Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross and follow me.
Dear Parishioners,

I have just come back from the cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels, Los Angeles, California. The episcopal ordination of the three auxiliary bishops finished about an hour and a half ago. It was a prayerful, joyous, warm and uplifting celebration. The cathedral, a very unique building and complex, seats 3,000 and it was packed with family and friends of those ordained, bishops from around the country, several clergy from different denominations and between 500 and 600 priests. There were approximately 40 priests from the archdiocese of Chicago with many of them from the faculty of the major seminary where Bishop Barron has been for many years as a student, member of the faculty and most recently as rector/president.

The procession was so well organized that Archbishop Gomez, the archbishop of Los Angeles, began with the sign of the cross 5 minutes before the ordination was scheduled to begin. I was seated near the magnificent pipe organ and the well trained choir. Bishop Barron’s sister, Pat Callahan, and her family and his brother, John, and his family were in the front pews to the left of the altar. His mother was at home able to watch it on television. She probably had the best seat.

The cathedral’s organ and the choir were majestic, helping everyone to pray. The readings were in Spanish, Korean and English. Archbishop Gomez is a soft spoken presider at liturgy such that his voice creates a sense of intimacy. You have the sense he is speaking directly to you alone. The rector of the cathedral served as the Master of Ceremonies and kept things moving with reverence and efficiency. Bishop Barron was ordained with two other priests who are well known and well loved in the archdiocese. The priests from Los Angeles were very welcoming to us who were from Chicago. Someone related to me a conversation they had with the young women who were sales clerks at the gift shop the cathedral has. The clerks were very excited that Bishop Barron was coming to their archdiocese. “We are so lucky to have him coming here.” And we at SJC and the archdiocese of Chicago will suffer his loss.

When a priest is ordained his hands are anointed since it will be with his hands that the Eucharist will be offered. When a bishop is ordained his head is anointed since he now has the responsibility of being the chief teacher of the diocese. (When a deacon is ordained there is no additional anointing (chrismation) since it is by virtue of his baptismal and confirmation anointing that the deacon becomes the sacrament of service.) Archbishop Gomez was generous in his use of the sacred chrism on the head of each of the new bishops. Bishop Barron explained at the banquet that while he appeared to be weeping during the Eucharistic prayer, in fact the oil had dripped down his face and the spices used to make it so fragrant were burning his eye. There was so much extra oil that Bishop Barron had to take a shower between the ordination and the banquet. He declared it to have been his worst hair day. When your head is anointed with oil you should know it.

It was a real privilege to represent you and to be present for Bishop Barron’s ordination. As he begins his episcopal ministry far from home, please keep him in your prayers. The best is yet to come.

Peace,
Fr. David

Pictured with Bishop Barron is his sister, Pat Callahan, with her husband, John, and children, Drew and Lauren.
Anointing Mass
On Sunday, September 27 we will have a special 12:30pm Mass for those who desire to receive the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. Following Mass there will be a reception for those who were anointed and their families and caregivers.

A Sacrament of Healing
We come before The Lord for healing. Like all sacraments, the Anointing of the Sick is a liturgical and communal celebration. The sacrament includes the following principle elements: the priest in silence lays his hands on the head of the sick or elderly person and prays over them. He then anoints their forehead and hands with the Oil of the Sick saying, “Through this holy anointing may the Lord in his love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit. May the Lord who frees you from sin save you and raise you up.”

What are the effects of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick?
The special grace of the sacrament unites the sick person to the passion of Christ, gives strength, peace and courage to endure sufferings of illness or old age, imparts the forgiveness of sins if the sick person was unable to obtain it through the sacrament of Penance, provides for the restoration of health and helps to prepare the person for passing over to eternal life.

Who may be anointed?
"The sacrament of the anointing is not a sacrament for those only who are at the point of death" (Catechism 1514). The sacrament of anointing is appropriate for those whose health is seriously impaired by sickness or advanced age. This includes persons who are seriously ill whether at home, in hospitals or in nursing homes, as well as sick children who are old enough to experience benefit from the sacrament. It could be physical, mental or emotional. The sacrament may be repeated if the person becomes ill again or if their condition becomes worse. A person may also be anointed before surgery.

Sources: Catechism of the Catholic Church, USCCB Catholic Catechism for Adults

Know Our Church
Sitting in the pews of our church you can see a narrow notch in the wall behind the ambo. Inside the notch is a lit candle that indicates the Real Presence of Christ, consecrated hosts, reserved in the tabernacle in the chapel behind it. The consecrated hosts are intended primarily for the sick, but they also provide for enough hosts to be available at all of our liturgies. The shards of artistry glass surrounding the candle and also above the tabernacle echo the representation of the Holy Spirit above the statue of St. John of the Cross in the narthex.

