America Welcomes

POPE FRANCIS

September, 2015

26th Sunday in Ordinary Time  September 27, 2015
Dear Parishioners,

We welcome at all of our masses this weekend Steven Lilly, a second year theologian from Mundelein Seminary. Steven grew up in St. Leonard’s parish in Berwyn. He will share part of his vocation story and ask for your spiritual and financial support. As I have mentioned in previous columns, the support of priestly vocations is critical as the priest shortage begins to more severely affect parish life. As Bishop Barron has said, the seminarians of today answer God’s call precisely at the lowest moment in church history in the United States because of the sexual abuse scandal. Wherever God may eventually call Steven in his life, we thank him for being with us this weekend.

Every Monday our parish has Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament from 2:30 pm until 9:00pm. A faithful group of parishioners has been sure that the Eucharist is not left alone during that time period. For a variety of reasons it is getting increasingly more difficult to have people commit to being present for at least a half hour during the dinner hours (between 5 and 7pm). If your schedule has some flexibility and you could be free during that time period it would be wonderful to have you join this prayerful group.

The pope’s trip to Cuba and the United States has received a tremendous amount of media attention this past week. He is arriving in the USA as I am writing this so I can’t tell you much more about the impact of his visit just yet. Several people have mentioned to me that they are praying for his safety especially on this trip. Many non-Catholics are as interested in what he has to say as are Catholics. May the pope’s presence help us all to be more aware of our responsibility for each other as brothers and sisters in Christ, wherever we may live or whatever the circumstances of our life may be.

One of the advantages of being exposed to different cultures is being introduced to new ideas, or variations on familiar ideas. The Holy Father brings a devotion to the Blessed Mother that I was not familiar with until he introduced it to the wider church. He came across it while studying in Germany in the 1980’s, where the devotion goes back to the 1700’s. As the Youth Catechesis (YC= Religious Education) program began another year this past week, our DRE, Janet Caschetta used the image of Mary, Untier (or Undoer) of Knots. (In German, Maria Knötenloserin.) It, in turn, is based on a reflection of St. Iraneus in the early 3rd Century pictured here. The devotion is that you bring your life’s challenges and troubles, the places where you are tied in knots, to Mary to have her undo them with you. Google it for more information on the background and for prayers that go with the devotion.

Peace,

Fr. David
Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

This weekend we celebrate the men studying for service as priests in the Archdiocese of Chicago. On this occasion, we honor the ministry of the many priests who serve you faithfully each day, as well as those who are preparing to serve you with charity in the future. Thank you for your generous support of these men.

Our seminarians are matching your sacrifice, by preparing for a life of service. They are willing to give up having their own families in order to make you and the rest of the Catholic community their family. Today, we are blessed with 78 men in formation for priesthood and another 60 high school aged young men in our pre-seminary Quigley Scholars discernment program. These 138 men are the future priests in our parishes.

Perhaps you know some of these men, and like me come away inspired by their love for the Church and the generous enthusiasm that motivates them to answer the call to serve as pastors of our people. We love our seminarians for good reason: they call out the best in us. They need and deserve our prayers and financial support, as they consider forsaking all for the Kingdom of God and the service of God’s people.

It is because of this commitment that I ask for your help by contributing generously to the seminarian education fund special collection this weekend. Regardless of the size of your gift, I can assure you that these young men will not be outdone in generosity. All funds collected will be used solely for the formation of new priests for the Archdiocese of Chicago. Should you find it more convenient, feel free to make your gift online through our website at www.archchicago.org/seminarianfund.

Thank you in advance for your commitment. This year as I mark my 40th anniversary of ordination as a priest, I pledge to you my daily prayers for you and your family. I ask for yours in return.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Blase J. Cupich
Most Reverend Blase J. Cupich
Archbishop of Chicago
An Anxious Person’s Prayer

Most of us are feeling the pressure at this time of year. Too much to do; too little time. Here’s a prayer for anxious people written by William Browning.

A Prayer to the Holy Spirit

O Holy Spirit, give me stillness of soul in you. Calm the turmoil within, with the gentleness of your peace. Quiet the anxiety within, with a deep trust in you. Heal the wounds of sin within, with the joy of your forgiveness. Strengthen the faith within, with the awareness of your presence. Confirm the hope within, with the knowledge of your strength. Give fullness to the love within, with an outpouring of your love. O Holy Spirit, be to me a source of light, strength and courage so that I may hear your call ever more clearly and follow you more generously.

Ignatian Spirituality

Goldfish have longer attention spans than humans.

