the Magi represent the entire world, they also represent our search for Jesus.

We have come to consider the gifts they bring as a foreshadowing of Jesus' role in salvation. We believe the meaning of the gifts to be Christological. Gold is presented as representative of Jesus' kingship. Frankincense is a symbol of his divinity because priests burned the substance in the Temple. Myrrh, which was used to prepare the dead for burial, is offered in anticipation of Jesus' death.

The word Epiphany means "manifestation" or "showing forth." Historically several moments in Christ's early life and ministry have been celebrated as "epiphanies," including his birth in Bethlehem, the visit of the Magi, his baptism by John, and his first miracle at Cana.

Living the Gospel

This gospel uncovers a number of contrasts: the magi-Gentiles from the east vs. Herod and the Jews of all Jerusalem; the light of the star that guided the magi vs. the darkness of Herod’s heart; the "newborn king of the Jews" thought to be found in Jerusalem, the home of Israel’s king vs. this Child being found in the small village of Bethlehem; Herod breeding evil in his heart to keep his power and status vs. the magi who paid homage and offered gifts to the Child. Searching for and finding the Christ necessitates a choice in face of contrasts: to accept or reject this new in-breaking of God. Further, there can be no encounter with Christ without a change in us.

God leads us just as surely as the star led the magi to Bethlehem. We must choose to trust in God's loving Presence and sure guidance. There will be inevitable setbacks and challenges as we struggle with following the Light; our everyday lives are filled with obstacles and restlessness which can get us off track. We must "search diligently": God and God's will can be found in many circumstances of our family life, work, and leisure times. Sometimes we must change course and take "another way": conversion is an ongoing milestone in Christian living. This feast day of the Lord's epiphany reminds us that the Light of Christ is a diffuse one; it permeates all the world, diffuses salvation everywhere, and invites all people to live in the Light. Our response: give of the treasure of our hearts. Give over our very selves to the Light. ©Living Liturgy.

"To offer gold is to proclaim Christ’s kingship, to offer incense is to adore his Godhead, and to offer myrrh is to acknowledge his mortality” (Saint Odilo of Cluny).

May we reflect the Light of Christ by the right choices we make for our lives and thus lead others to encounter Christ. May we encounter Christ in the good choices we make each day.

St. John of the Cross Parish
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Meditating on the Birth of Jesus

Dear Lord,

In my reflection today I discovered that I have to enter into my imagination; otherwise I’ll just be sitting waiting for things to magically happen. Lord, help me to use my surroundings and my consciousness as a vehicle—one that carries me into the world of these stories.

Today I tried a technique that my old roommate had taught me. I began by sitting still, praying for peace and calm. I was breathing deeply. And then I imagined myself getting up out of my chair and walking out the door. I walked outside, into the streets, and then into the woods. I was imagining myself running into a different reality, as if I were on a journey into another “imaginative” world. I climbed up some steep rocks, and over the hill was the town called Bethlehem.

It was magnificent and frightening at the same time. There were endless stars spread across the sky. As I made my way into the scene, I felt like a stranger who didn’t belong. But even so, I kept walking closer and closer to what looked like a barn and stables, and it was here that I saw Mary, Joseph, and the maidservant.

Mary had just given birth, and it seemed like I was coming into the calm after the storm. I was standing at a distance in the dark, and Mary caught my eye. She was young and beautiful. She seemed close to my age and a person that I could immediately become friends with. As I looked back, she nodded her head at me as if she were expecting me and—at that moment—I immediately sensed her warmth and her youthfulness, her compassion and love for her son.

I remember approaching the three of them carefully. Baby Yeshua was sleeping. I sat with them gazing at the small miracle, and after a little while, I mustered up the courage to ask Mary: “Can I do anything?”

And Mary whispered in reply, “No, just stay awhile. He’s happy you’re here.”

So I sat peacefully with them, struck with wonder and awe at the sight of our Savior.

Mary then asked if I wanted to hold him, and I could sense her warm smile and encouragement. She knew I was nervous and assured me, saying, “This child is as much yours as he is mine.” And as I was holding him I felt so humbled and honored. I kept whispering to him, “You’re going to save the world, and you don’t even know it.”