Lost Child Pilgrmage
Saturday, October 24 from 9am-1:30pm
Shrine of Our Lady of Pompeii
A special day of reflection, healing and hope for people grieving the death of a child. More information and registration at www.ourladyofpompeii.org or 312-421-3757.

Pregnancy Loss Couples Retreat
Saturday, September 19 from 8:30am-4pm
A healing retreat for any couple grieving any type of pregnancy or infant loss. The retreat will be held at the Archbishop Quigley Pastoral Center in Chicago. For registration or more information, call 312-534-5355 or 312-534-8273.
Becoming Catholic
Responding to God’s Call

God works in many different ways. Most of the time, God works through ordinary people and events—a parent, a friend, a beautiful sunset, a song, an inspiring story. Other times, we hear God’s call during crisis moments or major life-changes—a birth, an engagement, a sickness, a death. Sometimes we just have a feeling that something is missing.

No matter what a person’s reasons are for becoming Catholic, the Church’s hope and prayer is that when God calls them, they will respond. One part of the Catholic Church’s mission is to help people respond to God as best they can. For Christians, initiation and on-going participation in the life of the Church are the primary responses to God’s call. Through the process of becoming Catholic, we try to help people learn how to respond to that call not just for the moment of baptism but for everyday of their lives. The way we learn how to become Catholic is by actually doing what Catholics do. So the process of being initiated into the Church is not so much about learning things as in a classroom but learning a way of life as an apprentice learns a discipline from a master and that master’s community.

Do you remember when you first heard God’s call? Was it through a person or a significant event? What were you being called to do? How did you feel about what you were being called to do? Who helped you take the next step? (Source – Diana Macalintal – Team RCIA)

This past Tuesday, five men and women have responded to God’s call. With the RCIA team, their parish sponsors and the community of St. John of the Cross accompanying them, these men and women have begun the process of deepening their relationship to and with God through the treasures, traditions and faith of the Catholic Church. Please pray for these men and women, their sponsors and the RCIA team as we journey with them.

Fr. Bill

Almighty God,
look upon those who begin the process of being counted
among the members of your Church.
Teach them on this journey of coming to know Christ;
the love of God, the mysteries of our faith, the way of the Gospel, the call to be servants,
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.

Gracious God, You have called me to life and gifted me in many ways. Through Baptism You have sent me to continue the mission of Jesus by sharing my love with others. Strengthen me to respond to Your call each day. Help me to become all You desire of me. Inspire me to make a difference in others’ lives. Lead me to choose the way of life You have planned for me. Open the hearts of all to listen to Your call. Fill all with Your Holy Spirit that we may have listening hearts and the courage to respond to You. Enkindle in my heart and the hearts of others the desire to make the world a better place by serving as Lay Ministers, Sisters, Priests, Brothers or Deacons. Amen.
Living the Gospel

Jesus is called “the Christ”—Peter is called Satan. Salvation confronts human resistance. Peter had a certain image, belief, expectation of what “the Christ” was to be, to do. Suffering, rejection, and being killed had nothing to do with Peter’s Christ. But they have everything to do with the Christ of God. Without a right understanding of “the Christ,” we cannot, with him, rise to new Life. Alone, the demands of discipleship would be impossible, the struggle beyond us. But with God as our help, we can begin to think as God does, not as humans. And how does God think? Not in terms of beatings, buffets, pain, ridicule, or even death. God thinks in terms of life and love. God thinks in terms of salvation. God only wills for us what is good for us and what brings us to new Life. We take up our own cross daily because this is the way to a share in risen Life.

This Gospel makes explicit the parameters of discipleship: self-denial, bearing hardship. It makes equally explicit why in the world anyone would follow Jesus: because this is the way to have Life. It is no small coincidence that this Gospel begins with the question of Jesus’ identity and then ends with the cost of discipleship. Identity and discipleship are inextricably related because who we are, our own self-awareness, shapes how we follow. Our identity through baptism is that of Body of Christ; by being united with him in identity, we are also united with him in his life, death, and resurrection. Unlike him, we will not die on a cross. Like him, we are called to be followers who give themselves for the good of others. ©Living Liturgy

Background on the Gospel

Today’s reading is the turning point in Mark’s Gospel. In the presentation of the life and ministry of Jesus found in the Gospel of Mark, the deeds of Jesus have shown Jesus to be the Son of God. Yet many, including Jesus’ disciples, have not yet realized his identity. In today’s Gospel, Jesus asks the disciples for a field report by asking what others say about him. He then turns the question directly to the disciples and asks what they believe. Peter speaks for all of them when he announces that they believe Jesus to be the Christ.

