THIS IS THE TIME OF FULFILLMENT.
THE KINGDOM OF GOD

IS AT HAND.
REPENT,
AND BELIEVE IN THE GOSPEL.

3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time
January 25, 2015
Today marks the beginning of National Catholic Schools Week, the nationwide celebration of Catholic education and its focus on faith development, academic excellence and dedication to community service. We’ve planned activities the entire parish community can enjoy. Please join us after the 9am and 10:45am Masses this weekend in the Parish Center for coffee and donuts or at our School Open House on Thursday, January 29, 2015 from 9:30-11:00am or 1:30-3:00pm.

Along with our receptions after the Masses and our Open House, we’ve planned quite a few activities focusing around our community, our priests, faculty, and staff, as well as our students. We wish to thank you, our parishioners, for helping to make our parish school possible and the time, talent, and treasure you so generously give to us.

**This Week At SJC**

**Sunday – Faith, Knowledge, and Service in our Parish**
- Coffee and Donuts after the 9am and 10:45am Masses – Please join us!
- School choir to sing at the 5pm Mass with alumni.

**Monday – Faith, Knowledge, and Service in our Community**
- 9:15am All School Liturgy

**Tuesday – Faith, Knowledge, and Service in our Families**
- All families will receive a Holy Family prayer card as a gift to celebrate our families.

**Wednesday – Faith, Knowledge, and Service in our Faculty, Staff, and Volunteers**
- Lunch for Teachers/Staff
- Teachers/Staff will receive a special gift from students.

**Thursday – Faith, Knowledge, and Service in our Nation and Vocations**
- Our priests will receive a special gift from our students.
- Open House – 9:30-11:00am and 1:30-3pm

**Friday – Faith, Knowledge, and Service in our Students**
- Spirit Day – Students celebrate the end of Catholic Schools Week with friendly class competitions. We celebrate our school community.
Second Collection This Weekend  Annual Catholic Appeal

There will be a second collection today for the Parish’s “Support-a-Student” Program. The “Support-a-Student” Program provides financial assistance to parish families who are struggling to afford tuition at our parish school due to family hardship. Thank you for your generosity.

Be Part of the 2015 Annual Catholic Appeal

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.

Students: Your Help Is Needed!

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.
Living the Gospel

This gospel is a call-response episode; the call comes within the context of Jesus’ proclamation that now is “the time of fulfillment.” The kingdom of God is at hand in Jesus who manifests God’s abiding Presence, God’s promise of forgiveness, God’s unparalleled power to save. To enter into this “time of fulfillment,” we must leave everything behind and answer Jesus’ call to follow him. John preached repentance, and was arrested in spite of his goodness and innocence. Jesus preached the Gospel and suffered and died in spite of his goodness and innocence. Hearing Jesus’ call to discipleship and choosing to follow him faithfully literally assures us we will face adversity, however. The surprise of the gospel is not that we will meet adversity and suffering, as did both John and Jesus. The surprise of the gospel is not that we will face adversity, however. The surprise is that in preaching repentance and changing our lives, “the time of fulfillment” is upon us. The change assures us of God’s Presence.

The gospel portrays following Jesus in radical terms: turn from evil, leave all to follow Jesus. For most of us, this is not the kind of discipleship that following Jesus requires of us. Rather, to be faithful followers of Jesus we must change and be more Christlike in the little ways that are part of our everyday: turn to listen to someone rather than let our minds wander; root out whatever attitudes and behaviors most annoy those with whom we live; think only positive thoughts, especially about others. It’s these little changes that probably actually cost us the most! It’s also these little changes that help us grow into faithful disciples and that make evident that “the time of fulfillment” is now.

May we faithfully follow Jesus in all ways, even when it means adversity and suffering.
May we faithfully respond with urgency and immediacy to the proclamation of God’s reign at hand.

Background on the Gospel

The Gospel of Mark does not begin with a narrative about Jesus’ birth. Instead Mark begins by reporting on the preaching of John the Baptist. John is described as the voice in the wilderness sent to prepare the way of the Lord. Immediately after describing the work of John the Baptist, Mark reports on Jesus’ baptism and his temptation in the desert. Jesus’ public ministry begins after the arrest of John the Baptist. Mark wants his readers to understand the important connection between the end of the ministry of John the Baptist and the beginning of Jesus’ own ministry.

