I turn to you Lord

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time
February 15, 2015
Dear Parishioners,

Another Lent begins Wednesday of this week. I certainly remember the six weeks of Lent being a challenge at various moments in my past, but after being treated for cancer six weeks kind of flies by very quickly.

It was 8 years ago on Tuesday, February 10th, 2007, when Fr. John Hall died of a heart attack. The week before John had been announced as the new pastor of SJC. Then his death was announced the following week. John was a year younger than I am and had been a friend of mine since high school. I called my doctor on Monday, February 12th for an appointment later that week. Bishop Paprocki called me that same day and asked if I would be the pastor here. I was still pretty taken aback by John’s totally unexpected death and told the bishop that the last thing I wanted to do was to make that decision before John was buried and could we please wait until after his funeral before making any announcements. I did not want rumors at John’s wake about who was going to go to SJC, or who was going to take my place at the parish I had been assigned to in the northwest suburbs.

On Valentine’s Day I saw my doctor and I explained the pain I had been feeling in my right arm and clavicle. He scheduled a stress test for the following Monday. John’s funeral was Friday, February 16th. On Saturday I came and met with Fr. Hynes and learned more about the parish. I told him about my doctor’s appointment. On Monday I had the stress test and a chest x-ray for good measure.

On Tuesday, February 20th, my doctor called me at 9:00 am. The stress test was fine. The chest x-ray not so much. He told me he wanted me in his office right away, I had a mass in my right lung and he gave me the name of a surgeon. He never used the word cancer but he really didn’t have to now, did he? Ash Wednesday was the next day. Lent had begun. I soon found out I had to have twenty-five radiation sessions and five chemotherapy sessions pre-operatively to try and shrink the tumor. The last chemo was on Good Friday. The last radiation was Easter Tuesday, April 10th, two months after John had died. My surgery wasn’t until May 14th, the twelve post-operative chemo sessions would continue into September and I wouldn’t get here until the end of November, on Thanksgiving Day. What a Thanksgiving that was!

The details of my cancer journey, once vivid, have begun to fade in my memory. A lot of living has taken place since then when the fear and very real fact of my eventual and inevitable death was so close to me. Beginning with the ashes on Wednesday, part of the Lenten journey is always about facing the very real and inevitable death that we will all experience one day. Lent is a school about dying and rising. Physical suffering certainly gets your attention as it brings the daily routine of your life to an unexpected halt. It is also capable of informing our awareness of spiritual suffering, increased by the pain of sin and separation from the source of all that is life and love. Ash Wednesday just ain’t playin’. It is the rehearsal that is capable of preparing you for the profound tears of sorrow for beauty missed and love forsaken. And it is the source of exquisite presence and intense encounter with the ground of all being, the fullness of God, that only tears can wash (to borrow a phrase from Pope Francis).

Use this Lent well. Enter as deeply as you can into the transformative power of the Gospel. You have to die to self in order to rise to new life. They both begin now.

Peace,
Fr. David

P.S. Thank you for your generous support of the Annual Catholic Appeal and your patience during the process that is tedious and also effective. Your support touches the lives of those both near and far in very real ways. Thank you.
Ash Wednesday is the first day of the liturgical season of Lent. In this season, we prepare ourselves to celebrate the high point of our Christian life, Easter. The readings for Ash Wednesday call us to a change of heart and teach us about the traditional Lenten practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, disciplines that are to be part of the life of a Christian. During the season of Lent, we renew our commitment to them.

The meaning behind tracing a cross on our foreheads with ashes (the liturgical sign of Ash Wednesday) is a summary of our Christian life. On one level, the ashes remind us of our origin and our death. (In the words of the prayer said when we receive ashes: “Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return.”) The ashes are also the sign of our victory: the cross of Christ. In his death and resurrection, Christ conquered death. Our destiny as Christians is to receive the victory over death that Christ won for us. We acknowledge that victory when we “turn away from sin and [are] faithful to the gospel,” words from the alternative prayer when we are signed with ashes.

In the Gospel read on Ash Wednesday Jesus warns his followers against acting for the sake of appearance. When Jesus' disciples give alms, pray, and fast, they are to do so in such a way that only God, who sees the heart and knows what is hidden, will know.