The word Christ is the Greek translation of the Hebrew word for Messiah, which means “the anointed one.” At the time of Jesus, the image of the Messiah was laden with popular expectations, most of which looked for a political leader who would free the Jewish people from Roman occupation. Jesus does not appear to have used this term for himself. As we see in today’s reading, Jesus refers to himself instead as the Son of Man, a term derived from the Jewish Scriptures, found in the Book of Daniel and in other apocryphal writings. Many scholars suggest that the phrase Son of Man is best understood to mean “human being.”

Now that the disciples have acknowledged Jesus as the Christ, Jesus confides in them the outcome of his ministry: he will be rejected, must suffer and die, and will rise after three days. Peter rejects this prediction, and Jesus rebukes him severely. The image of Christ that Jesus is giving is not the image of the Messiah that Peter was expecting. Jesus then teaches the crowd and the disciples about the path of discipleship: To be Christ’s disciple is to follow in the way of the cross.

We can easily miss the fear that Jesus’ words must have evoked in his disciples. Death by crucifixion was all too familiar as a method of execution in Roman-occupied territories. It was also an omnipresent danger to the Christian community for whom Mark wrote. The path that Jesus was inviting his disciples to share meant tremendous suffering and death. This is the kind of radical commitment and sacrifice that Jesus calls us to adopt for the sake of the Gospel. Loyola Press
Richard Rohr Daily Meditation

Getting to Yes

Real holiness doesn’t feel like holiness; it just feels like you’re dying. It feels like you’re losing it. And you are! Every time you love someone, you have agreed for a part of you to die. You will soon be asked to let go of some part of your false self, which you foolishly thought was permanent, important, and essential!

You know God is doing this in you and with you when you can somehow smile and trust that what you lost was something you did not need anyway. In fact, it got in the way of what was real.

Many of us were taught to say no without the deep joy of yes. We were trained to put up with all the “dying” and just take it on the chin. Saying no to the self does not necessarily please God or please anybody. There is too much resentment and self-pity involved. When God, by love and freedom, can create a joyous yes inside of you—so much so that you can absorb the usual noes—then it is God’s full work. The first might be resentful dieting; the second is a spiritual banquet.

Attention is about love. When we pay attention to whoever we are paying attention to, we are loving them. Any work that we really do with real attention becomes a creative and a loving act.

Laurence Freeman

3 Prayers for a Better Workday

Let’s keep this simple. You’re going to work, and you have a lot of work to do, so let’s not pile on “spiritual practices”—just more stuff for you to do. It’s not wise to add more minutes to a day already overflowing with them. So try three prayers, quick and to the point, and see if they help.

God my Creator, thanks for giving me work to do.
When the project gets twisted up or when you think it will never end, or when the hours seem twice as long as they are, send up a prayer of thanks. You have work, and that’s huge. You are employed. It’s not a perfect job and it may not be a very good job, but all you must deal with is this day, and you are working.

Remind me, Holy Spirit, when my attitude veers off course.
I can fume at others who make life hard, or at the job itself because it’s a drudge or full of stress. But so much of that is outside my control. What I can focus on is myself. Am I in too big a hurry? Am I taking on stress that isn’t even mine? Am I allowing a horrible commute to color the rest of the day? Am I allowing this person to push my buttons? Is my ego working overtime?

Walk with me, Jesus, and help me walk with my coworkers.
Pope Francis has stressed that the church must go outside itself to where people actually live and that priests and bishops must be out among the people, laboring beside them. When we walk alongside our colleagues—through whatever kind of day we have—we are following Jesus, and Jesus is walking there too.

What has helped you pray and work?

Vanita Hampton Wright, Loyola Press.
Youth Catechesis Begins!!

Sunday, September 20th
and
Monday, September 21st
Families: Watch your email for your children’s classroom assignment.

First Class is Open House for parents,
Grades Kindergarten to 6th

7th Grade: Please refer to your child’s leader informational email after September 10th

Parent Reflection
Parents, take a moment and reflect on your own faith journey and name the persons who have been most significant in forming you as a Catholic Christian. Share your experience with your children over a meal.

