A Time of Renewal

Third Sunday of Lent

March 8, 2015

Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.
March 8, 2015

Dear Parishioners,

On Saturday morning, February 21st, the Parish Advisory Council met for our Winter Meeting. The purpose of this letter is to keep you informed of our work. Look for meeting minutes and pre-read communication materials from PAC members on our parish website.

At our winter meeting, the Council was joined by over 40 parish leaders who serve on the parish consultative bodies, ministry advisory groups and parish organizations for a meeting largely devoted to preparing for the To Teach Who Christ Is (TTWCI) Campaign. PAC Council members, Dan Cochran and Pat Surdyk, the Pre-Campaign Co-Chairs, helped to plan and facilitate our meeting.

Dan gave a brief overview of the archdiocesan wide campaign in which we plan to raise 130% (as are all parishes) of our ordinary income (or $3mm) through the five year pledge campaign to help the archdiocese reach its $350 mm goal.

- Forty percent of the funds raised will go to the archdiocese to strengthen our vocation of teaching who Christ is in parishes, in Catholic schools, and in our wider community. The archdiocese plans to establish a trust fund to assist families in need to attend Catholic schools, strengthen Catholic School curriculum and new technology, provide innovative new religious education programs, financial assistance to parishes in need of critical facility life/safety projects, and training/certification for catechists.

- Sixty percent of the funds we raise will be returned to our parish for the needs of our parish community. By allowing SJC to retain a good portion of the funds raised, the TTWCI Campaign presents a unique opportunity for our parish to come together and share the responsibility of our future, an exciting time to take responsibility for building a spiritual legacy for future generations.

- Parishioners, Larry and Julie Krema, and Dan Cochran will lead our TTWCI Campaign which will begin in the fall.

At our meeting the group brainstormed and prioritized ideas as to how our parish could grow in the future to enable us to better live out our parish mission, celebrating the Sacraments, reaching out to those in need and pursuing life-enriching religious education and formation opportunities for children, youth, and adults, which is the central focus of the Campaign. Next month all parishioners will be invited to generate ideas so that a draft of our case study (details of how we will use our portion of the funds) can be presented to the Parish Advisory Council and to the parish as a whole. At the end of our meeting, Co-Chair, Pat Surdyk, helped the group to identify the perceived benefits and challenges of the TTWCI Campaign.

**Save the Date**

Mark your calendar to join us in the Parish Center on either Tuesday, April 14th at 1pm or 7pm or on Saturday, April 18th at 9am to share your ideas on the needs of our parish community. More details will be forthcoming.

I look forward to sharing our ongoing progress as we prepare for the TTWCI Campaign.

Ann Marie Calistro
PAC Chairperson
Amidst the busy-ness of life, you are invited to spend time deepening your roots, exploring your relationship with God and yourself, and companioning with others on the same journey. If you are single, married, widowed or divorced, religious or skeptic, hurt or healing you will be at home on our Beloved Weekend. Our hope is that, together, we can rediscover what often eludes us, but what God wants each of us to know: that you are Beloved. Learn how this knowledge will enrich your life and relationships with others and fill you with joy.

The Beloved Weekend begins on Friday, April 24 at 7pm and concludes Sunday, April 26 at 1pm, but the Beloved Weekend doesn’t end on Sunday. After the retreat you will find regular opportunities to connect with and extend the Beloved experience as part of a parish community of believers.

**APRIL 24-26, 2015**

The Beloved Weekend is held at the Carmelite Center in Darien. The cost is $230 (per person for a double room) or $280 (private room). A deposit of $100 holds your spot. However, we never want cost to prohibit anyone from attending. Scholarships are available; just ask. To sign up visit www.stjohnofthecross.org or see our brochure at church exits. Questions about the retreat or scholarships can be directed to Marianne Firlit at 708-839-0377 or Andrea Gagliani at 708-246-1520.

"It brought me closer to others and allowed me to see God in them."

"The experience is like a seed that is planted that needs to be nourished to grow. It provides context and companions for the journey."

"It brought me closer to others and allowed me to see God in them."

"The retreat was transformational. It made me address feelings I was not sure I wanted to address, but it was truly a gift I am extremely grateful."

"Great new language and entry points for reflecting on who we are in relationship to God and who we are and who we want to be."

"I came away from the weekend with an amazing sense of peace and an overwhelming feeling that I am enough and loved unconditionally by God."
Period of Purification and Enlightenment

This is the time immediately preceding the elects’ initiation, usually during Lent; it is a time of reflection, intensely centered on conversion, marked by celebration of the scrutinies and presentations of the preparation rites on Holy Saturday.

