VENI,
SANCTE
SPIRITUS

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

February 8, 2015
Dear Parishioners,

Tired of watching Tom Brady lift the Lombardi Trophy over his head yet? It’s been a week, hasn’t it? Between the record snow storm and Super Bowl hysteria I’m not sure which was harder to endure. (The game did have some surprises, didn’t it?) Both Fr. Bill and I were impressed by the effort so many of you made to get to church last weekend. At the 5:00pm Sunday evening Mass there were 78 people. Ann Maney says there are normally 150 people at that Mass on Super Bowl Sunday, so the storm cut the number in half. Thank you to all who helped seniors and others who needed help in dealing with the adverse weather last weekend.

KUDOS to Frank Di Pompeo, his crew and the snow plow company for putting the property in excellent shape after the storm. They tried as best as possible to keep up with the snow during the storm but were really able to get things shoveled and plowed on Monday when school was closed. They did a great job and accomplished what others were not able to do as well, at least as far as I can tell with the limited driving I’ve done. So far the weight of the snow on the roofs hasn’t caused any major issues. I hope that is true for your home as well.

I came across a quote from Mike Ditka during the week that I wasn’t aware of before. He is quoted as having said that if he had an eight year old son today that he would not let him play tackle football. In an interview with Bryant Gumbel he responded to the theoretical question by answering, “Nope. That’s sad. I wouldn’t. And my whole life was football. I think the risk is worse than the reward. I really do.”

What today is one of the most watched sporting events in the world is in the process of changing from what we know it as today to what no one can really predict it will become. While the mounting medical evidence continues to pile high about traumatic brain injury despite all the protection that helmets and other equipment can provide, it will be the law suits from disabled players and deceased players’ family members that ultimately will force the game to be different. Having a (Chicago) football icon like Ditka take a stand in favor of protecting a child’s health against the risks of the game indicates the tipping point that is current public opinion. A few short years ago who would have predicted that? A few short years from now, who can predict the changes that inevitably has to come to the game.

This weekend we do the in-pew solicitation for the Annual Catholic Campaign. We’ve followed the process long enough by now that it has proven to be effective. Unfortunately it is no less tedious waiting while the process is completed during Mass. It is part of the reality of gathering as brothers and sisters at the altar that we implement a means for taking care of one another that includes the ‘least, the last and the lost’. The funds generated touch an awful lot of people’s lives who otherwise would not be ministered to by the archdiocese. The funds support administrative offices that our school administration relies on, the YC leadership depends on, and the Crossroads Youth Ministry is supported by. It helps pay for the education and formation of lay ministers, deacons and priests. We are all ‘Entrusted with Responsibility’ to pass on the faith to the next generation, and to do so with joy. Thank you for your spiritual and financial support.

Yesterday 197 eighth graders received the sacrament of confirmation from Bishop Frank Kane. They were well prepared by their parents, sponsors and catechists. As I wrote last week about the smaller group of Special Needs young adults who were confirmed, the Gifts of the Holy Spirit for this week’s confirmandi will be critical to their futures. Please continue to keep them in your prayers as they continue the path of maturation and spiritual development.

One of the great moments throughout the year here is when we celebrate the Sacraments of Initiation. The music ministry and the choir members and instrumentalists truly help us to pray twice with their beauty and artistry. My sincere appreciation to Mrs. Jessica Koch for her direction, Mrs. Anne Maney for her accompaniment and to every instrumentalist and choir member for contributing their precious time and talent to the liturgies. What a tremendous gift to the young adults receiving the sacrament. Come, Holy Spirit, come.

Fr. David

P.S. Please remember my admonition to the seniors and to anyone else to whom it may apply: If God wants you in church on Sunday, then God has to give you two things: good health and good weather. And they have to be at the same time. Otherwise it is God’s responsibility for you not being able to get to Mass.
Our faith is lived in schools and parishes, soup kitchens and counseling centers, on street corners and in churches, where people of all backgrounds in every neighborhood of the Archdiocese of Chicago are served. Your gift to the Annual Appeal helps to sustain Catholic schools, religious education, ministerial formation, and initiatives for life, peace and justice. 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.

Please make a pledge to the 2015 Annual Catholic Appeal. Any funds raised are carefully spent; it is money for God’s work, and we use it accordingly. Your contributions are deeply appreciated, very much needed and make a real difference in the lives of many.

**Catholic Religious Education**

At Baptism we receive the gift of our faith. The formation of Catholic faith in our children is continued through the nurturing role of parents and teachers. The world offers our children choices that challenge their faith. We answer that challenge through religious education programs and Catholic schools. The Appeal funds grants and scholarships for Catholic schools serving financially challenged communities. It also funds parish ministries that provide religious education to children, youth and adults in financially challenged communities.

**Family Community**

The Annual Catholic Appeal helps to strengthen families and local communities through capital improvement grants to parishes and schools serving economically challenged neighborhoods in the Archdiocese of Chicago. The Appeal funds recruitment, education and formation of lay ministers and deacons, and the continuing education and on-going formation of priests.

**Life**

The Respect Life Office, supported by the Annual Catholic Appeal, promotes reverence for the gift of life from conception through natural death. It promotes the cause of life through advocacy and prayer. Respect Life provides educational resources, a speakers bureau and sponsors annual conferences, retreats and rallies for adults and youth.