Technology at SJC soars
This week our students in fourth through eighth grades received their own iPads. In addition to our iPad program, first through eighth grade students use our state of the art computer lab equipped with 30 laptop computers. Students also utilize the mobile laptop computer lab. When students are in the Learning Resource Center they utilize Chromebooks. Each classroom is equipped with Elmo document cameras and projectors. Many classrooms including the Fine Arts utilize SmartBoards for instruction.
Outreach

**Annual Support Our Troops Collection: Now through September 22**
Donation Boxes in Church and Parish Center
The mission of Operation Support Our Troops is to supplement the basic provisions provided to American soldiers. The packages we send include packaged treats and toiletries that our troops cannot easily obtain. Please do not include any glass items.
- Individual cold drink mix packets of Gatorade or Propel
- Slim Jims Beef Jerky
- Peanut Butter (28 oz. or smaller)
- Individually wrapped snacks
- Foot Powder (20 oz. or smaller)
- White or black athletic socks (No visible logos)
- Lotion for men (12 oz. size or smaller)
- Coffee singles or 1 lb. Bags of coffee
- Non-aerosol shaving cream, razors
- Deodorant
- Hand sanitizer (12 oz. size or smaller)
- Toilet paper
Please contact Laurie Smillie, smillie@sjc.pvt.k12.il.us or 708-246-6760 X251 with questions.

**Interfaith Career Network**
**Upcoming Programs**
- **September 16 from 7-9pm:** Come to the Career Resource Center, a volunteer staffed resource where job seekers receive assistance with internet usage, resume/cover letter preparation and electronic job search skills including LinkedIn. First Baptist Church of La Grange. No appointment is needed.
- **September 17 from 7-9pm at St. John of the Cross:** Speaker, Steve Grosskopf, the founder of Gobie, will discuss the importance of research in the search process, where to look, what to look for and how to use the info to get hired.
- **September 22 from 7-9pm at First Presbyterian Church of La Grange:** ICN will host a 5-week Career Transition Boot Camp beginning Sept. 22. Whether you're looking for a change in jobs, making a career switch, unemployed, underemployed or a recent grad looking for your first position, this workshop is for you!

**Food Pantry Collection in Narthex**
Your donations brought to the church narthex during the month of September will be delivered to Catholic Charities in Cicero. Thank you for your continued generosity in helping the poor.

Let us ask Our Lady to help all families, especially those affected by unemployment. Pope Francis @Pontifex Sep 7
Soph-Jr-Senior High School Home Groups start TODAY

St. John of the Cross would like to invite you to discover the world of Crossroads. The mission of our Crossroads Youth Ministry is to embrace teens in our vibrant and caring parish community and meet them where they are by providing opportunities for them to:

- Grow in their relationship with God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit
- Build a community with other Catholic teens
- Learn more about their Catholic faith
- Develop leadership abilities by serving others
- Have fun in a faith-filled environment

Crossroads registration is open to all high school parish teens attending both public and private schools. Our twice a month (September – May) teen meetings are not religion classes. We don’t lecture about the commandments, Sunday Mass or even the Bible. In informal small group conversations, our committed volunteer adult leaders share their faith, answer questions about life and faith, and help you deepen your relationship with God. You will also meet and make friends with a ton of teens in our parish. Please contact the Parish Staff at 708-246-4404 if you have any questions.
Scouting:
Authentic Catholic Leadership Training Since 1960
1960, the year our parish was founded, was the first year of Catholic Scouting at SJC. Our first two SJC Scouts achieved Eagle Scout rank in 1966. Today, 55 years later, Scouting focuses on and builds character, creates lasting memories and friendships, and is a leadership training ground for our next generations of young men. If there are boys in the parish interested in an authentically Catholic fun leadership experience, Scouting is once again resuming weekly activities. If interested, please contact Tim Meece at tmeece@me.com for 1st through 5th grade boys, and John Spitkovsky at john.spitkovsky@mcsinc.com if older.

Nurturing Your Child’s Spirituality Program at The Well
Thursdays 9:30-11 am Sep 17; Oct 22; Nov 12; Dec 10  Facilitator: Bridget Sperduto
Children come to the planet as spiritual beings. Whether you are a parent, grandparent, or teacher, your role is about calling forth and naming children’s experiences of the Sacred. In this safe, interactive circle we will explore and name our understanding of God moving within and among us so that we may do the same for the little people in our lives. Cost: $60 or $15/session. Register at www.csjthewell.org

Moms’ Club
The Moms’ Club is an informal way to gather and connect with other moms in our parish. All moms with young children (6 and under) are welcome to join us on Friday mornings in the Parish Center from 9-10:30am for playtime, conversation and fun beginning September 25. Dates vary so sign up for our email sjcmomsclub@gmail.com to receive reminders and more information.