1st Scrutiny
Saturday, March 7th 5:00 pm Mass

2nd Scrutiny
Sunday, March 15th 10:45am Mass

3rd Scrutiny
Sunday, March 22nd 9:00am Mass

What are Scrutinies?

Scrutinies are rites for self-searching and repentance and have a spiritual purpose. They are meant to uncover, then heal all that is weak, defective or sinful in the hearts of the elect; to bring out and strengthen all that is upright, strong, and good. The scrutinies are celebrated in order to deliver the elect from the power of sin and Satan, to protect them against temptation, and to give them strength in Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life. These rites complete the conversion of the elect and deepen their resolve to hold fast to Christ and to carry out their decision to love God above all.

From the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults Study Edition.

Father of love and power, guide our elect:
Strengthen them in their vocation,
Build them into the kingdom of your Son, and
Seal them with the Spirit of your promise. Amen.

The Sacraments are the manifestation of the Father’s tenderness and love towards each of us.

Pope Francis @Pontifex · Feb 20
Congratulations to the following families who had their children baptized last Sunday. In the top photo, pictured with Fr. David from the left are Thomas and Mary Claire Downs with infant, Andrea Claire, Brad and Julie Hirsch with infant, Cassidy Ann. Pictured to the left are Matthew and Lisa Conboy with infant, Keeley Paige.

Archbishop Cupich asks for your participation in an important consultation on the family. You may have been aware of some media attention last October on part one of the Synod on the Family in Rome. In anticipation of part two this fall, Archbishop Cupich is giving a report to the National Conference of Bishops and is asking for consolidated feedback to be sent to his office. There are five questions. He also wants it to be made clear that this is not a voting process on what we want, or an opinion poll “but rather a part of a larger process of discernment. In other words, the Church is trying to understand where God is moving and calling us in this moment with regard to family life.”

The questions are pretty straightforward:
1. How has family life been a grace or a blessing from God for you?
2. In what way does our American culture at this historical moment help or hinder our families from being the families that God wants them to be?
3. In your experience, what are the main challenges that families face today?
4. How can we as a church respond to those challenges?
5. Can you suggest ways that parishes can include and be more available to those who might be overlooked when we consider family life, for example, single people, the widowed, single parents, divorced or separated, those who identify as gay or lesbian, and others?

You can find a version of this on the parish website where you can type your answers. Or you can re-produce these questions on a separate sheet of paper.

There are two conditions for submitting your responses: (1.) you must TYPE your answers and (2.) you must constrain yourself to one side of one sheet of paper. Remember these responses will be summarized for the Archbishop by our staff and submitted to his office on one sheet of paper.

The deadline is by Monday March 9.

Sign Up Today for our new Parish 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 this weekend. Photos will be taken in April or May. You can also call the Parish Center office to schedule your appointment, 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.

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.

Jesus intercedes for us each day. Let us pray: Lord, have mercy on me; intercede for me! Pope Francis @Pontifex · Feb 28
Join the Boys’ Choir for a Day!

What is it? A choir made up of boys from 1st – 8th grades from St. John of the Cross Parish.

When will it happen? The 12:15 pm mass on Sunday, March 15

When is the rehearsal? You have a choice – come to 1, 2 or all 3: March 11 from 3:45 – 4:30, March 12 from 3:45 – 4:30, and March 13 from 3:45 – 4:30. All rehearsals will take place in church. Contact Ann Maney with questions or for more information.
bourjman@sbcglobal.net or (708)246-4171

Do You Love Cookies?
Our parish Girl Scouts will be selling their wonderful cookies after Masses this weekend. Stop in the Parish Center to buy a couple boxes of your favorites. The Scouts promise that they are calorie free!

Teacher Recognition Trust Party
All are invited to the TRT St. Patrick’s Day Soirée on Saturday, March 14th at Ruth Lake CC. Proceeds from the raffles and live and silent auctions helps to provide an annual financial gift to both faculty and school staff, which supplements their income and lessens the salary gap that exists relative to public school employees. The gift also rewards them for their continued service and commitment to our parish school. For party tickets and sponsorships go to the home page of our parish website.
For raffle tickets contact Elizabeth Turcich at elizabeth@turcichfamily.com or 630.654.3840.