Abstinence from meat is to be observed by all Catholics 14 years old and older on Ash Wednesday and on all the Fridays of Lent. Fasting is to be observed on Ash Wednesday by all Catholics who are 18 years of age but not yet 59. Those who are bound by this may take only one full meal. Two smaller meals are permitted if necessary to maintain strength according to one’s needs, but eating solid foods between meals is not permitted. The special Paschal fast, as well as abstinence, are prescribed for Good Friday and encouraged for Holy Saturday. Loyola Press.

### What does it mean to fast?
To fast is to do without food. Its purpose is to experience the effects of not eating. It also serves to be a penance or a sacrifice - for the purpose of strengthening us. When we don't eat, for even a little while, we get hungry. When we get hungry, we have a heightened sense of awareness. If, when we eat too much, we have a sluggish feeling, when we fast, we have a feeling of alertness. Fasting is a wonderful exercise whenever we want to sincerely ask for an important grace from God. It is not that our fasting "earns" God's attention, but by fasting, we clarify our thinking and our feeling. It is purifying and prepares us to pray more deeply.

### What does it mean to abstain?
To abstain is to not eat meat. Its purpose is to be an act of penance - an act of sacrifice, that helps us grow in freedom to make much bigger sacrifices. Of course, it would not make sense to make the sacrifice of not eating meat, and then eat a wonderful meal I might enjoy even more. Many people eat a vegetarian diet, for a variety of reasons, and eating meat is not even an issue. It might be possible to abstain from a non-meal that I really like, on all the Fridays of Lent. It should be noted that many people in this world cannot afford to eat meat or do not have access to it. Part of our abstaining from meat can place us in solidarity with so many of our sisters and brothers around the world. Used with permission. Creighton University.

Watch next weekend’s bulletin for everything Lent at SJC.
Be sure to mark your calendar for our Parish Mission on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, March 2, 3 and 4 from 7-8:30pm in church with Terry Nelson Johnson. Terry will introduce the Mission at all Masses on March 1st. See the back of today’s bulletin for more information!

Pray Lent with your Little Black Book—available after all Masses this weekend. A $1 offering is suggested.
Pope Francis reminds us that we who are the Church, the Body of Christ, are entrusted with responsibility and must never forget the poor among us. May our support of the Annual Catholic Appeal provide us with a way to share the good news of Jesus Christ.

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 also serves people worldwide, without regard for religious affiliation, whose lives are devastated by natural disasters, illnesses, wars and famines.

As Fr. David noted last weekend: The Appeal supports the administrative offices that our school administration relies on, the Youth Catechesis leadership depends on, and our Crossroads Youth Ministry is supported by. It also 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.

The Annual Catholic Appeal continues this weekend at all Masses. If you have not done so already, please make a pledge to the 2015 Annual Catholic Appeal. Your contributions are deeply appreciated, very much needed and make a real difference in the lives of many. Thank you for your generosity.

A Reflection on Gratitude

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

Thomas Merton
Gratitude is not optional in the faith journey. It is central.

Gratitude is not simply remembering to say “Thank you.” There is a difference between the child who is taught to say “Thank you,” and the child who is truly grateful. The words are not necessary when we see the joy and appreciation of a child engaged with something that has been a gift. All children really need to do to show gratitude is to include us in their expressions of enthusiasm.

Gratitude is an acknowledgement of the continual gifting of God. And my expression of gratitude probably doesn’t begin with saying “Thank you.” Rather it begins in the savoring of what I have, in the celebration of the life that is. As I begin to savor and to celebrate, I start to look around for those whom I should include in my thanksgiving. I cannot help but turn my attention to God.

It is only in the last few years that I have become more acutely aware of the centrality of gratitude. I think in some ways it can be used as a hallmark for some degree of spiritual maturity. It’s the move away from the self-centered adolescent, “Thanks so much!” followed swiftly by, “But what I’d really like is!” to the more mature, “I have done nothing to deserve these riches.”

There is a difference between the person who is unsatisfied because he desires a greater sense of connection with God and the person who knows that there is far more to the spiritual journey than she currently experiences but is content to let God lead the way. The latter is a position of gratitude, an acknowledgement that God has led one thus far and will lead one on in God’s good time. Both may experience the desire for more, but the former can only see what he lacks, while the latter focuses on what she has.

