2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time
January 18, 2015

“...our mission is to love as Christ loved and to proclaim the Good News...”

from our Parish Mission Statement
Our beloved priest and friend, Fr. Kieran, passed away on Monday, January 12, 2015 in his home town of Quincy. Many of our parishioners will remember Fr. Kieran who helped out at St. John of the Cross for many years, saying Mass, leading scripture study classes and providing spiritual direction. In 2003 Fr. Kieran celebrated his 50th Golden Jubilee at St. John of the Cross.

A Memorial Mass will be offered at St. John of the Cross Parish on Tuesday, January 20th at 11:15am. A reception will follow in the Parish Center. Please respond to the Parish Center office by Monday if you plan on attending the reception.

Everyone who knew him has an imprint of Fr. Kieran’s love on their hearts which we will carry forever. Go to our parish website to add your remembrance of Fr. Kieran and read the full obituary.
Many of our parishioners have received a mailing from Archbishop Cupich. He asks that you make a pledge to the 2015 Annual Catholic Appeal. Please respond generously.

This year, the theme of the Appeal is Entrusted with Responsibility. We each have a responsibility to recognize God’s gifts to us and to nurture them.

As we contemplate His gifts to us, we should also reflect on our gratitude for these gifts. Your financial support for the work of our parish, of our Archdiocese and of the Church throughout the world is, in fact, one way to express this gratitude.

The Annual Catholic Appeal is the yearly fundraising campaign that supports the schools, programs, agencies and ministries that serve the educational, physical and spiritual needs of the people of the Archdiocese of Chicago. Through its support of Catholic Relief Services, the Appeal serves people worldwide, without regard for religious affiliation, whose lives are devastated by natural disasters, illnesses, wars and famines. Every Catholic family or individual is asked for their financial and prayerful support.

The Annual Catholic Appeal is an opportunity to share our financial gifts in order to help provide education, ministry and services throughout our community and the world. Since we are not a congregational church, all parishioners are asked to support the central structure of our local Church. Every time that we say the Creed we reaffirm that we are members of the “one, holy, catholic and apostolic church.” We are saying that every parishioner is a part not only of his or her parish, but also of the Universal Church. Each of us is responsible for the well being of the Church in our parish, throughout the Archdiocese and the world.

Watch the bulletin for more on the Appeal in the coming weeks.

Each year our parish 7th & 8th grade students assist with the Annual Catholic Appeal Collection as a service project. This year students may sign up to help as ushers on the weekends of February 7-8 and February 14-15 on our parish website home page. There will be an informational meeting for all student ushers on Saturday, January 31 at 9:30am or Tuesday, February 3 at 3:30 or 5:30pm in church. Sign up to attend one of these meetings as well. The meeting will last 30 minutes. Parents are welcome to wait for their child in the back of church. Students are asked to arrive promptly so the meeting can start on time. Call the Parish Center with questions.
Peace is not only the absence of war, but a general condition in which the human person is in harmony with himself, in harmony with nature, and in harmony with others. This is peace.

Each person, and every people hungers and thirsts for peace; therefore, it is necessary and urgent to build peace! Pope Francis

Background on the Gospel

We learn in today's reading how Jesus' first followers were gathered. The first two, Andrew and another man, were followers of John the Baptist. After hearing John's testimony, they became followers of Jesus. During their time with Jesus, the details of which are not specified, Andrew and the other follower came to believe that Jesus was the Messiah. Andrew then brings his brother, Simon, to Jesus. Immediately, Jesus gave Simon a new name, calling him Peter, which means "rock" in Greek. The renaming of Simon to Peter is reported in all four of the Gospels.

In the exchange between Andrew, the other disciple, and Jesus, we see an example of the usual pattern for first-century Jewish rabbinical schools. Jews sought out rabbis and established themselves as disciples of a particular rabbi. Jesus appears to have been unique in that he sought out individuals, inviting them to be his followers. In the passage that follows, John's Gospel tells us how Jesus took the initiative in calling Philip and Nathanael.

