St. John of the Cross Parish

Whoever serves me
must follow me,
says the Lord;
and where I am,
there also will my servant be.

A Time of Renewal

Fifth Sunday of Lent
March 22, 2015
Dear Parishioners,

Next week is Palm Sunday. The Christian ministers of the Village along with a small contingent of people from their congregations (well, mostly from SJC) have planned a very simple Ecumenical Blessing of Palm to begin the day in communal prayer and faith. Maybe you have seen a poster around town (thank you Marie Gerken) with some of the details. We will gather at the Tower (thank you Saranne Milano) at 8:15am Sunday, March 29th. The prayer will include a welcoming, communal song, reading from the Gospel, blessing of Palm and sending forth (thank you Rev. Kate Spellman from the Episcopal Church). Folks will be on their way back to their various denominations for the rest of Sunday services, if they so choose, no later than 8:30am. For some, that might be the only prayer they will participate in that day.

Our Village has only Christian churches in it. (And one Masonic Lodge.) As Christians, we all believe in Jesus. Ecumenism tries to find the common bonds in our very different congregations. Of course, the life of Jesus is central to our individual and communal lives. That is our greatest strength. The distinctions that separate our congregations, often referred to as ‘the scandal of Christianity’, are important, and must be respected. We Americans sometimes forget that blood has been spilled over these differences, families have been split, and yes, wars have been waged because of different understandings of God and revelation. A scandal indeed. It does not help to just reduce everything by saying ‘we worship the same God, so what difference should it make what religion we are’. It makes a huge difference in how you understand the world and your life.

We are not trying to prove the other congregations ‘wrong’. Nor are we trying to recruit new members to join us. We are respecting each other’s differences and simultaneously finding the common ground that unites us.

Palm Sunday, or Passion Sunday, leads us into Holy Week. It is the culmination of the season of Lent that began with a commitment to turn away from sin and to be faithful to the Gospel. It is when we celebrate the incredible self-emptying of Jesus in the gift of the Eucharist. It is when we see innocent suffering transformed and sinful humanity redeemed by unconditional love. It is when we wait in vigil for the dawn of new life, eternal life. It climaxes on Easter Sunday when death is at long last defeated and the Risen Jesus walks among us in a glorified body.

It is a week worthy of our time and energy. You are invited to join with your brothers and sisters who also believe in the life of Christ next Sunday at 8:15am on the Village Green.

Peace,
Fr. David

PS Thanks to those of you who were able to respond two weeks ago to the five questions posed by Archbishop Cupich. There were some very thoughtful responses, including those expressing hurt and anger. There were beautiful reflections on the sacrament of marriage and a lot of frustration with the culture expressed. The Staff is pondering what next steps we as a parish might take to continue the conversations. If you have any suggestions let us know!
Lenten Calendar

3rd Scrutiny for Elect:
Sunday, March 22 at the 9:00am Mass TODAY

Lenten Communal Reconciliation Service:
Tuesday, March 24 at 7pm

Stations of the Cross: Friday, March 27 at 6pm

Confessions: Additional priests will be available next Saturday, March 28 following the 8am Mass. There will be no confessions on Holy Saturday, April 4.

Palm Sunday Masses, March 29:
Regular weekend Mass schedule except the 12:15pm Mass begins at 12:30pm.

Return your CRS Rice 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
All are invited!

Easter Sunday, April 5
7:30am, 9am, 10:45am, and 12:30pm, church
9:15am and 11am, school multi-purpose room
No 5pm Mass ~ No babysitting on Easter Sunday

Pray for our elect as they journey to Easter

To Be Baptized
Nicole Poletti  Ellin Wheelihan  Eric Wong

To Be received into full communion
Michael McCaskey

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.

Let us allow God to fill our hearts
with his goodness and mercy.
Pope Francis @Pontifex · Mar 17

Our Offertory Collections on Holy Thursday & Good Friday

On Holy Thursday (as on Thanksgiving) the offertory collection will support our parish Caritas Needy Family Fund. Using the Latin word for “charity” as its name, this fund provides financial support to our parishioners, who through unplanned circumstances face difficulty meeting a critical financial obligation. If you are unable to attend the Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday, but still wish to donate to this important collection, you may drop it at the parish center marked for the Caritas SJC Needy Family Fund or go to Sharing Tab (Picture) on our parish website and click on the Caritas link on the left side.

