CHRIST
SPEAKS WITH AUTHORITY:
LET US LISTEN AND
REJOICE

4th Sunday in Ordinary Time
February 1, 2015
Dear Parishioners,

These are busy weekends despite the doldrums of winter setting in pretty firmly for most of us. This weekend we had a special Confirmation celebration for 9 of our Special Needs students. Bishop Manz was gracious and gentle in dealing with this very happy group of young adults, their sponsors and their families. Congratulations to them and to their very proud parents and family members.

It is also Super Bowl weekend, or “S-O-U-P-E-R” Bowl Sunday as the YC program spells it, quite intentionally. It is an attempt to counter balance, in some small way, the outsized spending that will take place in many places by many people at parties, or gambling or all kinds of things that happen under the umbrella of major sporting events. While the commercials can be interesting and frequently funny, and while the game itself is as close to being a ‘spectacle’ as the culture will provide, it is also an excuse for over indulging and excess of many things. It puts part of the shadow side of the media and its obsessive and repetitive coverage of minutiae and pointless detail on full display. There is much more to the shadow side of the media, like demonizing innocent people for the sole purpose of entertaining and amusing the frequently disinterested observer. And while the vast majority of us are utterly helpless in changing the focus and energy of conspicuous consumption, maybe by supporting a small effort like S-O-U-P-E-R Bowl Sunday we can put some food in what would otherwise be hungry stomachs.

Next weekend is a major moment for over 200 of our eighth graders as they receive the Sacrament of Confirmation from Bishop Kane. The sacramental celebration is the culmination of two years of faith sharing groups and over 20 service projects for each student. It is a sacrament of the gifts of the Holy Spirit but it is also a sacrament of transition and a sacrament of growing up. Our eighth graders are very conscious of their journey to high school coming up in a few months and maybe even too conscious of the challenge that awaits them four years from now in college. They are in transition as well from childhood faith to young adult faith, which will yield yet again as they continue their maturation to full adulthood. It is always interesting to me to see them begin to awaken to broader understandings of their faith and their world. They literally wrestle with reconciling what they had been taught when they were very little with what they are now capable of understanding as maturing young people. The technological world they live in seems to offer the ‘real’ answers to the questions of their lives by way of science and rational thinking. The magic of childhood faith begins to yield and may or may not lead to the beauty and mystery of adult faith. That is why they need the gifts of the Holy Spirit conferred on them through the sacrament of Confirmation. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are wisdom, understanding, counsel, knowledge, fortitude, piety, and fear of the Lord (wonder and awe). Which ones do you rely on the most? Which ones do you pray our young people will rely on the most? We all need all of the gifts at some time in our lives because no matter how old we are, we are always capable of growing in our relationship with the Lord.

No matter what Mass you go to these next two weekends you will see me, at least for a little bit. First I’ll announce the Annual Catholic Appeal and then the following weekend we will do the in-pew solicitation for it. Not my favorite way to spend weekends, and if it were not for your generous support I’d be totally depressed about having to do it. You are the 8th gift of the Holy Spirit in my life.

Peace,
Fr. David

In Cherished Memory of Fr. Kieran Kemner, O.F.M.
If you would like a prayer card from Fr. Kieran’s funeral please stop in the Parish Center office.
Please Support the 2015 Annual Catholic Appeal

All are encouraged to spend some time this week reflecting on information about the Annual Catholic Appeal. Please remember that the Annual Catholic Appeal is **much different than a one-time special collection. It is a pledge campaign** where you can make a gift payable in installments.

As you review the work enabled by your contribution to the Annual Catholic Appeal, please reflect on God’s gifts to you. He has given you all that you have. With these gifts, you are entrusted with responsibility. Your gifts to our parish, to the Archdiocese and to the work of the Church throughout the world should be given in gratitude for the continuing gifts that God gives you.

Each pledge makes a difference because all parishes participate in the campaign and the gifts of many enable our Archdiocese to deliver needed ministries and services. Our combined gifts not only signify our gratitude to God, they fund a significant portion of the work of our Archdiocese.

After our parish goal of $137,328 is reached in cash, 100% of any additional funds come back to our parish to help to fund our needs.

If you received your pledge form in the mail, please complete it and mail it back or bring it to Mass next weekend. For those of you that did not receive a mailing or have not had time to respond to it, we will conduct our in-pew pledge process at all Masses next weekend.

Thank you for your prayerful consideration and generous response.
We are the Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Chicago. Guided by the gospel and spirit of Jesus Christ, we nourish faith through Catholic schools and religious education programs, and support the many critical agencies and ministries of the Church. Through your support of the Annual Catholic Appeal, you assist in passing on the treasures of faith to a new generation of Jesus’ disciples.

ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL 2015
ENTRUSTED WITH RESPONSIBILITY

“The Annual Catholic Appeal reflects the mission entrusted to us, the good people of the Good News, to teach Christ’s presence to our children and youth in our religious education programs, our parish schools, in our high school youth ministry and to all we encounter in life. As Jesus’ family, we gather at the Lord’s Table to receive His presence in the Eucharist in order to bring His presence to others in joy.”

FR. DAVID FRANCIS RYAN, PASTOR
ST. FRANCIS DE SALES
LAKE ZURICH

2015 ANNUAL CATHOLIC APPEAL
THE FUNDS WILL BE DISTRIBUTED AS FOLLOWS:

- $3,500,000 grants and scholarships for schools serving financially challenged communities

- $1,350,000 support parish ministries that provide religious education to children, youth and adults in financially challenged communities

- $640,000 Catholic Relief Services for aid to the poor in foreign lands

- $1,000,000 capital grants to parishes and schools serving financially challenged communities

- $560,000 support ministries that provide comfort, care and counseling to those in need

- $250,000 promote the dignity of life from conception through natural death

Any funds raised are carefully spent; it is money for God’s work and we use it accordingly.

“WE WELCOME · WE SERVE · WE SUPPORT”

Catholic Relief Services represents the Church’s healing presence throughout the world. Without regard for religious affiliation, their work promotes human development by responding to major emergencies, fighting disease and poverty, and nurturing peaceful and just societies. Through the Annual Catholic Appeal, the generosity of the people of the Archdiocese of Chicago is passed on to support this important ministry.

“We try to incorporate our faith into the things we choose to do.”
Dr. Dan & Mary Hogan
St. Paul of the Cross
Park Ridge

“I am reminded that Mother Theresa said we don’t have to look far for people to help. We should love the poor in our own communities.”
Doris Lizondo Alvarez
Holy Name Cathedral, Chicago

“We want our kids to know that you have to give back in honor of those who have helped us get where we are.”
Theresa & Khanh Hu
St. John Berchmans, Chicago
Lifelong Learning

Background on the Gospel

Today’s Gospel continues our reading from Mark and describes what some believe was likely to have been a typical day in Jesus’ ministry. Jesus and the disciples that chose to follow him in last week’s Gospel arrive at Caesarea Philippi, a small village on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus teaches in the synagogue on the Sabbath. Mark reports that the people respond to Jesus’ teaching with astonishment, noting Jesus’ authority and contrasting it with the scribes’. Early in Mark’s Gospel we already find evidence of the tension that will manifest itself fully in Jerusalem.

After Jesus’ preaching, an even more astonishing thing happens. A man possessed with an unclean spirit calls out to Jesus. As we see in this example and throughout Mark’s Gospel, the spirits and demons seem to know Jesus and are often fearful of him. In fact, they seem to understand Jesus’ identity better than his disciples. As we will read again and again in Mark’s Gospel, Jesus orders the spirit to be quiet and drives the unclean spirit out of the man. Jesus’ ability to heal those possessed by demons is an indication of his power over evil.

In the prescientific age of Jesus’ time, all illnesses were understood to be manifestations of evil and sinfulness. Our modern understanding of illness is very different. Possession by unclean spirits may have been a way to describe what we might call mental illness today. It may have even been a way of describing certain kinds of physical conditions. There is evidence that there were many kinds of exorcists and healers in first-century Palestine. Jesus appears to be like these healers, but he heals with unique authority and connects his healing activities with the words of his preaching.

We are missing the point that Mark is trying to make in this Gospel, however, if we try to explain away the healing work of Jesus. The crowds see in Jesus’ cure of the possessed man further affirmation of his authority. Jesus’ power to heal gives greater credence to his teaching. Jesus impresses the crowds through his words, which are manifested with power in his deeds. Mark’s Gospel tells us that because of the authority with which he healed, Jesus’ fame spread throughout all of Galilee.

Living the Gospel

This Gospel narrates the first of many dramatic confrontations between holiness and evil. Holiness is “of God”; evil is everything that is opposed to God. All of us must confront many battles waged between good and evil throughout our lives. We must face decisions between what destroys our relationship with God and others and what helps us grow in holiness. For us to destroy the evil that confronts us, we must be “of God,” we must be holy. We, too, have Jesus’ same authority to banish evil because, baptized into Christ, we are holy ones “of God.” The authority of holiness is our baptismal birthright. It is God’s Life given us that makes us holy; it is God’s Life that makes us, too, “of God.” Like Jesus, we must be the authority of holiness incarnate.

Gospel living requires us to be so bold as Jesus in confronting whatever “demons” in us keep us from surrendering ourselves over to the growth and life to which God calls us. The call to die to self is more than idle talk. It is the ongoing demand in daily living to listen to God’s word, know all that the Lord commands us, and embrace the life God offers. It is the ongoing demand in daily living to confront evil boldly and not let it win. In surrendering ourselves to God’s will, in dying to self, we embrace our identity with “the Holy One of God” and are assured of the victory of new Life. Only by identifying with “the Holy One of God” can we speak and act with his authority. Truly, this is astonishing and amazing Good News. ©Living Liturgy.
Richard Rohr Meditation: Silence

Prayer is largely just being silent: holding the tension instead of even talking it through, offering the moment instead of fixing it by words and ideas, loving reality as it is instead of understanding it fully. We must not push the river, we must just trust that we are really in the river, and God is the current.