As we learn at the beginning of today's Gospel reading, Jesus preaches the Kingdom of God in continuity with the preaching of John the Baptist. Like John the Baptist, Jesus’ pronouncement of the kingdom is a call to repentance. Yet Jesus' preaching is greater than John’s. Jesus begins the time of fulfillment; the Kingdom of God is already here. This will be demonstrated again and again, both in Jesus' words and in the actions that follow. Jesus' healings and forgiveness of sins are signs of the Kingdom of God that he announces in his teaching.

In contrast to last week's Gospel, in Mark's Gospel Jesus takes the initiative in calling his first disciples. As mentioned last week, it was more typical of first-century rabbinical schools for students to seek out rabbis, asking to be their disciples. In Mark's Gospel, Jesus breaks with this tradition and invites his disciples to learn from him. Jesus is said to have first called four fishermen—Simon, Andrew, James, and John. Simon and Andrew are brothers. Jesus promises that he will make them “fishers of men.” James and John are also brothers. Mark does not report Jesus’ words of invitation to them, but he does report that they left their fishing immediately; their father, Zebedee, was left behind in the boat.

Mark’s Gospel is told with a great sense of urgency and immediacy. Jesus is a person of action, and events occur in rapid succession. We see this in today's Gospel. Time is of the essence; the fishermen immediately put aside their livelihood to become Jesus’ disciples. The Kingdom of God is here and now. The time of fulfillment is at hand. How might our lives be different if we more fully shared this sense of the immediacy of God's kingdom?
Hospitality is much more than a simple welcome or an offer of food or drink. Hospitality is an attitude of heart that opens us to others and receives them on their own terms. Henri Nouwen speaks of hospitality as a move from hostility to friendship:

“Hospitality, therefore, means primarily the creation of a free space where the stranger can enter and become a friend instead of an enemy. Hospitality is not to change people, but to offer them space where change can take place. . . Hospitality is not a subtle invitation to adopt the lifestyle of the host, but the gift of a chance for the guest to find his own.”

The challenge is to offer friendship without binding the guest and freedom without leaving them alone. “The real host is the one who offers that space where we do not have to be afraid and where we can listen to our own inner voices and find our own personal way of being human.” It means providing space where new life can be found and everyone’s gifts can flourish. To do so, we have to be at home ourselves and be willing to lay down our fears of change. We have to be willing to be vulnerable and open to new ways of doing things. We have to let go of our narcissism and exaggerated individualism.

Hospitality means openness to what guests and strangers bring to us. We receive a revelation from the guest which can change us and enrich our lives and open us to new possibilities and ways of thinking and living.

Hospitality implies attentiveness to the other and to the needs of others, even anticipating their needs. As Gula explains, “The key to hospitality is ‘paying attention.’ . . . When we pay attention, we divest ourselves of self-preoccupation. To be hospitable we have to get out of ourselves and become interested in the other.”

Often our lack of hospitality is simply the failure to notice and acknowledge others and their needs—the needs of the larger world and the needs of those closest to us. Jesus models that attentiveness. He noticed the sick, the excluded, the hungry, those that others passed by. God continues to be attentive. As we contemplate the ministry of Jesus, we are called to heighten our awareness of others so that we can carry on the ministry of Jesus.

—Excerpted from Putting on the Heart of Christ by Gerald M. Fagin, SJ

Well over a year ago SJC parishioners learned about a simple 500 year old prayer called the Examen developed by St. Ignatius Loyola that helps us become attuned to God’s presence in our day-to-day activities and concerns. In the five simple, yet powerful steps we encounter the God who desires to be close to us and whose presence in our lives makes all the difference. A great book on praying the Examen is A Simple, Life-Changing Prayer by Jim Manney.

The Examen is a prayer that can change you. If you have not prayed it recently, clip it out below and try it again.
Richard Rohr: God and Gender

Most people (not all) first experienced unconditional love not through the image of a man, but through the image of their mother. She therefore became the basis for many people’s real and operative God. I am convinced that many people sour on religion because the God they are presented with is actually less loving than their Mother and/or Father was.

For much of the human race, the mother has been the one who “parts the veil” for us, and opens us up to any inner life of emotions or soul. She gives us that experience of grounding, intimacy, tenderness, and safety that most of us hope for from God. However, many people also operate from a toxic and negative image of God. For those people, little that is wonderful is going to happen as long as that is true. Early growth in spirituality is often about healing that inner image, whether male based or female based.

