Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Sunday, January 31, 2016
Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

This year is a unique time of grace and responsibility. Together in the universal Church and with the guidance of Pope Francis, we are observing a Jubilee Year of Mercy. This holy year of prayer, reflection, and action centered on the mercy of God present in our lives and in our world inspires the theme of our Annual Catholic Appeal: The Hands of God’s Mercy.

As our beloved Holy Father Pope Francis reminds us, we are called to know the ways of God’s mercy in our own lives and then to be The Hands of God’s Mercy for others in our world. Pope Francis invites us to reclaim and support the spiritual and corporal works of mercy—something we can do through the Annual Catholic Appeal.

In a partnership of generosity, the Annual Catholic Appeal enables us to be The Hands of God’s Mercy in our world. The Appeal supports efforts to share the joy of the Gospel, inviting generations to become Jesus’ disciples. In addition, the Appeal helps to sustain Catholic schools, needy parishes, programs of religious education and ministerial formation, the many initiatives for the protection of life and the promotion of peace and justice, and the many other ways we as an Archdiocese proclaim the Gospel in our midst. The Appeal also funds Catholic Relief Services in reaching out to the poor and to those whose lives are devastated by natural disasters, illnesses, wars, and famines, no matter their religious affiliation.

Please join hands with me and so many others in the Archdiocese in this good work by making a generous gift to this year’s Annual Catholic Appeal. We want to be The Hands of God’s Mercy. Having known God’s mercy in our own lives, we now want to support those in need and to support the Church herself, for she connects us to Christ and has been a rich source of blessing for us and so many others.

Each year, the Archdiocese of Chicago reaches out to the Catholic Faith Community and asks for support for the schools, programs, agencies and ministries that serve the educational, physical and spiritual needs of our people. Your gift provides the much needed financial resources to help advance the mission of the Church in Chicago.

“The Annual Catholic Appeal reminds us that we are part of a bigger Church and participate in the ministry of the Bishop across the Archdiocese. Through our participation, we try and support other parishes so that they can enjoy what we enjoy—excellence in religious education and in our school. We are reminded that we are a missionary Church and need to reach out across many boundaries to be in solidarity with brothers and sisters we will never meet personally, but with whom we gather in faith at the Eucharistic table. The future Church will depend on those in formation programs today. It’s in our own best interest, and that of our children and grandchildren, to invest in them with trust and hope in the Holy Spirit.”

Fr. David in the 2016 Annual Catholic Appeal Brochure.

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Most Reverend Blase J. Cupich
Archbishop of Chicago
Our faith is lived in schools and parishes, soup kitchens and counseling centers, on street corners and in churches, where people of all backgrounds in every neighborhood of the Archdiocese of Chicago are served.

Your gift to the Annual Appeal helps to sustain Catholic schools, religious education, ministerial formation, and initiatives for life, peace and justice.

Through its support of Catholic Relief Services, the Appeal serves people worldwide, without regard for religious affiliation, whose lives are devastated by natural disasters, illnesses, wars and famines.

Please make a pledge to the 2016 Annual Catholic Appeal. Your contributions are deeply appreciated, very much needed and make a real difference in the lives of many.

In this Jubilee Year of Mercy, may we see our support of the Annual Catholic Appeal as one way to reclaim our responsibility to be the hands of God's mercy in the world.
Campaign Basics
The To Teach Who Christ Is campaign seeks to provide $350 million for local parish communities and shared ministries of the Church; $250 million will come from parish campaigns and $100 million through an archdiocesan major gift effort.

What Our Gift to TTWCI Will Do
The To Teach Who Christ Is campaign will benefit five elements vital to securing the future of the Archdiocese of Chicago.

$150M will be directed to a Catholic Education Scholarship Trust fund to ensure generations to come may receive the benefit of a Catholic education.

$30M will be designated for urgently needed repairs in low income parishes and to help them provide for handicapped accessible services.

$10M for Religious Education Training for catechetical leaders forming elementary and high school students and adults journeying through RCIA.

$8M will help provide professional development for teachers and principals and help fund school reform efforts and technology upgrades.

$2M will help create innovative religious education programs based on new models of learning to effectively engage children, youth, and adults, teaching them who Christ is.

As announced last November, our parish will conduct our parish TTWCI campaign differently as we will not have a 3-5 year pledge drive. We will, however, ask once a year for your help in meeting our financial obligations to the archdiocese.