Take a minute or two and listen to your thoughts. How many different directions does your mind take you? We have grown accustomed to measuring our lives by what we do, and how much we produce. “What did you do today?” is a common question… We tell ourselves how important we are by how full our calendar is…and we often tell others that too. Our jobs, our friends, school, our family relationships—all of these things require our time and our energy. It is vital that we all take time out from our daily, busy lives to slow down, to pause, and to reflect. Do we remember to do that? Take this as your reminder to take a pause and slow down today. Ignatian Spirituality.

Life. In the Scriptures Jesus proclaims that he came that all may have life, life to the fullest. Jesus tells his listeners that he is “the bread of life.” In every culture, one form of bread or another is the basic staple of life. Just as food served around our family tables nourishes our physical bodies, Jesus Christ nourishes our spirits and our very lives with his own self, “his” life at the Eucharistic table. What greater gift could we ever receive than the very life of Christ in us?

What moves me to deeply appreciate Jesus’ sharing his life with me?

How do my actions and words make evident that Christ lives within me?

God, source of our being, I am filled with gratitude for the gift of Jesus’ own life offered to me when I gather with your people around your table. Open my heart to the depth of your love, to the bread of life that is your Son and to the movement of the Spirit in my life.

“I am the Bread of Life” (John 6:48).
Living the Gospel

Focused completely on his saving mission to bring about the kingdom of God, Jesus directly confronts human pettiness and sinfulness. He uses graphic examples to demand that disciples turn from whatever is inconsistent with acting in his name, with continuing his mission. Any behavior which causes us to sin or to lead others into sin must be cut off. Part of a disciple’s work is to take on Jesus’ values, Jesus’ goodness. Being a disciple demands radical choices about how we live and relate to others. It means being as completely focused on Jesus’ saving mission as he was. It means that acting in his name is exactly that: doing as he would do. And Jesus never sinned.

Through our baptismal anointing we are commissioned to speak and do deeds in the Lord’s name. Thus baptism is more than initiation into a group—it is the transformation of ourselves into disciples of Christ who follow the Teacher by faithful service “in [his] name.” Faithful service is not expressed in occasional good deeds, but in ongoing patterns of unselfish, life-giving behaviors. Faithful service is expressed in making our own the values and mission that attract us to Jesus in the first place. As a follower of Christ, discipleship means doing something so great as taking the garbage out without being asked. It means that our words and actions are consistent with Jesus’ Gospel values. It means that we are ruthless about choosing to cut out behaviors inconsistent with Jesus’ values and gentle about choosing to do the works of the Teacher.

May we be faithful disciples who act in Jesus’ name in serving others. May we support one another in making the radical choices that faithful discipleship demands.

The Path for Entering the Kingdom of God

Now the first thing I wanted to share with you is precisely the joy of having Jesus as teacher and as a model for our lives. Let us look to him! This gives us so much strength and consolation in our weaknesses, in our misery, and in our difficulties. We all have difficulties, all of us...

Looking at Jesus we see he chose the path of humility and service. Rather, he himself is this path. Jesus was not indecisive; he was not indifferent. He made a decision and followed it through until the end. He decided to become man and as a man to become a servant until his death on the cross. This is the way of love, there is not other... This word solidarity runs the risk of being deleted from the dictionary because it is a word that bothers us, it bothers us. Why? Because it requires you to look at another and give yourself to another with love...And we want to take this path. Christ’s humility is not moralism or a feeling. Christ’s humility is real; it is the choice of being small, of staying with the lowliest and with marginalized, staying among all of us sinners. Be careful, this is not an ideology. It is a way of being and a way of life that come from love and from God’s heart...

Jesus is the path, and a path is for walking and following...We cannot follow Jesus on the path of love unless we first love others, unless we force ourselves to work together, to understand each other and to forgive each other, recognizing our own limits and mistakes. We must do works of mercy and with mercy! Putting our heart in them. Works of charity with love, with tenderness, and always with humility!...

Therefore following Jesus on the path of charity, going with him to the existential outskirts...for the Good Shepherd what is far, what is on the margins, what is lost and unappreciated is the object of greater care, and the Church cannot but make her own this special love and attention. The first in the Church are those who are the most in need, humanly, spiritually, materially, the neediest. Pope Francis
Outreach

Everyday Mercy
For example, mercy gives you his seat on the bus, acting as if he was about to get up anyway rather than making you feel that he is doing you a favor. Mercy does not let out that sigh—you know the one—the wordless disapproval toward the person in the check-out line ahead of you whose card didn’t swipe, or who can’t find her coupons, or whose toddler is having a meltdown. Mercy offers quiet sympathy and does not convey with her body language that this holdup is ruining her day. Sometimes mercy chooses not to send back the food that isn’t just right, simply because the waitress looks overwhelmed. Ignatian Spirituality

September Food Pantry Collection
Please help us feed the hungry by bringing nonperishable food to the church narthex when you come to Mass. At the end of September, our donations will be delivered to Catholic Charities in Cicero. Thank you for your continued generosity.