Most of us know that God is beyond gender. When we look at the Book of Genesis, we see that the first thing God is looking for is quite simply “images” by which to communicate who-God-is (Genesis 1:26-27). God is not looking for servants, for slaves, or for people who are going to pass loyalty tests. God is just looking for images—“images and likenesses” of the Inner Mystery. Whoever God “is,” is profoundly and essentially what it means to be both male and female in perfect balance. We have to find and to trust images that present both a healthy feminine face for God and a healthy masculine face for God. Both are true and both are necessary for a vital and loving relationship with God. Up to now, we have largely relied upon the presented masculine images of God (which closed many people down) while, in fact, our inner life is much more drawn to a loving feminine energy. That is much of our religious problem today, and I do not believe that is an exaggeration.

God of all goodness, hear our prayers.
Bless us with 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.

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.

Volunteers Needed

Children’s Liturgy of the Word
Volunteers are needed to help lead our Children’s Liturgy of the Word program held during the Sunday 9am and 10:45am Masses each week. Materials and training provided. Contact Megan O’Brien at obrien.megan1@gmail.com.

Men of the Parish:

Men of the Parish: Look for SAM to return to St. John of the Cross Parish on March 7th. Take this Men’s Club quiz – the answer will be provided next week. SAM stands for:
1. Strategic Asset Management
2. Surface to Air Missile
3. Saturday Morning (AM)
4. Sigma Alpha Mu
5. Sharing Among Men

Donate Electronically

Parishioners are encouraged to make their offertory donations from their bank account through our online giving program on our parish website. Just click on the Sharing Picture. You can schedule your donation to arrive at SJC on a weekly, monthly, quarterly, or annual basis, and you can change or stop your donation with the click of your mouse. It’s just as easy and secure as shopping online at Nordstrom’s!! It’s also convenient and helps our parish budgeting by providing a consistent revenue source and increased efficiency in recording of donations. We are ready to help you in any way. Paper forms can also be downloaded on our website and dropped off at the Parish Center. Changes to your e-giving plan can be made over the phone. Call MJ at x123. SJC would also be honored to be remembered in your will or other long-term giving plans.

The Well Spirituality Center

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

On a Clear Winter’s Eve, a Circle of Kindred Spirits Consider Slowing Time
Monday, Jan. 26 from 7-9 pm Tomorrow!
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

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.

Upcoming Programs at Mayslake Ministries
www.MayslakeMinistries.org
Balancing Life with Courage, Grit, Love & Healing: A Women’s Morning of Renewal with author, Lee Woodruff: Saturday, January 31 from 9am-Noon at the Tau Center in Wheaton. Cost $45. Author and reporter, Woodruff shares the wisdom and inspiration she learned along her own remarkable and difficult journey following a critical injury sustained by her husband, Bob Woodruff, a co-anchor of ABC’s World News Tonight. Nothing is stronger than the courage gained through love and hope. A book signing will follow.

Plan Ahead to Attend. . .
Have I Told You Lately: A Half Day Retreat for Married Couples: Saturday, March 7 from 9am-1pm at Mayslake on Ogden in Downers Grove. Cost: $40 per couple. Create new romance and spirituality in the everyday life of your marriage. Renew the gift of your marriage with this workshop.

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.

How often we forget to dedicate ourselves to that which truly matters! We forget that we are children of God. Pope Francis @Pontifex · Jan 18
Outreach

BEDS PLUS Soup & Bread Event Tonight
Tonight, Sunday, Jan. 25th, all are invited to the third annual Soup & Bread event benefitting BEDS. Holiday Inn William Tell Banquets in Countryside from 4-7pm enjoy live music, craft beers and great local food. Tickets are $25 per person or $50 per family of 4. Reserve tickets 708-354-0858 x 2.

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 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

Sharing Parish Our Lady of Charity School Snowball Fundraiser
All are invited to attend the OLC Snowball on January 31 at 6pm. For tickets and more info go to Snowball@olc-school.org. SJC will place an ad in their ad book to support this event.

Ongoing Food Collection in Church Narthex
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.

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

Toys Donated to SJC Given to Sharing Connections
An area nonprofit donated extra toys to SJC last week. Our parish in turn delivered them to Sharing Connections in Downers Grove for distribution to children of families who have experienced personal and financial difficulties. Pictured above are volunteers at Sharing Connections (SC) in Downers Grove receiving some of the toys.