**Neighbors Throughout The World**

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.
Pray for our RCIA

The Baptismal Garment

Several years ago I gave Second Graders and their teachers a tour of the sacristy in preparation for their First Eucharist. In the midst of showing the kids all the liturgical vessels and vestments used in the celebration of Mass – the questions came. What is that? Why do you wear that? One of those that’s, was the long white garment/robe that a priest wears under a chasuble (the outer colored vestment). I told them that this article of clothing was a very important white garment. I explained that when they were baptized this same white garment, though significantly smaller placed on them. After a child or an adult is baptized in the waters of new life, their baptismal garment is placed on them – accompanying this are the words, “See in this white garment the outward sign of your Christian dignity. With your family and friends to help you by word and example, bring that dignity unstained into the everlasting life of heaven.”

The custom of the baptismal garment dates back to the earliest days of our church. When adults and children were presented for baptism – they were lead to a baptistery which often times was located outside of the church. The famous baptistery at the Cathedral in Florence Italy is an example of this. In the baptistery, those who were to be baptized stripped down and were led naked into the baptismal pool of water. Rising up out of the font, they would have been anointed with the perfumed oil of Chrism and clothed in a white garment, a sign of their new life in Christ. The newly baptized would wear their baptismal garment to church every day for one week up until the Second Sunday of Easter. On Pentecost, the newly baptized would once again wear their baptismal garment one last time. The purpose of the white baptismal garment was two-fold, it re-clothed the naked body coming up out of the waters of the baptismal font and it identified the new baptized for the sake of the community.

**Beginning the First Sunday of Lent, February 22, the baptismal garments will be used by our RCIA catechumens and candidates.**

*Our catechumens, Ellin and Eric will carry their baptismal garment with them (they will be baptized at the Easter Vigil) and our candidates Nicole and Mick will wear their baptismal garment (as they were baptized in another faith tradition and seek full communion in the Catholic Church) in the opening procession at the Masses they will be in attendance at.*

The white baptismal garment is a symbol not only of our new life in Christ but also Easter’s promise of eternal life. Thus the garment returns at the end of the life of a Christian in the Funeral Rite. When the casket of the deceased arrives at the door of the church it is draped by the pall, a white cloth that reminds us of the baptismal garment a Christian puts on when their journey of faith begins. Let us all continue to pray for our catechumens and candidates as they continue their preparation for the Sacraments of Initiation, Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist.

Fr. Bill

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**RCIA Prayer**

Almighty God,
look upon your servants,
Nicole, Mick, Eric and Ellin,
as they begin the process
of being counted among the
members of your Church.

Teach them
through this
time of preparation
in coming to know Christ,
the love of God,
the mysteries of our faith,
the way of the Gospel,
the grace of
the sacraments,
and the importance
of their relationship
with you and the Church.

Send down upon them
and their sponsors
your Spirit of
guidance and wisdom
as they journey
together in faith.

We thank you
for these whom
you have called
and we await
their joining us
around the table
of the Lord.

**Through the power**
of the Holy Spirit,
**assure them of the**
prayers and support
of the St. John of the Cross
faith community.

Amen.
Background on the Gospel

Today we continue to read from Mark's Gospel, learning more about the ministry of Jesus. Jesus cured Simon's mother-in-law, and he immediately began to serve Jesus and his disciples. Jesus also cured many others who were brought to him, healing their illnesses and driving out demons. As we will see throughout Mark's Gospel, Jesus did not permit the demons to speak because they knew his identity and would have revealed it to those who were present.

On the morning after this busy day, Jesus retreated in prayer, but was pursued by Simon and others who brought news that many people were looking for him. At this point in Mark's Gospel, we begin to see a distinct role for the inner circle of Jesus' disciples—they act as intermediaries between Jesus and the people. Jesus reports to his disciples that they need to leave Capernaum to preach in other places.

Today's Gospel completes a picture of Jesus' ministry: preaching, curing the sick, driving out demons, and then moving on to continue this work in another place. Mark's Gospel tells us that Jesus did this throughout Galilee.

Jesus' compassion and healing of the sick is a sign of the Kingdom of God. The Church continues to extend Christ's healing presence to others in its ministry to the sick. In the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, the Church prays for spiritual and physical healing, forgiveness of sins, and comfort for those who are suffering from illness.

In today's Gospel we also notice the importance of prayer in Jesus' daily life. Jesus rose early in the morning, removed himself from the crowds, and went to a deserted place to pray. When the disciples found him, he told them that it was time to move on. We believe that in his prayers Jesus found guidance and direction from God. We also bring our decision to leave Capernaum to God in prayer, asking for his guidance and direction from God. We also bring our decision to allow Jesus' Presence to us today and his healing hand do not assure us that we will never suffer. The new life and hope Jesus brings by preaching the Good News assures us, however, of having the strength to keep the suffering in perspective. Jesus assures us that suffering belongs to this life, but this is not all there is to life. We need to allow Jesus’ Presence to transform us so that our every breath is a proclamation of God’s Good News, his saving mystery. Most of us won’t go out to neighboring towns to preach. But we can smile a simple thank you to the tired cashier in the supermarket. We can bite our tongue rather than snap at the rambunctious children. We can do something thoughtful for someone when it is not expected. Like Jesus, we can be a living Gospel, the Good News in action. We are the Good News when we, like Jesus, take time in prayer to encounter him, grow in our love for him, draw strength from him.