Thank You
Dear St. John of the Cross Parish,

We, at Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation (PBMR) wish to thank you, Father Dowdle, and the parishioners of St. John of the Cross Parish. We have been so abundantly blessed by your generosity. We have had generous financial support, delicious food, plants, trees, expertise, school supplies and school clothes, toiletries, paper products and above all - support, prayers and LOVE!

You certainly LIVE the Gospel and we are deeply grateful for Bill Bright and Shawn Sweeney who have introduced us to so many wonderful people. God bless each one of you and your families.

Sincerely,
Sr. Donna, Fr. Dave Kelly, and the young men and women served by Precious Blood Center.

Interfaith Career Network Programs
interfaithcareernetwork.org

Communicate Better In Your Job Search
Thursday, October 1 from 7-9pm at St. Cletus School.
Learn how to write persuasive marketing letters and a better way to do thank you notes. Key insights covered this evening include: how to tell your story, writing with the reader in mind, writing letters that have a chance of getting read and using a powerful business proposal in place of an ordinary thank you note.

Fall 2015 Career Transition Boot Camp
Week 2 of 5: Tuesday, September 29 at First Presbyterian Church of La Grange. Learn how to prepare a compelling resume and elevator speech. This workshop will also cover skills assessment strategies to facilitate career changes.

Thank You
Dear St. John of the Cross Parish,

Thank you for sending the $1500 sharing check. I am continually grateful that Kolbe House has received this generous gift that enables us to continue our ministry to the incarcerated. Together we have been able to develop and foster a greater awareness and need for this ministry.

When I am walking through the jail’s underground tunnel system, I think about how privileged I am to be in this ministry. Each person that I visit offers me a new way of seeing life. These moments have me running the gamut of emotions. I am sometimes hopeful, frustrated, disappointed, sad and even sometimes happy.

I never forget that whatever stories that I hear in jail that there is another side to the same story, and that is from the perspective of the person who was affected by the actions of this man or woman. Our prayer is that truth be known, be revealed for everyone. Truth sets all of us free even if incarceration is the final outcome.

Always know that I am thankful to God for the relationship that has been formed between the people of St. John of the Cross and the staff and volunteers of Kolbe House.

Rev. Arturo Perez Rodriguez

We know by faith that “the Creator does not abandon us; he never forsakes his loving plan or repents of having created us. Humanity still has the ability to work together in building our common home” (Pope Francis at The White House on Wednesday, Sept. 23).
Tonight - Sunday, September 27

All high school teens are invited to join us at 6pm in the Parish Center as we begin our new year. Our Homecoming themed kickoff will include faith sharing, games and team building exercises. Pizza will be served. We will also welcome home a special guest speaker, Fr. Brendan Lupton.

Even if you have not yet registered for Crossroads, come join in on the fun!

Volunteers Needed!!
As our year begins, we are in need of adults and teens to join our leadership teams.

- **Home Group Leaders** Adults are needed to lead our Freshmen Home Groups. Please consider sharing your wisdom and real-life experiences while guiding our parish teenagers on their faith journey. As a leader, you will be responsible for facilitating a small group twice a month in your home. Contact Terry Stadler at 708-246-3838 or tjs47@att.net for more information.

- **Day of the Spirit Team** Two teens and one adult
- **Identity Retreat Team** One adult
- **Service Coordinator** One adult (male)
- **Social Coordinator** One adult
- **Ignite Gospel Reflection Coordinator** One adult

Contact Katie Hayes 708-246-4404 x140 or khayes@stjohnofthecross.org to volunteer or learn more about these rewarding opportunities.

Identity Retreat—Oregon Trial
The Frosh/Soph Identity Retreat, a weekend of winter fun, reflection, and prayer, will be held Saturday, January 2–Monday, January 4, 2016 at Dickson Valley Camp and Retreat Center in Newark, IL. Register online at http://www.stjohnofthecross.org/crossroads/retreats/ by October 8.

Mark your calendar for these Harvest Saturday events:
- Nov. 7  Flyer Day
- Nov. 13  Box Night
- Nov. 14  Harvest Saturday

October 4  Calendar of Events
- Identity Retreat Team Meeting 10:45am
- Freshmen Experience 6pm
- Home Group Meetings
Twice a month, our students celebrate an all school liturgy. The students spend a great deal of time working with Fr. Bill and other faculty members to plan the Mass. The children select the readings, carry the gifts, participate in the choir, write the intentions, and help in planning the homily. This week our 8th graders planned the liturgy and focused on the service that they do in the community. We discussed Pope Francis and his call to us to lead lives of service. It was a beautiful Mass. On the next page are excerpts from the 8th graders’ reflections.