Walking with Faith, Following Hope Pilgrimage & Prayer
On the 10th anniversary of the Catholic Campaign for Immigration Reform there will be a 1:30pm pilgrimage on Saturday, September 19th from three different locations: Holy Name, Newman Center-UIC, and Holy Family Parish. A Prayer Vigil at Federal Plaza will follow from 3-4pm with Most Rev. John R. Manz and Most Rev. Alberto Rojas.

Information on placing an ad in the Fall Fashion Show Program can be found at all church exits. Call Rosaria Becker at 708-309-0351 for more information.
Sing to the Lord!
Children’s Choir Practice Has Begun!
Did you know that SJC has two choirs available to all children in the parish? You can join at any time. Questions? Contact Ann Bourjaily-Maney at (708) 246-4171 or bourjman@sbcglobal.net.

Cherub Choir serves children in grades 1-3 and practices on Wednesdays from 3:45 – 4:30pm in the church.

Youth Choir serves students in grades 4-8 and practices on Thursdays from 3:45 – 4:30pm in the church.

Teen Young Adult Choir
Our Sunday 5pm Mass Choir, “5 Alive,” serves high school/college/young adults. We practice at 4pm and sing at 5pm. No regular commitment is needed – you only come when it works for you! Contact Ann Bourjaily-Maney or visit the 5 Alive Facebook page.

Is God Calling You to Share Your Faith?
Crossroads Ministry Volunteer Opportunities
Crossroads, is looking for adult volunteers to join our ministry leadership team. There are short term opportunities as a retreat team member or as a Freshman Experience Team member. We are also looking for adults to serve through the school year as an Ignite Scripture Study Coordinator, Service Coordinator or as a Social Coordinator. We are in need of adults to serve as Home Group Leaders working with incoming Freshmen teens through their high school years. Please pray about your availability and commitment and call Terry Stadler to learn more about how you can help guide our parish teens in the development of their faith and relationship to God. Terry Stadler at 708-2463838 or tjs47@att.net

Respect Life Prayer Group
Join fellow SJC parishioners as they gather to pray for respect for all life from conception to natural death on Saturday mornings from 7:30-9am at Anchor Health in Glen Ellyn.

NAMI Overview: Stories of Hope and Encouragement
The West Suburban Faith-Based Mental Health Cluster Group, in partnership with NAMI DuPage, will be offering a FREE mental health presentation on Tuesday, September 22 from 7-8:30pm at Adventist La Grange Memorial Hospital. Come hear an overview of mental illness, including two personal stories of hope and encouragement, one from an Individual Peer Support Specialist, in recovery from mental illness, and another from a Family Support Specialist who's walking alongside a loved one with mental illness. Both will share how they have successfully navigated through difficult times with the help of NAMI Du Page and explain how Support Specialists can be an invaluable resource in the recovery process. Resource handouts will be provided. To register please contact the Adventist Midwest Health Regional Call Center at 630-856-7525.

“Even the weakest and most vulnerable, the sick, the old, the unborn and the poor, are masterpieces of God’s creation, made in his own image, destined to live forever, and deserving of the utmost reverence and respect.” Pope Francis
Flourish: Faith Sharing for Women
All women of the parish are invited to the Flourish gatherings starting again this fall. Meetings are from 9-11am every other Thursday in the Parish Center. Our next session is Sept. 24. This fall we will be working on the bible study “Girl Talk” by Jen Hatmaker. Questions can be directed to Laura Jachim at l.jachim@comcast.net or Elizabeth Russell-Jones at erusselljones@stjohnofthecross.org.

As women, we are relational by design. We long to communicate and share. Simply put, we are made to connect. (Just take a look at your cell phone bill.) But in the frenzy of everyday life, friendships are often the first casualty on an overwhelming to-do list.

Author Jen Hatmaker believes it’s time to reprioritize. Girl Talk is a fun, fresh Bible study with a focus on friendship. In this series, Jen takes a girlfriend-next-door look at what makes relationships tick. You’ll discover God’s design for community, how to avoid harmful people, and the five levels of communication that nurture intimacy. Most of all, you’ll share life with women on the same journey as you—which is what friendship is all about.

Spirituality of John of the Cross
3:30pm on Wednesdays beginning September 14. Participants will gain a deeper awareness of and appreciation for the patron saint of our parish as we study ‘The Collected Works of St. John of the Cross.’ Please contact Sr. Joyce with any questions or to place your discounted book order. 708-599-2954.