Living the Gospel

In the Gospel Simon says to Jesus, “Everyone is looking for you.” Jesus is having great success healing many people and driving out demons. All who encounter him adore him. Nonetheless, Jesus moves on to other villages. Personal idolization is not the purpose for which Jesus has come. His ministry is not about drawing attention to himself, but about preaching the Good News of salvation. Yet his ministry is about himself, for he is the Good News.

Like those in the Gospel who come to Jesus for healing, we all come to Jesus with expectations. The challenge is to move beyond our expectations to what Jesus really wants to give us—the Good News of salvation. Jesus’ Presence to us today and his healing hand do not assure us that we will never suffer. The new life and hope Jesus brings by preaching the Good News assures us, however, of having the strength to keep the suffering in perspective. Jesus assures us that suffering belongs to this life, but this is not all there is to life. We need to allow Jesus’ Presence to transform us so that our every breath is a proclamation of God’s Good News, his saving mystery. Most of us won’t go out to neighboring towns to preach. But we can smile a simple thank you to the tired cashier in the supermarket. We can bite our tongue rather than snap at the rambunctious children. We can do something thoughtful for someone when it is not expected. Like Jesus, we can be a living Gospel, the Good News in action. We are the Good News when we, like Jesus, take time in prayer to encounter him, grow in our love for him, draw strength from him.

Getting Ready for Lent

Ash Wednesday which marks the start of Lent is February 18th. The parish will have copies of the Little Black Book available next weekend, February 14-15, after all Masses. If copies are still available, they will also be available on Ash Wednesday.

Little Black Books can be your daily prayer companion during Lent. The left side has timely thoughts, quotes, reflections and information that teaches about our faith. The right side cites a part of the Gospel reading for that day and suggests some reflections.

The Mass schedule for Ash Wednesday is 6:30am, 7:45am, 6:30pm, and a 4pm Word Service.
The Gift of the Ordinary

Last week my 84-year-old mother was in the hospital. For days on end doctors tried this and that to stabilize her heart. What struck me was not the desire for some great miracle in which, beyond the capacities of medicine and the doctors, her heart would suddenly be strong again, but instead a desire shared by so many people I talked to in the hospital—to be able to do the most ordinary of things. The patients wanted to cuddle up and get a good night’s sleep in their own beds, take a shower, cook themselves breakfast, go to the grocery store, and walk the dog. “Oh, that would be heaven,” one patient dreamed. Heaven? When faced with not being able to do these supposedly mundane tasks, they suddenly become the greatest desires of our hearts.

So often people look for miracles as proof of their belief (or hope) that there is a God. It seems the more outrageous or beyond the bounds of science, the more we are apt to believe there is something greater than ourselves at work. Unfortunately, a faith that is based on the scientifically unexplainable is all too often lost in challenging times when the miracle is debunked or when the prayed-for miracle doesn’t happen. One of the greatest gifts of practicing Ignatian spirituality is coming to recognize the utterly miraculous gifts in the most ordinary aspects of life.

When we get in the habit of regularly asking, “Where is God in all this?” or looking back over the day and identifying, “Where was I fully present? Where did my heart soar?” we get in the habit of recognizing with gratitude and awe the most seemingly benign things—the smell of the flowers, the laughter shared with a teenager, holding hands with another, and, when we really take the time the taste it, the most delicious pizza ever!

Can you look out your window right now, at this very moment, and identify a miracle? A wonder? A marvel? Can you recognize with every breath the thousands of processes taking place perfectly in sync within your own body? The everyday, completely ordinary act of living is truly a gift.

In these often dreary, cold days of winter, when it seems there is nothing special to motivate our faith, in this Ordinary Time of the Church year and life, could it be that we actually are given the greatest gifts of all? Used with permission. L. Kelly/Ignatian Spirituality.

Theology of Coffee

Ignatian spirituality suggests invoking our senses and imagination to encounter God and ourselves. When I am holding a cup of coffee, the warmth radiates through my hands, forearms, and shoulders. The smell wafts through the air from the dark caramel color, almost black. The whole experience is sensual, and helps my sleepy self wake up to greet the day with gratitude and a tranquility that I feel from this warmth. It induces a peaceful demeanor, which invites me to meet God and my own thoughts. In these moments, I review the previous and forthcoming days, reflecting on both the harder and easier parts in order to create my hopes for the new day.

When has an ordinary object helped you to experience God?

Ignatianspirituality At God in All Things, Jacqueline Shrader
23rd World Day of Prayer for the Sick

February 11, was established by Pope John Paul II in 1992 as World Day of the Sick.

Today we pray for those who are burdened by illness and suffering that they embrace their suffering and pain in solidarity with the cross of Jesus and experience his peace and healing.

We also especially pray for those professionals and volunteers in the healthcare field who through their loving compassion for the sick willingly sharing their time, skills, patience and care, that they may grow in a special closeness to the Lord and wisdom of the heart.