That may be impractical, but the way of faith is not the way of efficiency. So much of life is just a matter of listening and waiting, and enjoying the expansiveness that comes from such willingness to hold. It is like carrying and growing a baby: women wait and trust and hopefully eat good food, and the baby is born.

Prayer:
Listen to the stillness, the language of God.

Practice Listening

A listening exercise by Vinita Wright, from her book Days of Deepening Friendship.

Over the next several days, practice listening. Listen to everything—traffic sounds, nature sounds, speaking sounds, and the sounds of peace and quiet. Try to listen with great attention for five or ten minutes every day. Do this during a coffee/tea break, if that helps.

Then, gradually tune in to God’s voice. This voice will come through many of the sounds you have already been noticing. It will also emerge as you partake of the arts—books, music, paintings, dance, and so forth. You will hear God’s voice during worship or while your children are playing.

Try to spend a few moments each day quietly listening for God. Don’t say anything or ask for anything. Or if you do ask for something, may it be, “God, help me tune in to your voice.”

Remembering the 4 Chaplains

In the early morning of Feb. 3, 1943 a torpedo struck the USAT Dorchester in the Atlantic Ocean, just 150 miles from its destination. Panic and chaos quickly replaced the calm and quiet aboard Dorchester. The blast killed scores of men, while many more were seriously wounded.

It would only take 20 minutes for the Dorchester to sink into the ocean. But what occurred in those 20 minutes is something we still revere today.

Four men showed selfless acts of courage during the sinking: Rev. George Fox (Methodist), Jewish Rabbi Alexander Goode, Rev. Clark Poling (Dutch Reformed) and Father John Washington (Roman Catholic). Each man demonstrated service before self in a time of crisis. The chaplains calmed the crewmen, comforted the injured, directed others to safety and distributed life jackets. When there were no more life jackets, the four chaplains removed theirs and gave them to four crewmen.

Pvt. William Bednar recalled floating in oil-laden water surrounded by dead bodies and debris. “I could hear men crying, pleading, praying,” Bednar said. “I could also hear the chaplains preaching courage. Their voices were the only thing that kept me going.”

As the Dorchester disappeared under the waves, the Four Chaplains stood praying arm-in-arm. Feb. 3 will mark 72 years since the sinking and the display of bravery.

We pray for those who have given their lives in our nation’s service, that God may gather them into the kingdom of heaven. Amen.

Jim Martin, SJ, comments on following Jesus:

If you act on Jesus’s words (not just listen but act on them) you’ll be like the fellow who builds on rock. Your life will be steady, unshaken, permanent. Notice that Jesus does not say that you won’t encounter any storms in your life. The one who builds on rock still has to face the rains and the winds. Believing in God, and acting on Jesus’s words, does not guarantee that your life will be free of suffering.

That goes against the grain of much of contemporary Christianity, which says that if you believe in Jesus your life will be one of ever-greater success and comfort. In other words, free of suffering. Just looking at the great Christians of our age shows how false that is. Did the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. suffer because he somehow had insufficient faith? Did Mother Teresa suffer because she didn’t act on Jesus’s words? More to the point, did Jesus suffer because his belief in God was inadequate? No. Suffering is part of everyone’s life — from the devout believer to the doubtful seeker.

But, as Jesus says, following the word of God means that the suffering will not shake you.

Used with permission. Ignatian Spirituality/Jim Manney
New Eyes of Gratitude, Grace, & Freedom

Recently a post written by Glennon Doyle Melton at her blog Momastery spread like wildfire through my Facebook newsfeed. The post, “Give Me Gratitude or Give Me Debt,” resonated deeply with me and the other women who were sharing it because it spoke straight to the heart about our tendency to want to keep up with trends. Upon going to bed one night, Melton prayed, “I need new eyes.” She awoke the next morning with new eyes that rightly see the multitude of gifts in life that we often take for granted.

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The morning this blog post flooded my newsfeed, I found myself turning to the multitude of gifts in life that we often take for granted. Melton's post that day:

**Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will. All that I have and call my own, you have given it all to me. Take, Lord, all that I have and possess. Thank you for what you've given to me: our home, our clothes, our food, our water, our “stuff,” our jobs, my kids' education, our education, my memories, my family, my friends, and all that I understand. Give me a heart of gratitude, Lord, for all you have given me.**

**To you, Lord, I return it.** Everything that I have and possess is yours. Give me eyes that understand that. Lord, keep me from holding on too tightly to anything or anyone. Help me detach from all these things I have and possess.