Jesus asks Andrew and the other disciple, "What are you looking for?" This is a telling question, and one that we might often ask of ourselves. John the Baptist testified to Jesus' identity, the Lamb of God, using the framework of the Old Testament. Andrew, Simon, and the other first disciples were looking for the Messiah, whom they also came to know as the Son of God. What do we look for and what do we find in Jesus?

May we remain faithful to Jesus even when the cost is great. May we grow in self-giving love, bringing Christ’s saving Presence to all we meet.

Living the Gospel

John's two disciples would have interpreted the Baptist's cry, "Behold, the Lamb of God," within the Passover and temple tradition of sacrifice of lambs. What is startling about John's cry is that he uses this sacrificial reference not for a lamb, an animal, but for a human being who was walking by—Jesus. John is pointing to Jesus as the One who will be sacrificed. Little did they know at this point that the core of following Jesus is sacrifice—a total self-giving. Still, they followed him. As with all disciples, it took a time of rubbing shoulders with Jesus, hearing him teach and preach, observing his interactions with people, observing him pray, experiencing his resoluteness about his mission for them to begin to know Jesus, grasp his mission, and absorb the strength and courage to live his total self-giving life. Growing in total self-giving takes much time.

We cannot truly be disciples of Christ unless we, too, hear God's call and respond by transforming our lives, evidenced in the simple willingness to be obedient to God's will and take up the saving mission of Christ. Identifying with Christ and continuing his self-giving work of salvation make demands on us. Like Andrew in the gospel, we must boldly announce the Presence of Christ in our midst and bring others to Jesus. We do this best by living as he did: caring for others, bringing a healing touch, working at developing a deeper relationship with Christ through liturgy and prayer. The demand is surely there: become so intimate with Jesus that we do not waver in our love for him nor in our growing in his life-giving, total self-giving.

May we remain faithful to Jesus even when the cost is great. May we grow in self-giving love, bringing Christ’s saving Presence to all we meet.
Thank you John Kravcik

Joan & John Kravcik
Parishioners for over 50 years, Joan and John Kravcik have been active in many parish ministries such as the Parish Council, Parish School Board, the Bereavement Ministry and the Usher Ministry, receiving the Christifedeles Award from Cardinal George in 2008 for their service and dedication to our parish.

John, who has headed up our Usher Ministry for 40 years is retiring from his post. Many parishioners know John and Joan who have regularly ushered at the Saturday 5pm Mass. Our parish extends a big thank you to both of them and to John as Head Usher, and our continued prayers for living their faith so fully among us.

During this Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, we pray that all may work together to promote unity among Christians.

We give you thanks, O God, for you bless the Church with the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Help us support one another, to be respectful of our differences and to work for the unity of all those throughout the world who call upon Jesus as Lord.

Help us by your grace to continue praying the prayer of your Son that we may be one, that we may draw ever closer together and recognize our unity is that of Yours, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

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.

Home Visits
If you, a family member or someone you know are homebound and unable to attend weekly Mass, a trained Minister of Care will bring you or your family member Holy Communion. You and the minister decide on the day, time, and frequency of visits. Call Fr. Bill for more information.

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 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.

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.
Richard Rohr Meditation: Rewiring the Brain

I try to teach people an entirely new way of knowing the world, a way of knowing that has the power to move them beyond mere ideology and dualistic thinking; we call it contemplation. Mature religion will always lead us to some form of prayer, meditation, or contemplation to balance out our daily calculating mind. Believe me, it is major surgery, and you must practice it for years to begin to rewire your egocentric responses. Contemplation is work, so much so that most give up after their first futile attempts. But the goal is not success at all, only the practice itself. The only people who pray well are those who keep trying to pray.

Such seeing—and that is what it is—gives us the capacity to be happy and happily alone, rooted in God, comfortable with paradox and mystery, and largely immune to mass consciousness and its false promises. It is called wisdom seeing, and it is the job of elders to pass this on to the next generation.