Thursday, March 19, 2015
SJC Men’s Club NCAA Tournament & Cards Night
All parish men are invited to watch the NCAA Division I Second Round on the big screen. Food, beverages and playing cards are provided by the Men’s Club. Doors to the lower level Parish Center open at 6:30 pm. Please come join the fun and fellowship. More info to come! Contact Dan Montgomery at tdm30550@gmail.com or 312.952.1435

Interested in Joining the Women’s Club?
If you enjoy meeting new women and being part of planning, serving and sharing your time and talents, then we are looking for you to join us on the Women’s Club Board.
The Women’s Club is looking for the following new board members: Hospitality, Publicity, Fundraising, Programs, Spiritual Enrichment
* Please see the website for specifics on each position.
We have an induction ceremony welcoming our incoming board members in May. Our kick-off dinner meeting for the new board is held in August and meetings are held the third Thursday evening of every month, September thru May, excluding December.

Watch for information about our annual flower sale during the month of April.
Background on the Gospel

In today's Gospel we read about how Jesus overturned the tables of the merchants and the moneychangers in the Temple at Jerusalem. In order to understand the relevance of Jesus' action, we must learn more about the activities that were going on in the temple area. Worship at the Temple in Jerusalem included animal sacrifice, and merchants sold animals to worshipers. Moneychangers exchanged Roman coins, which bore the image of the Roman emperor, for the temple coins that were needed to pay the temple tax.

Jesus' action at the Temple in Jerusalem is recorded in all four Gospels and is often understood to be among the events that led to Jesus' arrest and Crucifixion. The Gospel of John, however, places this event much earlier in Jesus' public ministry than do the Synoptic Gospels. In John's Gospel this event occurs at the very beginning of Jesus' ministry, after his first miracle at the wedding feast at Cana.

We must read the Gospel of John carefully, especially in its presentation of Jesus' relationship to Judaism. The Gospel of John tends to reflect greater tension and animosity between Jesus and the Jewish authorities than the Synoptic Gospels. The Gospel of John was the last of the four Gospels to be written, and its narrative reflects the growing divide between the Jewish community and the early Christian community. Thus, greater emphasis on the distinction between Christianity and Judaism is found in John's Gospel.

Reflecting upon the destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem (A.D. 70), John recalls Jesus' cleansing of the Temple and uses that story to interpret this later event. John explains to his audience, an early Christian community, that temple worship would no longer be necessary because it was surpassed in the passion, death, and Resurrection of Jesus. With greater frequency than the other Evangelists, John intersperses post-Resurrection reflections of this Christian community in his narrative.

After clearing the Temple of the merchants and the moneychangers, John's Gospel tells us that the people asked for a sign of Jesus' authority to do such an audacious act. In response, Jesus predicted his death and Resurrection. Throughout John's Gospel, the language of signs is distinctive. Jesus' miracles are called signs, and the people look to these signs for proof of his authority. Here we learn that the sign par excellence will be Jesus' passion, death, and Resurrection.

During Lent we reflect upon the meaning of this sign for us and for our world. We might take this opportunity to consider the quality of our prayer and worship. In our prayers we seek to deepen our relationship with the person of Christ. In our worship with the community, we gather to experience anew the passion, death, and Resurrection of Jesus and its significance in our lives. Christ promises to be present with us when we gather for prayer. 

May we be living signs of God's Presence and saving works, giving over the temple of our bodies for the good of others.

May we come to a deeper belief that God is drawing us to eternal life in the heavenly temple of glory.

Most of us get lost in the demands of our everyday living. We get up in the morning, spend our day working, prepare and clean up after meals, shop and clean, and do countless other things before we fall into bed at the end of the day—usually totally exhausted. In the midst of all this it is pretty difficult to be single-minded about anything except the tasks at hand. This gospel strikingly challenges us to keep doing all these everyday tasks—but for the right reason: to continue to be living signs of Jesus' risen Presence within and among us. Ultimately, we are to offer up the temple of our own bodies by dying to self and only in this way can we share in the new Life God offers us. This is our daily dying: doing what is demanded of us out of love for God and the good of others. This is our daily rising: that we have kept our sight on God, have conformed ourselves more perfectly to Christ, and have believed the signs of God's Presence to us. ©Living Liturgy

For daily Lenten reflections go to our parish website homepage.