**Everything is yours. Do it with what you will.** Show me how to live and love, Lord. Show me how to spend my money and how to care for my home and my family. Show me how to be unattached from stuff and trends. Help me be indifferent to all that I call my own. Take all that I have, and use it as you see fit.

**Give me only your love and your grace; that is enough for me.** I am enough, Lord, because you love me. The trends and things do not define me, nor does my job, nor do my roles as wife or mother. You are what defines me. Who I am in you is who I am, Lord. Give me new eyes.

**Amen.** Melton, once given her new eyes, says “I’m insanely lucky and I’m finally FREE.” We are extremely lucky (graced) to be loved by God and finally free from all the disordered attachments that keep us from fully embracing the love of God. This is the stance of life I need most as a mother—that I am lucky and free. I often forget that, so I return to the Suscipe time and time again, so God can remind me.

Used with permission. www.ignatianspirituality.com/Becky Eldredge

Family Connection

The people who heard Jesus teach and saw him heal in today's Gospel were said to have been astonished and amazed by the authority of his teaching. So compelling were Jesus’ words and actions that the news about him could not be contained; it spread quickly throughout all of Galilee. Two thousand years later, the news about Jesus continues to spread. We are called to participate in sharing the Good News of Jesus with others in our words and in our deeds.

Gather as a family and try to name some amazing things, events, or people. In today's Gospel we hear that the people were astonished and amazed by their experience of Jesus. Read today's Gospel, Mark 1:21–28. What did the people who saw and heard Jesus find so amazing? (In Jesus, the people heard and saw the power and authority of God at work.) People should see in our lives the power and authority of God at work. Can you name any modern examples of people in whom you have seen the power and authority of God at work? Conclude in prayer together that we will experience wonder at the work of God in our world today. Pray together the Prayer to the Holy Spirit. Loyola Press

**Our Mother the Church and the Gift of Motherhood**

Pope Francis spoke about motherhood at his first Wednesday Audience of 2015 on January 7th. “We are not orphans; we have a Mother! Our Lady, the Mother of the Church, is our Mother.”

“Every human person owes his life to a mother, and almost always owes her much of his subsequent existence.” He commended mothers for sacrificing so much for their children, a kind of “maternal martyrdom,” to use the phrase of Archbishop Oscar Romero. Continuing with the Archbishop's words, Pope Francis said that the “spirit of martyrdom is to give in duty, in silence...to give one’s life little by little.”

The Pope commended mothers for serving as an “antidote to “egotistical individualism” and for passing on the “seed of faith” to their children by praying their first prayers with them. The English language summary added, “Mothers are an antidote to the spread of a certain self-centeredness, a decline in openness, generosity and concern for others. In this sense, motherhood is more than child-bearing; it is a life choice, entailing sacrifice, respect for life, and commitment to passing on those human and religious values which are essential for a healthy society.”

The Holy Father concluded by thanking mothers: “Dearest mothers, thank you; thank you for what you are in the family and for what you give to the Church and to the world.” usccb /Pope Francis
Confirmation Preparation for Adults
Adults who have been baptized, have received First Holy Communion, and who are interested in completing the sacraments of initiation should contact Fr. Bill Vollmer. Adult Confirmation Preparation Sessions will be held on Monday evenings at St. Frances of Rome in March and April.

SJC Moms Club
Connect with other mothers in our parish for social time and playtime with your children. Drop in times at the Parish Center:
Friday, February 6 from 9:30am-11am
Friday, March 6 from 9:30-11am

Please help us welcome our new members to the St. John of the Cross Parish faith community:
Annie and Preston Holdren and Family
Shawn and Matthew Mullarkey and Family
Michelle and Laurance Drish
Alejandra and Nicholas Curry and Family
Jacqueline and Christopher Gallagher
Kathy and Anthony Janiak and Family
Kristy and Chad Kail and Family
If you would like to register to become a member, please contact Elizabeth Russell-Jones in the Welcome Center. For more information call 708.246.4404x155 or erussell-jones@stjohnofthecross.org.

A Reflection on Gratitude
To be grateful is to recognize the Love of God in everything He has given us -- and He has given us everything. Every breath we draw is a gift of His love, every moment of existence is a grace, for it brings with it immense graces from Him. Gratitude therefore takes nothing for granted, is never unresponsive, is constantly awakening to new wonder and to praise of the goodness of God. For the grateful person knows that God is good, not by hearsay but by experience. And that is what makes all the difference.

Thomas Merton

Calder of Events
February 8 - Home Group Meetings
- 10am Kairos Parent Meeting

Today is the registration deadline for Summer Work Tours and Conferences. Registration forms are on our website, www.stjohnofthecross.org/crossroads/work-tours/

Pictured below is the team that worked at our local sharing parish, Our Lady of Charity, last summer.