Receptivity to God’s Love

The readings from last weekend for the celebration of the Baptism of the Lord concern receptivity to God’s gifts. Isaiah’s words invite the thirsty to “come to the water” and promise those who listen that they “shall delight in rich fare.” (Isaiah 55:1—2)

Isaiah reminds us that God is a God who is constantly offering us good gifts. The “rich fare” of God is not only the plenty of nourishing food that a good community provides for all, but also the deeper food of love that God endlessly offers. Yet we might ask ourselves: Are we receptive to the love that God is constantly pouring out?

Sometimes I can be tempted to pay attention to what is missing in my own life instead of appreciating God’s bounty. Yet love is a plentiful offering. Jesus is receptive of God’s love in allowing himself to be baptized by John, although John says he is not worthy to untie Jesus’ sandals (Mark 1:7—11). Jesus shows us that before we can undertake our own ministries of care, we need to allow the sun of God’s loving rays to shine upon us so that we can reflect back some of that light to others.

How do we practice receptivity? Here are some concrete practices that may be helpful. All involve some degree of surrender to God’s action over our own.

1. **Rest in silence.** Silencing our own interior voices in prayer allows God’s voice within to rise to the surface. Or there may be an even deeper experience of relationship beyond words, an underlying unity of self, God, and others.

2. **Be attentive to everyday acts of love.** All around us, people act in loving and generous ways. Perhaps my spouse tries to connect by sharing about his day: am I open to listening attentively? Or I may see two students who greet and warmly embrace one another—even if I do not know them, witnessing their mutual care is a gift.

3. **Let go and surrender to loving here and now.** Often, we want to give and to receive love in ways of our own choosing, but if we are open to change, we make room for love to flow. Perhaps today my teenager doesn’t want to engage in small talk, but meanwhile I can practice kindness to a stranger in need.

4. **Give away love without expectation of return.** Paradoxically, the more we give away ourselves, the more room there is for God to enter in. St. Clare described the soul as a mirror that reflects divine love. St. Catherine wrote of it as like an empty jug that must stay near the fountain of love. Both images remind us that it’s in emptiness that we find fullness, and in letting go that we can both receive and give.

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God, the Giver of all life and the Lord of peace, hear our prayers. May we give voice to the presence of your Son, the Lamb of God, who is in our midst, by seeking his peace and justice in our time and place. In his name, we pray. Amen.
Outreach

My Will and the New Year

It was a freezing cold night as we left Mass and headed across the street to pick up dinner for our daughter before we headed to our New Year’s Eve party. It was the kind of cold that stops your breath when you venture outside and freezes your eyelashes together in seconds. My husband ran in to the McDonald’s, leaving my daughter and me in the running car to spare us the harsh temperatures outside. Shortly after he left, someone knocked abruptly on my car window. Startled, I rolled down the window and winced as a cold wind whipped across my face. It was a homeless lady. “I’m hungry,” she said. “Buy me something to eat.”

I do admit that I was rather unimpressed. With my daughter watching from the back seat and just having left Mass, I felt cornered into helping this woman. I turned off the car, loaded up my daughter, and begrudgingly headed into the McDonald’s. This lady was a rather demanding sort as she ordered me, “Get me this, not that.” Irritated as I was, I was also very much worried about how she was going to get through this night. We were far from any shelters, and my discussion with the woman only confirmed my fear that my family was all she had. We ended up missing our party and spent the evening finding shelter for this lady. It took us on an adventure completely outside of our plans.

“Take, O Lord, and receive my entire liberty, my memory, my understanding and my whole will,” St. Ignatius prays. So often it’s easier to say the words than to actually carry them out. I have a very faithful friend who tells me that he desires to desire to say that prayer, but he’s not there yet. My experience with the homeless woman brought my friend’s comment to life for me. We desire to let go of ourselves and follow the will of God, provided it doesn’t interfere too much with our own. But how much more fulfilling it is when we do manage to just let go and follow!

That night, instead of partying to mark the New Year, I, by the grace of God, had the privilege of ensuring one of God’s children was fed and sheltered against the horribly cold winter; perhaps we even saved her life. That sort of fulfillment beats a champagne toast any day, and certainly helps to stoke the desire to desire for the Lord to take and receive my whole will.