The funny thing is that this session on the “Birth of Jesus” was more about Mary than anyone else. I encountered Mary in an entirely new way. She was young and beautiful, warm and welcoming, and in many ways, I could sense she was terrified of a mysterious future—just like me. But this didn’t stop her from carrying on with what she promised. Fear did not paralyze this woman, because her faith in God consumed her. It was a humbling experience.

When it was time to go, Mary took back Yeshua, and she looked at me again and said, “You’re a part of the family now.”

Thank you, Mary, for letting me into your family’s life.

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Richard Rohr Meditation

A wonderful children’s book, Old Turtle and the Broken Truth, written by Douglas Wood with watercolor illustrations by Jon J. Muth, tells an imaginary story of how the world came to be so fragmented when it is meant to be whole and how we might put it back together again.

In a far-away land that “is somehow not so far away,” one night a truth falls from the stars. And as it falls, it breaks into two pieces—one piece blazes off through the sky and the other falls straight to the ground. One day a man stumbles upon the gravity-drawn truth and finds carved on it the words, “You are loved.” It makes him feel good, so he keeps it and shares it with the people in his tribe. The thing sparkles and makes the people who have it feel warm and happy. It becomes their most prized possession, and they call it “The Truth.” Those who have the truth grow afraid of those who don’t have it, who are different than they are. And those who don’t have it covet it. Soon people are fighting wars over the small truth, trying to capture it for themselves.

A little girl who is troubled by the growing violence, greed, and destruction in her once peaceful world goes on a journey—through the Mountains of Imagining, the River of Wondering Why, and the Forest of Finding Out—to speak with Old Turtle, the wise counselor. Old Turtle tells her that the Truth is broken and missing a piece, a piece that shot off in the night sky so long ago. Together they search for it, and when they find it the little girl puts the jagged piece in her pocket and returns to her people. She tries to explain, but no one will listen or understand. Finally a raven flies the broken truth to the top of a tower where the other piece has been ensconced for safety, and the rejoined pieces shine their full message: “You are loved / and so are they.” And the people begin to comprehend. And the earth begins to heal.

Gateway to Silence:
We are one in God.

Father,
ever present to your people
in everything that is good,
Hear our prayers.
May your peace and justice
be the star we follow
in our lives’ journey
to your everlasting kingdom.
We ask this in the name of
your Light and Word to us,
Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Now the Work of Christmas Begins

The feast of Epiphany today brings the Christmas season to an end. To mark the day, here’s a litany called “Now the Work of Christmas Begins” composed by Howard Thurman, an African-American theologian, educator, and civil rights leader.

When the song of the angels is stilled, when the star in the sky is gone, when the kings and princes are home, when the shepherds are back with their flocks, the work of Christmas begins: to find the lost, to heal the broken, to feed the hungry, to release the prisoner, to rebuild the nations, to bring peace among the people, to make music in the heart.

“When the king of heaven was born, the heavens knew that he was God because they immediately sent forth a star; the sea knew him because it allowed him to walk upon it; the earth knew him because it trembled when he died; the sun knew him because it hid the rays of its light” (Saint Gregory the Great).
**Rite of Dismissal**

From now through Lent, you will see at certain Masses our catechumens and candidates being dismissed from Mass with their catechist. Fr. Paul Turner, one of the leading theologians in the field of the RCIA writes, “Catechumens and candidates are dismissed not just because they are not yet eligible for Communion, but because they are not yet eligible to fulfill the tasks expected of all the faithful throughout the second part of Mass, “The Liturgy of the Eucharist.” The Liturgy of the Word is open to all because through the proclamation of the word by Lectors and the Priest and or Deacon (Gospel only) we are all instructed by God. Through our hearing of the word, we are all called to live it in our lives, thus catechumens and candidates belong with the gathered assembly for this first part of the Mass. Each week our catechumens and candidates will be called forward with their catechist at the end of the Liturgy of the Word, the General Intercessions. As they are sent forth they will spend more time talking and reflecting on the word of God we have just heard proclaimed in the scriptures and in the homily. During this dismissal the catechist will carry with them the Lectionary – the book that contains our scripture proclaimed at Mass.

**Confirmation Prayer Tree**

On February 7th our parish 8th graders will receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. As they conclude their journey and prepare to receive the Holy Spirit, we ask that parishioners remember them in prayer. Next weekend our Confirmation Prayer Tree will be set in the church narthex. On it you will find doves with the name of each 8th grade student. Please take a dove and pray for this young adult that he or she may grow ever closer to Jesus, imitating his life and his love.