Sharing Connections provides gently used furniture, clothing and household items to low-income families helping them transform a bare apartment or house into a home. Most families are coping with crisis like domestic violence, returning or homeless veterans, job loss, or financial hardship.

SC staff works closely with referring partner organizations such as domestic violence shelters, housing organizations, food pantries, schools, veteran, and teen parent organizations. Fitting with the vision of SC, distribution of cribs and beds for children is a major focus. Over 6000 families are served annually, each receiving roughly $1200 in furniture and products.

For every piece of furniture you don’t need, there is a family who does.

SC Vision: Tonight, everyone eats at a table and sleeps in a bed.

SC Mission: Share good things with good people.

Items may be brought to Sharing Connections or larger items will be picked up by volunteers. Go to their website to learn more at sharingconnections.org

SC is located at 5111 Chase Avenue in Downers Grove 630.971.0565
Catholic Charities Refugee Resettlement News

- Two new families have arrived in Chicago—a family of 7 from Burma and a family of 5 from Syria. St. John of the Cross Parish Outreach will assist by providing 12 new mattress sets for these families.
- Several of our parishioners who are nurses are exploring how they can become involved with the Refugee Resettlement Program by providing medical care and counsel to the new families.

SJC Cooks!
Several of our parishioners regularly prepare food such as macaroni and cheese, lasagna, meatballs and pasta, and other casseroles that is then frozen and delivered to Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation for the youth and young adults who attend. If you would like to become involved by sharing your culinary skills contact Bill Bright.

Volunteers Needed: Parish Directory 2015
Are you detail-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.

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.

Thank You from Helping Hand
Helping Hand Center in Countryside has been serving special needs children and adults in our area for over 60 years, offering a range of programs and services, including outpatient therapies, early intervention, a school for children with autism, high school transition, residential homes, employment services, adult developmental training, and special recreation programs. Moreover, Helping Hand provides its clients with dignity, respect, patience, consistency, safety, security and compassionate care that enables them to achieve their highest level of independence.

Thank you to St. John of the Cross Parish for being an important part of the Helping Hand community by providing many gifts of time, talent and treasure such as:
- Welcoming our students with autism to attend Vacation Bible School
- VBS students making homemade welcome cards for new Helping Hand clients
- Through Share Christmas, providing many of our clients and families in need with gifts
- Parish families hosting their own parties and collecting donations for clients in need
- Students at SJC learning about autism and assembling “blessing bags,” making sensory and art kits for aging clients, and raising money to install a new water fountain for our school
- SJC children, teens and adults volunteering their time to support our programs and special events

All that you have done for the past 55 years and all that you continue to do to partner with Helping Hand is inspiring to all of us on staff. Your help gives us strength to move forward despite financial uncertainties and to continue to grow and serve so many who are in need. We thank you for your enthusiasm, compassion and love, and we extend a special thank you to Bill Bright who has connected your parish with our organization. He is an amazing community leader.

Sincerely,
Mary Beth Happ
Helping Hand Executive Director

We who are Christians, members of God’s family, are called to go out to the needy and to serve them.
Pope Francis @Pontifex · Jan 17
Family Connection

Today's Gospel describes how Jesus called his first disciples and the immediacy with which these men dropped everything to follow him. We can only begin to imagine what Jesus' presence must have been like to invoke such a response in these first disciples. While a few of us might relate to such a radical conversion, many of us would find such a sudden change in ourselves or in another person unsettling. There are few things for which we would willingly drop everything. And yet this is the immediacy with which these first disciples responded to Jesus. These first disciples were willing to drop everything in order to make Jesus and the Kingdom of God the most important things in their lives.

Gather as a family and talk about circumstances in which you have had to “drop everything” (the call to pick up a sick child from school, the cry of a hurt or angry child) How did you feel about having to change your plans in each of these situations? How do we feel when someone asks us to drop everything to help him or her? For many of us, it is not easy to drop everything to respond to the needs of another.

Read today’s Gospel, Mark 1:14–20. Invite your family to imagine what Jesus’ presence and invitation to these first followers must have been like that they responded by leaving their livelihood to become his disciples. How might our life change if we understood the Kingdom of God to be as important and immediate in our lives? Ask God to help you experience the Kingdom of God with such immediacy. Pray together the Lord’s Prayer.