Little Rock Scripture Study
Ten Mondays at 1pm beginning September 14. Word of God at Vatican II and Book of Wisdom. Contact Roberta Gilbert at bertageorge@gmail.com or Chris Sulak at 708-246-4784.

Chicago Catholic Scripture School
Year II Basic Bible Study this fall on Wednesday evenings in the Parish Center. Learn More and Register at http://www.catechesis-chicago.org/ccs/en-us/overview.aspx

Centering Prayer Workshop at SJC
Many Catholics and other Christians are finding that a practice call Centering Prayer helps them move toward a closer and more meaningful relationship with God. Centering Prayer is a method of silent prayer and meditation that is grounded in ancient Christian tradition. The practice prepares us to experience God’s presence within us, closer than breathing, closer than thinking, closer than consciousness itself. Contemplative Outreach– Chicago is offering its fourth annual one day introductory workshop on the method on Saturday, October 3 at SJC. The workshop will offer indepth introductory sessions on Centering Prayer, opportunities for silent contemplation and a range of other thought provoking topics for attendees to choose from This year’s agenda includes sessions on Thomas Merton, Cosmology and Teilhard de Chardin, ways of listening and speaking to the Divine within, the thoughts of Thomas Keating on Archetypes and more. All are welcome. Look for brochures at church exits or go to http://centeringprayerchicago.org/events/annual-fall-one-day-workshop/ or call Phil Jackson 847-778-1022.

Spiritual Journaling
Tomorrow, Monday, September 14 the Spiritual Journaling group will begin reading the book, Jesus, A Pilgrimage by James Martin SJ. Our format is to read a chapter together, followed by discussion and a 10-15 minute period for reflection. Journaling is optional. Join us on Monday mornings from 9:30-11am in the Parish Center. For more info or to order a book ($17) call Roe Lawinger 708-246-2107.

As part of our adult formation efforts, SJC sponsors programs at The Well throughout the year. Our sponsorship helps The Well bring many inspiring speakers to our area and allows for our parishioners to attend special programs free of charge. Our first parish sponsored program for the fall is detailed below. To register, simply call the Parish Center. The Well Spirituality Center is located at 1515 Odgen Avenue in LaGrange Park. Visit their website, www.csjthewell.org, to view more.

Evolution on a Cosmic Scale
Monday September 28 from 7:00 – 9:00 pm
Facilitator: Grace Wolf-Chase, Ph.D.
During the last few decades, science has made tremendous progress in tracing the history of the Universe from rather humble beginnings to the emergence of stars, galaxies, planets, and, at least on Earth, life. Increasingly, new discoveries suggest that environments conducive to life as we know it on Earth may be relatively common in the Universe. Since the mid-1990s, the number of planets discovered orbiting stars other than our Sun (“exoplanets”) has increased exponentially, and so has the number of known exoplanets that are potentially habitable. How do these discoveries inform our thinking about life on other worlds, including intelligent life, and how might they influence theological thinking? The concept of “other worlds” is not new to Christian thought, but for the first time in human history, this concept has moved from the realm of philosophy and abstract thought to empirical scientific investigation.
Minister of Care

Adults interested in serving as a Minister of Care to the aged and infirm in hospitals and at home are invited to attend a four session training program at Carmelite Spiritual Center on:

September 15, 17, 22 and 24 from 7-9:30pm
or October 6, 8, 13, and 15 from 9-11:30am

The sessions will cover the theological, pastoral, and practical aspects of ministry to the sick. A fifth session will be held at the parish to cover information specific to serving at our parish. The cost is covered by the parish, however, registration is required by emailing Steve at sweigand@stjohnofthecross.org.

Communion Minister Training

Interested adults or any student that is a HS Sophomore or older wanting to serve as a Communion Minister at Sunday Mass needs to attend one of the upcoming training sessions scheduled for:

Sunday, September 20 from 3-4pm or
Thursday, September 24 from 6:30-7:30pm

No registration is required. Training will begin promptly in church.

Evening of Reflection for Lectors

Tuesday, September 22 at 7:00pm
The importance of the Liturgy of the Word as proclaimed by the Lector cannot be underestimated. It is all the more fitting and necessary that we gather to reflect upon the Word we proclaim in spirit, song & and celebration. Time to socialize around food and drink will be held in the Community Room immediately following our time in Church. Please RSVP by Mon. Sept 21 to: sweigand@stjohnofthecross.org or by calling the Parish Center office. This evening of reflection meets diocesan requirements for ongoing formation of liturgical ministers.