Prayer for Caregivers

O, Divine Healer,
Look down upon all who care for your people
- wounded in body or mind or spirit -
Gift our minds with knowledge and wisdom,
Our hands with the touch of kindness,
Our spirits with a deep compassion.
Open our hearts to be ever more inclusive and deepen our capacity for wonder that we may recognize You in unexpected people and situations.
We pray in gratitude,
O Healing Mystery, for the skill of Physicians the experience of Nurses, the touch of CNA’s and Orderlies, the cleansing gifts of Housekeepers, the listening ear of Social Workers, the creativity of Case Managers, the prayer and presence of Chaplains, the attentiveness of Dieticians, the expertise of Information Technologists and Engineers, and the guidance and vision of Administrators and Leaders.
Thank you for the call to be a healing presence to Your People.
Bless us and all whom we encounter, O God of Many Names.
Amen.

Several years ago Outdoor World magazine carried a beautiful article by Barry Lopez: One drizzly morning Barry got up and went off alone before breakfast for a walk in the woods. As he squished through the pines and cedars he recalled a similar morning in his boyhood, when he saw his grandfather go off alone through these same woods. When his grandfather returned, little Barry asked him where he had been and what he had done. His grandfather smiled, put his arm around Barry and said, “Let’s go get some breakfast.” As Barry continued to walk in the drizzle he came to a clearing in the woods. There he knelt down and laid his hands flat against the damp earth. It gave him a feeling of being united with all creation. Barry recalled how his grandfather told him, that if he ever felt lonely, he should go for a walk in the woods, be quiet, and do whatever he felt moved to do, like kneeling down and laying his hands flat against the earth. Half an hour later when Barry started back to the house, he felt renewed and recharged. Then he remembered why his grandfather used to walk in the woods in the morning. His grandmother once told him it was the way his grandfather said his prayers. He would always end up on the other side of the woods, standing on the beach with his hands in his pockets, listening to the ocean.

Today’s Gospel indicated that Jesus used to go off by himself to pray also. One reason why Jesus did this was the same reason why Barry used to do it: to renew himself, to recharge himself. Mark’s Gospel says Jesus had spent the previous day healing people. This exhausted him spiritually.

In a similar way working with people drains us of power. That’s why we need to do what Jesus did. We need to recharge ourselves spiritually. Maybe we can’t do this by going off alone in the woods. Maybe we can’t even do it by going off alone to a quiet part of our house. But we can pause momentarily during the course of our day to get in touch with ourselves and to listen to God’s voice in our heart.

Today’s Gospel invites us to ask ourselves:
Do we follow the example Jesus gave us in his life?
Do we pause periodically to get in touch with ourselves?
Do we pause occasionally to listen to God’s voice in our heart?

Slow me down, Lord.
Slow me down!
Ease my pounding heart;
Quiet my racing mind;
Soothe my frayed nerves;
Relax my tired muscles.
Teach me the art of taking minute vacations, of keeping in touch with myself, of listening to the voice of God and drawing from it, new light, new strength and new courage.
Slow me down, Lord.
Slow me down.

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Amid the turmoil of his day, Jesus took time to pause and pray. So should we.

Used with permission M. Link
Interfaith Career Network Workshops
Free Resume Review—Saturday, February 14 from 9-11 am. Come for a 20 minute one-on-one conversation with a professional for some ideas and suggestions that may help enhance your resume, learn helpful job search strategies and create your elevator speech. St. Cletus Education Building (Rm 201)

Learn How to Network and Land More Interviews! Thursday, February 19 from 7-9 pm at SJC Parish Center. Paul Cameron will discuss specifics to make the most of every networking opportunity you have, and parishioner, Tom Rohan, will discuss how to find contacts to build your network and how to grow your network quickly.

Career Transition Boot Camp - Last 2 Weeks
Week 4: Tuesday, February 10 from 7-9 pm. With 80% of the jobs found in the "hidden job market" networking is the heart of any job search. Jim Peterson will coach you on the fundamentals of networking and will provide job search tips for people over 50 or re-entering the workforce. First Presbyterian Church of La Grange.

Men's Club Speaker
The SJC Men’s Club invites all men of the parish to a morning with

Dr. Sean Tierney
on
Musings on “My Journey in the Faith, the Common Core, and the Founding of the Chesterton Academy of the Holy Family High School”

Saturday, February 14
9:00am-10:30am
Parish Center

Light morning refreshments will be served

Dr. Sean Tierney, cardiologist, is a resident of Western Springs and will share his faith journey and what led to the founding of the Chesterton Academy of the Holy Family opening in the Fall of 2015. Dr. Tierney will also share some of his experience from a recent medical mission to Honduras.

Women’s Club Annual Retreat
Sojourn to a Joyful Heart: Celebrating the Writings of Pope Francis

with Dr. Mary Amore of Mayslake Ministries

Dr. Mary Amore, author, blogger, presenter, mission and retreat leader, and member of the North American Academy of Liturgy, holds a Doctor of Ministry Degree in Liturgy and Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies from CTU and is the Director of Mayslake Ministries.