In 2015 your generosity to the Annual Catholic Appeal exceeded our goal by $170,000. This overage will be used as our first payment to the TTWCI Campaign. We hope to make that same payment every year until 2022 to retire our $1.2M TTWCI campaign debt.

Your donation to the Annual Catholic Appeal and the TTWCI Campaign will help to ensure that those in need in our archdiocese will be able to have what our parish has in education, sacramental life and ministries.

Thank you in advance for your generosity.
Practical Suggestions
- Be faithful about attending wakes/visitations
- Support or volunteer at a hospice
- Participate in a Bereavement Ministry
- Spend time with widows and widowers
- Take friends and relatives to visit the cemetery
- Support ministries that offer free Christian burials to those unable to afford one
- Offer daily prayers for those with terminal illnesses and for those who have died
- Send Mass cards to families of those who have died

How can we show others the mercy of God? We say that God is compassionate, but we ignore the poor. We say that God loves us and has mercy on us, but we hold grudges against our friends. Our actions need to authentically reflect God's mercy.

Jan utor is often a month of new beginnings and new resolutions. In this Jubilee Year, we are asked to make acts of mercy a priority in our lives and to live out the compassionate love of God. In this passage from Micah, we are reminded of God's eternal promise to us. Throughout the Old Testament, we read stories of God's covenant that he made with his chosen individuals (through Noah, Abraham, and Moses). This covenant is more than a promise; it is also a relationship between God and his people. This relationship continues with the New Covenant, which is made through the life, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus, and with our participation in the New Covenant through the sacraments of the Church. God, who is ever faithful, will never break his covenant with us. Even if we fail or fall away, God still yearns for our return.

Pope Francis highlights verses 18-19 as an illustration of God's compassion and mercy toward us. No person and no action can compare to the generous mercy and compassion that God has for us. Even though we may break our part of the covenant relationship, God pardons our sins because of his great love. God "delights in mercy"—God's merciful attitude is not a chore or a bother for God. Rather, pardoning sins and drawing people back into a relationship brings joy to God. As we make our annual resolutions, don't forget to include one about acting as God acts, with love and compassion to everyone we encounter. If you have trouble keeping this resolution, just remember that God will always keep his "resolutions"!

Reflection Questions
1. After reading about God's covenant with us and God's enduring love and compassion, what are some things we can do to strengthen our relationship with God? Why is it important for us to respond to God's covenant of love and mercy with our own actions of love and mercy?
2. What is one realistic New Year's resolution you can make this year that will help you adopt the attitude of mercy? What are some things you can do that could help you stay on track in keeping this resolution throughout the year? Uscb.
Background on the Gospel

This Sunday we read from the Gospel of Luke, continuing immediately from last week's Gospel. Recall that in last Sunday's Gospel, Jesus read from the prophet Isaiah and announced that this Scripture was now fulfilled. In today's Gospel, we learn that the people of Nazareth are impressed by Jesus' words, and yet they seem surprised. They still think of Jesus as merely Joseph's son. They do not expect such words from someone they believe that they know.

This Gospel is about who Jesus is and who people believe him to be. The story of Jesus' preaching and rejection at Nazareth is found in each of the Synoptic Gospels. In Luke's Gospel, this incident is told in a way that foretells Jesus' passion and death and helps explain the inclusion of the Gentiles in the promise of salvation. In Luke's Gospel this incident appears at the beginning of Jesus' ministry; in Matthew and Mark, this event is placed considerably later, after Jesus has preached and taught elsewhere. Only Luke identifies the content of Jesus' teaching in any detail, telling us that Jesus read from the book of the prophet Isaiah in the synagogue. In Mark and Matthew's Gospels, Jesus teaches in the synagogue in Nazareth, and the townspeople take offense because Jesus is only the son of a carpenter. They reject his authority to teach them. In Matthew and Mark, it is only after Jesus is rejected that he observes times when Israel has rejected prophets.

In Luke's Gospel, the people are surprised but not immediately offended by Jesus' words in the synagogue. It is the words that follow his reading from the prophet Isaiah that seem to offend them. Jesus challenges and provokes the people of Nazareth by referring to examples in which Israel rejected the prophets. He also challenges them to respond to his message, the message of a prophet, in a way that is different from their ancestors. This call for a new response leads to his rejection.