Christian Meditation

All are welcome to attend our weekly Christian Meditation sessions in the Parish Center on Wednesdays at 2pm and Saturdays at 7am. New this fall: Meditation will now also be offered on Tuesday evenings at 7:30pm. Step 11 Meditation meets on Mondays at 10:30am.

Eucharistic Adoration

Mondays from 2:30-9pm in the Mary Chapel. At 2:30 the Divine Mercy Chaplet is recited and at 8:45pm the Rosary is prayed. Adults and families welcome.

Adult Music Ministry

There are two adult choirs that sing at weekend Masses. Both are fun, supportive, and social groups who pray together and aim to foster prayer in our community through our love of music. No previous experience or music-reading skill required – just a desire to sing praise to the Lord! If you are interested in attending a rehearsal or want to find out more about Music Ministry, please contact Jessica Koch, Director of Music Ministries at jkoch@stjohnofthecross.org

Traditional Choir rehearses on Wednesdays at 7:30pm and sings at the Sunday 10:45am Mass.

Contemporary Ensemble rehearses on Thursdays and sings at the Saturday 5pm Mass.

Praying the Rosary

Parishioners pray the Rosary in the Mary Chapel before and after daily Mass. Also during the school year, parish school homerooms join adult parishioners on Tuesday mornings at 9:05am to pray the Rosary.

Mary’s life shows that God accomplishes great deeds through those who are the most humble. Pope Francis @Pontifex Aug 15
God’s Ineffability – What’s Revealed in Jesus’ Eyes?

God, as I understand him, is not very well understood. A colleague of mine, now deceased, was fond of saying that. It’s a wise comment.

Anyone who claims to understand God is deceived because the very first dogma we have about God affirms that God is ineffable. That means that we can know God, but never adequately capture God in a concept. God is unimaginable. God cannot be circumscribed and put into a mental picture of any kind. Thank goodness too. If God could be understood then God would be as limited as we are.

But God is infinite. Infinity, precisely because it’s unlimited, cannot be circumscribed. Hence it cannot be captured in a mental picture. Indeed, we don’t even have a way of picturing God’s gender. God is not a man, not a woman, and not some hybrid, half-man and half-woman. God’s gender, like God’s nature, is intellectually inconceivable. We can’t grasp it and have no language or pronoun for it. God, in a modality beyond the categories of human thought, is somehow perfect masculinity and perfect femininity all at the same time. It’s a mystery beyond us.

But while that mystery cannot be grasped with any rational adequacy, we can know it intimately, and indeed know it so deeply that it’s meant to be the most intimate of all knowledge in our lives. It’s no accident that the bible uses the verb “to know” to connote sexual intimacy. There are different ways of knowing, some more inchoate, intuitive, and intimate than others. We can know God in a radical intimacy, even as we cannot conceptualize God with any adequacy. And that’s also true of all the deep realities in life, we can know them and relate to them intimately, but we can never fully understand them.

So where does that leave us with God? In the best of places! We are not on a blind date, struggling to develop intimacy with a complete stranger, with an unknown person who could be benign or malignant. God may be ineffable, but God’s nature is known. Divine revelation, as seen through nature, as seen through other religions, and especially as seen through Jesus, spells out what’s inside God’s ineffable reality. And what’s revealed there is both comforting beyond all comfort and challenging beyond all challenge. What’s revealed in the beauty of creation, in the compassion that’s the hallmark of all true religion, and in Jesus’ revelation of his Father, takes us beyond a blind date into a trustworthy relationship. Nature, religion, and Jesus conspire together to reveal an Ultimate Reality, a Ground of Being, a Creator and Sustainer of the universe, a God, who is wise, intelligent, prodigal, compassionate, loving, forgiving, patient, good, trustworthy, and beautiful beyond imagination.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, once, in a mystical vision, saw all of this hidden inside the eyes of Jesus. Staring at a painting of Jesus on a church-wall one day, Jesus’ eyes suddenly became transfigured and this what Teilhard saw: “These eyes which at first were so gentle and filled with pity that I thought my mother stood before me, became an instant later, like those of a woman, passionate and filled with the power to subdue, yet at the same time so imperiously pure that under their domination it would have been physically impossible for the emotions to go astray. And then they changed again, and became filled with a noble, virile majesty, similar to that which one sees in the eyes of men of great courage or refinement or strength, but incomparably more lofty to behold and more delightful to submit to. This scintillation of diverse beauties was so complete, so captivating, and also so swift that I felt it touch and penetrate all my powers simultaneously, so that the very core of my being vibrated in response to it, sounding a unique note of expansion and happiness.