Volunteers Needed: Parish Directory 2015

Are you detailed-oriented? Are you interested in getting involved in a project here at St. John of the Cross? We are now forming a committee to develop the 2015 Parish Directory. Step forward and receive a free portrait package for your stewardship on the committee. If this interests you, please contact, Elizabeth at 708.246.4404 or Erussell-jones@stjohnofthecross.org.

Kolbe House Jail Ministry Mass

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 come. 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 to SJC! We write today to express our deepest gratitude at the overwhelming generosity that you have shown us at the Refugee Resettle Program and those we serve.

Your generosity allows our clients a peaceful night’s rest in their own beds, familiar meals cooked as they strive to build a new home, more time to adjust to life in the US as they look for jobs.

Above all, you have freely offered to accompany our refugees on a journey that most of us cannot fully understand. As Pope Francis reminds us: “They are human people... who are appealing for solidarity and assistance, who need urgent action, but also and above all, understanding and kindness. God is good. Let us imitate God.”

Thank you all and best wishes in this joyous holiday season.

Catholic Charities Refugee Resettlement Staff.
Dear St. John of the Cross,

Thank you for the generous donation of $2,000 for the support of the work we do here at Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation. I cannot tell you how grateful we are for all that you do for us.

This year has been a truly busy year, but one that has been filled with so many good things. We have a young man in this fourth year of college who will graduate this year in May. It is a tremendous sign to the other youth—it is possible if you put your mind to it.

There have been some tragedies as well. This past week we lost two youth to gang violence. One was well known and loved by many. We have been spending time with the family and the youth as they strive to make sense out of senseless violence.

Your gift is one of the joys—for it means that we will be able to give greater support and guidance to youth and care to their family.

PBMR works to provide the kind of care and support that enables them to become successful. So many youth have the talent and ability, but need the guidance and support of mentors and support programs.

Your generosity and kindness is sincerely appreciated.

Fr. Dave Kelly

Thank you so much for all you have done for my family.

To whom it may concern: Thank you very much for the gift card. At this moment we are going through a very difficult situation, so thank you again. God bless you.

I cannot begin to tell you how grateful I am. I haven’t worked for one year and it has been extremely difficult for my family and me. This gift has made our Christmas so much brighter. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Thank you for your love and generosity.

Thank you for the beautiful plant. It lifted my spirits.

My children and I truly are grateful for your support at this time of year.

Thank you for continually giving as Christ has given to us—His Son. Every time you give to someone you don’t even know, you’ve given like Christ. I thank you so much and pray for you.

My family thanks you for your kind generosity. We wish you wonderful Christmas blessings.

Thank you so much for your kind heart and spirit. My family and I really appreciate this blessing. May God continue to bless you and your family.

Thank you for the gifts. It is because of you that my family will have a wonderful and blessed Christmas.

Thank you for the help you have given me.

Thank you for your tremendous generosity to us. You have put a smile on their faces and they are now able to purchase things for their families this Christmas. May the Lord bless you abundantly this season and in the new year.

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SJC received many thank you notes from many people who received gifts through our Share Christmas Program. Here are just a few!

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Our Lady of Charity School Annual Snow Ball—Jan. 31st 6pm For tickets and info go to SnowBall@OLC-School.org
Upcoming Meetings & Programs in Our Area

Update on Initial Ecumenical Effort
A one hour meeting was held last week to begin brainstorming about developing Ecumenical relationships among the people of the 9 congregations in Western Springs. Some tentative plans began to develop around a common gathering on Palm Sunday and a sunrise service on Easter. There are other ideas about how to develop relationships that will be followed up as plans develop. A second planning meeting will be on Tuesday, January 27 at 3:00pm here at St. John of the Cross. If you would like to be a part of the planning, please contact Fr. David to let him know if you will make the meeting.

Confirmation Preparation for Adults
Adults who have been baptized and 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.