Once a year on Good Friday, we are called to support Christians in the Holy Land as requested by Pope Francis. Our Good Friday donations support the work of the Franciscans in the Holy Land, housing and feeding the poor, providing religious formation and education, maintaining shrines and parishes, and conducting pastoral ministry. For more information, visit www.MyFranciscan.org.
On March 31, Archbishop Cupich will celebrate the Chrism Mass with the priests and people of the Archdiocese for the first time. This Mass is celebrated once a year during Holy Week. During the Mass the Archbishop will bless the Oil of the Catechumen and the Oil of the Sick (or Infirmed). He will also consecrate the Chrism Oil. All of the oils are olive oil. The Chrism Oil is a mixture of olive oil and perfume, usually balsam and clove, giving it its fragrant smell. These oils are an important element in our worship as throughout the year they are used in our parish’s celebration of the sacraments. Every year after the Mass, representatives from every parish in the Archdiocese will bring these oils back to their parishes for use throughout the year. The blessing and use of oils has its roots in the early Church. In the Letter of James, we hear, “is anyone among you sick? They should summon the presbyters of the Church, and they should pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord.” (James 5:14)

The Oil of the Catechumen is used in the celebration of the Sacrament of Baptism both in infant baptism and for adults baptized at the Easter Vigil. Those anointed with this oil are strengthened by Christ to resist the power of Satan and reject evil in all its forms.

The Oil of the Sick is used in the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. This oil is for the healing of body, mind and soul. In our faith community it is used for those who are infirmed, including those at RML Specialty Hospital and the local nursing homes, to experience the compassion of Christ and his saving love.

The sacred Chrism Oil is consecrated for the anointing of infants after baptism, of candidates for confirmation, of the altar and wall of a new church, and of bishops and priests at their ordination.

The sacred and holy oils are stored in glass vessels in our parish’s ambry, the box-like cabinet located on the wall behind the baptismal font. In many older churches the holy oils were kept in an ambry built into a wall leaving them virtually invisible to people. Today, more and more churches are building ambries and placing them where people can see them. The keeping of the holy oils in a dignified vessel has led us to have a better regard for their significance and a greater respect of the sacraments in which these oils are used.

Fr. Bill
Background on the Gospel

Today's Gospel reading is taken from the Gospel of John. We are reading much further into John's Gospel than we have for the past two weeks. Chapter 12 of John's Gospel is a preparation for the beginning of the passion narrative to follow. Jesus has just raised Lazarus from the dead—an important sign in John's Gospel, which inspired many people to believe in Jesus. This event also marks the turning point in Jesus' conflict with the Jewish authorities. John's Gospel tells us that the Sanhedrin met after this event and made plans to kill Jesus. In the 12th chapter of John's Gospel, Jesus is anointed at Bethany and enters Jerusalem in triumph. We again see evidence of the significance of the raising of Lazarus to this event; John reports that the crowds also gathered to see Lazarus.

Following his triumphant entry into Jerusalem, Jesus predicted his suffering, death, and Resurrection and prepared his disciples to believe in the salvation that his death would accomplish. Using the metaphor of the grain of wheat, Jesus presented the idea that his dying would be beneficial. He also taught that those who would be his disciples must follow his example of sacrifice. This theme will be repeated in John's account of the Last Supper, when Jesus washed the feet of his disciples as an example of how they must serve one another.

The final section of today's Gospel might be read as John's parallel to the agony in the garden. Unlike the Synoptic Gospels, the Gospel of John does not record Jesus' anguished prayer in the garden of Gethsemane before his arrest. Although comparable words are found in today's reading, Jesus gives a confident response to the question he raises when asking God to save him from his impending death. After announcing his conviction that it is for this purpose that he came, a voice from heaven speaks, as if in answer to Jesus' prayer. This voice, like the one heard at Jesus' baptism and at Jesus' Transfiguration—events reported in the Synoptic Gospels but not in John's Gospel—affirms that God welcomes the sacrifice that Jesus will make on behalf of others. In John's Gospel, Jesus teaches that this voice was sent for the sake of those who would believe in him.

In today's Gospel, we also hear Jesus speak about the cosmic framework against which we are to understand his passion, death, and Resurrection. Through his death and Resurrection, Jesus conquered Satan, the ruler of this world. In this way the world is judged, but the judgment is not condemnation. Instead, through Jesus' dying and rising, salvation is brought to the world.

Living the Gospel

Jesus reveals his "hour . . . to be glorified" in surprisingly inglorious ways: dying grain, losing life, serving others. Jesus himself struggled with this: "I am troubled now." Who doesn't? When we focus only on the giving up and the giving over of our lives, however, we fail to take into account the glorification. We focus on the pain, but not on the gain. By Jesus giving his life over for our salvation, glorification bursts forth. The Father is glorified in the very giving over of the Son. The Son is glorified in giving himself over to the cross. We are glorified in giving ourselves over to following Jesus to the cross. And this glorification is fullness of Life.

Self-giving strengthens our fidelity as a servant-follower of Jesus. We must take up the habit of dying to self for the good of others. This defines what it means to be a faithful follower of Jesus. When we struggle with dying to self, we are in good company: Jesus himself was "troubled" (gospel) by this and cried out to be delivered from it (see second reading). We don't enter the paschal mystery as the dying and rising rhythm of our Christian living apart from Jesus. When we do take up the cross and die, not in the physical sense but by laying down our lives in service, we are able to see that the cross is the means of glory—for the Father, for Jesus, and for us. Our dying to self is hardly the pain of "no pain, no gain." It is the road to glorification.