Last week, the Parent Association hosted a New Family Ice Cream social for all of our new families. The kids had a great time playing different games and eating lots of ice cream, while the parents had a chance to get to know one another outside of the children’s classrooms. Pictured below are some of the kids.

YC Children welcoming the Pope to the USA with #FlatFrancis … see our Social Sites for more..

https://www.facebook.com/sjcyc
https://twitter.com/YouthSjc
https://instagram.com/sjcyc/
https://www.pinterest.com/sjcyc/

Parents Putting Faith First
Parents, this week get online at usccb.org and choose a clip of Pope Francis’ visit to the US and watch with your child. Pray for the Pope’s safe return to Rome.
This past week, Pope Francis visited the Cuba and the United States. At one of the celebrations of Eucharist, Francis said in his homily we are called to “live to serve.” He further stated that we “are to live authentically in a concrete commitment to our neighbor.” St. Pope John Paul II called the Eucharist a school of love and service. We are taught the way of service in our celebration of the Eucharist, for it teaches us how to live as Christ lived, laying down his life for others.

Last Monday at our Parish School Mass, several of our 8th graders shared the following reflections on the importance of service in their lives. In their own words:

**Service** is related to our faith because by doing service, we are living out what Jesus did. By doing this we are spreading our faith to others and making a difference.

Serving the community is very important. One service project that I have done is make and package food for a program called Outreach. A few friends and I made enough food to feed hundreds of people. At the end of the day we all realized how big a difference we made in just a few hours.

Eager is the way I felt before I accomplished a service project at LaRabida Hospital. A few friends and I drove downtown and decorated the hospital lobby for Christmas. After we finished, we saw how happy it made the kids and the staff there and they thanked us all so much. This is a service experience that I will never forget and I can’t wait to do it again this year.

Really fulfilled is how I felt after I folded blankets, pillow covers, and towels for the homeless shelter. My friends and I, on our own time, folded essential living items for a homeless shelter. I felt very fulfilled after because I felt like I could do more to help serve the homeless shelter. Also, I felt inspired because it made me feel like I made a difference. Finally, it was a great service project that I hope more people do.

Very Good. This is how I felt when I completed one of my first service projects. This project was volunteering at Goombay Bash, an event hosed by H Foundation, a foundation that raises money for basic cancer research. It was a truly amazing experience to be able to volunteer at such an awesome event.

Inspired. This is how I felt after helping out at a charity event for The Treasure Chest Foundation. The Treasure Chest Foundation provides toys for young cancer patients about to undergo surgery. This event was inspiring because over the past couple years I have helped at the Crofton Kelly Fun Fest. More money is raised and more people attend each year showing their support for The Treasure Chest Foundation.

Cheerful. This is how I felt after I helped paint the hallways at a Chicago middle school. The school had not received any type of renovation in the last 25 years. It took over three hours from start to finish but was worth every minute when we got to see the student's face light up after they saw their newly painted school.

Extremely lucky is the way I felt when I picked up food at the doorsteps for Harvest Saturday, at SJC. When I was in the freezing weather, for hours picking up heavy food, I didn't feel so lucky at the time, but when I saw all the food that we had delivered, I had realized how fortunate I am. I am so lucky and grateful to have a roof over my head and food on my plate each and every day. Service teaches me to appreciate all that I have, and realize the wonderful life I have been given. This act of service has taught me to not take advantage of all the great things in my life, and to count my blessings, always.

**Service** shows me love because we are helping others in need. Doing service is helping others when we do something to help others, we always feel so good. It shows our compassion and love to others when we volunteer and do service. When we do service, the people we are helping really appreciate what we are doing and they can feel the love from us.
Men's Club

THE SJC MEN’S CLUB INVITES YOU TO OUR ‘SMOKER’
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15TH AT 6:30PM AT THE CASA DE MONTECRISTO IN COUNTRYSIDE

SNACKS AND COLD REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED. YOU ARE WELCOME TO BYOB, BUT BEER WILL BE AVAILABLE.

RSVP TO DAN MONTGOMERY AT TDM30550@GMAIL.COM 312.952.1435

Women’s Club

The mission of the St. John of the Cross Women’s Club is to bring the women of our parish together to foster and celebrate our spiritual and social well-being. Through our fundraisers, retreats, spiritual reflections and social events, we seek to develop a closer relationship with God and one another.