**National Migration Week**

Today, on the Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord, National Migration Week begins. Pray for the protection of refugee families fleeing persecution that they may find refuge and comfort.

Loving Father, remembering that the Holy Family fled violence and lived for a time as refugees, we ask that you protect all refugee families fleeing persecution, and provide them a place of safety and comfort. For children who are making perilous journeys, often alone and without the protection of loved ones, we ask that you reunite them with their families and protect them from violence on the journey. For all migrants, that they not feel compelled to migrate but have opportunities in their homeland where they can thrive and live fully human lives. Open our hearts so that we may provide hospitality for those who come in search of refuge. through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.
Welcome home Identity retreat participants. Many thanks to the awesome team of teens and adults who ran the retreat!

Was your New Year’s resolution to help others and get involved? Check out the opportunities we offer this semester:

**Opportunities for Teens**

- **Work Tours** - see our website, http://www.stjohnofthecross.org/crossroads/work-tours/, for details and an application.
- **Kairos Retreat** - March 19-22. Applications will be available online January 12 for St. John of the Cross, St. Francis Xavier and St. Cletus parishioners.
- **Stations of the Cross Team** - contact Michael King at mking18@nazarethacademy.com
- **Join a Liturgical Ministry** - contact Liam Mear at mailraem@gmail.com

**Opportunities for Adults**

- **Lead our Fish Fry or Catholic Goods sale**, or work behind the scenes. Contact Ann Smith at anngsmithws@gmail.com
- **Serve as a Work Tour Leader** - contact Joe Gazdacka at gazzyjoe@aol.com

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**Little Rock: The Eucharist in Scripture**

Beginning Monday, January 5th from 1pm-3pm for six sessions all are invited to study the biblical foundations of the Eucharist. Eucharist in Scripture emphasizes the importance of meals shared in faithful fellowship as part of our covenant relationship with God. Old Testament meals and promises provide the foundation for gospel meals with Jesus, culminating in the Last Supper as understood by Paul in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. “Breaking bread” in Acts and the Bread of Life discourse in John are examined carefully. The class materials fee of $15 can be brought to class in the Parish Center.

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**Ecumenical Relationships Development**

*The ministers of the different churches in the Village are trying to build relationships between themselves and among their congregations. We are in the brainstorming phase of planning, trying to build off the October experience of sharing our histories. The meeting will be on January 13th from 3pm—4pm. If you have an interest in developing relationships with our fellow Christian brothers and sisters, please contact me. Whether you can make the meeting or not, I’d like to find some parishioners who have a particular passion for ecumenism. Let’s see what might be possible to share with one another.* Fr. David

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**Search for a Job in Government**

Interfaith Career Network invites you on Thursday, January 15th from 7-9 pm in the Parish Center to learn from nationally recognized government HR pro, Nancy Segal, who has spent her entire career working to find people employment with the Federal Government.

Are you in your 50’s or 60’s? To quote from our speaker: "I frequently see people in their 50’s, and 60’s getting hired. This is nowhere close to a big issue in federal hiring. Its more about the qualifications and how they are presented." Nancy has hired hundreds of federal employees during a distinguished government career and can help you unlock the maze of how to get a job from the nation’s largest employer. Learn: where to find federal jobs, what to look for, how to apply, how to create a federal resume, how to complete the application and how to interview. This meeting is open to all and there is no charge to attend.
Win a Penthouse Suite for 20 at The United Center
Support our Early Childhood Playground

Chicago Bulls vs. Phoenix Suns
February 21, 2015

$100 per ticket
Buy your ticket early!
Only 300 sold!

Winner will be notified on January 9, 2015

Sponsored by The School Advisory Board

Questions or to Purchase Contact:
Jennifer Miller 708-246-4454 or miller@sjc.pvt.k12.il.us
Send check payable to SJC 708 51 Street Western Springs, IL 60558

8th Grade YC parents
Please make sure your child is signed up for a Confirmation Interview. The staff interviews are conducted in a small group with four to five candidates and a parish staff member. You received emails with the link for Sign Up Genius to select a date and time that works best for your child.