Monday
2 Kgs 5:1-15ab
Pss 42:2, 3; 43:3, 4
Luke 4:24-30

Tuesday
Dan 3:25, 34-43
Ps 25:4-5ab, 6 and 7bc, 8-9
Matt 18:21-35

Wednesday
Deut 4:1, 5-9
Ps 147:12-13, 15-16, 19-20
Matt 5:17-19

Thursday
Jer 7:23-28
Ps 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9
Luke 11:14-23

Friday
Hos 14:2-10
Ps 81:6c-8a, 8bc-9, 10-11ab, 14 and 17
Mark 12:28-34

Saturday
Hos 6:1-6
Ps 51:3, 4, 18-19, 20-21ab
Luke 18:9-14

4th Sunday of Lent
2 Chr 36:14-16, 19-23
Ps 137:1-2, 3, 4-5, 6
Eph 2:4-10
John 3:14-21

St. John of the Cross Parish ~ Find more information on our website: stjohnofthecross.org ~ 3/8/2015 ~ 3rd Sunday of Lent ~ page 7
**Desert Time**

Why are we afraid of desert time? Why are we afraid and sometimes resistant to prayer time, to the quiet alone time with God?

Experienced teachers on prayer, like Fr. Ron Rolheiser, suggest that the desert “is the place where one does battle with Satan.” (Our Deepest Longing, pg. 53) Within our solitude we face our demons head on, and we are confronted by all of our baggage and dark spots. We resist going into the silence and quiet because we do not like what we see there.

Desert time is vital to a mature relationship with God. If we are committed men and women of faith, then God is going to bring us to the desert at some point to look deeply at ourselves and see all of us the way God sees us. This means we will have to confront the dark spots of our lives and the things we do our best to hide from God and from the rest of the world.

Jesus was no different. He was “led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil.” (Luke 4:1–2). Jesus faced Satan and “then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.” (Matthew 4:11) We face Satan and our own temptations in our desert time, just as Jesus did. And just as Jesus was not alone in his desert battle, we are not alone either.

As we continue on our Lenten journey, let us be led by the Spirit to have the courage to head into the desert as Jesus did. We pray that during these weeks of Lent, God will strengthen us in our weakness the way Jesus was strengthened. As St. Paul reminds us, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.” (2 Corinthians 12:9)

Jesus’ time in the desert prepared him to begin his public ministry. When we leave our desert time and confront our demons with God’s help, we are stronger. It is in the desert time—our time of prayer, solitude, and aloneness with God—that God readies us for our next steps.

**Richard Rohr Meditation: Temple Religion**

Jesus enters the temple and drives out the salesmen who “were selling and buying there” (Matthew 21:12), trying to sell worthiness, purity, and access to God (Luke 19:45-46), just as the Catholic Church did later with indulgences and stipends of various sorts. This is the great temptation of all religion. Jesus symbolically dismantles this system by not allowing it to operate in its present form and releasing the animals that were sold for sacrifice (John 2:15-16). The temple of religion (read “church” or “mosque,” too) is henceforth to become personal, relational, embodied in him and other people, and not a physical building (John 2:21).

The precise message of the Raised Up Christ is that God is available everywhere, as his body moved beyond any limits of space and time. For some reason we like to keep God “elsewhere” or “just here,” where we can control God by our theologies, tabernacles, and services. We often tell God whom he can love or not love. Poor God must conform to our moral systems and judgments.

This public demonstration against and inside of the sacred space of the temple is surely the historical action that finally gets Jesus killed. The trouble with declaring one space sacred is that we then imagine other spaces are not! Here he takes on the major detours of false religion, which are any attempt to “buy” God by exclusionary purity and debt codes, and by emphasizing “sacrifices” (which the clergy just happen to control) over basic mercy and compassion (Matthew 9:13).

Jesus really did come to liberate God for humanity and humanity for God.
CRS Operation Rice Bowl Week 3

NIGER

Loving God, we pray that all people gain opportunities to express their dignity through meaningful work.

HABIBOU’S STORY

Life in Niger is ruled by the seasons. There’s the dry season, the hot season, the rainy season—and the hungry season. The hungry season comes every year, when food supplies run out and prices rise. Poor families face the difficult choice between feeding their children and meeting other basic needs.

Habibou Alassane, his wife and nine children are farmers in Tourbey, a remote village in Niger. Usually during the hungry season, Habibou had to leave his family and travel—sometimes very far away—in order to find work. If he didn’t work, his family went hungry.

But this year, for the first time in 15 years, Habibou does not have to leave Tourbey. A Catholic Relief Services project called *Bonbatu* hired Habibou and other farmers to dig reservoirs. The work provides farmers with income, and the reservoir will provide water for crops and livestock and prepare the fields for planting. *Bonbatu* means “I become stronger.” Habibou’s family is stronger. His children are well fed. And his fields are ready for the planting season.