We invite you to attend our various functions and seek your help in planning and coordinating our events. Your participation in the Women’s Club lets you become actively involved in the life of the parish while forging life-long friendships with other women. For more information or to learn more, email us at SJCWomensClub@gmail.com.

Mark your calendar now to attend our events!!

Join us at the 9am Mass next Sunday, October 4 and stop in the Parish Center afterwards for coffee and conversation. Meet the Board, learn more about our events and how you can get involved.

Our next ladies’ night out is our Fairytale Fashion Show on Thursday, October 29 at Drury Lane. Get your ticket today! Raffle tickets too!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunday, October 4 at 9am</td>
<td>Board Installation at Mass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hospitality following in the Parish Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, October 29</td>
<td>Fairytale Fashion Show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:30 Cocktails &amp; Shopping</td>
<td>Drury Lane, Oakbrook Terrace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:30pm Dinner Fashion Show</td>
<td>Purchase your ticket on our parish website:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or at the Parish Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekend of Nov. 7-9</td>
<td>Coat Drive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, November 12</td>
<td>Evening of Reflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday, December 13</td>
<td>Luminaria Pick Up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, January 21</td>
<td>Cooking Night Dine &amp; Demo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, March 5</td>
<td>Off Campus Retreat Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, May 4</td>
<td>Flower Sale Pick Up Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, June 18</td>
<td>Annual Garage Sale</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gospel:
If you can't hear it from Pope Francis, then hear it from Jesus:
"I desire mercy not sacrifice."
Love, forgive, be compassionate.

James Martin, SJ 9.21.15
Upcoming Events for Seniors

SJJC Saintly Senior Club proudly presents its annual fall Oktoberfest Luncheon
Friday, October 9 at 11:30am in the Parish Center
Cost: Members $15, Non members $20
R.S.V.P.’s due by Monday, October 5
Enjoy a delicious, authentic German luncheon. Wine, beer, and soft drinks included. A lively entertaining program featuring Bud & Norm Hinchman follows lunch! This is a great opportunity to connect with other seniors in our parish. Hope to see you there! Any questions, call Gerri Mazzone 708-246-0721.

Saintly Senior Bus Trip
Thursday, October 29
Join us for a trip to White Pines Dinner Theatre in Mt. Morris, Illinois for lunch and a toe tapping musical program by MoTown’s Gregory James.

Gregory James has a soulful and distinct R & B singing style which will mesmerize you as you tap your feet to all the familiar sounds and beats. James performs songs by Al Green, The Four Tops, the Temptations, The Manhattans, Marvin Gaye, The Spinners, Stevie Wonder, and many more!

The cost of the trip is $55 which includes the motor coach, luncheon, entertainment and all gratuities. The motor coach will leave the Parish Center at 9am and return about 5pm. Reservation with your check is due by Monday, October 19.

Questions? Contact Carolyn Koehler at 708-246-2978.

RSVP Today!!

| Name: ______________________________ |
| Address: ____________________________ |
| Phone: ______________________________ |
| Email: ______________________________ |

Senior Club Dues $10/person
   _____ Number of Members
   _____ Amount Enclosed
   Please put your dues in a separate envelope/separate check.

Senior OctoberFest Luncheon: October 9
   _____ Number of Members @ $15
   _____ Number of Guests @ $20
   _____ Amount Enclosed

Senior Bus Trip: October 29
   _____ Number of People @ $55
   _____ Amount Enclosed
   Drop off your R.S.V.P. to the Parish Center or in the Sunday basket.
Parish Sponsored Program at The Well
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.

Say Hello!
Next week our new phone system will be installed. Our previous system was over ten years old and was well beyond its useful life. A loss of basic capabilities and lack of available replacement parts necessitated the purchase of a new phone system. The purchase of the new system, which cost approximately $40,000, was approved by the Parish Finance Council in February and should be up and running next week. Our phone numbers will remain the same, but now you will be able to see who is calling on your caller id where in the past the caller id showed only the Parish Center number. Thank you for your patience as our full time staff and high school receptionists learn to use the new system.

Parish Center 708-246-4404 ~ School 708-246-4454
Youth Catechesis Office 708-246-6760

No One Dies Alone (NODA)
AMITA Health Adventist Medical Centers, Hinsdale and La Grange Hospitals, are seeking volunteers from the community to serve as compassionate companions to patients who are dying and have no family or friends to sit at the bedside with them. No educational degrees or previous experience is required…only a compassionate heart is necessary. (18 years and older are eligible to volunteer.) An informational meeting and training will be offered in October, 2015. For more information contact Mimi Giles at 708-245-3920 or Steve Weigand in the Parish Center.