The YC office is closed until January 5th, you can email Smillie@sjc.pvt.k12.il.us if you need information before the 5th or you can leave a message at 708-246-6760.

Check out the Family Home Lesson on YC website ~ Due in January.

YC Schedule

| Classes K-6 | 10:15-11:30am | Sunday, January 11, 25 |
| FFC | Noon-1:30 pm | Monday, January 12, 26 |
| Jr Hi Sm Groups | 7 grade | Sunday, February 1 January 11 in homes |
| | 8 grade | January 11 6:30 pm - Parish Center |
| | 7 & 8 grades | January 25 |
| Special Needs | | Sunday, January 11, 25 |

Youth Catechesis Office
The YC Office will be closed Dec 22 to Jan 5 ~ Merry Christmas!

O God, who on this day revealed your only Begotten Son to the nations by the guidance of a star, grant in your mercy that we, who know you already by faith, may be brought to behold the beauty of your sublime glory. Collect
**Outreach**

**Donate Stamps** — Shoppers at Jewel Osco receive Saver Stamps that can be redeemed for Cuisinart cookware. Donate your Saver Stamps to help us earn cookware for new refugee families served by the Catholic Charities Refugee Resettlement Program in Chicago. Stamps may be dropped off at the parish center or the YC office.

**Thank YOU!!!** SJC has been able to redeem Saver Stamps for 7 cookware sets and counting......

**Volunteer Tutors Needed**

Volunteers are needed for School on Wheels Adult Literacy/English as a Second Language program, which is a ministry of the Congregation of St. Joseph of La Grange 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, January 10 and January 17, 2015, at the Congregation of St. Joseph Center in La Grange Park. Call (708) 482-5060 or (708) 482-5077.

**Turkeys To Go**

100 Christmas turkeys, donated by one of our parishioners, are loaded into a truck just before Christmas for delivery to St. Mark’s, Precious Blood, and four other parishes and community centers in Chicago.

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**Sharing Christmas with Others**

Through your wonderful generosity, St. John of the Cross Parish was able to give Christmas gifts to 325 Sharing Parish families (1,575 members), 164 seniors from SJC and Little Brothers of the Poor, 40 families from BEDS Plus, 17 individuals from Helping Hand, 49 sheet sets, 61 personal care sets, and 13 backpacks for St. Thomas of Canterbury, and 826 gifts for children. In addition, parishioners donated roughly $10,000 in gift cards and cash given to families in need in the Chicago area as well as to Helping Hand, Little Brothers of the Poor, and Beds Plus.

Thank you for your support of our annual Share Christmas gift drive and making a meaningful difference in the lives of those in need this Christmas.

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**From:** Catholic Charities Refugee Resettlement  
**Subject:** An additional $5,000 gift from St. John of the Cross!!

Thank you to the generous donor who gave an additional check of $5,000.00 made out to Catholic Charities. This is so amazing to see God answering prayers for a much needed emergency rental assistance fund. It is faith-building for me to see how He is answering our prayers through Saint John of the Cross!

We will be using this gift to purchase beds for families arriving in Chicago from around the world. We are so grateful for all you do!!

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**From:** Helping Hand Center, Countryside  
**To:** St. John of the Cross Parish School Students  
**Subject:** Thank you!!

Thank you for your gift of $1,687 for a new water cooler for our Countryside building. In addition your gifts of handmade fleece scarves, hats and gloves, Blessing Bags, craft kits, ornaments and cards has made the holidays extra special at Helping Hand Center.

We are so thankful for your invaluable partnership and truly appreciate your commitment to our organization and investment in our mission of assisting persons with disabilities to achieve their highest level of independence through quality programs and services.

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**From:** Rev. Arturo Perez at Kolbe House  
**To:** St. John of the Cross Parish  
**Subject:** Thank you!!

Thank you for the $1,500 sharing check for Kolbe House. Your check brings to memory many of the volunteers of your parish that I have met through service activities, vacation bible school, and from tours of Kolbe House.

I cannot go through these moments in the jail and at Assumption Parish without being grateful for your active and faithful support of our ministry. We have established a family relationship of care and concern for one another. As the year comes to an end, know that I give thanks for the gift of the people of SJC in the life of our ministry. May you be blessed now and throughout the New Year.
Upcoming Programs at The Well

Upcoming Programs at The Well in LaGrange

1515 West Ogden csjthewell or call 708-482-5048

Mark your calendar to join us for the next two parish sponsored programs at The Well during the month of January. Both programs are free to our parishioners. Just call the parish center to register.