Original Sin, the Immaculate Conception (Dec. 8), and the Annunciation (March 25)

Through original sin, the consequences of the sin of Adam and Eve, all humanity lost the original blessing God intended and became subject to sin and death. Jesus, being fully God and fully human, was born without original sin. Mary, his mother, was also conceived without original sin. That belief, called the Immaculate Conception, celebrates God's victory over sin and death in the moment Mary comes into existence. The feast of the Immaculate Conception is celebrated on December 8.

The announcement of the birth of Jesus—the Annunciation—is recounted in Luke 1:26-38. It tells us of the exalted position of Jesus and the beauty of Mary's response. The feast of the Annunciation is celebrated on March 25, nine months before Christmas. Through the angel Gabriel God asks Mary the impossible, to be Mother to the Son of God. As a young unmarried woman, Mary risks shame and possible execution to answer God's call. Mary is the first and most important vessel of bringing Christ's presence into the world.

Loyola Press.
Have you ever thought about the impact that the Eucharist has on your work days, Monday through Friday, or on your relationships in your family, neighborhood, or the world?


Our parish will be offering a book discussion where we will read the book and discuss its impact on our lives. Our discussions will span three weeks and will be offered two times each week. You may attend either session each week.

Mondays at 7 pm: April 27, May 4, and May 11
Thursdays at 1 pm: April 30, May 7 and May 14.

This series is being facilitated by Terry Stadler. Terry has been a parishioner for 32 years, along with his wife, Mary of 47 years. He has 11 years experience in directing adult spirituality development and growth.

The book is being offered to our parishioners for $7. Please sign up for this exciting discussion group by dropping off an envelope with your contact info and payment for the book to the Parish Center by April 15th.

Name: _____________________________________________
Phone:_____________________________________________
Email: _____________________________________________
Prefer Mondays ________   Thursdays________

Participants should try to read the first two chapters for our first session.

Our parish congratulates these families who had their sons baptized last Sunday. Pictured with Deacon John Schopp are:

Meghan and William Kushner with William Ryan,
Ashley and Kory Kliebert with Keegan Thomas and
Michelle and Laurance Drish Jr. with Laurance Gerard, III.
Prayer

God of life, Source of love, accept the offering of our prayers. Bless us always with the hope of the grain of wheat, that we may seek to die to ourselves for the sake of others so that we may one day rise to the new life of eternal springtime of your Son, our Lord and Risen Savior. Amen.

Richard Rohr Meditation
Life & Death Are Not Two

Let us look at the phenomenon that some have called “falling upward.” The very activity we discern in the planets and evolution seems to be that through loss, crisis, stress, limitation—use whatever word you want—we move into deeper states of consciousness and freedom. I think even physicists today would say that actual loss is not real. Nothing totally dies. There is only transformation.

The common metaphor is that the liquid world is moving to solid, then to vapor, and eventually back again. Just wait a while. It looks like a death, a loss in each case, but in fact it is a becoming. Now we recognize that spiritual teachers were saying this all along. In Christianity it was called “the Paschal Mystery”—a phrase used by Saint Augustine to teach the paradox that dying must precede resurrection. Jesus, for Christians, became the Icon and living image of that mystery. Christians believe that his crucified body in fact transmuted, transformed into the risen Christ, and he is a stand-in, a corporate personality for all of creation. He holds the two sides of life together in one hopeful place.

Reclaiming Sabbath

With only a few weeks of Lent remaining, I want to offer a suggestion for our faith journeys that will carry us beyond Lent: reclaiming Sabbath. Despite the promise of technology to make us more efficient and give us more free time, we are busier than ever, and it is becoming more of a challenge to disengage and find time for rest, renewal, silence, quiet, and time simply to be with God. Not only have we lost the spirit of Sabbath, but we, as a society, have lost the value of rest that refreshes. Instead, we proudly wear our busy-ness as badges of honor.

It seems we have gotten away from the practice of Sabbath in our lives. Sometimes our institutions do not help this practice of Sabbath by hosting non-faith related events on Sundays, such as sporting games, meetings, or fundraisers. All of these are good things and can be meaningful activities for us to participate in. However, if we never take a day or even a shorter time period to give our time to Christ, Sunday becomes like every other day where the fullness of our schedules keeps us from doing what the Sabbath is meant to do: open our time to God so he might renew us and guide us.

Let us embrace St. John Paul II’s words on Sabbath rest:

I would strongly urge everyone to rediscover Sunday: Do not be afraid to give your time to Christ! Yes, let us open our time to Christ, that he may cast light upon it and give it direction. He is the One who knows the secret of time and the secret of eternity, and he gives us “his day” as an ever new gift of his love. The rediscovery of this day is a grace which we must implore, not only so that we may live the demands of faith to the full, but also so that we may respond concretely to the deepest human yearnings. Time given to Christ is never time lost, but is rather time gained, so that our relationships and indeed our whole life may become more profoundly human. (On Keeping the Lord’s Day Holy)

I invite us to turn to Jesus and ask him to help us answer:

- How might we reclaim the practice of the Sabbath in our personal lives?
- How might we reclaim the Sabbath within our Catholic institutions so that we can help each other embrace Sabbath moments in our lives? Ignatianspirituality. B. Eldridge
For Reflection

Where Have We Not Yet Surrendered Ourselves to God?