Friday, February 20 from 7-9pm and Saturday, February 21 from 8:30am-2pm
Doubletree Hotel in Downers Grove

Price Options
$175 room and retreat
$75 retreat only
$50 Friday retreat only
$50 Saturday retreat only

RSVP by February 18
Questions to Elizabeth Turcich at elizabeth@turcichfamily.com

Women’s Club Retreat RSVP

Name: ______________________________
Phone: ______________________________
Reserving a Room:  Yes      No  (Circle)
Roommate?: _________________________
Retreat Options:
Attending Retreat Friday/Saturday with room ($175) _____
Friday/Saturday without a room ($75) _____
Friday or Saturday only ($50) _____

Please complete and return to the Parish Center by 2/18. If sharing a room, submit RSVP together.
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. Our next drop-in time at the Parish Center is: Friday, March 6 from 9:30-11am

Flourish: Spring Faith Sharing
Flourish Faith Sharing will meet on Thursday mornings in the Parish Center from 9-11am for a bible study, “Discerning the Voice of God,” by Priscilla Shirer. Dates are: February 19, March 5 and 19, April 16 and 30 and May 14. For more information email Laura Jachim at ljachim@comcast.net or Elizabeth Russell-Jones at erusselljones@stjohnofthecross.org

New Parish Directory
We need you to be a part of the new Parish Directory! The Parish Directory will bring our faith community together and will help you to connect names with a faces. We know your family has changed since the last directory five years ago, and we have many NEW families to include in the 2015 directory. You’ll receive a FREE 8x10 portrait and a Parish Directory just by having your picture taken.

We will be in the church narthex booking photo appointments before and after all Masses beginning the weekend of Feb. 28/ March 1. So bring your calendar and decide what day looks good to have your photo taken in April or May. Or register on-line for your photo appointment and receive a $10 coupon to use toward the purchase of additional photos. Visit www.appt.lifetouch.com to schedule your photo session today. If you have any questions, please contact the Parish Center 708.246.4404.

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
April—Scholarship Committee meets and notifies awardees
If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity please contact Katie Hayes at the Parish Center.

Prayer Shawl Meeting
The next meeting of Prayer Shawl Ministry will be Wednesday, Feb. 11 at 1pm in the Parish Center. All knitters and crocheters are welcome to join in making shawls for those in need. If you are unable to attend, you can drop off your shawl at the parish center. For further info or if you would like a shawl for someone who is experiencing illness or the difficulties of life contact Sheila 708-246-7836 or Mary 708-246-5108.

Welcome to SJC
We welcome Matt Merz, a recent graduate of Illinois State University (2014), to the music staff at St. John of the Cross Parish as the 10:45am Traditional Choir Accompanist. An organist and pianist, he has served in church music for the past 10 years, and is now beginning a career with GIA Publications in Chicago, as a Marketing Associate. In addition to an active performance schedule, Matt enjoys traveling, bicycling, cooking, eating, and writing about food and music. A native of Los Angeles, Matt now calls the Logan Square neighborhood in Chicago home.

A word of thanks goes to Ann Bourjaily-Maney and Keith Kalemba for helping out in the interim, and to the members of the Traditional Choir for their patience during the search process.
A Story from Catholic Charities
Refugee Resettlement Services

Recently we resettled a Congolese family of 7 in Chicago—two parents with their 5 children, ages 2-14 years old. They had lived in a refugee camp in Rwanda for the past 15 years and all of their children were born in the camp. When the family arrived we were very surprised to learn that the 41 year old mother was around 6-7 months pregnant with their sixth child! The family’s case manager helped the expecting mother set up prenatal doctor appointments and begin to navigate the U.S. health care system. Because of her age, how far along in the pregnancy she was, and not knowing what kind of prenatal care she had received (if any) in Rwanda, she was considered “high risk” and had to be taken to a specific medical clinic. Luckily, her health and the growing baby’s health were excellent and the doctors had no concerns about the pregnancy.

The family’s volunteer threw a small baby shower for the mother. It was a wonderful event, complete with delicious food, decorations, and gifts that various people donated. She received diapers, clothing, blankets, and a nice bassinet for the baby. The mother was very grateful and happy, especially since this was her very first baby shower!

She went several days past her due date and there were still no signs of labor, the doctors decided to induce her to avoid any complications she might have going too far past her due date. On October 10, 2014 a healthy baby girl was born! When the baby came home, her 5 siblings were beyond excited, all crowding around their mother trying to get a good look at their new baby sister.

They think it’s pretty great that their little sister is the first American citizen! The family is doing well and all are delighted with the new addition to their family.

Celebrating Black History Month with St. Thaddeus

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.

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 now through March 13th. 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.

Ongoing Food Collection in Church

Our parish Food Pantry Collection during the month of February will be delivered to our neighboring parish, St. Francis Xavier. Please remember to bring nonperishable foods to the narthex of church when you come to Mass.

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.

When we meet a person truly in need, do we see the face of God?
Pope Francis @Pontifex
Parishioners & Friends are cordially invited to the
Saintly Senior Valentine’s Luncheon on
Thursday, February 12th at 11:30 am
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 tomorrow Monday, Feb. 9th.