It is helpful to consider the historical context of Luke's Gospel. Luke has witnessed the acceptance of the gospel message among many Gentiles. He endeavors to explain why the Good News of Jesus has not been as well-received by his Jewish contemporaries. Luke's report interprets the cause of Jesus' rejection at Nazareth in the context of this later Christian history. Just as the people at Nazareth did not welcome the Good News that Jesus announced, so too many among the people of Israel will not accept the preaching of the gospel.

After Jesus' words of challenge, Luke reports that there was a movement to kill Jesus by throwing him over a cliff. This differs from the reports found in Mark and Matthew's Gospels, where Jesus is said to be unable to perform miracles in Nazareth because of the people's lack of faith. Luke says that Jesus walks away from the crowd that intended to kill him; it is not yet his time. The animosity of the people of Nazareth prefigures and prepares the reader of Luke's Gospel for the cross. Luke wants all to understand that it is through his death on the cross that Jesus offers God's salvation to all.

Living the Gospel

Whose side do we want to be on? The winners, of course! But unwittingly the people in the gospel story choose to be on the wrong side! At first they "all spoke highly" of Jesus. But then they heard him say what they didn't like and turned on him. "Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing." However, more than one Scripture passage is being fulfilled in this gospel. The words and deeds of Jesus fulfill the Scripture passage from Isaiah about the coming of salvation: glad tidings for the poor, liberty for captives, sight for the blind, freedom for the oppressed. The words and deeds of the people fulfill the Scripture passages about rejecting and killing God's prophets: they question Jesus' origins, become furious at his words, and act to destroy him. The people choose the wrong side! Which Scripture passages do we hear? Which do we fulfill? How do we choose to live?

Living the Gospel is what must shape our everyday choices and responses. This means, for example, that if the chatter around the watercooler at work grows uncharitable or coarse, we have the courage to walk away. Another example: if prejudice exists among our friends and acquaintances, we have the courage to extol the dignity of the minority. Dying to oneself means that we place Gospel values before any others and are willing to stake our lives on them. We might not always concretely experience God's protection and deliverance in the given moment; but we know from Jesus' life that God is there when it really counts—leading us to Life everlasting.

May we hear Jesus’ gracious words and allow them to be fulfilled in our own words and deeds. May we lift the burdens of the poor and the suffering by hearing and heeding God's word.

Loyola Press

Monday
2 Sam 15:13-14, 30; 16:5-13
Ps 3:2-3, 4-5, 6-7
Mark 5:1-20

Tuesday
Mal 3:1-4
Ps 24:7, 8, 9, 10
Heb 2:14-18
Luke 2:22-40

Wednesday
2 Sam 24:2, 9-17
Ps 32:1-2, 5, 6, 7
Mark 6:1-6

Thursday
1 Kgs 2:1-4, 10-12
1 Chr 29:10, 11ab, 11d-12a, 12bcd
Mark 6:7-13

Friday
Sir 47:2-11
Ps 18:31, 47 and 50, 51
Mark 6:14-29

Saturday
1 Kgs 3:4-13
Ps 119:9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14
Mark 6:30-34

5th Sunday in OT
Isa 6:1-2a, 3-8
Ps 138:1-2, 3-4, 5-7, 8-11
1 Cor 15:1-11

Richard Rohr Meditation

Seeing the Divine Image

You cannot earn God. You cannot prove yourself worthy of God. Knowing God's presence is simply a matter of awareness, of enjoying the now, of deepening one's own presence. There are moments when it happens. Then life makes sense. Once I can see the Mystery here, and trust the Mystery even in this piece of clay that I am, then I can also see it in you. I am able to see the divine image in myself, in you, and eventually in all things. Finally the seeing is one. How you see anything is how you will see everything.

Jesus pushes seeing to the social edge. Can you see the image of Christ in the least of your brothers and sisters? He uses that as his only description of the final judgment (Matthew 25). Nothing about commandments, nothing about church attendance—simply a matter of our ability to see. Can we see Christ in the "nobodies" who can't play our game of success? In those who cannot reward us in return? When we can see the image of God where we are not accustomed to seeing the image of God, then we see with eyes not our own.

Finally, Jesus says we have to love and recognize the divine image even in our enemies. He teaches what many thought a leader could never demand of his followers: love of the enemy. Logically that makes no sense. But soulfully it makes absolute sense, because in terms of the soul, it really is all or nothing. Either we see the divine image in all created things, or we don't see it at all. We see it once, and the circle keeps moving outward, widening its embrace.