Many of us give up something as part of a Lenten fast. Fasting helps us in our almsgiving in having more to give away to others, serves as a penitential offer for past wrongdoing, and unites us in solidarity to those who are hungry. Fasting is good, especially if we keep in mind it is a means and not an end in itself. But as we move through these days and weeks of Lent, we are called to give even more deeply: to give up aspects of our lives and even our selves to God.

In Lent, we are being asked to consider where we have not yet surrendered our lives to God, not so much by way of great, romantic gestures, but rather in concrete and practical ways. For example:

- Do I seek to make my family’s everyday life happier rather than putting my own desires first?
- Can I make do without some material goods, so that I can share with others who lack even the basics?
- Can I stop dwelling on past hurts so that I can give generously here and now?
- Do I listen when I want to speak and make room for others’ voices and dissenting opinions?
- Am I willing to let teenage or adult children, friends, or my spouse grow in new directions, even when that means certain kinds of losses for myself?
- Am I able to let go of any desire that exists to prop up my own sense of self, and trust that there is a deeper self beneath whose joy lies in self-gift?

Loving God,
You have heard my complaints, my impatience.
Sometimes I become frightened
when I move away from you.
Guide my heart back to you.
Help me to think beyond my own wants
and to desire only to do you will.
Thank you for the many blessings in my life
and for the ways I feel your presence.

Creighton University.

Message of Mercy

I am always struck when I reread the parable of the merciful father; it impresses me because it always gives me great hope. Think of that younger son who was in the father’s house, who was loved; and yet he wants his part of the inheritance. He goes off, spends everything, hits rock bottom, where he could not be more distant from the father. Yet when he is at his lowest, he misses the warmth of the father’s house and he goes back. And the father? Had he forgotten the son? No, never. He is there, he sees the son from afar; he was waiting for him every hour of every day. The son was always in his father’s heart, even though he had left him, even though he had squandered his whole inheritance, his freedom. The father, with patience, love, hope, and mercy had never for a second stopped thinking about him, and as soon as he sees him still far off, he runs out to meet him and embraces him with tenderness, the tenderness of God, without a word of reproach: his son has returned! And that is the joy of the father. In that embrace for his son is all this joy: he has returned! God is always waiting for us; he never grows tired. Jesus shows us this merciful patience of God so that we can regain confidence, hope—always! A great German theologian, Romano Guardini, said that God responds to our weakness by his patience, and this is the reason for our confidence, our hope (see Glaubenserkenntnis [Würzburg, 1949], p. 28). It is like a dialogue between our weakness and the patience of God; it is a dialogue that, if we have it, will grant us hope.

I would like to emphasize one other thing: God’s patience has to call forth in us the courage to return to him, however many mistakes and sins there may be in our life. Jesus tells Thomas to put his hand in the wounds of his hands and his feet and in his side. We too can enter the wounds of Jesus; we can actually touch him. This happens every time we receive the sacraments with faith. St. Bernard, in a fine homily, said: “Through the wounds of Jesus I can suck honey from the rock and oil from the flinty rock (see Deut. 32:13), I can taste and see the goodness of the Lord” (On the Song of Songs 61:4). It is there, in the wounds of Jesus, that we are truly secure; there we encounter the boundless love of his heart. Thomas understood this. St. Bernard goes on to ask: But what can I count on? My own merits? No. “My merit is God’s mercy. I am by no means lacking merits as long as he is rich in mercy. If the mercies of the Lord are manifold, I too will abound in merits” (61:5). This is important: the courage to trust in Jesus’ mercy, to trust in his patience, to seek refuge always in the wounds of his love. St. Bernard even stated, “So what if my conscience gnaws at me for my many sins? ‘Where sin has abounded, there grace has abounded all the more’ (Rom. 5:20)” (61:5).

Maybe someone among us here is thinking, My sin is so great, I am as far from God as the younger son in the parable; my unbelief is like that of Thomas. I don’t have the courage to go back, to believe that God can welcome me and that he is waiting for me, of all people. But God is indeed waiting for you; he asks of you only the courage to go to him. How many times in my pastoral ministry have I heard it said, “Father, I have many sins”? And I have always pleaded, “Don’t be afraid, go to him, he is waiting for you, he will take care of everything.” We hear many offers from the world around us; but let us take up God’s offer instead: his is a caress of love. For God, we are not numbers, we are important; indeed we are the most important thing to him. Even if we are sinners, we are what is closest to his heart. ignatianspirituality.com pope-francis-message-of-mercy
Hamuli’s Story

When banana trees die, Hamuli Kahati has nothing to sell. And his family has nothing to eat. That’s why it’s so important for farmers like Hamuli in the Democratic Republic of Congo to be able to care for their crops.

Sometimes it isn’t safe for Hamuli to tend his trees—the DRC has a long history of war and conflict. Other times, the trees themselves get sick with a banana wilt disease. When the disease devastated the trees on Hamuli’s farm, his income dropped from $150 a month to only $7. He struggled to give his three daughters even one meal per day.