From Dinosaurs to Star Trek: The Evolution of Hope for a Threatened Planet
Saturday, January 24, 2015 from 10am-Noon
Speaker: Pat Bombard, BVM

Pat holds a Doctor of Ministry from CTU and a MA in Religious Studies from Mundelein. She offers workshops and retreats on emerging trends in spirituality and leadership.

Some scientists speculate that an asteroid striking Earth ended the 160 million year reign of the dinosaurs. Today some say human-caused environmental destruction is the lead cause of Earth’s present great extinction. Do we have any better chance at changing the course of history than the dinosaurs? The answer to that question lies in the path of conscious evolution—a very personal journey from despair to hope that each of us can and must take. Together we will share stories of our learnings on the journey thus far.

On a Clear Winter's Eve... A Circle of Kindred Spirits Consider Slowing Time
Monday, January 26, 2015 from 7-9pm
Speaker Barbara Mahany

Barbara Mahany is an author and journalist with job experience as a reporter/writer at the Tribune and a pediatric oncology nurse at Children’s in Chicago. Her new book: Slowing Time: Seeing the Sacred Outside Your Kitchen Door, was selected as a top 10 religious book by Publishers Weekly.

Barbara Mahany explores Winter, the Season of Deepening. The long dark winter weeks, not long after the Nativity and then Epiphany, invite us to draw deeper inside this Ordinary Time, to begin anew, to spark a winter’s dream, to marvel in the quietude that the New Year brings. Blessings and lessons abound in these snow-blanketed weeks as we commit again to the dream of all who we can be. Together we will partake of that, and sip something warm, besides. Books will be available for purchase and a book signing.

The Child Jesus reveals the tenderness of God’s immense love surrounding each one of us.

Pope Francis @Pontifex - Jan 3
Family Connection

The tradition of giving gifts at Christmas is thought by some to be rooted in the gift giving of the Magi. In many cultures, gifts are not exchanged at Christmas, but rather on the feast of the Epiphany. Whenever you exchange your Christmas gifts, take some time to reflect on this tradition of gift giving at Christmas. Think of the best gift you have received. What was it? What made it special? Was it the gift itself, the thought that went into it, or the person who gave it to you?

Read today's Gospel, Matthew 2:1-12. The gifts of the Magi—gold, frankincense, and myrrh—have come to be understood as symbols of Christ's royalty, divinity, and eventual suffering and death. They are special because in giving them, the Magi acknowledge who Jesus was to be: our Savior. We pray that we will acknowledge Jesus as Savior in all that we do and say. Conclude by singing together "We Three Kings."

Loyola Press

God, thank you for a new year. May everyone in our family be willing to begin anew with a clean slate. We know that you are always ready to forgive us. Help us to be willing to forgive ourselves and to forgive one another. As we begin a new year, remind us of our truest values and our deepest desires. Help us to live in the goodness that comes from doing what you want us to do. Help us to put aside anxiety about the future and the past, so that we might live in peace with you now, one day at a time.

What Gifts Did They Bring? What Were Their Names?

In Matthew’s Gospel reading today (MT 2:1-12), the birth of Jesus is heralded by the arrival of mysterious visitors from the east. Traditionally identified as three kings, because they spoke directly to king Herod, or as astrologers because they followed a star, or as wise men because they knew of Christ’s birth through some hidden wisdom. The fact is we know virtually nothing about them; not even their number, although that’s traditionally been fixed at three, because they brought three gifts:

**Gold** — a symbol of wealth and power identifies the recipient as a king.

**Frankincense** — the crystalized resinous sap of a tree used as incense and as an offering, is symbolic of prayer.

**Myrrh** — another resinous tree sap was used in healing liniments, and as an embalming ointment. Myrrh is an odd gift for a child, unless you know that this special child will, through his death and resurrection, redeem the world. At the beginning of Jesus’ life on earth, this gift foreshadows his death.

The names of the wise men according to tradition are Caspar, Melchoir and Balthazar.