Ireland: The Enchanted Emerald Isle
Deacon Rich Voytas from St. Daniel the Prophet Parish helps out with infant baptisms at our parish every month. Deacon Rich is leading a journey through Ireland on September 18-27, 2016. For more information, contact Rich at 773-537-8834. There will also be an information meeting at St. Daniel School on October 5 at 7pm.

Centering Prayer Workshop at SJC Next Saturday
Many Catholics and other Christians are finding that a practice called 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 in-depth 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 Mary Anne Jackson 847-698-5298.

Ireland: The Enchanted Emerald Isle
Deacon Rich Voytas from St. Daniel the Prophet Parish helps out with infant baptisms at our parish every month. Deacon Rich is leading a journey through Ireland on September 18-27, 2016. For more information, contact Rich at 773-537-8834. There will also be an information meeting at St. Daniel School on October 5 at 7pm.

Centering Prayer Workshop at SJC Next Saturday
Many Catholics and other Christians are finding that a practice called 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 in-depth 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 Mary Anne Jackson 847-698-5298.
Parish News

Seasons of Hope—Christ Centered Grief Support
6 Tuesdays Beginning Tuesday October 20
Seasons of Hope is a grief-support ministry grounded in the healing wisdom, tradition, and practice of the Catholic faith but is open to anyone mourning the loss of a loved one or struggling with the grieving process. Seasons of Hope consists of six weekly sessions held on consecutive Tuesday evenings beginning October 20 from 6:30-8pm in the parish Rectory. There is no charge to attend. Please call Kathleen Broderick at 708-246-1165 to register or for more information.

Supporting People with Mental Illness and their Families
Youth Mental Health First Aid Workshop
Saturday, October 3 from 8am–5pm at First Congregational Church of Western Springs
Adults who work or interact regularly with young people are invited to attend a one-day workshop focused on teaching parents, family members, caregivers, teachers, school staff, peers, neighbors, health and human services workers, and other caring citizens how to help adolescents (age 12-18) who are experiencing a mental health or addictions challenge or are in crisis. The course introduces common mental health challenges for youth, reviews typical adolescent development, and teaches a 5-step action plan for how to help young people in both crisis and non-crisis situations. The program will be led by a certified Mental Health First Aid facilitator. Topics covered include: anxiety, depression, substance use, disorders in which psychosis may occur, disruptive behavior disorders (including AD/HD), and eating disorders. (Lunch available - $10 donation) To learn more or to sign-up for this free workshop (space is limited to 30), contact Rev. Meredith Onion at meredith@wscono.org or 708-246-1900, ext. 222.

Annual Mass Supporting People with Mental Illnesses, Families, Friends, and Mental Healthcare Providers
Sunday, October 18 at 2pm at St. Gertrude Church in Chicago
Mental illnesses, such as depression, bi-polar disease, schizophrenia, anxiety disorders and others touch one in four families. Stigma, the misinformation about these illnesses, keeps people from seeking help, and stigma keeps people from helping. The Mass is for all affected and those who are interested in helping. Refreshments and conversation will follow Mass. Deacon Tom Lambert 773-525-0453x21, email:olmcinfo2@aol.com; or Deacon Dan Welter 312-534-8283, email: dwelter@archchicago.org.

Adult Mental First Aid Workshop
Saturday, October 24 from 8am-5:30pm at Christ Church of Oak Brook
Adults, age 18 and older, who would like to gain a basic understanding of what different mental illnesses and addictions are, how they can affect a person’s daily life, and what helps individuals experiencing these challenges work toward recovery, are invited to attend a one day workshop. You will learn risk factors and warning signs for mental health and addiction concerns, strategies for how to help someone in both crisis and non-crisis situations, and where to turn for help. Topics covered include anxiety, depression, psychosis, and addictions. To learn more or to sign-up (space is limited to 30), contact Adult Ministry and Care - Cindi Swift at 630-321-3936, cswift@cc-ob.org.

Pet Blessing Next Sunday
Next Sunday, October 4 at 3:30pm all pets of the parish are invited to come to the east lawn behind the Parish Center for a blessing on the Feast of St. Francis, patron saint of animals. Bring your family pet on a leash (with every thing you need:) for this special blessing.

Respect Life Sunday: October 4
All are welcome to take part in the annual Life Chain next Sunday. The Life Chain is a visual statement supporting the sanctity of human life where people of all ages and faiths stand in silent prayer along major streets holding signs that proclaim the importance of human life. Our parish will gather at Ogden and Wolf and Ogden and Grand from 2:30-3:30pm Contact our parish Respect Life Coordinator, Blanche Heaney at 708-246-7437 with questions.