Questions?
Call Gerry Mazzone
708-246-0721

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Questions?
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708-246-0721

Saintly Senior Valentine’s Party
Name: ________________________________
Guests: ________________________________
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................................................................
Address: ______________________________
................................................................
................................................................
Phone: ________________________________
Number of Members: ____________________
Number of Guests: ______________________
Amount Enclosed: ______________________

Note the Saintly Senior party is on a Thursday and in the Parish Center this year!

3 Upcoming Programs at The Well Spirituality Center
1515 Ogden Avenue, LaGrange Park. To register, visit www.csjthewell.org; call 708-482-5048 or email thewell@csjoseph.org

Psalms – Prayer and Poetry for Life Today
Tuesdays, beginning Feb. 10, 7-8:30 pm with Marianne Race, CSJ
Unlock the riches of the psalms for personal and contemporary worship. Attention will be given to the historical setting, literary form and biblical theological significance. We will use New Collegeville Bible Commentary Vol. 1 Psalms 1-72 and Vol. 2 Psalms 73-150 by Dianne Bergant, CSA. Cost: $100 or $12.00/session

Vital Signs: The Nature and Nurture of Passion
Wednesday, Feb. 11, 7-9 pm with Gregg Levoy
What inspires passion in your life? And what defeats it? How do you lose it and how do you get it back? Gregg Levoy, author of the bestselling books Callings and Vital Signs: the Nature and Nurture of Passion, will help you explore how you can cultivate not just a specific passion, but passion as a mindset—a stance—that helps bring vitality to all your engagements, from work and relationships to creativity and spiritual life. Cost: $20.00

Nurturing Your Child’s Spirituality
Thursday, Feb. 12, 9:30-11 am with Bridget Sperduto
Children come to the planet as spiritual beings. Whether you are a parent, grandparent, or teacher, your role is about calling forth and naming children’s experiences of the Sacred. In this safe, interactive circle we will explore and name our understanding of God moving within and among us so that we may do the same for the children in our lives. Cost: $15.00

Congratulations to our Parish Boy Scouts!
Seven Boy Scouts from our parish were awarded the Ad Altare Dei emblem at a ceremony at Holy Name Cathedral on Sunday, January 25. The Ad Altare Dei is a 6-month program developed by the National Catholic Committee on Scouting for Boy Scouts of the Catholic faith. Its purpose is to foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each young person by encouraging him to actively live out his Catholic Christian faith through study and through service. Congratulations to the following Boy Scouts (as pictured from left to right): Cullen Younker, George Zurowski, Matthew Kelly, Bishop Francis Kane, Michael Korenchan, Greg Smith, Revere Laird, and Kevin Shafer.
Most all of us worry about aging, especially in how it affects our bodies. We worry about wrinkles, bags under our eyes, middle-age fat, and losing hair where we want it only to find it on places where we don’t want it. So every now and then, when we look in a mirror or see a recent photograph of ourselves, we are shocked at our own faces and bodies, almost not recognizing ourselves as we see an old face and old body where we are used to seeing a young one.

But examining ourselves for signs of aging isn’t a bad practice, except that we should be looking for things other than wrinkles, loose skin, hair loss, and weight gain. With these bodily things, nature eventually has its way. Where we should be looking for signs of aging is in our eyes. It’s there where the real signs of aging and senility reveal themselves. If we were to set up a mirror and stare straight into our own eyes, what would we see? Are our eyes tired, unenthusiastic, cynical, lifeless, dead? Do they radiate mostly anger and jealousy? Is there any fire there? Are they so deadened so as to be incapable of being surprised? Have they lost their innocence? Is there still a child buried somewhere behind them?

The real signs of senility are betrayed by the eyes, not the body. Loose skin merely reveals that we are aging physically, nothing more. Bodies age and die in a process as inevitable and natural as the changing of the seasons, but dead eyes signify a more deadly senility, something less natural, a fatigued spirit. Spirits are meant to be forever young, forever childlike, forever innocent. They are not meant to deaden and die. But they can die through a lack of passion, through the illusion of familiarity, through a loss of innocence and wonder, through a fatigue of the spirit, and through practical despair.

Despair is a curious thing. Mostly we despair not because we grow weary of the shortcomings and sufferings in life and, at last, find life too much to take. Rather we despair for the opposite reason, namely, we grow cynical of joy. Joy lies in experiencing life as fresh, as novel, as primal, as a child does, with a certain purity of spirit. This type of joy is not pleasure, though there’s pleasure in it. Pleasure of course can be had without joy but that kind of pleasure is the product of a lack of wonder and reverence in experiencing. That kind of pleasure is initially experienced as a victory, as a throwing off of naiveté, as liberation; but it soon turns into defeat, into dullness, boredom, and a deadened eros. Our palate loses its itch for tasting. Our enthusiasm dies and a certain fatigue of the soul sets in. There is nothing left in us that’s fresh and young, and our eyes begin to show this. They lose their sparkle, their childlikeness.

In her poignant novel, Stone Angel, Margaret Laurence describes her heroine, a despairing lady named Hagar, looking into a mirror and saying to herself: “I stood for a long time, looking, wondering how a person could change so much…So gradually it happens. The face – a brown and leathery face that wasn’t mine. Only the eyes were mine, staring as though to pierce the lying glass and get beneath to some true image, infinitely distant.”