Lord, help us to be instruments of your peace.

CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING FOCUS: Dignity of Work and Rights of the Worker

Jesus spent years working as a carpenter. Work is important to help people live good lives, so people must be paid a fair wage to provide for themselves and their families.

As a parish community we are participating in CRS Rice Bowl this Lent. Expressing our love for those in need renews our relationship with Jesus and expands our hearts in hope. We invite you to continue to pray and fast in solidarity with those who are hungry, and learn about the people who will receive help from our sacrificial contributions. Bring your filled Lenten Rice Bowl with spare change to Mass on Palm Sunday, March 29.

St. Paul said, “The attitude you should have is the one that Christ Jesus had.”
News & Notes

Special Collection Next Sunday
Church in Eastern & Central Europe
Restore the Church ~ Build the Future

For many in the Church in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as parts of Asia, the aftermath of 70 years of Soviet rule is still felt in the form of poverty, infrequent pastoral care, and lack of buildings in which the faithful can worship and cultivate their faith. Your support is needed to fund grants that strengthen the Church in this region and promote ministries for children and families, create affordable housing, and provide a cultural and spiritual education.

Our faith calls us to serve the marginalized and to care for every human life. In order to carry out this important work, the Aregak Center in Gyumri, Armenia, offers resources and care for children with multiple disabilities. Conceived jointly by Caritas Armenia and Caritas Vorarlberg (Austria), the center is the first center of its kind in the country. The center sponsors programs that change attitudes toward people with disabilities and break down prejudices that have stigmatized and segregated the disabled in Armenian society. To facilitate this goal, the Aregak Center serves as a meeting point where people with and without disabilities participate together in a variety of recreational and therapeutic activities. The center also runs the Daycare Center for Children with Multiple Disabilities, where professional staff and volunteers offer the latest therapies and group activities designed to expand and stimulate the capabilities of each child.

In order to continue serving this vulnerable population, the Aregak Center relies on grants and donations funded by people like you. Your support for the Collection for the Church in Central and Eastern Europe will give the love of Christ to a child living with disabilities.

Our Lenten Journey...

Stations of the Cross: Friday, March 12, 19 and 27 at 6pm
Confessions each Saturday except Holy Saturday following the 8am Mass
Film Series, 8 Big Problems of Life, with Laurence Freeman, OSB continues on Saturday, March 14 & 21 at 8:30am Parish Center
Crossroads Teens and 3rd/4th Graders Easter Basket Project: Sunday, March 15
Communal Reconciliation Service: Tuesday, March 24 at 7pm

Holy Week:
Palm Sunday Masses, March 29:
Regular weekend Mass schedule except the 12:15 Mass begins at 12:30pm. Return your CRS Bowl to church or the Parish Center
Holy Thursday, April 2
Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper 7pm
Good Friday, April 3
Stations of the Cross at Noon
The Passion of Our Lord 3pm
Holy Saturday, April 4
Blessing of Easter baskets 11am in Parish Center
Easter Vigil 7:30pm ~ Reception following in Parish Center
Easter Sunday, April 5
7:30am, 9am, 10:45am, and 12:30pm in church
9:15am and 11am in school multi-purpose room
No 5pm Mass ~ No babysitting on Easter Sunday

St. John of the Cross Parish ~ Find more information on our website: stjohnofthecross.org ~ 3/8/2015 ~ 3rd Sunday of Lent ~ page 10
Family Connection

Today's Gospel invites us to reflect upon our worship of God. For Jesus and his Jewish contemporaries, the Temple was an important, holy place where they gathered to worship God. The Christian understanding of worship was transformed in light of Jesus' Resurrection. In the Christian understanding, God is worshiped in a person, the person of Jesus Christ. As we read in today's Gospel, Jesus is himself the Temple that will be destroyed, but in three days God will raise him up again. As you gather as a family, talk about places and times when you have experienced God's presence. After his Resurrection, Jesus' disciples understood that Jesus was present with them as they gathered to pray and especially when they gathered to share a meal. Read together today's Gospel, John 2:13-25. Jesus teaches us in today's Gospel that he is God's presence with us. Thank God for Jesus' presence with us, especially in the Sacrament of the Eucharist. Pray together the Lord's Prayer.

Praying On the Go

This week we encourage you to pray with your family at times other than when you normally do such as at mealtime or bedtime, perhaps when you are driving the kids to activities or going on a date with your spouse. These examples might inspire our own creative or spontaneous prayer.