Project Rachel
If you or someone you know is suffering after abortion, confidential nonjudgmental help is available. Call Project Rachel’s national toll free number 888-456-4673 or visit hopeafterabortion.org.
Recently, at an academic dinner, I was sitting across the table from a nuclear scientist. At one point, I asked him this question: Do you believe that there’s human life on other planets? His answer surprised me: “As a scientist, no, I don’t believe there’s human life on another planet. Scientifically, the odds are strongly against it. But, as a Christian, I believe there’s human life on other planets. Why? My logic is this: Why would God choose to have only one child?”

Why would God choose to have only one child? Good logic. Why indeed would an infinite God, capable of creating and loving beyond all imagination, want to do this only once? Why would an infinite God, at a certain point, say: “That’s enough. That’s my limit. These are all the people I can handle and love! Anything beyond this is too much for me! Now is the time to stop creating and enjoy what I’ve done.”

Put this way, my scientist friend’s hunch makes a lot of sense. Given that God is infinite, why would God ever stop doing what God is doing? Why would God favor just us, who have been already been given life, and not give that same gift endlessly to others? By what logic, other than the limits of our own mind, might we posit an end to creation?

We struggle with this because what God has already created, both in terms of the immensity of the universe and the number of people who have been born in history, is already too much for our imagination to grasp. There are billions and billions of planets, with trillions of processes happening on each of these every second. Just on our planet, earth, there are now more than seven billion people living, millions more have lived before us, and many more are being born every second. And inside of each of these persons there is a unique heart and mind caught-up in an infinite and complex array of joys, heartaches, and moral choices. Moreover, all of these trillions of human and cosmic processes have been going on for millions and billions of years. How can we imagine a heart and a mind somewhere that knows and loves and cares intimately about every individual person, every individual joy, every individual heartache, every individual moral choice, and every individual planet, star, and grain of sand, as if it were an only child?

The answer is clear: It cannot be imagined! To try to imagine this is to end up either in atheism or nursing a false concept of God. Any God worth believing in has to be able to know and love beyond human imagination, otherwise the immensity of our universe and the uniqueness of our lives are not being held inside the loving care of anyone’s hand and heart.

But how can God know, love, and care for all of this immensity and complexity? Moreover, how will all these billions and billions of people go to heaven, so that all of us end up in one body of love within which we will be in intimate community with each other? That’s beyond all imagination, at least in terms of human capacity, but my hunch is that heaven cannot be imagined not because it is too complex but because it is too simple, namely, simple in the way Scholastic philosophy affirms that God is simple: God so embodies and encompasses all complexity so as to constitute a reality too simple to be imagined.

It seems too that the origins of our universe are also too simple to be imagined: Our universe, in so far as we know it, had a beginning and scientists believe (The Big Bang Theory) that everything originated from a single cell of energy too tiny to measure or imagine. This single cell exploded with a force and an energy that is still going on today, still expanding outward and creating billions and billions of planets in its wake. And scientists believe that all of this will come back together again, involute, sometime in a future which will take billions of more years to unfold.

So here’s my hunch: Maybe the billions and billions of people, living and dead and still to be born, in both their origins and in their eventual destiny, parallel what has happened and is happening in the origin, expansion, and eventual involution of our universe, that is, just as God is creating billions and billions of planets, God is creating billions and billions of people. And, just as our physical universe will one day come back together again into a single unity, so too will all people come together again in a single community within which God’s intimate love for each of us will bring us together and hold us together in a unity too simple to be imagined, except that now that union with God and each other will not be unconscious but will be known and felt in a very heightened, self-conscious gratitude and ecstasy.