A good look in the mirror for most of us, sadly, reveals much the same, a lifeless face that’s not really ours and dull eyes, our own, but hidden beneath a lying glass. Somewhere the fire has gone out; our eyes and face are devoid of wonder and innocence.

What’s to be done? We need to take a good long look at ourselves in a mirror and study our eyes, long and hard, and let what we see shock us enough to move us towards the road of unlearning, of post-sophistication, of wonder, or renewed innocence. Here’s the counsel: Go to mirror and stare into your eyes long enough until you see there again the boy or girl who once inhabited that space. In that, wonder will be born, a sparkle will return and, with it, a freshness that can make you young again.

Our eyes don’t grow tired, rather they get buried. That’s what causes the blank, passionless stare. Bodies tire, but eyes are windows to the soul and they are forever eager to see. One of the contrasts between Christianity and Buddhism has to do with the eyes. The Buddhist saint is always depicted with his or her eyes shut, while the Christian saint always has them open. The Buddhist saint has a sleek, harmonious body, but his or her eyes are heavy and sealed with sleep. The Christian saint’s body is wasted to the bone, but his or her eyes are alive, hungry, staring. The Buddhist’s eyes are focused inwardness. The Christian’s eyes are staring outwards, hungry, full of wonder.

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser, theologian, teacher, and award-winning author, is President of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio TX.
January 31st Bishop Manz conferred the Sacrament of Confirmation on ten wonderful children from the YC Adaptive Catechesis class. The students have been listening to scripture and learning about Jesus’ life and what the Sacrament of Confirmation is all about. They were prepared by their Catechists, Diane Campion and Catie Lee Brennan. What a beautiful ceremony, filled with the Holy Spirit! Congratulations Spencer, Mitchell, Emily, Emeline, Maria, Connor, Rose, Chris, Alex and Justin.

Each year, our sixth graders design and build their own puppets in art class. This is quite a lengthy process as the kids start from a rough design on their own. Our art teacher, Mr. Casper, teamed up with one of our librarians, Mrs. Adducci. During library time, the students wrote their own puppet shows focusing on positive lessons and then presented their puppet shows to the other children in the school during Catholic Schools Week. This is a tradition that many of our graduates remember fondly.

On Friday during Catholic Schools Week, our students participated in Spirit Day. Classes participated in a variety of competitions including a hula hoop contest, a faculty/student volleyball game, and even a cheer competition where classes wrote their own cheers.

This Week at SJC
Monday, February 9   All School Liturgy 9:15am
Wednesday, February 11  Pre School Mother’s Tea 10:45am
Thursday, February 12  Pre School Mother’s Tea 10:45am,
K-3 Valentine’s Day Parties 2:15pm, Pre School Mother’s Tea 2:45pm,
Grade 8 Fortnightly 7:30pm
Friday, February 13  SCHOOL IS IN SESSION Make Up Snow Day
**Volunteer Opportunities**

- Two adults are needed to coordinate volunteers and supplies, and run the silent auction table at our March 6 Fish Fry.
- We also need one more adult to help lead our Catholic Goods Sale this Spring.
- These important fundraising events help the Crossroads teens defray the cost of their Work Tour service trips and conferences. Contact Ann Smith at 246-4047 to learn how you can get involved and support our ministry.
- **There are still a few Work Tour spots open, so get your registration forms in ASAP.** Forms available at www.stjohnofthecross.org/crossroads/work-tours/

**Girls Church League Spring Basketball**

Registration for Girls Church League Basketball is now open. Games will be played at SJC, St. Cletus and St. Francis on Saturday nights beginning in April. We will practice once a week on Wednesday nights from 7:30-8:30pm. Visit our website, www.stjohnofthecross.org/crossroads/sports to register.

**Calendar of Events**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 8</td>
<td>Kairos Parent Meeting 10am</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 22</td>
<td>Home Group Meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 28</td>
<td>Work Tour Meeting 1-3pm</td>
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**Family Connection**

We know from last week’s Gospel that Jesus gathered and prayed with the community in the synagogue. Today we learn that Jesus also took the time to pray alone. Following the example of Jesus, we also pray together with our community, and we take the time to pray alone. Our children observe our prayer with others. We might want to take the opportunity to talk with them about our private prayer, however, so that through our example, they may learn to make private prayer an important part of their daily lives.

Gather as a family and talk about the ways in which your family prays together (at Mass, grace before meals, bedtime prayers). Invite each member of the family to talk about his or her private prayer: When do you pray? Where do you pray? How do you pray? What do you pray for?

Jesus modeled for us a life of prayer. Read together today’s Gospel, Mark 1:29-39. Talk about this Gospel with your family. Ask questions such as the following: What do you think Jesus was praying about in today’s Gospel? What guidance have you received from God in prayer? Conclude by asking God to bless our times of prayer so that we can know and follow God’s ways. Pray together the Lord’s Prayer.

**Pope Francis: Continuing Catechesis on Family**

“Fathers sometimes are so concentrated on themselves and on their work, and at times on their own individual fulfilment, that they even forget the family.” Pope Francis said that he always used to ask fathers in Buenos Aires if they played with their children, and they would make excuses. He said that this paternal absence in the life of children “produces gaps and wounds which can also be very grave,” and leads to disruption and deviance.