In a society which is focused on the next goal, the next success, the next whatever, gratitude is countercultural. In truth, gratitude is the first step on the pathway to true freedom in God.

May we grow in our relationship with Jesus and touch others with his healing Presence. May we faithfully and publicly proclaim all that Jesus has done for us.

Living the Gospel

This healing account between a leper and Jesus dramatically unfolds in a conversation punctuated by concrete and very personal gestures. The leper comes to Jesus, kneels, and boldly begs for cleansing, gestures expressing his sense of unworthiness. Moved with pity, Jesus stretches out his hand and touches the leper, gestures revealing the leper’s inherent dignity. Jesus heals more than the man’s body. Encounter with Jesus and being healed always fashions a new relationship with him.

Freed from pain and isolation, the leper can let his inherent dignity spill over into proclaiming the Good News of a new Presence, a new Awakening, a new Life.

Each of us has been touched by Jesus, healed of pain and suffering, been invited to grow into a deeper relationship with him. Our own inherent dignity is reinforced by Jesus’ very personal compassion and care for each of us. We experience this compassion and care in our own moments of deep prayer as we turn to Jesus in our need. We experience Jesus’ compassion and care in the helping hand of another, in the unexpected pat on the back for something we’ve done well, in a burst of energy we get from another noticing some good we’ve done. In these and many other ways, goodness abounds and relationships grow. Gospel living means taking up our cross daily and actually doing what Jesus did—willing the good of others. Doing so sometimes means risking isolation: being snubbed by coworkers, being laughed at by people who consider us religious fanatics, being ridiculed for giving of our time and possessions for the good of others. Such isolation because of Gospel living is not the loss it seems, however, for it gains us deeper community in the Body of Christ.

Monday
Gen 4:1-15, 25
Ps 50:1 and 8, 16bc-17, 20-21
Mark 9:11-13

Tuesday
Gen 6:5-8; 7:1-5, 10
Ps 29:1a and 2, 3ac-4, 3band 9c-10
Mark 8:14-21

Ash Wednesday
Joel 2:12-18
Ps 51:3-4, 5-6ab, 12-13, 14 and 17
2 Cor 5:20-6:2
Matt 6:14-16, 18-18

Thursday
Deut 30:15-20
Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4 and 6

Friday
Isa 58:1-9a
Ps 51:3-4, 5-6ab, 18-19
Matt 9:14-15

Saturday
Isa 58:9b-14
Ps 86:1-2, 3-4, 5-6
Luke 5:27-32

1st Sunday of Lent
Gen 9:8-15
Ps 25:4-5, 6-7, 8-9
1 Pet 3:18-22
Mark 1:12-15
Family Connection

Today’s Gospel invites us to think about the choices we make as individuals and as a family. Jesus was faced with a choice in today’s Gospel. By choosing to heal the man with leprosy, Jesus showed God’s compassion for the sick and the outcast. The man knew that Jesus had a choice and that Jesus could reject his request. He may have expected that Jesus would not help him. The social taboos regarding leprosy certainly gave him little on which to base his hope. In the person of the man with leprosy, we see an image of all those in need. The sick and the outcast of our world are watching us, to see if we as Christians will choose to extend ourselves to others in need of healing and compassion.

Gather with your family and talk about some of the choices you have made as a family. (where to go on vacation, what activities to do together, how to spend our evenings, and so on) How does your family go about making these decisions? What do your choices communicate to others about your family’s values? In today’s Gospel, Jesus was faced with a choice. Read today’s Gospel, Mark 1:40 -45. In choosing to heal the man with leprosy, Jesus chose to show God’s compassion and mercy. All our choices reflect our faith, and others are watching. Conclude in prayer together, asking God to help your family show compassion to others in your family decisions. Pray together today’s Psalm, Psalm 32.

Ash Wednesday & Families

Our parish will have three Masses on Ash Wednesday at 6:30am, 7:45am, and 6:30pm. Each year there is also a Word Service at 4pm in church. The Word Service consists of scripture readings from the day, a homily, intercessions, the Our Father and distribution of ashes. This is a wonderful liturgy for families to attend together after school.

National Marriage Week 2015

“Marriage is a symbol of life, real life: it is not fiction. It is the Sacrament of the love of Christ and the Church, a love which finds its proof and guarantee in the Cross. My desire for you is that you have a good journey, a fruitful one, growing in love. I wish you happiness. There will be crosses. But the Lord is always there to help us move forward. May the Lord bless you!”