Community, Prayer, Service and Simplicity.
These are the themes of the Crossroads Work Tour and Conference experience. We will introduce these themes at our first Formation meeting on Saturday, February 28 from 1:00-3:00 p.m. All teens who will be going on a work tour or attending a conference must attend the meeting, and we encourage at least one parent to accompany their teen.

Adults Needed to Assist our Ministry
2 adults are needed for our Fish Fry leadership team, 4 are needed for the S.Wo.R.D. one day summer retreat team, and 2 for our Catholic goods sale. Contact Ann Smith at 708-246-4047 for details.

Coming Soon...
Our Social Coordinators and Fr. Bill are planning a movie night with popcorn, conversation and fun!

Our Sports Coordinators have begun making plans for the spring girls basketball league and summer softball!
Enjoy your Super Bowl Sunday events today!

Thank you to all who donated non-perishable food to our SOUPER Bowl Sunday drive.

The wonderful and unique focus of this event is helping those in need in our area. Nothing we collect, or any monetary donation, goes to souperbowl.org. Everything stays local. We report our success to souperbowl.org, but the donations get distributed to the charity of the YC Council’s choice.

Donations collected on Sunday, February 1 will be brought to our neighboring St. Cletus Food Pantry.

Food donated on Monday, February 2 will go to a different local food pantry. Thank you to all the wonderful volunteers and our YC Council for helping sort and deliver our food donations.

The family is the greatest treasure of any country. Let us all work to protect and strengthen this, the cornerstone of society.

Pope Francis @Pontifex · Jan 16

True love does not pay attention to the evil it suffers. It rejoices in doing good.

Pope Francis @Pontifex January 29

St. John of the Cross Parish School: A Community of Faith, Knowledge, and Service

Now that our celebration of National Catholic Schools Week has ended, we wish to thank the families, parishioners, and friends who helped make our week special. We appreciate the time you spent learning about the community of faith, knowledge, and service that SJC provides for our students and our parish.

This Week at SJC

Tuesday, February 3, Parent Association Meeting 9am

Thursday, February 5 Afternoon Conferences

Friday, February 6 Conferences ~ No School

Friday, February 6 Confirmation Practice 6:30 & 7pm Church

Saturday, February 7 Confirmation 10am & 2pm

Practicing charity is the best way to evangelize.

Pope Francis @Pontifex · Jan 24

www.stjohnofthecross.org
Our Lady of Charity School in Cicero
Pictured above is Carlos Trejo, the Foundation Director for Sharing Parish, Our Lady of Charity School, accepting 150 gifts donated by a nonprofit through our parish. The gifts will be used as achievement incentives for students. The annual Snowball benefitting OLC was last evening. SJC placed an ad in their ad book to support their fundraising event.

Hospice Volunteer Opportunities
Rainbow Hospice & Palliative Care will be hosting training sessions for volunteers interested in helping patients and families in their area. Volunteers participate in a wide variety of activities from patient care, bereavement support, outreach, data management, administration and more. For information on becoming a volunteer call Kathy Huber 847-685-9900 or khuber@rainbowhospice.org or go to their website www.rainbowhospice.org. Training dates are Feb. 10, 12, 17 and 18 from 5:30-9:30. If these dates do not work for you other training arrangements can be made.

Ignatian Volunteer Corps
Members of this Jesuit service program volunteer in poor and marginalized communities 2 days a week (Sept-June), reflect, pray, and meet monthly with other IVC members and a spiritual reflector. IVC members serve as tutors, employment counselors, food pantry volunteers, elderly companions, hospital chaplains, and more! To speak with a neighbor who is an IVC volunteer, contact Paul Krug at 630-323-3574. Or call for more info at 312-961-6206.

Ongoing Food Collection in Church
Our parish Food Pantry Collection during the month of January will be delivered to our neighboring parish, St. Barbara's in Brookfield. Please remember to bring nonperishable foods to the narthex of church when you come to Mass.

Celebrating Black History Month with St. Thaddeus in Chicago
All are invited to attend 10:30am Mass on Sunday February 22 to celebrate Black History Month. There will be refreshments after Mass. RSVP to Debra at St. Thaddeus 773-568-7077 if you plan to attend to help them plan.

Kolbe House Jail Ministry Mass Today
Kolbe House, the Jail Ministry for the Archdiocese of Chicago, invites you to a bilingual (Spanish and English) Mass at 3 p.m. on Sunday, February 1, at Assumption B.V.M. Parish, 2434 South California Avenue in Chicago. At this Mass, we especially invite anyone who is personally affected by incarceration, a victim of crime, or anyone who wants to be part of our ministry through prayer. If you are an ex-offender or have a loved one who is incarcerated, please join us. If you need more information, please call Deacon Pablo or Fr. Arturo at Kolbe House: 773-247-0070 or email Pablo at khpablop@aol.com

Thank you from Kolbe House
As the new year begins I want to thank you for sending the $1500 sharing check. I look forward in this new year to deepening our relationship and strengthening our unity as we serve the Lord in his people.