Interfaith Career Network
Career Transition Boot Camp. Looking to change a job, interested in making a career change, unemployed, underemployed, recent grad looking for your first professional position? Sessions take place on Tuesday January 20 and 27, February 3, 10 and 17 from 7-9 pm. Attend one week or all five. It’s free and open to all. Join us at First Presbyterian Church in La Grange.

Retreats for Men & Women with James Finley
Dr. Finley is on the living school faculty of Fr Rohr. He is a great teacher and uses the art of storytelling to teach. He is highly recommended. Both retreats are at the Carmelite Center in Darien. Register and find more information online at ilmidwestmalespirituality.org/news/james-finley-retreats/

The Spirituality of Healing
February 12 from 9:00am – 4:30pm Cost: $75 per person (includes lunch) A one-day retreat exploring a seven step, contemplative approach to the decisive role spirituality can play in healing trauma and all forms of suffering. The day is intended for clinicians, pastoral counselors, spiritual directors, trauma survivors, those in twelve step recovery programs and for all who are interested in the spiritual dimensions of healing.

Falling in Love with God: The Spiritual Teachings of St. John of the Cross
February 13-15 Cost: $175. An introduction to the spiritual teachings of the 16th century Spanish Carmelite mystic St. John of the Cross. An emphasis will be given to how John guides us through the dark night of the soul in which we come to a profound experience of God’s oneness with us in all things. This retreat is intended for sincere beginners as well as those more experienced in the practice of contemplative prayer.

The Well Spirituality Center is located at 1515 Ogden Avenue in LaGrange Park.

Dinosaurs to Star Trek: Evolution of Hope for a Threatened Planet
Saturday, Jan. 24, 10-noon Facilitator: Pat Bombard, BVM 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 of 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. Through our parish sponsorship, this program is free to our parishioners. Call the Parish Center to register.

On a Clear Winter’s Eve, a Circle of Kindred Spirits Consider Slowing Time
Monday, Jan. 26, 7-9 pm Facilitator: Barbara Mahany Barbara Mahany, the author of Slowing Time: Seeing the Sacred Outside Your Kitchen Door, explores with us 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. Through our parish sponsorship, this program is free to our parishioners. Call the Parish Center to register.

Living More Mindfully
Saturday, Jan. 31, 9-noon Facilitator: Susan Lucci The practice of intentional, nonjudgmental awareness of moment-to-moment experience has been around for thousands of years. Wisdom traditions recommend mindful practice in a variety of forms to cultivate well-being. Thousands of scientific studies are now confirming these benefits to our health. Begin again in the new year, setting your intention to live more mindfully. Pause to reflect with others and learn methods for practicing mindfulness. Cost $45.00 To register, visit www.csjthewell.org; call 708-482-5048 or email thewell@csjoseph.org
Family Connection

In today's Gospel we learn about one of at least two family relations that appear among Jesus’ first disciples. Andrew is the brother of Simon, whom Jesus renames Peter. In next week's Gospel, we will learn about the brothers James and John, the sons of Zebedee. We know from the letters of Paul and other witnesses to the early Church that it was a common occurrence for an entire household to be baptized together. From the very beginning of the Church, families helped one another to know and follow Jesus. We hope and pray that this continues to be true in our family life.

Before your family gathers, look around your house and gather some items that your family might have that remind you of your faith. Perhaps you have a cross or crucifix displayed in your home, a statue of Mary, or statues or other art depicting saints. In today's Gospel we learn about how Andrew led his brother, Simon, to Jesus. Read today's Gospel, John 1:35–42.

In our family life, we also help to lead one another to Jesus. Talk together about the items that you gathered, discussing what these items mean to you and how you might use them during the day for prayer. Pray that your family will continue to help one another grow in our faith in Jesus. Pray together the Glory Be to the Father.

Cold Weather Keeping You Inside?

When you think of family fun activities, you likely think of activities in the truest sense of the word: swimming, biking, sledding, and the like—in other words, doing something that involves activity. While all those things are, in fact, fun family activities, there’s likely one key element missing from them: real conversation—the kind that helps you get to know the most important people in your life and helps them get to know you!