Catholic Relief Services helped start a field school where farmers like Hamuli could try different ways of treating banana wilt disease and learn new ways to work together. After training at the school, members visited each other’s fields and worked as a community to clean the disease off the trees. By coming together as a team, the farmers were able to help each other restore their farms and support their families.

Now Hamuli’s trees are thriving. With the $40 he earns each month, Hamuli’s family is eating two to three meals a day. He is even able to send his children to school. Hamuli knows that healthy harvests mean healthy families—and this is a lesson his entire community can share.

CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING FOCUS: Call to Community

Human beings are not only sacred, but social. How we participate in our family and community, from our daily actions to our policy decisions, affects each and every person.

God of all people,
We offer you our Lenten journey.
May we learn to walk as one human family, remembering in a special way those who are poorest and most in need.
Bless our prayers, our fasting and our Lenten gifts.
Through these actions, we show our love for your Son, Jesus, and answer your call to love one another.
Amen.

Lord, help us to be instruments of your peace.

As a parish community we have been participating in CRS Rice Bowl during Lent, reading stories about our brothers and sisters in need worldwide, and devoting our Lenten prayers, fasting and gifts to change the lives of the poor. Expressing our love for those in need renews our relationship with Jesus and expands our hearts in hope. Go to our parish website to learn more. Bring your filled Lenten Rice Bowl with spare change to Mass next weekend or to the Parish Center during the week.
Gratitude Corner

With this note comes my sincere gratitude to you for the $1500 Sharing check that was received. During these Lenten days of almsgiving, we at Kolbe House Jail Ministry are grateful to be the recipients of such generosity.

Lenten days are days of reflection about the love and mercy of God in all of our lives. We are all equal recipients of these gifts. We share them with one another in many different ways. One way is when we bear one another’s burdens, troubles, and concerns. We enact the love and mercy of God who shares His presence with each of us in the life, death and Resurrection of Christ. These lofty theological statements are brought home by the simple acts of daily charity that are manifested in so many ways from SJC. I am humbled that you have been so good to us and continue to seek out more ways to share in our ministry to the incarcerated. For that I will always be grateful. Rev. Arturo Perez Rodriguez, Kolbe House

We extend a heartfelt thanks to your generosity to the St. Barbara Food Pantry/Lending Closet. As a result of your donation, we will be able to help those less fortunate with nourishment and hope that they are not forgotten during these cold days.

The St. Barbara Food Pantry was founded in 1980 to answer a growing need for services in our area. We provide emergency meals and supplemental food to families seeking help, with special attention given to expectant mothers, children and infants, as well as senior citizens. We convert cash donations to grocery certificates for our local grocer, Tischler’s, so families can purchase fresh food and dairy. We also provide access to school supplies, clothing and fresh produce as available. Our Lending Closet also serves as a closet for donated medical equipment, reallocating supplies to those who need assistance so that they may have access to a better quality of life. It is only with the help from generous and caring people like SJC that we are able to continue to minister to the needs of so many who are experiencing difficult times and are seeking our help. Thank you so much for answering that call and joining our mission. Maria Espinosa, St. Barbara Food Pantry & Lending Closet

Calling all Gardeners!

Spring is on the way and we are actively looking for new volunteers to join our Gardening Angels group. Come help keep our parish grounds beautiful, well-manicured, weed-free and watered. There are several levels of volunteerism. Confirmation candidates and high school teens are invited to participate as well.

There is a Special Projects Group that helps at one or all of the following:

- Spring Clean Up (week of March 30)
- Planting Days (anticipating May 16, 19 & 23)
- Mulching Day (anticipating June 6)

Regular Weekly Volunteers—These volunteers come to garden once each week for about two hours during the months of June - August. (Based on the number of volunteers we have, and schedule availability, we may be able to spread this out to once every other week.)

Choose what works best for you.

If you would like to be a part of this dedicated and energetic group or have additional questions, contact Jan Grabacki—708-246-4610 (Home) or 630-204-5264 (Cell) - or beaconjan@aol.com

When your life is filled with the desire to see the holiness in everyday life, something magical happens: ordinary life becomes extraordinary, and the very process of life begins to nourish your soul!—Rabbi Harold Kushner

It doesn’t matter if you don’t know a flower from a weed—Your energy and enthusiasm is really all we need!
Parish News

SJC Scouts Place in Annual First Aid Meet
Our SJC Boy Scouts earned 2nd Place in the local First Aid Meet, a competition among close to a dozen local Scout troops. Out of over 400 points possible, they ended just 5 points behind the first place team.

Scouting is a Youth Ministry where participants learn leadership and life skills and have lots of fun in the process. If you would like to participate, please contact John Spitkovsky at (708) 579-3316. Cub Scouts is open to boys age K-4th grade, and Boy Scouts is open for boys age 5th grade – 12th grade.

New Parish Boys’ Choir
Boys in grades 1-8 joined voices last Sunday at the 12:15pm Mass. Thank you for sharing your talents with us.