Source: usccb and 2015 Sourcebook

"God calls each of us to be holy, to live his life, but he has a particular path for each one of us. Some are called to holiness through family life in the sacrament of Marriage.” - Pope Francis

**Christ Alive in Our Marriage Retreat: Jan 10, 2015**

How is Christ alive in one another? In our journey as a couple? How do we make Christ alive in our world?

Charis Ministries and Old St. Patrick's Church present this retreat opportunity to reflect on the meaning of your vocation and how you are being invited to live out your faith. Spend the day hearing talks by other young couples, talking with your spouse and others, and praying and reflecting as a couple. This retreat, designed especially for couples in their first five years of marriage, is open to all young adult couples. Retreat begins at 9:30am (9am registration) and concludes with 4pm Mass. Location: Old St. Patrick's Church, Chicago. Retreat Cost (includes lunch): $60/couple from December 18, 2014 - January 7, 2015. Don't ever let cost get in the way. Payment Plans & Scholarships available! Register at http://charisministries.org/marriage_chicago_jan2015_register Questions? Contact Deirdre (deirdre@charisministries.org or 773-508-3237) or Keara (Kearac@oldstpats.org or 312-798-2328)
SJC TRIVIA NIGHT IV

Saturday, January 24th
SJC Parish School Gym
Doors Open at 6pm ~ Games begin at 6:45pm

All are invited to come to Trivia Night! It’s fun and it’s a great way to meet fellow parishioners. Here’s how it works:

1. Organize a group of up to 10 people (ages 21 and over only) to form your team. Name your team.
2. Brush up on your trivia knowledge.
3. Send in your table reservation with a check(s) totaling $200 for each table of ten; (note: cost per table is $200 even if there are less than ten participants on your team). Make all checks payable to St. John of the Cross. Seating is limited, so RSVP soon.
4. Drop an envelope with the reservation form including the name of your team, captain and team member names along with your check(s) to SJC Parish Center attention Men’s Club.
5. That night, bring your own appetizers, food and your favorite beverages. Alcoholic beverages are permitted.
6. Winning Team will receive fabulous prizes and many accolades!

Questions? Contact Barrett Long @ 708-784-9224 or Dan Montgomery @ 312.952.1435.

More info on the Parish website.
Mass Intentions

**Monday, January 5, 2015**
7:45 Erv & Sophie Rozsypal; Thomas Albertson

**Tuesday, January 6**
7:45 Mitch Allen; Mary Jo McAuliffe

**Wednesday, January 7**
7:45 Our Beloved Dead; Jack Schwab

**Thursday, January 8**
7:45 Matthew Flood & Jorge Paez; Margaret Mary Woods

**Friday, January 9**
7:45 Martin J. Daley; Anthony Madaio

**Saturday, January 10**
8:00 Patrick Sheridan; Linda McMahan
5:00 David Bock; Nancy Leslie; Robert Plechaty

**Sunday, January 11**
7:30 Kathleen Bedford; Clifford Riordan, Sr.
9:00 Nazareno Marconi; Gloria Turlek
10:45 Deceased members of the Budreck and Hecko Families: Alice Marzalik
12:15 Robert Sullivan; William McMahon
5:00 Robert Murray; Lenny Kamenjarin

*Italics—Living*

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Pray for our Sick

Bruno Armalas
Mike Delaney
Melanie Yates

Pray for our Beloved Dead

**Harry W. Colmery**, father of Scott, grandfather of Harry, Frederick, and William

**Reggie Cook**, brother of Christina Turlek

God does not reveal himself in strength or power, but in the weakness and fragility of a newborn babe.

_Pope Francis _@Pontifex _· _Jan 2_
Women's Club Annual Dine & Demo Night
Thursday January 22, 2015
7:00 pm - 9:00 pm
Parish Center
Please join us and Dee Dee Saracco of

* gravy *

*nana’s sunday cooking, everyday!

for a wonderful evening of
mouthwatering easily prepared Italian dishes.
Also, for their second year, a wine-pairing presentation from

Hillgrove Wine Cellars & Bistro
-Wine Bar - Bistro - Craft Brews-
of Western Springs

It's sure to be a great night of
GOOD FOOD, GOOD WINE & GOOD FRIENDS!
RSVP by January 20th to the Parish Center.
Cash or check payment saves your spot for this wonderful evening.
Space is limited.