~ Pope Francis

A Prayer for Married Couples

Lord God, Author of love, we ask you to bless the union of our marriage, a symbol of life and our forever love.

Look with kindness on us and guide us amidst the joys and struggles of our lives.

Open our hearts to your Spirit to sustain our love, to conquer every difficulty together, to grow together.

Renew and strengthen our marriage when it becomes lost, wounded or worn out. Help us to love as you love, without condition, without limit. Give us the grace to to know true joy together and gratitude for the gift of each other.

Increase your love in us, and strengthen our bond of peace, so that we may share the rich blessings of our love within our family and in our world.

We ask this in Jesus’ name, Love Incarnate. Amen.

Ask Jesus to multiply your love. In the prayer of the Our Father we say: “Give us this day our daily bread.” Spouses can also learn to pray like this: “Lord, give us this day our daily love,” for the daily love of spouses is bread, true bread of the soul that sustains them in going forward. … The more you trust in him, the more your love will be forever, able to be renewed, and to conquer every difficulty.

~ Pope Francis

Take an online Marriage Retreat with Pope Francis. Sign up on our parish website home page.
Richard Rohr Meditation
St. Catherine of Siena in her Dialogues pictures the spiritual life as a large tree:

- The trunk of the tree is **love**.
- The core of the tree, that middle part that must be alive for the rest of the tree to be alive, is **patience**.
- The roots of the tree are **self-knowledge**.
- The many branches, reaching out into the air, are **discernment**.

In other words, says Catherine, **love** does not happen without **patience**, **self-knowledge**, and **discernment**.

Today we have little encouragement toward honest self-knowledge or training in spiritual discernment from our churches. We prefer the seeming clarity of black-and-white laws. By nature, most of us are not very patient. All of which means love is not going to be very common.

Prayer Reflection
Today we have little encouragement toward honest self-knowledge or training in spiritual discernment from our churches. We prefer the seeming clarity of black-and-white laws. By nature, most of us are not very patient. All of which means love is not going to be very common.

Some years ago an old man collapsed on a busy street corner in downtown Brooklyn. Within minutes an ambulance rushed him to a nearby hospital. There he kept calling for his son. A nurse found a dog-eared letter in the man’s wallet. From it she learned that his son was a marine stationed in North Carolina.

That night an anxious marine showed up at the hospital. Immediately the nurse took him to the old man’s bedside. The man was heavily sedated. And so the nurse had to tell him several times, “Your son is here. Your son is here.” Finally the old man opened his eyes. He could barely make out his son, but he recognized his marine uniform.

At that point, the son took his father’s hand and held it lovingly. For the rest of that night, the marine sat at the old man’s bedside. Occasionally, he patted the man’s hand and spoke to him tenderly. Several times the nurse urged the marine to take a break and get something to eat or drink, but he refused. Toward dawn the old man died.

When the nurse extended her sympathy to the young man, the marine said, “Who was that man?”

“Well, he was your father?” the nurse asked.

“No, he wasn’t,” said the marine. “I never saw him before in my life.”

“Why didn’t you say something?” said the nurse.

“I would have,” said the marine, “but I could see that he was too sick to realize that I wasn’t his son. I could also see he was slipping fast and needed a son. So I decided to become that son.”

That story illustrates the kind of compassion that Jesus showed the leper in today’s gospel. Mark says that when Jesus saw the leper, he was moved with pity, stretched out his hand and healed him.

That’s exactly what the marine did. When he saw the man he was moved with pity, stretched out his hand, and took the man’s hand in his own, showing the old man the same compassion that Jesus showed the leper.

This story also shows the marine gladly paying the high personal price that his compassion demanded. Although he was bitterly tired from his long day and lack of sleep, he stayed and held the old man’s hand throughout the night. He did what Jesus did so often in the Gospel.

How does the story of the marine and the story in today’s Gospel apply to us? First, the stories invite us to reflect on the quality of our compassion toward those around us. How compassionate are we toward others? Do we put ourselves in their shoes as the marine did?

Second the stories invite us to reflect upon our willingness to pay the price that compassion sometimes demands. It does not always come cheap, and often exacts a high personal price.