Parish Directory
Call the Parish Center office today to schedule your family photo for the new Parish Directory or register on-line for your photo appointment and receive a $10 coupon to use toward the purchase of additional photos. Visit our parish website home page.

Thursday, April 16th 7-9pm
School Multi-Purpose Room

April in Provence
The Soulful Art of French Container Gardening

Join us for a spiritual, hands-on experience featuring Amy Cox of omstead (www.omstead.net) who will lead us through the creation of French container gardens to take home & savor for the outdoor season ahead.

Wine & cheese will be served as Amy intermingles tales of her own spiritual adventures and growth experiences in Provence.

Amy will also offer a limited supply of spiritual garden-centric items for sale, including plantable prayer seed crosses and other unique items perfect for creating lasting First Communion memories. 5% of the proceeds will be donated back to the St. John of the Cross Women’s Club.

Registration and a payment of $25 must be received by Thursday, April 9th! To register and pay online using a credit card, please use the below link: https://clients.mindbodyonline.com/classic/home?studioid=116375
Or you may drop an envelope with your contact info and $25 cash or check payable to: “omstead, llc” at the Parish Center no later than Thursday, April 9th.
Each month, a group of parent volunteers spends some time in grades K-5 working with students on art lessons focusing on different artists. The students are able to broaden their knowledge by applying artists’ techniques in their own artwork. The kindergarten students tape papers under their desks and lie on the floor to paint in the style of Michelangelo, while 3rd graders use wide brush strokes and cool colors while learning about Monet and other Impressionists. This program is widely popular among the parents, teachers, and students.

And, our principals received some special visitors from our Kindergarten classes on St. Patrick’s Day!

### Calendar of Events

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Welcome Back K19 Retreatants!

**Part-time Youth Ministry Coordinator Wanted**

If you enjoy working with teens and can help us grow our Ministry, then join our Crossroads team. See our website, [www.stjohnofthecross.org/crossroads/](http://www.stjohnofthecross.org/crossroads/) for details and a job description.

Calling All Actors and Actresses

Crossroads teens will present the Living Stations of the Cross at noon on Good Friday, and we need a couple more teens to join us. Rehearsal is this Thursday, March 26 at 6:00pm. Contact Michael King at mking18@nazarethacademy.com to sign up.

Youth Rally - Sunday, April 12

All high school teens are invited to represent our parish at a Youth Rally at St. Celestine in Elmwood Park, featuring guest speaker Mike Patin. Mike uses energy and humor to affirm God’s presence among us and invites us to take the next step in our journey with God. We’ll depart the Parish Center at 1:30pm and return by 7:30pm. If your home group is not going, but you’d still like to attend, contact Katie Hayes.

Parent Outreach Event

As the parent of a Catholic teenager, do you ever wonder how you can continue to support and enhance the faith journey of your son or daughter in high school and beyond? Does your teen think that one’s faith journey ends after Confirmation? Come join parents of teens in our parish as we explore answers to these and other questions! **Monday, April 13**, from 7:00-8:30pm in the Parish Center. Mike Patin will be our guest speaker. Hospitality will be provided and there is no charge for this event. Questions? Contact Beth Korenchan at bkorenchan@comcast.net.

This Week at SJC

- **Tuesday, March 24**: Regional Fair Gym 6:30pm
- **Thursday, March 26**: Grade 8 Talent Show Gym 7:00pm
- **Saturday, March 28**: Used Uniform Sale Parish Center 9-11am
Focus on Marriage in Lent

This Lent focus on growing in holiness with your spouse. In his homilies and addresses, Pope Francis has spoken quite directly about how husband and wife should treat each other, about prayer within the family, and other ways the family lives its identity as a “domestic Church.”

1) **Be courteous to your spouse.** Use polite requests: “May I? Can I?” For example, “Would you like for us to do this?” and “Do you want to go out tonight?” To ask permission means to know how to enter with courtesy into the lives of others. …True love does not impose itself harshly and aggressively.” (Address to Engaged Couples, Rome, Feb. 14, 2014.)

2) **Say “thank you” to your spouse.** “It seems so easy to say these words, but we know that it is not. But it is important! … It is important to keep alive the awareness that the other person is a gift from God—and for the gifts of God we say thank you!” (Address to Engaged Couples, Rome, Feb. 14, 2014)

3) **Ask forgiveness from your spouse.** Say, “I’m sorry.” “Let us learn to acknowledge our mistakes and to ask to forgiveness. ‘Forgive me if today I raised my voice’; ‘I’m sorry if I passed without greeting you’; ‘excuse me if I was late’.” (Address to Engaged Couples, Rome, Feb. 14, 2014) “Never let the sun go down without making peace! Never, never, never!” (Address to Engaged Couples, Rome, Feb. 14, 2014) “It is important to have the courage to ask forgiveness when we are at fault in the family.” (Address to Participants in the Pilgrimage of Families, Rome, Oct. 26, 2013)