Consider trying a NEW kind of family fun activity—learning about the ones you love. To do it, you only need a few questions to spark fun conversation. That’s right—having conversations with your family can be downright fun. How?

Well, grab a bowl of popcorn, gather your family, and try the questions listed here for starters (excerpted from The Meal Box):

- What has been the most exciting moment or event in your life to this point?
- If you could change one thing about the way your favorite holiday is celebrated, what would you change?
- Kids: What aspect of being an adult are you looking forward to the most? Adults: What aspect of being a kid do you miss the most?
- When you consider our amazing earth, in what particular aspect of it do you find it easiest to “see” God? Loyola Press.

Here is what some of our Crossroads teens had to say about their work tour experience.

“I was transformed by sharing reflections with new (and now really good) friends and learning to see God in both the nature and people.” Holly, Senior

“I would recommend other teens try a work tour because you learn a lot about yourself and meet great people!” Anne, Senior

“This was easily the best trip I’ve ever taken. I got to create close relationships with people I would’ve never met at school. I wouldn’t trade this week for anything.” Sean, Junior

Pictured below is the group that worked at Habitat for Humanity in WV last summer.
All men of the parish are invited to a Men’s Smoker benefitting SJC Parish School Athletics. Enjoy a night of food, beverages, cards and great conversation at The Village Club of Western Springs on Friday January 30th from 7-11pm. The cost is $60 which includes pizza, assorted drinks, and a gift. Visit our website to download a flyer at http://www.stjohnofthecross.org/school/sjc-athletic-association-fundraiser-1302015/Questions to Phil May at 708-814-7445.

Chicago Bulls vs. Phoenix Suns
February 21, 2015

$100 per ticket
Buy your ticket early!
Only 300 sold!
Winner will be notified on January 23, 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 Presentation
John Grossman spoke with our 8th grade students about the Anatomy of Love. Through stories, statistics and laughter, he tackled the challenging subject of Gods’ plan for our spiritual sexuality. Here are comments from small group leaders (and parents) from the presentation:

“I thought the presentation was excellent...John touched on so many salient points.”

“This was my first time attending his presentation and I think he did a great job with a difficult subject. He was informative and entertaining. I hope SJC continues to invite John back.”

“I thought the presentation was awesome, and actually wish that my high school senior (who heard it in 8th grade) could really benefit from hearing it again.”

Thanks for all the wonderful comments about our fall Family Home Lesson.
We are glad you enjoyed sharing faith with your children.

Next YC Mass: March 15 at 9:00am

Sunday is the Lord’s Day. Let us find time to be with him. Pope Francis @Pontifex - Jan 10
Infant Baptism

Our parish community prayerfully supports and congratulates the following families who had their child baptized last Sunday. Pictured from the left with godparents are Clare Kathleen Ryan with parents Daniel and Sheila, John William Bushnell with parents David and Kathryn, and Reagan Elizabeth Bobinski with parents Christopher and Jill.

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

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

Pre-baptism sessions are offered for 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 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.

Lord, teach us that here on earth you have no voice but ours to preach the good news of Jesus to others. Help us spread that good news not only by our prayers and by our material resources but also by our personal word and example. Lord, teach us that here on earth we are, indeed, your hands; we are your voice; we are your heart.
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.
We can never be challenged too strongly with regards to being committed to social justice. A key, non-negotiable, summons that comes from Jesus himself is precisely the challenge to reach out to the poor, to the excluded, to those whom society deems expendable.

Therefore the huge, global issues of justice should preoccupy us. Can we be good Christians or even decent human beings without letting the daily news baptize us? The majority of the world still lives in hunger, thousands are dying of Ebola and other such illnesses, countless lives are torn apart by war and violence, and we are still, as a world, a long ways from dealing realistically with racism, sexism, abortion, and the integrity of physical creation. These are major moral issues and we may not escape into our own private world and simply ignore them.