Last Sunday Pope Francis was greeted by thousands of young people at the University of Santo Tomas in Manila where he took questions from a number of students and children. Following are some excerpts from his remarks regarding information technology.

“Today, with so many kinds of media, we are informed, even over-informed. Is this a bad thing? No. It is good and useful, but we do run the risk of information overload. We have plenty of information, but maybe we don’t know what to do with it all. We risk becoming “museums,” storing up all sorts of things but not knowing what to do with them. We don’t need young people who are storehouses, but young people who are wise.

You can ask me: Father, how can I become wise? This is another challenge: the challenge of love. What is the most important lesson which you have to learn at the University? What is the most important lesson that you have to learn in life? It is learning how to love. This is the challenge which life sets before you today. Learning how to love. Not just how to accumulate information. There comes a time when you don’t know what to do with it all. It’s a storehouse. Unless, through love, all this information can bear fruit.

For this to happen, the Gospel proposes to us a serene and tranquil thing to do. It is to use the three languages: the language of the heart, the language of the hands, and the language of the hands. All three together, harmoniously: what you think, you feel and you do. Your information descends to the heart, moves it and gets translated into action. And all this in a harmonious way: I think what I feel and do, I feel what I think and what I do, and I do what I think and what I feel. The three languages. Are you ready to repeat these three languages? Thinking, feeling and acting. Say those words back to me. And all of this harmoniously.

True love is both loving and letting oneself be loved. It is harder to let ourselves be loved than it is to love. That is why it is so hard to achieve the perfect love of God, because we can love him but the important thing is to let ourselves be loved by him. True love is being open to that love which was there first and catches us by surprise. If all you have is information, you are closed to surprises. Your information descends to the heart, moves it and gets translated into action. And all this in a harmonious way: I think what I feel and do, I feel what I think and what I do, and I do what I think and what I feel. The three languages. Are you ready to repeat these three languages? Thinking, feeling and acting. Say those words back to me. And all of this harmoniously.

What is the most important lesson that you have to learn in life?
It is learning how to love.
Infant Baptism

Parish News & Notes

Our parish community prayerfully supports and congratulates the following families who had their children baptized last Sunday. Pictured from the left with Deacon John Schopp is the Sorich family: Michael, Katie and baby Patrick Michael, the Prendergast family: Ryan, Angela and baby Mia Marie, and the Broderick family: William, Kathryn and baby William Timothy.

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.

Interfaith Career Network
Energize Your Job Search Using LinkedIn: Your LinkedIn profile is the second most important job hunting tool next to your resume. The ICN speaker meeting on Thursday, February 5 from 7-9 pm will focus on different ways to use this free tool to improve your job search. St. Cletus Education Building.

Career Transition Boot Camp: Week 2: Tuesday, January 27 from 7-9 pm. Keynote speaker Dennis Hamilton will provide a special presentation on identifying your skills and quantifying your accomplishments which are the keys to preparing a compelling resume and “elevator speech.” Join us for one or all four of the remaining consecutive Tuesday sessions. First Presbyterian Church of La Grange.

Do You Love LinkedIn?: Would you be willing to share your enthusiasm and expertise? Would you be willing to help others energize their job search using LinkedIn? Interfaith Career Network is looking for a volunteer(s) to assist job seekers in their professional search using this powerful tool. If interested in LinkedIn coaching or other volunteer opportunities with ICN, please contact Judy Kennedy, jkennedy1333@ameritech.net, at 708.352.8943; or Tom Rohn, tom_rohn@yahoo.com, at 708.772.4231.

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. Visit our website to download a flyer at http://www.stjohnofthecross.org/school/sjc-athletic-association-fundraiser-1302015/
A simple prayer:
"Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those who are without a bowl of soup to eat," is inspiring a youth-led movement to help hungry and hurting people around the world.

Join YC students during Super Bowl by placing an “O” in Super for Souper Bowl Sunday

More than 23 years ago, a Super Bowl Sunday prayer inspired a group of young people to do something more than celebrate a football game. They created Souper Bowl of Caring, and have rallied youth across the US to raise over $90 million for people in need. On Sunday February 3rd, millions of Americans will tune in to the Super Bowl football game. There will be parties with abundant food, friendship and fellowship. At the same time, there will be people worrying about staying warm, finding shelter and a warm meal.