4) **Pray together with your spouse and family.** “Praying the Our Father together, around the table, is not something extraordinary: it’s easy. And praying the Rosary together, as a family, is very beautiful and a source of great strength! And also praying for one another! The husband for his wife, the wife for her husband, both together for their children, the children for their grandparents…praying for each other. This is what it means to pray in the family and it is what makes the family strong: prayer.” (Homily for Family Day, Rome, Oct. 27, 2013) Pray to the Lord to “multiply your love and give it to you fresh and good each day.” Pray together, “Lord, give us this day our daily love.” (Address to Engaged Couples, Rome, Feb. 14, 2014)

5) **Visit the elderly, especially your grandparents.** “Grandparents are like the wisdom of the family, they are the wisdom of a people. … Listen to your grandparents.” (Address to Participants in the Pilgrimage of Families, Rome, Oct. 26, 2013) “How important grandparents are for family life, for passing on the human and religious heritage which is so essential for each and every society!” (Angelus at World Youth Day, Rio de Janeiro, July 26, 2013)

6) **Share the faith with others.** “Christian families are missionary families. …They are missionary also in everyday life, in their doing everyday things, as they bring to everything the salt and the leaven of faith!” (Homily for Family Day, Rome, Oct. 27, 2013) By Bethany Meola, USCCB

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**YC Schedule**

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<tr>
<th>Classes K-6</th>
<th>10:15-11:30am</th>
<th>Sunday, Mar 22</th>
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<tr>
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<td>6:15-7:30pm</td>
<td>Monday, Mar 23</td>
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<tr>
<td>FFC</td>
<td>Noon-1:30 pm</td>
<td>All work due by April 15</td>
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<td>Jr Hi Sm Grps</td>
<td>7th &amp; 8th grade</td>
<td>March 22 and 23—on campus</td>
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<td>Special Needs</td>
<td>Sunday, Mar 22</td>
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Seeing in a Deeper Way

Sometimes you can see a whole lot of things just by looking. That's one of Yogi Berra's infamous aphorisms. It's a clever expression of course, but, sadly, perhaps mostly, the opposite is truer. Mostly we do a whole lot of looking without really seeing much. Seeing implies more than having good eyesight. Our eyes can be wide open and we can be seeing very little.

I've always been intrigued by how scripture describes Paul immediately after his conversion. We always assume that it tells us that Paul was struck blind by his vision, but, I think, the text implies more. It tells us that Paul got up off the ground with his eyes wide open, seeing nothing. That doesn't necessarily equate with physical blindness. He may well have been seeing physically, but he wasn't seeing the meaning of what he was getting himself into. Someone had to come and open his eyes, not just so that he could see again physically but especially that he could see more deeply into the mystery of Christ. Seeing, truly seeing, implies more than having eyes that are physically healthy and open. We all see the outer surface of things, but what's beneath isn't as automatically seen.

We see this, for instance, in what's contained inside the healing miracles of Jesus. In the Gospels, we see Jesus perform a number of healings. He heals lame people, deaf people, mute people, people with leprosy, and two women who for different reasons are unable to become pregnant. What's important to see in these various miracles is that, almost always, there's more at issue than mere physical healing. Jesus is healing people in a deeper way, that is, he is healing the lame so that they can walk in freedom and in service of God. He is healing the deaf so that they can hear the Good News. He is healing the mute so that they can open their mouths in praise. And he is healing those who are hemorrhaging interiorly so that they can bring new life to birth.

We see this most clearly at those times when Jesus heals people who are blind. He's giving them more than just physical sight; he's opening their eyes so that that can see more deeply. But that's only an image. How might it be unpackaged? How can the grace and teachings of Jesus help us to see in a deeper way? Here are some suggestions:

- By shifting our eyes from seeing through anger to seeing through protection to a posture of nurture.
- By shifting our eyes from seeing through jealousy to seeing through admiration.
- By shifting our eyes from seeing through bitterness to seeing through eyes purified and softened by grief.
- By shifting our eyes from seeing through fantasy and auto-eroticism to seeing through appreciation and prayer.
- By shifting our eyes from seeing through relevance to seeing through contemplation.
- By shifting our eyes from seeing through longing and hunger to seeing through gratitude.

One of the key movements within our spiritual lives is the movement from fantasy to prayer, a movement that ultimately frees us from wanting to press to ourselves all that's beautiful to appreciating beauty for its own sake. We can only really see and appreciate beauty when we stop lusting for it. 

Nothing taints our eyesight as much as anger. It's the most debilitating of all cataracts. And nothing cleanses our vision as much as forgiveness. Nobody holding a grudge sees straight. Tears clear our eyesight because they soften a heart hardened by wound.

Our perception becomes distorted whenever we move from the happy state of admiration to the unhappy state of envy. Our eyesight is clear when we delight in admiration.

By shifting our eyes from seeing through envy to seeing through gratitude.

The root of bitterness is wound and the way out of bitterness is grieving. Tears clear our eyesight because they soften a heart hardened by wound.

Apathy is receiving God's gifts without giving back. Gratitude is being grateful for having received. Gratitude lowers the bar for seeing. Gratitude makes seeing possible.