However, precisely because they are so mammoth and important, we can get the impression that the other moral issues we have to deal with, issues of private morality, are not as important. It's all too easy to conclude that, given the mega-problems in our world, it doesn't matter much how we live in the deeper recesses of our private worlds.

Our private, little moral concerns can look pretty petty when weighed against the problems of the world as a whole. Do we really believe that God cares much whether or not we say our morning prayers, gossip about a colleague, nurse a grudge or two, or are less than fully honest in our sexual lives? Does God really care about these things?

Yes. God cares because we care. Large, global issues notwithstanding, issues of personal integrity are generally what make or break our happiness, not to mention our character and our intimate relationships. In the end, they aren't petty concerns at all. They shape the big things. Social morality is simply a reflection of private morality. What we see in the global picture is simply a magnification of the human heart.

When ego, greed, lust, and selfishness are not dealt with inside the private recesses of the heart, it's naive to think that they will be dealt with at a global level. How are we to build a just, loving world, if we cannot, first of all, tame selfishness inside us? There will be no transparency at a global level as long as we continue to think it's okay to not be transparent in our private lives. The global simply reflects the private. The failure to recognize this is, to my mind, the elephant in the room in terms of our inability to bring justice to the earth.

Social action that does not have private morality as its base is not spirituality, but simple political action, power dealing with power, important in itself, but the not to be confused with real transformation. The kingdom of God doesn't work that way. It works by conversion and real conversion is an eminently personal act. Carlos Castaneda, the Native American mystic, writes: "I come from Latin America where intellectuals are always talking about political and social revolution and where a lot of bombs are being thrown. But nothing has changed much. It takes little daring to bomb a building, but in order to stop being jealous or to come to internal silence, you have to remake yourself. This is where real reform begins."

Thomas Merton makes the same point. During the 1960s, when so many intellectuals were involved in various social struggles, Merton was tucked away in a monastery, far (it would seem) from the real battlefronts. Stung by outside criticism of his monastic seclusion, he admitted that to most outsiders it "must seem like small potatoes" to be engaged mainly in a war against one's private demons. However, he still believed that he was fighting the real battle: that of changing hearts. When you change a heart, he says, you have helped bring about some permanent structural, moral change on this planet. Everything else is simply one power attempting to displace another.

Private morality and all that comes with it - private prayer and the attempt to be honest and transparent in even the smallest and most secret of things - is the core from which all morality takes its root. Jan Walgrave, commenting on the social importance of mysticism, suggests: "You can generate more energy by splitting a single atom than you can by harnessing all the forces of water and wind on earth. That is precisely what Jesus, Buddha, and Mohammed did. They split the inner atom of love. Great energy flowed out." John of the Cross, in teaching about the vital importance of honesty in small things, says: "It makes no difference whether a bird is tied down by a heavy rope or by the slenderest of cords, it can't fly in either case."

Private morality is not an unimportant, unaffordable luxury, a soft virtue, something that stands in the way of commitment to social justice. It's the deep place where the moral atom needs to be split.

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser, theologian, teacher, and award-winning author, is President of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, TX.
The Week Ahead
Monday, January 19, 2015
Martin Luther King Jr. Day No School
Parish Center will have regular hours: 9am-8pm
9:30am Spiritual Journaling
10:30am Christian Meditation
No Adoration Today
Tuesday, January 20, 2015
9:05am Tuesdays with Mary Rosary Mary Chapel
11:15am Memorial Mass for Fr. Kieran & Reception
7:00pm School Board Meeting
7:00pm RCIA
Wednesday, January 21, 2015
9:30am Bible Study
11:00am Ladies Bridge
1:00pm Contemplative Outreach Meeting
2:00pm Christian Meditation
7:00pm Chicago Catholic Scripture School
Thursday, January 22, 2015
9:00am Flourish
6:30pm Women’s Club Cooking & Wine Class
Friday, January 23, 2015
Saturday, January 24, 2015
9:00am Promise
6:00pm Men’s Club Trivia Night
Sunday, January 25, 2015
School Catholic Schools Week Hospitality
after the 9am & 10:45am Masses
10:00am Crossroads Update Meeting
10:00am YC Jr. High Small Groups
10:15am YC Classes
10:30am Jr. High Small Groups
1:30 pm Baptism Prep
3:00pm Crossroads Kairos Retreat Meeting
3:30pm YC Jr High Small Groups