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser
Monday, September 28
9:30am Spiritual Journaling
10:30am Step 11 Christian Meditation
1:00pm Little Rock
2:30pm Adoration
Tuesday, September 29
9:05am Tuesdays with Mary Rosary
6:30pm 2nd Grade Parent Meeting church
6:30pm RCIA
7:30pm Christian Meditation
Wednesday, September 30
9:00am Fr. Harry’s Opera Class
9:30am Gospel of John Bible Study
1:00pm Contemplative Meeting
2:30pm Christian Meditation
3:30pm Cherub Choir Practice
3:30pm John of the Cross Study
6:30pm Protecting God's Children
6:30pm PRP
7:00pm Chicago Catholic Scripture Study
7:00pm Prayer Group
7:30pm Traditional Choir Practice
Thursday, October 1
9:15am Resurrection Choir Practice
3:30pm Youth Choir
7:00pm Beloved Team Meeting
7:30pm Contemporary Choir Practice
Friday, October 2
9:15am School Adoration
9:05am Tuesdays with Mary Rosary
6:30pm 2nd Grade Parent Meeting church
6:30pm RCIA
7:30pm Christian Meditation
9:00am YC Jr. High Group
10:15am YC Classes Today!
10:30am Fresh/Soph Retreat Meeting
1:30pm Baptisms
3:00pm Baptism
3:30pm Pet Blessing
4:00pm YC Jr. High Small Groups
6:00pm Beloved Team Meeting
6:00pm Crossroads Freshman Experience
6:00pm YC Jr. High Group
Saturday, October 3
7:00am Christian Meditation
9:00am Contemplative Outreach Meeting
1:30pm Baptism
Sunday, October 4
Women’s Club Hospitality after 9am Mass
9:00am YC Jr. High Group
10:15am YC Classes Today!
10:30am Fresh/Soph Retreat Meeting
1:30pm Baptisms
3:00pm Baptism
3:30pm Pet Blessing
4:00pm YC Jr. High Small Groups
6:00pm Beloved Team Meeting
6:00pm Crossroads Freshman Experience
6:00pm YC Jr. High Group

Mass Intentions

Monday, September 28
St. Wenceslaus, Martyr; St. Lawrence Ruiz & Companions, Martyrs
7:45am Anton & Sophia Ksiazkiewicz; Robert Cosgrove

Tuesday, September 29
Sts. Michael, Gabriel, & Raphael, Archangels
7:45am Barbara Mann; Therese Jurkacek

Wednesday, September 30
St. Jerome, Priest & Doctor
7:45am William Albertson, Sr.; Chester Cebula

Thursday, October 1
St. Therese of the Child Jesus
7:45am Marie O’ Brien; Our Beloved Dead

Friday, October 2
Holy Guardian Angels
7:45am Alice Mueller; Bridget Dowdle

Saturday, October 3
Blessed Virgin Mary
8:00am Timothy Doyle; Elizabeth G. Purtell
5:00pm Michael Powers; Joan Rooney

Sunday, October 4
27th Sunday in Ordinary Time
7:30am Suzanne Eley; Ignatius Janusek
9:00am Pat Collins; Michael Pickell
10:45am James Ferry; John Kley & James Fletcher
12:15pm Helen & Rueben Parker; Ed & Emma Sayers
5:00pm Jack W. Byans; Dorothy Mesch

Pray for Our Sick
Msgr. John Dalton
Marie Daly
Jerry Donohue
Lucelle Drescher
George Forster
Sean Hamer
Mark Hubatch
Karen Hult
Dan Hussey, Sr.
Mary Lichtenauer
Juan Mendez
Jane Nilles

Pray for Our Beloved Dead
Bob Rooney, husband of Muriel and late Joan, father of Rob, Tim, Elizabeth, Joe, John, Mary Hogan, Sheila Schneider, Michelle Hamilton, Susan Farrell, Patti Powers and Peggy Schuld, grandfather of 34, great grandfather of 3
Gene Gallagher, husband of Ginger, father of Mary Ann Stanton, grandfather of Mike and Kate
Eileen Nolan, mother of Eileen Thomas, grandmother of Michael and Sean

Rev. David P. Dowdle, Pastor
ddowdle@stjohnofthecross.org
Rev. Joseph F. McDonnell,
Pastor Emeritus
Rev. William J. Vollmer,
Associate Pastor
Rev. William J. Vollmer,
Deacon John Schopp, Deacon
john.schopp@newhemispheres.com
Bill Bright, Director of Outreach
bbright@stjohnofthecross.org
Janet Caschetta, Director of YC
jcaschetta@stjohnofthecross.org
Kathleen Gorman, School Principal
gorman@sjc.pvt.k12.il.us
Katie Hayes, Dir of Crossroads
khayes@stjohnofthecross.org
Jessica Koch, Director of Music
jkoch@stjohnofthecross.org
MJ Martin, Director of Operations
mjmartin@stjohnofthecross.org
Megan O’Malley, Parish Reservations
momalley@stjohnofthecross.org
Elizabeth Russell-Jones, Welcome
erussell-jones@stjohnofthecross.org
Steven Weigand, Pastoral Associate
sweigand@stjohnofthecross.org

St. John of the Cross Parish
www.stjohnofthecross.org
September 27, 2015
Page 15
Come, laugh, pray, walk, talk, listen, and rest in God.

Experience what it means to be God’s Beloved.

October 16-18

Brochures at all church exits. Register on our parish website or at the Parish Center office. Questions? Call or email Marie Gerken at marie@gerken.org 708-246-6198 or Tiffany White at tfoxwhite@gmail.com 630-745-0474.