Pope Francis exhorted fathers to speak with their children, educate them, and model for them principles and values. He urged them not to feel inadequate to the task and “withdraw and neglect their responsibility.” He addressed the necessary distinction between companion, or friend, and father. “It is true that you must be a companion to your child but without forgetting that you are the father. However, if you only behave as a companion on a par with your child, you will not do the child any good.”

Vatican City, January 28, 2015

What we need is to love without getting tired. How does a lamp burn? Through the continuous input of small drops of oil. What are these drops of oil in our lamps? They are the small things of daily life: faithfulness, small words of kindness, a thought for others, our way of being silent, of looking, of speaking and of acting. Do not look for Jesus away from yourselves. He is not out there; He is in you. Keep your lamp burning, and you will recognize Him.

~Mother Teresa
### Mass Intentions

**Monday, February 8**  
7:45am Our Beloved Dead; Muriel Albertson

**Tuesday, February 9**  
7:45am Dolores Williams; Patricia Cebula

**Wednesday, February 10**  
7:45am John Hogan; Susan O’Connell

**Thursday, February 11**  
7:45am William J. Rooney, Jr.; Jack Gallagher

**Friday, February 12**  
7:45am William McMahon, Sr.; Betty Tobin

**Saturday, February 13**  
8:00am John Hogan; Helen Paul  
5:00pm Roger Sapp; John Joseph Wheelihan

**Sunday, February 14**  
7:30am Richard Pett; David Thonn  
9:00am Rose Adducci; Mary & Cerillo Trinco  
10:45am Carmela Cosenza; Ramon & Gloria Sanchez  
12:15pm William McMahon, Sr.; Robert Clifford Sullivan  
5:00pm Debbie Brandt; Madalyn Runge

*Italic: Living*

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### Pray for our Sick

- Mary Barrett  
- John Coyne  
- Marie Coyne  
- Don King  
- Norbert Koziol  
- Raymond Kula  
- Donald Martin  
- John Martin  
- Richard Ryan

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### Pray for our Beloved Dead

- Tara Bassi, daughter of Kelly O’Brien, sister of John & Michael Bassi & Connor Ryan  
- Jim Dunne, father of Terrence, grandfather of Brian, Kevin, & Sheila  
- Joseph Hickey, father of Al, grandfather of Rob, Brian & Meghan  
- David Roemer, father of Phillip, grandfather of Kelly, Kristen, Daniel & Eric

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### Tax Statements Mailed

2014 Tax statements of donations were sent out last week. If you would like to receive one just call Marguerite Chrusciel at the Parish Center: x161.

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### 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 at x 120.

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### The Week Ahead:

**Monday, February 9**  
9:15am School Mass  
9:30am Spiritual Journaling  
10:30am Christian Meditation Step 11  
1:00pm Little Rock Study  
2:30pm Adoration  
6:15pm YC Classes  
7:00pm Boy Scouts

**Tuesday, February 10**  
9:05am Tuesdays with Mary Rosary Mary Chapel  
7:00pm Boy Scout Parent Pack Committee  
7:00pm RCIA  
7:00pm SJC Teacher Recognition Trust

**Wednesday, February 11**  
9:00am Broderick Bridges Faith Sharing  
9:30am Bible Study  
1:00pm Prayer Shawl Ministry  
2:00pm Christian Meditation  
3:00pm Spirituality of St. John of the Cross  
7:00pm Chicago Catholic Scripture School  
7:00pm Fest Committee Meeting  
7:30pm SAM Planning Meeting

**Thursday, February 12**  
11:30am Senior Club Valentine’s Day Luncheon  
6:30pm Fostering Club Faith Workshop

**Friday, February 13**

**Saturday, February 14**  
7:00am Christian Meditation  
9:00am Men’s Club Spiritual Speaker

**Sunday, February 15**  
1:30pm Baptisms

**Monday, February 16**  
No School President’s Day  
No Adoration  
Parish Center Hours 9am-8pm

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### Looking Ahead. . .

Little Black Books for Lent will be available at all Masses next weekend: February 14-15  
Ash Wednesday: February 18th  
Masses are at 6:30am, 7:45am, 6:30pm; Word Service: 4pm  
Parish Advisory Council Winter Meeting Saturday, February 21 at 8:30am

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**Rev. David P. Dowdle, Pastor**  
ddowdle@stjohnofthecross.org

Contact Fr. Joe through the Parish Office  
Rev. William J. Vollmer, Associate Pastor  
bvollmer@stjohnofthecross.org

**Deacon John Schopp, Deacon**  
john.schopp@newhemispheres.com

**Bill Bright, Director of Outreach**  
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**Janet Caschetta, Youth Catechesis Director**  
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**Jim Clauer, Director of Worship**  
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**Laura Dragich, Reservations**  
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**Kathleen Gorman, School Principal**  
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**Katie Hayes, Director of Teen Ministry**  
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**Jessica Koch, Director of Music**  
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**M.J. Martin, Director of Operations**  
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**Elizabeth Russell-Jones, Welcome**  
erussell-jones@stjohnofthecross.org

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**St. John of the Cross Parish**  
www.stjohnofthecross.org  
February 8, 2015  
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RECEIVED THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION
ON SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2015
ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS PARISH