So many of us spend a fair amount of time in the car, often with other members of our family. These can be nice times to begin or end the trip, with a very brief prayer. Bless our shopping tonight. Help us be grateful for the gifts you give us. May this food/these clothes help us be mindful of those who have so much less than we do. Or, Bless Ann at practice today. Give her gratitude and delight in the gifts you give her. Help her to do her best, to encourage others, and to learn what you offer her today. Or, Lord, as we go to Bill and Ann's for dinner, we thank you for our friendship with them, and we ask you to bless this night with all the graces you might offer us in the care we have for one another; we ask this in Jesus' name. Or, Lord, as we drive to church, we thank you for our faith and for this chance to be together with our parish community; please allow us to hear your Word, to give you thanks and praise, and to be nourished for the mission you give us this week. Creighton University

Silencing our Disappointments

Last week we asked for the grace to be more unselfish and to love our spouse more. This week we focus on silence. We hold off on the sarcastic comment aimed at our spouse. We silence a cutting remark. We drop the correction before it comes out of our mouths. Neglect the pouting. Stop the stony silence when we are displeased. These behaviors can be long standing and not easy to change. Also, it might take a while before our spouse really trusts these efforts. We will be the ones doing the “giving” for a while.

We are born selfish creatures crying out for someone to take care of our needs. The process of growing in this life seems to be learning how to become less selfish, less self-absorbed. On our good days we can do that, by loving, giving and caring for others before thinking of ourselves. But on our bad days, we look at our spouses and others and grumble about the unfairness: “Why is it always ME who has to do the giving? Why doesn’t my spouse have to care about ME first? Am I always the one who has to apologize first? Ask about the other’s day first? When is it MY turn to be taken care of?”

We are called to love in marriage the way we are loved by Jesus – without figuring out what we will get out of it. “Love one another as I have loved you.” As I have loved you. In the same way Jesus loves us – without limits. And so we love our spouse who is crabby and barking. Instead of snapping a response we can ask ourselves, “What does my spouse need right now?” It’s not about giving up my dignity or rolling over to a bully. It’s about loving someone who might not be very loveable right now.

We can wallow in our own self-pity and self-absorption, but it is in that moment that we are being called more deeply into Jesus’ love. We must die to our own needs and our own longing in order to find a new life in Jesus. In a profound way, we are being called to the simplest task: to care about other people before we take care of ourselves. What kind of people would we be if we got everything we wanted? If we never had to move outside of our own needs and desires? Jesus asks us: What good is it for us to get everything we wanted, if in the process we lose our very selves?

Creighton University
What can I do to share God's love with others?

SJC Cooks!
Pictured to the right are pans of homemade lasagna made by two parish volunteers in our Parish Center kitchen last week. The food will be frozen and delivered to Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation in Chicago. What can you do to make a difference in the lives of others?

The Precious Blood Center/Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation (PBMR) was established in 2003 in the Back of the Yards/New City neighborhoods of Chicago to reach out to a community affected by poverty, gangs, violence, and racial divisions, and to work for reconciliation and healing, providing hope, healing and hospitality to at-risk youth. PBMR and Kolbe House at Assumption Parish are part of our Sharing Parish efforts.

Thank You for Your Food Pantry Donations
Pictured above is parishioner, Shawn Sweeney, helping to deliver three car loads of nonperishable food donations collected in February to neighboring parish St. Francis Xavier's food pantry. Thank you for your generosity.
During the month of March, our donations will be delivered to St. Mark Parish in Chicago. Please continue to remember those who live in poverty by bringing food to our church narthex.

7th Graders Serving Others
Through a generous donation from the Women's Club, refugee families living in the Chicago area will have ample dinnerware and flatware for their families at meal time. Pictured are 7th grade YC students and leaders who generously gave their time to sort, wrap and box over 650 items to be gifted to refugee families.
As they worked the students talked about the refugee families. Their prayer for them would be that soon they would hear that their relatives back home were safe.

If you would like to learn how you can help a refugee family in need please contact Bill Bright.

Prayer Shawl Meeting: Knitters and crocheters are invited to our next meeting on Wednesday, March 11th at 1pm in the Parish Center to help knit and crochet shawls and pray for those who are ill or suffering. If you know someone in need of comfort and solace who might like a prayer shawl contact Sheila at 246-7836 or Mary at 246-5108.
Shhh…Students Testing
It was a quiet week at SJC. This week all of our students in the third through seventh grades participated in the TerraNova standard achievement tests. In the past, on average our students place in the top 10% of all schools nationwide.