Please join the young people of our Youth Catechesis Program as they demonstrate God’s love by caring for their neighbors through the Souper Bowl of Caring. It is a simple, yet significant act. Drop off a can of soup, non-perishable food items or a monetary donation at the signs: “SOUPER BOWL OF CARING” at YC classes and church narthex on February 1st and 2nd.

Our youth are developing hearts for giving that can last a lifetime. Please support their efforts.

Everything collected will be donated to area food pantries chosen by YC Council. Please give generously.

YC Schedule
Classes K-6 10:15-11:30am Sunday, January 25, Feb 1
6:15-7:30pm Monday, January 26, Feb 2
FFC Noon-1:30 pm Sunday, February 1
Jr Hi Sm Groups 7 & 8 grades January 25, Feb 8, 22
Special Needs Sunday, January 25

Summer Work Tour & Conference Registration Deadline Feb. 1
The deadline to register for our summer Work Tours & Conferences is just a week away! Make your plans now for a rewarding experience this summer. Adults are needed too!

Work Tours
June 8-15 New for Crossroads this year, we will visit one of the homes of Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos (NPH), Spanish for “Our Little Brothers and Sisters,” in Guatemala.
July 12-18 Habitat for Humanity in Franklin, WV
July 20-24 Our Lady of Charity, our local Sharing Parish in Cicero.
August 1-8 Our Lady of Perpetual Help, our Sharing Parish in Williamsburg, KY

Conferences
June 26-28 Youth Leadership Conference, Lewis University in Romeoville
July 6-10 Notre Dame Vision Conference
August 29-30 Cultivation Ministries Peer Ministry Retreat in East Troy, WI.
November 19-21 National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) in Indianapolis

Kairos Update
We received a record number of applications for Kairos 19, and registration is now closed. Kairos 20 will be held August 6-9. Watch for registration in May.
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.
  - General Journey Toward Healing: 6 weeks on Tuesdays beginning February 10th from 12:30pm to 2:00pm.

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 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.

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.

Saintly Senior Valentine’s Luncheon
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: ____________________

Note: The party is on a Thursday in the Parish Center!
Christian de Cherge, the Trappist Abbott who was martyred in Algeria in 1996, was fond of sharing this story: He had a very close Muslim friend, Mohammed, and the two of them used to pray together, even as they remained aware of their differences, as Muslim and Christian. Aware too that certain schools of thought, both Muslim and Christian, warn against this type of prayer, fearing that the various faiths are not praying to the same God, the two of them didn’t call their sessions together prayer. Rather they imagined themselves as "digging a well together". One day Christian asked Mohammed: "When we get to the bottom of our well, what will we find? Muslim water or Christian water?" Mohammed, half-amused but still deadly serious, replied: "Come on now, we’ve spent all this time walking together, and you’re still asking me this question. You know well that at the bottom of that well, what we’ll find is God's water."

There are important religious truths couched inside that story. First off, all religions worthy of the name believe that the first thing we need to affirm about God is that God is ineffable, that is, God is beyond all human imagination, conceptualization, and language. Everything we think and say about God, even within scripture and our defined dogmas, is more inadequate than adequate. It reveals some truth, but, this side of eternity, never the complete truth. No dogma and no religion ever provide an adequate expression of God. If this is true, and it is, then all religious truth is always partial and limited in its historical expression and cannot claim adequacy. All religions, all dogmas, and all expressions of theology, irrespective of denomination or religion, must humbly acknowledge their incompleteness. Only God is absolute, and an absolute knowledge of God lies at the bottom of the well, at the end of our religious journey.

That fact radically changes the way we need to conceive of ecumenism and interfaith dialogue. Since no one, us included, has the full truth, the way of ecumenism and interfaith dialogue should not be conceived, as has been so much the case up to the present, of one side winning the other side over: We, alone, have the truth and you must join us! Rather the way has to be conceived of precisely "digging a well together", namely, as each of us, with an open heart, longing for those others who are not at our table, refusing all proselyting, becoming engaged through our own religious tradition in the search for deeper conversion. That search is precisely the search to get to the bottom of the well, knowing that, once there, we, as all other sincere, authentic religious searchers, will find both God's water and unity with everyone else who is there.