Even though the weather is cold and snowy there is a beauty that it contains. We all look for the warmth that comes from people who care about one another and who show that care both in word and action. The beauty of these past years together is evident. Certainly we have felt the warmth of SJC’s care for us, the staff, and the volunteers of Kolbe House as well as for those we serve when they are released from jail or prison. Your initiative and kindness are greatly appreciated.

Rev. Arturo Perez Rodriguez, Director

Cookies Needed for Helping Hand Valentine Party on February 7
Drop off homemade or store bought COOKIES to the Parish Center vestibule on February 5 or 6.
2015 Dine & Demo Night
Thank you very much to all of you who joined us last week at the Women’s Club Annual Dine and Demo!

Special thanks to the following who were a big part of making this event a success!
- Dee Dee Saracco of Gravy for her wonderful "Sunday Italian Dinner" cooking demonstration and plated food along with donating a give-away basket filled with her specialty items.
- Hillgrove Wine Cellars & Bistro for supplying the delicious wine pairings for our Italian menu & donating wine for the "Wine & Dine" give-away basket
- Turano Bakery for their continued donations of scrumptious breads for our guests to take home with them.
- Davanti Enoteca of Western Springs for a $25 gift card added to the "Wine & Dine" basket and the lovely tomato cans used for decorating our tables
- The women of SJC WC, friends & volunteers who give us their continued support to help make these program events a lot of fun and a huge success! God Bless.

SAVE THE DATE...
“Princess for a Night”
Spring Drive Saturday, March 14
The Women’s Club will host this event to help provide teenage girls that may not be able to afford a new prom gown a gently used dress and accessories for her formal prom this year. We will begin to collect gently used prom dresses and accessories beginning January 31 – March 13.
Boxes will be set up in the church, Parish Center, and school. We are also looking for gift certificate donations from local hair salons, spas, dry cleaners. Please look for more details in the weeks ahead.
Questions: contact Jennifer Miller at jenjoemiller@hotmail.com.

Father Joseph F. McDonnell Scholarship Fund

Are you thinking of choosing a Catholic High School?

Fr. Joseph McDonnell Scholarship Information
Our parish Women’s Club generates funds in support of Catholic education by awarding scholarships to 8th grade and high school students of our parish who plan to attend a Catholic high school.

The number of scholarships and awarded sums are decided by the Scholarship Committee and based on the number of qualifying applicants and funds available.

Preference will be given to those students who demonstrate financial need and are actively involved in the St. John of the Cross parish community. Applications are available in the school, Parish Center office and online in the Women’s Club section.

Timeline for Applications
February 10—Completed Applications Due
March—Scholarship Committee meets and notifies awardees

If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity please contact Katie Hayes at the Parish Center.

Please join the St. John of the Cross Women’s Club for their 2015 Retreat as we Sojourn to a Joyful Heart with Dr. Mary Amore of Mayslake Ministries
Friday, February 20, 2015, 7:00 to 9:00 pm
Saturday February 21, 2015, 8:30 to 2:00pm
Retreat and accommodations will be held at the Doubletree, Downers Grove.
Registration and event details will be available soon.

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Grief Support

- Little Company of Mary Hospital, Evergreen Park—Registration Required. Call 708-229-5484.
  - Grief Support for Adults: Living When a Love One Has Died. 6 consecutive Wednesdays beginning Feb. 25 from 7:30-9:30pm. Support groups formed specific to loss and age of participant.
  - Grief Support for Children: The Heart Connection. 8 consecutive Mondays beginning March 9th from 6-7:30pm for children ages 5-18 who have had a loved one die. Early registration suggested.
- Grief Counseling: Assistance in alleviating the pain of loss, either recent or past, from a licensed counselor is offered in the peaceful atmosphere of The Well. By appointment with Cecilia Kaiser, LPC and Grief Recovery Specialist. Call 708.482.5088. Adjustable rates available.

SAM for Men

SAM is a unique program that was active at St. John of the Cross Parish 12 years ago, providing a place for men of the parish to gather to discuss issues and challenges related to their faith. The SJC Men's Club will bring this program back to SJC with a SAM Gathering on Saturday March 7 in the Parish Center from 9am to 10:30am.

An acronym for Sharing Among Men, SAM gatherings were typically held on a Saturday morning -- thus the SAM (Saturday AM) acronym took on a double meaning.

The Men's Club believes there is a void, and therefore a need for a place where men can combine fellowship with spiritual meaning. SAM gatherings are a great place to make new acquaintances, catch up with men you already know, and to learn more about important aspects of our Catholic faith. It is a place where you can explore your own views on key topics, but also hear from other men just like you. Sharing is not required -- some men may just want to listen and learn, and that is OK too.

More information will be forthcoming - so for now, just save the date, March 7 from 9am to 10:30am and plan to give yourself the gift of fellowship with other men of the parish.