More Spelling Superstars
Orla Ryan placed 1st and Ethan Ayersman placed 2nd at the Knights of Columbus regional spelling bee. They were the last two standing and completed at least 50 rounds after that against each other. They both advance to the state Knights of Columbus spelling bee in Chatham, Illinois in April.

Friday Morning Mass
Each Friday, during the Lenten season, our second and third grade teachers invite their students to participate in the daily liturgy before the school day commences. After the liturgy, these teachers invite their students back to their classrooms for a healthy snack and to discuss the mass. Many of our students and their parents attend.
It is easy to mistake piety for the genuine response that God wants of us, that is, to enter into a relationship of intimacy with Him and then try to help others have that same experience.

We see this everywhere in Scripture. For example, in Luke’s Gospel, after witnessing a miraculous catch of fish, Peter responds by falling at Jesus’ knees and saying: “Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!” At first glance that would seem the appropriate response, a wonderfully-pious one, an acknowledgement of his littleness and unworthiness in the face of God’s abundance and goodness. But, as John Shea points out in his commentary on this text, Jesus names Peter’s response differently and invites him to something else. What? Peter’s response manifests a sincere piety, but it is, in Shea’s words, “fearfully wrong”: “The awareness of God makes him [Peter] tremble and crushes him down. If he clings to the knees of Jesus, he must be on his own knees. Peter does not embrace the fullness; he wants to go away. This is hardly the response Jesus wants. So he instructs Peter not to be afraid. Instead, he is to use what he experienced to bring others to the same experience. As Jesus has caught him, he is to catch others.” Jesus is inviting Peter to move out of fear and into deeper waters of intimacy and God’s abundance.

We see a similar thing in the First Book of Samuel (21, 1-6). King David arrives at the temple one morning, hungry, without food. He asks the priest for five loaves of bread. The priest replies that he hasn’t any ordinary bread, only consecrated bread that can be eaten only after the appropriate fasting and rituals. David, nonetheless, knowing that, as God’s king on earth he is expected to act resourcefully rather than fearfully, asks for the loaves and he eats the bread that, in other circumstances, he would have been forbidden to eat.

What makes this story important is the Jesus, when confronted by the fear and piety of the Scribes and Pharisees, highlights it and tells us that David’s response was the right one. He tells those who were scandalized by his disciples’ lack of fear that David’s response was the right one because David recognized that, in our response to God, intimacy and a certain boldness in acting resourcefully, are meant to trump fear. “The Sabbath,” Jesus asserts, “was made for man, not man for the Sabbath”. That axiom might be rendered this way: God is not a law to be blindly obeyed. Rather God is a loving, creative presence that invites us into intimacy and then gives us energy to be more-creative in the light of that relationship.

Some years ago, a young mother shared this story with me. Her son, six years-old and now in school, had been trained from his earliest years to kneel down by his bed each night and pray aloud a number of ritual prayers (the Lord’s Prayer, the Hail Mary, a prayer to his guardian angel, and blessings and protection for his parents and siblings). One evening, shortly after starting school, when his mother took him to his room, he crawled into bed without first kneeling to say his prayers. His mother asked him: “What’s wrong? Don’t you pray anymore?” “No,” he replied, “I don’t pray anymore. My teacher at school (a nun) told us not to pray but to talk to God … and tonight I’m tired and have nothing to say!” In essence, this is the response of King David, asking the priest for the consecrated loaves. This young boy had an intuitive grasp that God is not a law to be obeyed but an intimate presence that resources us.

A number of the great Christian mystics have taught that, as we grow more deeply in our relationship with God, we gradually become more bold with God, that is, fear gives way more and more to intimacy, legalism gives way more and more to resourcefulness, judgment gives way more and more to empathy, and the kind of piety that would have us clinging to the knees of Jesus paralyzed by our own sinfulness gives way more and more to a joyous energy for mission.

Of course, there’s an important place for piety. Healthy piety and healthy humility are gifts from the Holy Spirit, but they do not paralyze us with an unhealthy fear that blocks a deeper, more-joyous, and more-intimate relationship with God. David had a healthy piety, but that didn’t stop him from acting boldly and creatively inside the intimacy of his relationship to God. Jesus too had a healthy piety, even as he was constantly scandalizing the pious around him.

We too easily mistake unhealthy fear for genuine piety. We do it all the time, naïvely seeing fear as virtue; however the mark of genuine intimacy is never fearfulness, but bold, joyous energy. The healthiest religious person you know exhibits this boldness and joy rather than a dead, overly-fearful piety.