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
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Elizabeth Russell-Jones, Welcome Coordinator
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Mass Intentions
Monday, January 19, 2015
7:45am Nellie DiPompeo; John J. Schwab, Jr.
Tuesday, January 20, 2015
7:45am Jerry Albertson; John McCarthy; Matthew Flood, Jorge Paez
Wednesday, January 21, 2015
7:45am Nellie DiPompeo; Joseph Maleszka
Thursday, January 22, 2015
7:45am Frank Kranz; Michael Goedert; John Santucci
Friday, January 23, 2015
7:45am Our Beloved Dead; Bill Maguire
Saturday, January 24, 2015
8:00am Don Spiering; Marion Koerner
5:00pm Jack Fash; Larry Dougherty
Sunday, January 25, 2015
7:30am Margaret Mary Woods; John Hogan
9:00am Lee Shores; Mary Maska
10:45am Marion Koerner; Grace Slattery
12:15pm Gloria Stibich; Joanna Santangelo
5:00pm Joseph Munch; Nellie DiPompeo

Italics: Living
Pray for our Sick
Pray for our Beloved Dead

Rev. Kieran Kemner
Larry O’Mahoney, husband of JoAnne, father of Conrad and Kelsey
Helen “Terry” Vilimas, mother of Kristine
Patrick Lynch, husband of Betty, uncle of John Lynch
Irmia Voller (former SJC organist)
Kevin Wallace, husband of Susan Zwolinski-Wallace, father of Timothy and Katie, son-in-law of Eleanor Zwolinski
Bill Allen, brother of Vaughn Allen

Pope Francis said, “We often pray to Jesus, we pray to the Father, especially when we pray the “Our Father” – but not so frequently do we pray to the Holy Spirit – it is true, no? – He is the Forgotten One.” The Holy Father went on to say, “We need to ask for His help, His strength, His inspiration,” explaining, “the Holy Spirit, who entirely animated the life and ministry of Jesus, is the same Spirit who now leads Christian existence, the existence of [every] man and woman who say they are and want to be Christians.

An important part of our Catholic tradition is to pray for those who have died. Requests that a particular loved one be remembered in a special way at Mass can be arranged at the Parish Center Office. Sympathy cards are available. A Mass intention stipend of $10 is requested.
The Parish Center Office will accept Mass intention requests for 2016 beginning on Tuesday, January 20th at 9am.
Women's Club Annual Dine & Demo Night

Thursday January 22, 2015 7:00-9:00pm Parish Center

Please join us and Dee Dee Saracco of gravy

for a wonderful evening of mouthwatering easily prepared Italian dishes.

Dee will also have containers available for purchase at this event and will be donating 10% back to the Women’s Club for anything purchased or ordered Thursday evening. Here specialties include:

Vodka Sauce: $14  * Bolognese Sauce $14  * Turkey Chili $14  * Chicken Noodle Soup $11

Also, for their second year, a wine-pairing presentation from

Hillgrove Wine Cellars & Bistro

-Wine Bar - Bistro - Craft Brews-

of Western Springs

Hillgrove will also be donating 10% per bottle / 15% per case back to the Women's Club for anything purchased at the event through Sunday 1/25.

It's sure to be an enjoyable evening with GOOD FOOD, GOOD WINE & GOOD FRIENDS!

RSVP by January 19th to the Parish Center

Cash or check payable to St. John of the Cross Women’s Club  $10.00 per person

NAME: ________________________________  NUMBER OF GUESTS: __________

ADDRESS: ________________________________  E-MAIL: __________________________

PHONE: ________________________________  AMOUNT ENCLOSED $____________

QUESTIONS? CONTACT DENISE SCHULLO AT DEEC7@HOTMAIL.COM OR JEANNE CONKIN @
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