Divorce Support

- Divorce & Beyond at St. Francis of Assisi in Orland Park. Information Night is Sunday Feb. 8th at 7pm. Register at 708-614-0286 or jtrusdale@sfaorland.org
- Journey, Divorce Recovery Ongoing Monthly Meetings utilize The Catholic's Divorce Survival Guide on the second Monday of each month at St. Paul of the Cross in Park Ridge from 7-8:45pm. Contact Deacon Bob Bulger at 847-825-7605 or bobbulger@spc-church.org.

Interfaith Career Network

LinkedIn for Beginners—New Ideas for Everyone—Your LinkedIn profile is the second most important job hunting tool next to your resume. On Thursday, February 5 from 7-9 pm our speaker, Denis Curtin, will focus on different ways to use this free tool to improve your job search. Please join us at the St. Cletus Education Building.

Career Transition Boot Camp Week 3: Tuesday, February 3 from 7-9 pm. Keynote speaker, Dennis Hamilton will help you craft that all important "Elevator Speech." Time will be allowed to practice your personal statement with fellow attendees. Join us for one or all three of the remaining consecutive Tuesday sessions at First Presbyterian Church of La Grange. Please enter church on Catherine Avenue. Again, this Boot Camp is open to all who are employed, under-employed, unemployed or just trying to figure out what your next career step should be. There is no cost to attend. For additional information, please contact Susan Sedler at sqsedler@aol.com.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Women in our parish gather monthly to knit shawls and pray for those in need of comfort, healing and solace. If you or someone you know would like a prayer shawl contact Mary 708-246-5108 or Sheila at 708-246-7836.
The Positive Side of Melancholy

Normally none of us like feeling sad, heavy, or depressed. Generally we prefer sunshine to darkness, lightheartedness to melancholy. That’s why, most of the time, we do everything we can to distract ourselves from melancholy, to keep heaviness and sadness at bay. We tend to run from those feelings inside us that sadden or frighten us.

That’s why, for the most part, we think of melancholy and her children (sadness, gloomy nostalgia, loneliness, depression, feelings of loss, feelings of regret, intimations of our own morality, a sense of missing out on life, fear of what lies in the dark corners of our minds, and heaviness of soul) as negative. But these feelings have their positive sides. Simply put, they help keep us in touch with those parts of our soul to which we are normally not attentive. Our souls are deep and complex, and trying to hear what they are saying involves listening to them inside of every mood within our lives, including, and sometimes especially, when we feel sad and out of sorts. In sadness, melancholy, and fear, the soul tells us things that we normally refuse to hear. Hence, it’s important to examine the positive side of melancholy.

Unfortunately, today it is common to see sadness and heaviness of soul as a loss of health, as a deficiency in our vibrancy, as an unhealthy condition. That’s both unfortunate and shortsighted. For instance, in many medieval and renaissance medical books melancholy was seen as a gift to the soul, something that one needed to pass through, at certain points in his or her life, in order to come to deeper health and wholeness. This, of course, doesn’t refer to clinical depression, a true loss of health, but to all those other depressions that draw us inward and downward. Why do we need to pass through melancholy in order to come to wholeness?

Thomas Moore, who writes with deep insight on how we need to learn to listen more carefully to the impulses and needs of our souls, offers this insight: “Depression gives us valuable qualities that we need in order to be fully human. It gives us weight, when we are too light about our lives. It offers a degree of gravitas. It was associated with the metal lead and was said to be heavy. It also ages us so that we grow appropriately and don’t pretend to be younger than we are. It grows us up and gives us the range of human emotion and character that we need in order to deal with the seriousness of life. In classic Renaissance images, found in old medical texts and collections of remedies, depression is an old person wearing a broad-rimmed hat, in the shadows, holding his head in his hands.”

Milan Kundera, the Czech writer, in his classic novel, The Unbearable Lightness of Being, echoes what Moore says. His heroine, Teresa, struggles to be at peace with life when it’s not heavy, when it’s too much lightness, sunshine, and, seemingly, non-mindful; when it’s devoid of the type of anxieties that hint at darkness and mortality. Thus, she feels always the need for gravitas, for some heaviness that signals that life is more than simply the present flourishing of health and comfort. For her, lightness equates with superficiality.

In many cultures, and indeed in all of the great world religions, periods of melancholy and sadness are considered as the necessary path one must travel in order to sustain one’s health and come to wholeness. Indeed, isn’t that part of the very essence of undergoing the paschal mystery within Christianity? Jesus, himself, when preparing to make the ultimate sacrifice for love, had to, painfully, accept that there was no path to Easter Sunday that didn’t involve the darkness of Good Friday. Good Friday was bad, long before it was good; or, at least, so it looks from the outside. Melancholy, sadness, and heaviness of soul mostly look the same.

So how might we look at periods of sadness and heaviness in our lives? How might we deal with melancholy and her children?