The stories also invite us to not just to examine ourselves on these points, but to do something about them if this seems to be in order. Used with permission. M. Link.

Prayer for Strength
O God, you are always with me and know me best.
You want my happiness.
Help me find it.
Show me the way to life with you.
Help me in my choices.
I do want to follow your voice.
Give me the courage to fully trust you.
I know you love and care for me.
So lead me, Lord, on your way.
Mother of Jesus, pray for me.

Archdiocese of Chicago Office of Evangelization
Becoming a Deacon
The call to the Diaconate, like all Christian vocations, is from God. It is a call that may be beckoning you? To find out more about responding to this possible call, please contact Fr. David. Applications are due by May 1st for next fall. Applicants must be 31-62 years of age at the time of application.

Upcoming Interfaith Career Network Programs
- Learn How to Network and Land More Interviews! Thursday, Feb. 19 from 7-9 pm  SJC Parish Center
- Career Transition Boot Camp Tuesday, Feb. 17 from 7-9 pm First Presbyterian Church of La Grange: HR professionals will coach you on phone and in person interviewing.

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.

Programs at Mayslake
Medical Professional’s Retreat
“In Deep Quiet”
This retreat offered by Mayslake is all about quiet: its value and how to achieve it. Come join us as we train our hearts solely on the Word of God, and nothing else. 8pm Monday, Feb. 23 through Wednesday, February 25 at the Carmelite Center in Darien. Cost: $285

Anxiety Awareness & Prevention
“Open New Doors—leave your worries behind”
This workshop offers insights into anxiety: what causes it, what eases it, what prevents it and how it impacts our lives and spirituality will be discussed. We all experience anxiety in our lives from time to time. Worrying and stress can prevent us from being the best person that God created us to be. Slowing down to gain insights can reduce our stress. Resources will be presented to enhance our coping skills for even more abundant and healthy lives. Tuesday, March 10 from 7-9pm Cost $25
Call 630-852-9000 or mayslakeministries.org for more information.

New Head Usher
Val Vlazny is a founding parishioner who has assisted our parish over the years with his involvement on the School Board, as a lector and communion minister at Mass, and as a school custodian in the very early days. Val, who has also been an usher at the Saturday 5pm Mass for over 20 years, will take over as Head Usher supervising and leading this important liturgical ministry. Thank you Val for all you have done and continue to do at SJC!!

Our parish faith community celebrates with the following families who had their children baptized last Sunday by Deacon John Schopp. Pictured from top to bottom with their godparents are: Rafaella Jolene Curry with parents, Nicholas and Alejandra, Libby Grace Schommer with parents, Matthew and Elizabeth, Charles Martin Vincent with parents, Andrew and Cheryl.
Women’s Club Annual Retreat

Sojourn to a Joyful Heart: Celebrating the Writings of Pope Francis

with Dr. Mary Amore of Mayslake Ministries

Friday, February 20 from 7-9pm

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.

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.

8 Big Problems of Life

We’ve all heard of the 7 deadly sins. Did you know there were originally 8, called the 8 Principal Faults? In this series of talks, Laurence Freeman, OSB, draws on the wisdom of the early desert teachers who combined deep spiritual wisdom with sharp psychological insight. His approach, like theirs, confronts the inner problems we struggle with, but sees them in therapeutic rather than judgmental terms. He develops the schema of what he refers to as the 8 Big Problems of Life and shows how understanding them as patterned states of mind will help us overcome them—making meditation, relationships, and daily life a great deal easier. Fr. Laurence, a Benedictine monk, is the Director and Spiritual Leader of the World Community for Christian Meditation, and an author, international speaker and retreat leader. He sees the contemplative as the essential dimension of all spirituality. All are welcome on Saturdays during Lent in the Parish Center from 8:30am-10am, except March 7th. This film series is sponsored by our parish Christian Meditation groups. Coffee will be provided. You may bring your own snack if you choose.

SAM

St. Augustine said “You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you.” If you are a guy with a Saturday morning free and are not afraid to explore your faith with your SJC brothers, join us on March 7th at 9am in the Parish Center when SAM (Sharing Among Men) returns to our parish.

Flourish: Spring Faith Sharing

Flourish Faith Sharing will meet on Thursday mornings in the Parish Center from 9-11am for a bible study. Dates are: Feb. 19, March 5 and 19, April 16 and 30 and May 14. For more information email Laura Jachim at l.jachim@comcast.net.