The root of bitterness is wound and the way out of bitterness is grieving. Tears clear our eyesight because they soften a heart hardened by wound.

Nothing taints our eyesight as much as anger. It's the most debilitating of all cataracts. And nothing cleanses our vision as much as forgiveness. Nobody holding a grudge sees straight.

By shifting our eyes from seeing through anger to seeing through forgiveness.

Love is the eye! So say the medieval mystics, in wisdom that needs to be added to the medical vocabulary of contemporary optometry. Seeing straight has more dimensions than we normally imagine.

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser, theologian, teacher, and award-winning author, is President of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, TX. He can be contacted through his website www.ronrolheiser.com.
The Week Ahead:
Monday, March 23, 2015
9:15am School Stations of the Cross
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 24, 2015
9:05am Tuesdays with Mary Rosary
7:00pm Parish Lenten Reconciliation
Service in Church
7:00pm RCIA

Wednesday, March 25, 2015
9:30am Bible Study
2:00pm Christian Meditation
3:00pm Spirituality of St. John of the Cross
7:00pm Cub Scout Meeting
7:00pm Chicago Catholic Scripture School

Thursday, March 26, 2015
10:00am Parish Directory Meeting
2:15pm Market Day Pick Up
7:00pm Outreach Committee Meeting
7:00pm Faith Sharing Group

Friday, March 27, 2015
6:00pm Liturgy Stations of the Cross
Saturday, March 28, 2015
7:00am Christian Meditation
8:30am Confessions in Church following morning Mass
9:00am Used Uniform Sale

Sunday, March 29, 2015
Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord
12:15pm Mass Begins at 12:30pm Today
6:00pm Beloved Meeting

More Parish News...
Bakers Needed
As has been our tradition, parishioners are asked to bake homemade desserts for the Vigil Reception. Please bring your favorite baked goods to the Parish Center on Good Friday or Holy Saturday until noon. Put your desserts in non-returnable containers, i.e., wrapped on paper plates or in ziplock bags, etc. Any questions can be directed to Ginny Grecco at 708-246-7371.

Fr. Bonin Trip to the Opera
Fr. Bonin is organizing a trip to the Lyric Opera to see The Marriage of Figaro, on October 21 at 2:00pm. We need a group of at least ten to get a great discounted rate. Please call the Parish Center ASAP if you are interested.

Mass Intentions
Monday, March 23 St. Turibius of Mogrovejo, Bishop
7:45am Don Wees; deceased members of the O’Toole family

Tuesday, March 24 Lenten Weekday
7:45am Alice Stasica; William Caplice

Wednesday, March 25 Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord
7:45am Our Beloved Dead; Clarence Naborowski

Thursday, March 26 Lenten Weekday
7:45am Margo Hermes; Jack Gallagher

Friday, March 27 Lenten Weekday
7:45am Neal Ryan; Jack Rooney

Saturday, March 28 Lenten Weekday
8:00am Jim Waters; Barbara Rosiello
5:00pm Don Kowalski; Laura Gragg

Sunday, March 29 Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord
7:30am Mel Carr; Ann Cadero
9:00am Jack Doyle; Mary Jo McAuliffe
10:45am Phyllis Siffermann; Adeline Anderson
12:30pm Rose Sumpay; Charles Tracy
5:00pm Carmella Fennessy; Stanley Roszkowski

Italics: Living

Pray for our Beloved Dead

Bruno Armalas, husband of Lydia, father of Michelle and Robert
Bob Santucci, son of Mary Ann and the late John, brother of Bill, Dan, Ed, John Paul and Mary Beth White; uncle of Andrew, Heather, Ian, Spencer and Tia
Bernard Casella, husband of Karen, father of Carie Kessler, Toby, Mike, and Matt

Pray for our Sick

John Cozza Rodney Callens
Cornelius Fitzmaurice Karen Hult

Baby Olivia Kavanaugh Lee Lepinske
Casimer Ragus

Wedding Banns

Nora White and Kevin Malone

Rev. David P. Dowdle, Pastor
ddowdle@stjohnofthecross.org
Rev. Joseph F. McDonnell,
Pastor Emeritus
Rev. William J. Vollmer,
Associate Pastor
bvolmer@stjohnofthecross.org
Deacon John Schopp,
Deacon
john.schopp@newhemispheres.com
Bill Bright, Director of Outreach
bbright@stjohnofthecross.org
Janet Caschetta, Director of YC
jcascetta@stjohnofthecross.org
Jim Clauer, Director of Worship
jclauer@stjohnofthecross.org
Laura Dragic, Reservations
ldragic@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
mjmartin@stjohnofthecross.org
Elizabeth Russell-Jones, Welcome erussell-jones@stjohnofthecross.org
Fellow parishioners shared:

“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.”

“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.”

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

“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.”

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, male or female 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.

Read more on our website or take a brochure at the exits of church.

COME BE FILLED. ENERGIZED. STRENGTHEN YOUR CONNECTION TO GOD.