First off, it’s important to see melancholy (whatever its form) as something normal and healthy within our lives. Heaviness of soul is not necessarily an indication that there is something wrong inside us. Rather, normally, it’s the soul itself signal for our attention, asking to be heard, trying to ground us in some deeper way, and trying, as Moore puts it, to age us appropriately. But, for this to happen, we need to resist two opposite temptations, namely, to distract ourselves from the sadness or to indulge in it. How do we do that? James Hillman gives us this advice: What to do with heaviness of soul? “Put it into a suitcase that? James Hillman gives us this advice: What to do with heaviness of soul? “Put it into a suitcase and carry it with you.” Keep it close, but contained; make sure it stays available, but don’t let it take you over.

That’s secular wording for Jesus’ challenge: If you wish to be my disciple, take up your cross every day and follow me.

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser, theologian, teacher, and award-winning author, is President of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, TX.
Our parish community prayerfully supports and congratulates Cara and Pete Rogers on the baptism of their infant Matthew James last weekend. Pictured with the proud parents is Fr. Rich Hynes.

Parishioners & Friends are cordially invited to the
Saintly Senior Valentine’s Luncheon
on
Thursday, February 12th
at 11:30am

Enjoy a delicious luncheon and an entertaining program in the Parish Center

Tickets are $15.00 for members and $20.00 for nonmembers

Reservations to the Parish Center by Monday, Feb. 9th.

Questions? Call Gerry Mazzone
708-246-0721

Saintly Senior Valentine’s Party
Name: ____________________________
Guests: ____________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________
Address: ____________________________
________________________________________
Phone: ______________________________
Number of Members: _______________
Number of Guests: _______________
Amount Enclosed: _______________

Congratulations to Parish Scouts
The following Boy Scouts received their Pope Pius XII Scout Award last Sunday at Holy Name Cathedral from Bishop Francis Kane: Sean Brynda, Bowen Pearson and Robert Spencer. All three young men are freshmen at LT.

Men’s Club Trivia Night IV Thank You!
Thank you to all who attended for making this event a grand success. A big Thank You to Kevin Cooney, Joe Durkin and Greg Koerner for another outstanding job with the organization, question research and presentation. A special Thank You to our prize donors:

LaGrange Movie Theatre      Horton's      Casey's
Elite Fitness        Q BBQ        The Hot Dog Company
L J Shaw and Assoc.

Congratulations to the 3 “High Scorers: Lipinski, Snow and Klafta Teams and to “Theme” award winner: the Michalowski Team.
The Week Ahead
Monday, February 02
9:30am Spiritual Journaling
10:30am Christian Meditation Group Step 11
1:00pm Little Rock
2:30pm Adoration
5:30pm Finance Council Meeting
7:00pm School Play Auditions
6:15pm YC Classes
7:00pm Boy Scouts
Tuesday, February 03
9:00am Parent Association Meeting
9:05am Tuesdays with Mary Rosary Mary Chapel
3:30pm ACA Student Usher Information Meeting
5:30pm ACA Student Usher Information Meeting
7:00pm RCIA
7:00pm YC Council Meeting
Wednesday, February 04
9:30am Bible Study
2:00pm Christian Meditation
7:00pm Chicago Catholic Scripture School
Thursday, February 05
9:00am Flourish
7:00pm Grecco Faith Sharing
Friday, February 06
9:30am Mom’s Club
6:00pm Confirmation Rehearsal
Saturday, February 07
7:00am Christian Meditation
Confirmation Masses
6:00pm Crossroads Identity Retreat Reunion
Sunday, February 08
10:00am Kairos Retreat Parent Meeting
12:00pm Kairos Retreat 19 Team Meeting
3:30pm YC Jr High Small Groups
4:00pm YC Beds
Mass Intentions
Monday, February 2
7:45am John J. Schwab, Jr.; Michael Goedert
Tuesday, February 3
7:45am Our Beloved Dead; Deceased members of the O’Malley & Madigan Families
Wednesday, February 4
7:45am John Hogan; Ann Maliszewski
Thursday, February 5
7:45am Larry Dougherty; Patrick McNamara
Friday, February 6
7:45am John Spalo; David Myers
Saturday, February 7
8:00am Wallace Williams; Paul & Adel Darrah
5:00pm Laura Stark; Gloria Turlek
Sunday, February 8
7:30am Delfina Tricis; Fred Dziok
9:00am Oliver Hauber; Nazareno Marconi
10:45am Mary Rohen; Ann & Ross Grecco
12:15pm Mary Maska; Debbie Brandt
5:00pm Maureen Cooney; Arnold Sayyeau

Italics: Living
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
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Elizabeth Russell-Jones, Welcome
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God of all goodness, hear our prayers. Bless us with the wisdom to recognize your hand at work in every dimension of our lives; grant us the faith to understand your will in all things, so that in you, our lives may be complete and our deepest hopes may be fulfilled. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.
ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO

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Annual Catholic Appeal 2015