New Parish Directory

Our new Parish Directory will bring our faith community together and will help you to connect names with faces. We know your family has changed since the last directory five years ago, and we have many NEW families. 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. Photos will be 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.
Our Daydreams

A good part of our lives are taken up with daydreams, though few of us admit that and even fewer of us would own-up to the contents of those fantasies. We're ashamed to admit how much we escape into fantasy and we're even more ashamed to reveal the content of those fantasies. But, whether we admit it or not, we're all pathological daydreamers; except this isn't necessarily a pathology. Our hearts and minds, chronically frustrated by the limits of our lives, naturally seek solace in daydreaming. It's an almost irresistible temptation. Indeed the more sensitive you are, perhaps the stronger will be the propensity to escape into daydreams. Sensitivity triggers restlessness and restlessness doesn't easily find quiet inside ordinary life. Hence, the escape into daydreams.

And what about the contents of those daydreams?

We tend to have two kinds of daydreams: The first kind are triggered more by the immediate hurts and temptations within our lives; for example, a lingering hurt or anger has you fantasizing about revenge and you play out various scenes of retaliation over and over again in your mind. Or an emotional or sexual obsession has you fantasizing about various kinds of consummation.

The other kind of daydream we escape into is not so much triggered by the hurts and obsessions of the present moment but takes its root in something deeper, something classically expressed by St. Augustine in the opening lines of his Confessions (a hermeneutical key for his life and our own): You have made us for yourself Lord and our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Simply put, we are over-charged for our lives, given infinite spirits and infinite appetites and put into this world wherein everything is finite. That's a formula for chronic dissatisfaction. What's our escape? Daydreams.

However these second kind of daydreams are somewhat different from the first. They aren't so much focused on the immediate angers and temptations in our lives but rather are the habitual imaginary lives that we have interiorly fashioned for ourselves, fantasy lives that we play over and over again in our minds the way we might play and replay a favorite movie. But there's something interesting and important to note here. In these daydreams we are never petty or small, rather we are always noble and grand, the hero or the heroine, generous, big-hearted, immune from faults, drawing perfect respect, and making perfect love. In these daydreams we, in fact, intuit the vision of Isaiah where he foresees a perfect world, the lamb the lion lying down together, the sick being healed, the hungry being fed, all restlessness being brought to calm, and God, himself, drying away every tear. Isaiah too fantasied about perfect consummation. His fantasy was a prophecy. In our earthly fantasies we might not prophesize but we do intuit the Kingdom of God.

With that being said, we still need to ask ourselves: How good or bad is it to escape into daydreams?

At one level, daydreams are not just harmless but can be a positive form of relaxation and a way to steady us inside the frustrations of our lives. Sitting back in an easy chair and sinking into a daydream can be little different than sitting back and turning on your favorite piece of music. It can be an escape that takes the edge off of the frustrations within your life.

But there's a potential downside to this: Since in our daydreams we are always the hero or the heroine and the center of attention and admiration, our daydreams can easily stoke our natural narcissism. Since we are the center of everything in our daydreams we can easily become over-frustrated with a world within which we are not much the center of anything. And there's more: Etty Hillesum, reflecting on her own experience, suggests another negative consequence from habitually escaping into daydreams. She affirms that because we make ourselves the center of the universe inside our daydreams we often end up not being able to give anything or anybody the simple gaze of admiration. Rather, in her strong words, in our daydreams we can easily become over-narcissistic. Since we are the center of everything in our daydreams we can easily become over-narcissistic. And there's more: Etty Hillesum, reflecting on her own experience, suggests another negative consequence from habitually escaping into daydreams. She affirms that because we make ourselves the center of the universe inside our daydreams we often end up not being able to give anything or anybody the simple gaze of admiration. Rather, in her strong words, in our daydreams we take in what we should be admiring and, instead, masturbate with it. For this reason, among others, daydreams help block us from mindfulness, from being in the present moment. When we are all wrapped-up in fantasy it's hard to see what's in front of us.