Now while I was ardently gazing deep into the pupils of Christ’s eyes, which had become abysses of fiery, fascinating life, suddenly I beheld rising up from the depths of those same eyes what seemed like a cloud, blurring and blending all that variety I have been describing to you. Little by little an extraordinary expression of great intensity, spread over the diverse shades of meaning which the divine eyes revealed, first of all penetrating them and then finally absorbing them all. ... And I stood dumbfounded. For this final expression, which had dominated and gathered up into itself all the others, was indecipherable. I simply could not tell whether it denoted an indescribable agony or a superabundance of triumphant joy.

God cannot be deciphered, circumscribed, or captured in human thought; but, from what can be deciphered, we’re in good, safe hands. We can sleep well at night. God has our back. In the end, both for humanity as a whole and for our own individual lives, all will be well, and all will be well, and every manner of being will be well. God is good.

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.
Monday, September 14
9:30am Spiritual Journaling
10:30am Step 11 Christian Meditation
1:00pm Little Rock Scripture Study Group
1:30pm School Reconciliation Service
2:30pm Adoration
6:30pm YC Catechist Meeting
7:00pm Boy Scout Troop 117

Tuesday, September 15
9:05am Tuesdays with Mary Rosary
6:30pm RCIA
7:00pm School Advisory Board Meeting
7:30pm Christian Meditation

Wednesday, September 16
9:00am Fr. Harry’s Opera Class
9:30am Gospel of John Study
12:00pm Ladies Bridge
2:30pm Christian Meditation
3:30pm Spiritualty of John of the Cross Study
3:45pm Cherub Choir Practice
6:00pm Parish School New Family Social
7:00pm Chicago Catholic Scripture School
7:00pm Prayer Group
7:30pm Traditional Choir Practice

Thursday, September 17
3:45pm Youth Choir Practice
6:30pm Parish School Curriculum Night
7:00pm Women’s Club Meeting
7:00pm Career Networking Program
7:00pm Beloved Team Meeting
7:30pm Men’s Club Meeting
7:30pm Contemporary Choir Practice

Friday, September 18
8am Parish School Workshop

Saturday, September 19
7:00am Christian Meditation
9:00am Spirituality Among Men (SAM)

Sunday, September 20
9:00am YC Jr. High Small Groups
10:30am Frosh/Soph Retreat Meeting
10:15am YC Classes today
1:30pm Baptisms
3:00pm New Communion Minister Training
4:00pm YC Jr. High Small Groups
6:00pm New Member Welcome Party

Mass Intentions

**Monday, September 14**  
*Exaltation of the Holy Cross*
7:45am Margaret Kegaly; Jeremiah & Mary Albertson

**Tuesday, September 15**  
*Our Lady of Sorrows*
7:45am Deceased members of the Quinn family; James Dages

**Wednesday, September 16**  
*Sts. Cornelius & Cyprian, Martyrs*
7:45am John Santucci; Margaret Darrow and Rita Gangi

**Thursday, September 17**  
*St. Robert Bellarmine, Bishop & Doctor*
7:45am Catherine Schnitzer; Reggie Cook

**Friday, September 18**  
*Weekday*
7:45am Henry Watson; Joe Scelsi

**Saturday, September 19**  
*St. Januarius, Martyr; Blessed Virgin Mary*
8:00am Mary Spetter; Our Beloved Dead
5:00pm Thomas Marshall; Robert Plechaty

**Sunday, September 20**  
*25th Sunday in Ordinary Time*
7:30am Genrose Hlavin; Lino Lupetini
9:00am Patrick Collins; Chuck Tracey
10:45am Beth O’Leary; Mitch Allen
12:15pm Ray & Lou Kiley; Mary Ann Matysik
5:00pm Patricia & Glenn Rankin; Mike Reidy

*Italics: Living Intention*

Remembered in Prayer

**Pray for Our Sick**
Connie Christiansen
Msgr. John Dalton
George Forster
Gene Gallagher
Sean Hamer

**Pray for Our Beloved Dead**
Dragica Pozek, mother of Sylvie Salazar, Suzana Pozek, and Beatrice Vrizi
Helene O’Donohue, mother of Terry, Tim, Ian and Mary Zearfoss

Gracious God, hear the prayers we lift up to you. Give us the courage and generosity to crucify our self interests and take up our crosses to follow Christ so that we may bring his new life and liberation to our world. We offer these prayers in the name of Jesus, the Messiah and Redeemer.

*September 13, 2015*
Come.
Come as you are.

Be filled with the Light of my Infinite Love
and know yourself as Beloved.

October 16-18

Brochures at church exits.
Register in the Parish Center office or on our parish website.