The renowned ecumenist, Avery Dulles, called this the path of "progressive convergence". Eventual unity among the various churches and various faiths will not come about by everyone in the world converting to one denomination or one religion. Rather it will come about, and can only come about, by each of us converting more deeply inside our own tradition. As each of us and each faith move more deeply into the mystery of God we will progressively draw closer and closer to each other. Christian de Cherge's story illustrates this wonderfully.

And this path, when correctly taken, does not lead us into relativism and the naïve belief that all religions are equal. Nor does it mean that we do not enthusiastically and openly celebrate our own religious faith tradition, stand ready to defend it, and stand ready to welcome anyone into it. But it does mean that we must humbly accept that, while we have the truth, the truth is not ours alone. God is not a tribal deity and God's salvific intent is universal. God desires the salvation of those in other denominations and in other religious traditions just surely as he desires our own. Hence, as Jesus teaches us, God has "other sheep", loved individuals and loved communities who are not of our fold. God's love and revelation embrace everyone.

The path to unity among Christians of different denominations and the path to unity among world religions is not then the path of proselytism within which any one tradition, Christianity included, claims absolute truth for itself and demands that union can be achieved only by everyone converting to its side. Rather it lies in "digging a well together", that is, in each of us, within our own tradition, converting more deeply into the mystery of God and into all that asks of us. As we move deeper into the mystery of God we will find ourselves more and more one, as brothers and sisters in faith.

No religion is absolute, only God is absolute. Knowing that, should make us less smug in the practice of our own religion, more respectful of other denominations and religions, and more willing to let God's vision trump our own.

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 26
9:15am Catholic Schools Week All School Mass
9:30am Spiritual Journaling
10:30am Christian Meditation
12:00pm Vicariate Music Meeting
1:00pm Little Rock Scripture Study
2:30pm Adoration
6:15pm YC Classes
7:00pm Boy Scouts

Tuesday, January 27
9:05am Tuesdays with Mary Rosary Mary Chapel
3:30pm Ecumenism with Fr. David
7:00pm RCIA

Wednesday, January 28
9:30am Bible Study
2:00pm Christian Meditation
7:00pm Crossroads Home Group Leaders
7:00pm Chicago Catholic Scripture School

Thursday, January 29
School Open House
2:15pm Market Day Pick Up
5:30pm Special Needs Confirmation Practice
7:00pm Outreach Committee Meeting

Friday, January 30
7:00am Christian Meditation
9:30am Student Ushers Information Meeting in church
11:00am Special Needs Confirmation

Saturday, January 31
7:00am Christian Meditation
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Mass Intentions

Monday, January 26, 2015
7:45am Margaret Albertson; Roger Ritchie

Tuesday, January 27, 2015
7:45am Our Beloved Dead; Catherine Piszczor

Wednesday, January 28, 2015
7:45am Anthony Jacyno; Rose Canino

Thursday, January 29, 2015
7:45am Margaret Mary Woods; Helen Wojtowicz

Friday, January 30, 2015
7:45am Mary Kay Herrmann; Deceased members of the Carr & Grandys Families

Saturday, January 31, 2015
8:00am Lenny Kamenjarin; Reggie Cook
5:00pm Sylvester Ptak; Rosemary Schick

Sunday, February 1, 2015
7:30am Jack Doyle; Danny McKeon
9:00am Tepen Chao; Ruth & Fred Hughes
10:45am Jack Hughes; Larry Dougherty
12:15pm Deceased members of the Dwyer-Millette Families; Mary Maska
5:00pm John P. Hogan; Dora Alvarez

Italics: Living

Pray for our Sick

Tara Bassi
John Coyne
Marie Coyne
Karen Hult

Pray for our Beloved Dead

Robert Glancey, grandfather of Jim Clauer
William Bernasek, father of Paul
Arduna “Addy” Falcone, mother of Sandra Infelise
John Koterba, cousin of Shirley Rozsypal
Walter Lach, father of Chris and Eileen Kamholz, grandfather of Hilary and Andrew Hinds and Grace and Emalee Kamholz
Michael W. Cunningham, father of Mike, grandfather of Jenny and Kaitlin

Almighty God, protect all those serving our country with the shield of your strength. Keep them safe from all evil and harm. May the power of your love enable them to return home in safety to all who love them, forever praising you for your loving care. Amen.
Celebrating St. John of the Cross Parish School!

Please join us after the 9:00 or 10:45 a.m. Mass for Coffee & Donuts in the Parish Center today!!