So where should we go with all of this? Given both the good and bad within our daydreams and given our near-ir-curable propensity to escape into fantasy, we need to be patient with ourselves. Henri Nouwen suggests that the struggle to turn our fantasies into prayer is one of the great congenital struggles within our spiritual lives. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin shares in his journals that when he was young he struggled a lot with fantasy but, as he grew older, he was able more and more to stand in the present moment without the need to escape into daydreams. That's the task we need to set before ourselves.
Our school principal, Mrs. Gorman, along with members of our Student Council attended a prayer service at St. Ferdinand in Chicago with Archbishop Cupich. Mrs. Gorman was selected to speak at a luncheon following the prayer service where she addressed the successes, challenges, and the future of Catholic Schools.

SJC students swept The Knights of Columbus Spelling Bee this week. Eighth grader, Bernadette Miao, placed first, while fifth grader, Orla Ryan came in second, Ethan Ayersman, also in fifth grade, rounded out the top three placing third. In addition to our students sweeping this competition, Bernadette finished first in the West 40 Cook County Scripps Spelling Bee and will now move onto the Regional Spelling Bee next week.

This Week At SJC
February 16  No School
February 17  School Advisory Board Meeting  7:00 pm
February 18  Ash Wednesday School Liturgy  9:15 am
Love Day

4th grade students brought a loved one with them to class on February 8th and 9th. Loved ones included parents, older siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles and neighbors! They enjoyed games and activities in the classroom and ended with a prayer service and blessings. What a wonderful time!

YC Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classes K-6</th>
<th>10:15-11:30am</th>
<th>Sunday, Feb 22, Mar 8, 15, 22</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6:15-7:30pm</td>
<td>Monday, Feb 23, Mar 9, 16, 23</td>
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<td>FFC</td>
<td>Noon-1:30 pm</td>
<td>Sunday, March 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jr Hi Sm Groups</td>
<td>7th grade I</td>
<td>Feb 22-3:45 pm –on campus</td>
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<td></td>
<td>8th grade</td>
<td>Feb 22-in homes for session</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Needs</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sunday, Feb 22, Mar 8, 22</td>
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YC News

THANK YOU!
St. John of the Cross Youth Catechesis’s 2015 Collection
raised:
$100 and 1,417 food items

Thanks to your efforts this year, more dollars have been raised, more lives have been changed and the nation has seen the impact of people working together to help those in need. Thank you for working to transform the time around the Super Bowl into the nation’s largest celebration of giving and serving.

February 1, 2015

Love Day

Adults Needed!
Our March 6 Fish Fry is fast approaching and we are still in need of adults to help coordinate volunteers and supplies and to run the silent auction table. We also need one more adult to help lead our Catholic Goods Sale this Spring. Contact Ann Smith at 246-4047 to volunteer.

Service Project
The Off the Street Club - Circle of Friendship Party is Saturday, February 28 from 12:30-4:30pm at the Lyons Township High School Corral. We need 5-10 teen volunteers to lead kids through games and help at the “count the candy” station. If you would like to volunteer at the party, contact Madeleine Girgis at madeleine.girgis@students.ignatius.org by Monday, February 23.

Over fifteen years ago, Western Springs and OTSC created a Circle of Friendship. This circle joins Western Springs families from our village’s schools and churches with the OTSC children who live on the West side of Chicago. The WS – OTSC Circle of Friendship helps all the children understand that no matter where you live, no matter what you have, we are all the same.

Living Stations of the Cross
As you begin your Lenten journey, consider joining the Crossroads teens who will be presenting the Living Stations of the Cross on Good Friday, April 3, at Noon. We will rehearse ONLY TWICE, March 5 and March 26 from 6-7:30 pm. Contact Michael King at mking18@nazarethacademy.com if you want to join our team.
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.

Parish Ongoing Food Collection
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.

Refugee Women at Work
Refugee Women’s Studio in Chicago is a place for women to gather, share their struggles and skills, and learn, grow and create together. The studio is a collaboration between Catholic Charities and Refugee One that offers sewing classes, craft classes, skill development workshops, and women’s groups.
The studio hosts Loom, a social enterprise of Catholic Charities Refugee Resettlement Program. At Loom, women from Iraq, Bhutan, Congo and Afghanistan gather to produce beautiful handmade products in collaboration with local Chicago designers. Women who have fled war and violence from all over the world have the opportunity to work together in Chicago, learn new skills, produce beautiful handmade products, earn an income and be a part of a community of creative, enterprising women. Go to www.loomchicago.com to learn more.