Ron Rolheiser
The Week Ahead...
Monday, March 09, 2015
9:30am Spiritual Journaling
10:30am Step 11 Christian Meditation
1:00pm Little Rock
2:30pm Adoration
6:15pm YC Classes
7:00pm Boy Scouts

Tuesday, March 10, 2015
9:15am School Liturgies
7:00pm Boy Scouts Parent Pack Committee
7:00pm Crossroads K19 Team
7:00pm RCIA
7:00pm Teacher Recognition Trust

Wednesday, March 11, 2015
9:00am Bridges Group
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
7:30pm SAM Planning Meeting

Thursday, March 12, 2015
7:00pm Crossroads K19 Team Teen Space
7:00pm Faith Sharing Group

Friday, March 13, 2015
11:30am Senior Club Luncheon
6:00pm Stations of the Cross

Saturday, March 14, 2015
7:00am Christian Meditation
8:30am Christian Meditation Film Series

Sunday, March 15, 2015
10:15am YC Classes
1:30pm Baptisms
3:30pm Crossroads Easter Basket Project
6:00pm Beloved Meeting

Have You Stopped to Count?
You have always learned that Lent commemorates the 40 days that Jesus spent praying in the desert before his public ministry. However, if you count the days from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday, you'll realize there are actually 46 days!

What?
Yes, there are 46 days between Ash Wednesday and Easter. Because each Sunday of the year is a grand celebration and commemoration of the resurrection of Jesus, we don't count them in the 40 days of penance. There are six Sundays between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday. So, by subtraction, we are left with 40 days.

Mass Intentions
Monday, March 9 Lenten Weekday
7:45am Dr. Norbert Mann; Neil Ryan

Tuesday, March 10 Lenten Weekday
7:45am Amedeo & Adina Misantoni; Martin Daley

Wednesday, March 11 Lenten Weekday
7:45am Jack Gallagher; Sr. Anna Marie O’Brien RSM

Thursday, March 12 Lenten Weekday
7:45am Jack Gallagher; Clarence Naborowski

Friday, March 13 Lenten Weekday
7:45am Our Beloved Dead; Frank Saran

Saturday, March 14 Lenten Weekday
8:00am Edward Wolak; Lenny Kamenjarin
5:00pm Patricia Ann Wrenn; Michael Hosey

Sunday, March 15 4th Sunday of Lent
7:30am Janet Giardini; Thomas Marshall
9:00am Frank Saran; Lenny Kamenjarin
10:45am Rosemary Schick; Jack Walsh, Jr.
12:15pm Brian Donovan; Beatriz Cokin
5:00pm Walter Pezzcor; Thomas Marshall

Pray for our Beloved Dead
Herb Young, husband of Mary, father of David
Mary Elizabeth Spetter, mother of Don, Mary Kay Kaminski, and Susan Wolff, and Eileen Spetter, grandmother of Alex, Jeffrey, Natalie, Matthew, Kevin, Michelle, Jack & Dan
Patricia Kinnerk, aunt of Brendan Koch
Mary K. Niesen, wife of Russ, cousin of Phyllis Kelley
Mike Francis, father of Mike, grandfather of Michael, Caroline, & Danny

Pray for our Sick
Mary Barrett
Rodney Cullens
Baby Olivia Kavanaugh

Jim Clauer, Director of Worship
jcclauer@stjohnofthecross.org
Laura Dragich, Reservations
ldragich@stjohnofthecross.org
Kathleen Gorman, Principal
gorman@sjc.pvt.k12.il.us
Katie Hayes, Dir of Teen Ministry
khayes@stjohnofthecross.org
Jessica Koch, Director of Music
jkoch@stjohnofthecross.org
MJ Martin, Director of Operations
jmjmartin@stjohnofthecross.org
Elizabeth Russell-Jones, Welcome
erussell-jones@stjohnofthecross.org

Loyola Press
Annual St. Patrick-St. Joseph Luncheon
Friday, March 13
11:30am
Parish Center
Enjoy a traditional Corned Beef Luncheon
followed by a Lively Musical Program
Beer & Wine Included
$15 Members ~ $20 Guests
Questions? Call Gerrie Mazzone  708-246-0721

RSVP by Monday, March 9
Name: _______________________________ Phone _______________________
Guest: ___________________________  _____ Members @ $15 ____
Guest: ___________________________  _____ Guests @ $20 _____
Guest: ___________________________  Total $ _____