Annual Crossroads ~ Men’s Club Fish Fry
Friday, March 6th
Pre-Purchase Tickets by dropping off this form to the Parish Center and we will have your tickets at the door.

Name: ___________________________________________________
Phone: ___________________________________________________
5pm Seating ______ 6:30pm Seating ______ (Check One)
Number of Tickets: Kids ______ @ $ 6= ______
Adults ______ @ $12= ______
Seniors ______ @ $ 9= ______
Total= ______

Thank You for Supporting Our Teens in Service to Others!

February 15, 2015  Page 13
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 led 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 newly baptized for the sake of the community.

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.

**Beginning next weekend 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.**

The Rite of Sending, a parish celebration, will take place next Sunday at the 10:45 a.m. Mass. At that Mass, a catechist from the RCIA team will present each of our catechumens and candidates to the priest. He will then call them forward with their sponsors and ask them a series of questions on their readiness to celebrate the Sacraments of Initiation. After this, they will sign their names in the Book of the Elect which will be presented to Bishop John Manz at Holy Name Cathedral at the Rite of Election celebrated later that afternoon. The Rite of Election refers to the biblical idea of being “chosen by God” into a relationship. We believe that God continues to call people into a covenantal relationship through the Sacraments of Initiation. At the cathedral our catechumens and candidates will be affirmed by their godparents and sponsors that they are ready and have the desire to be initiated into the Catholic faith. Having entered the cathedral as catechumens and candidates, Ellin, Eric, Nicole and Mick leave as members of the “elect,” those to be initiated at the Easter Vigil.

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

**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._
**Mass Intentions**

**Monday, February 16**
*President's Day*
7:45am Jack Doyle; Anthony Madio

**Tuesday, February 17**
7:45am Evelyn Spitkovsky; Reggie Cook
7:45am Antoinette Pisczor; Teresa Frutos
9:15am All School Mass
4:00pm Word Service & Distribution of Ashes
6:30pm Theresa Ann Keanini; Martin Biebel

**Wednesday, February 18, Ash Wednesday**
6:30am Mass
7:45am Mass
9:15am All School Mass
9:30am Bible Study
11:00am Ladies Bridge
2:00pm Christian Meditation
3:00pm Spirituality of St. John of the Cross
4:00pm Ash Wednesday Word Service & Distribution of Ashes
6:30pm Mass
7:00pm Chicago Catholic Scripture School

**Thursday, February 19**
9:00am Women's Club Flourish
6:30pm YC Fostering Faith Workshop
7:00pm Career Networking
7:00pm Women's Club Board Meeting
7:30pm Men's Club Board Meeting

**Friday, February 20**
9:00am School Celebrate SJC Planning
6:30pm Lenten Stations of the Cross

**Saturday, February 21**
7:00am Christian Meditation
8:15 Film Series Program
8:30am PAC Meeting
6:00pm Usher Party

**Sunday, February 22**
10:00am YC Jr. High Small Groups
10:15am YC Classes
12:00pm Crossroads Kairos Retreat 19 Team
1:30pm Baptism Prep
3:45pm YC 7th Grade Speaker

*Pray for our Sick*

Mary Barrett
Don King
Norbert Koziol
Nancy Lore

*Pray for our Beloved Dead*

Andrea Schloderbach, sister-in-law of Beth Lopez, aunt of Bob & Katie Lopez
George Sarros, father of Mark, grandfather of Alexandra, Valerie, Nathan, Meghan & Christian Sarros
Marian Buckl, father of Tomaz, grandfather of Robert, Daniel & Emilia
David Dees, grandfather of Sarah Kline, Spencer and Fr. Elliott Dees
Dolores Collins, sister of Ginny McClellan

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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.
RUNNING THE
Paschal Mystery

AN INSPIRING THREE NIGHT EVENT...

Presented by Dr. Terry Nelson-Johnson, D. Min.

SJC Parish Mission

March 2nd, 3rd and 4th at 7:00 PM

MONDAY: INTRODUCTION TO THE PASCHAL MYSTERY AND HOLY THURSDAY
TUESDAY: GOOD FRIDAY AND HOLY SATURDAY
WEDNESDAY: EASTER SUNDAY

More info available now at:
stjohnofthecross.org/mission