The Christian vision is that the world is a temple. If that is true, then our enemies are sacred, too. Who else created them but God? The ability to respect the outsider is probably the litmus test of true seeing. And it doesn't stop with human beings and enemies and the least of the brothers and sisters. It moves to frogs and pansies and weeds. Everything becomes enchanting with true sight. One God, one world, one truth, one suffering, and one love. All we can do is participate. I hope you enter the New Year with this awareness and an intention to join in with all your heart, mind, and body!

Gateway to Silence

God's life is living itself in me.
We held our annual spelling bee, now in its second year, this week. About forty children competed to qualify for the Scripps Spelling Bee. Sixth grader, Ethan Ayersman, rose to the top to earn the honor. However, eighth graders, Katherine Gibbons and Joey Wocjicki, and fifth graders, Madeline Pace and Natalie Sur, will compete in the Knights of Columbus Spelling Bee along with Ethan. We are very proud of all of our students for their hard work and dedication.

Our sixth grade is busily preparing for next week’s puppet shows. The sixth graders each designed and built their own puppets in their art classes and worked in teams to write puppet shows during their Learning Resource time. They will perform the shows for the younger children on Thursday of next week.

This Week at SJC – National Catholic Schools Week
Sunday, January 31  Welcome Reception after the 9am and 10:45am Masses in the Parish Center
Monday, February 1  All School Liturgy  9:15am
Tuesday, February 2  Parent Association Meeting  9:00am
Wednesday, February 3  Volunteer Reception  9am
Thursday, February 4  Open House  9:30-11am  in School &  1:30-3pm in School
Friday, February 5  Spirit Day  Out of Uniform
                   Men’s Smoker  7pm
                   Confirmation Practice  7:30-8:30pm
Saturday, February 6  Confirmation  10am & 2pm
Grace Reflected:
The Seeds of Joy
Women’s Club Day
Retreat Experience
Welcoming back
Laura Field
Spiritual Director at Old St Pat’s
Saturday, March 5
9am-3pm
Morton Arboretum-Lisle
$50
Women of all faiths welcome.
Breakfast and lunch included.
Space is limited.
RSVP by February 27 to
marie@gracerelected.com
Questions Marie Gerken 630-235-7035
Tiffany White 630-745-0474
Checks can be made out to the Women’s Club and dropped off at Parish Center or pay on our parish website.

Fr. McDonnell Catholic High School Scholarship Applications Due February 8
Each year through fundraising efforts, the Women’s Club is able to offer scholarships to 8th grade students in YC and our parish school and current high school students of our parish to help defray Catholic high school tuition costs. Applications, with a current report card, are available in the Parish Center, YC office, and school office and are due by February 8th to Katie Hayes, Director of Crossroads in the Parish Center. Recipients will be notified by mid-March.

The custom of the baptismal garment dates back to the earliest days of our Church. When adults and children were presented for baptism – they were lead to a baptistery which often times was located outside of the church. In the baptistery, those who were to be baptized stripped down and were led naked into the baptismal pool of water. Rising up out of the font, they would have been anointed with the perfumed oil of Chrism and clothed in a white garment, a sign of their new life in Christ. The newly baptized would wear their baptismal garment to church every day for one week up until the Second Sunday of Easter. On Pentecost, the newly baptized would once again wear their baptismal garment one last time. The purpose of the white baptismal garment was two-fold, it re-clothed the naked body coming up out of the waters of the baptismal font and it identified the newly baptized for the sake of the community.

The white baptismal garment is a symbol not only of our new life in Christ, but also Easter’s promise of eternal life. Thus the garment returns at the end of the life of a Christian in the Funeral Rite. When the casket of the deceased arrives at the door of the church it is draped by the pall, a white cloth that reminds us of the baptismal garment a Christian puts on when their journey of faith begins.

Beginning next weekend our catechumens, Rob, Shler and Randy will carry their baptismal garment with them (they will be baptized at the Easter Vigil) and our candidates Amy, Marla, Sarah, (they were baptized in another faith tradition and seek full communion in the Catholic Church) and Marti (completing the sacraments of initiations) will wear their baptismal garment in the opening procession at the Masses they will attend. The Rite of Sending, a parish celebration, will take place next Sunday at the 10:45 am Mass. At that Mass, a catechist from the RCIA team will present each of our catechumens and candidates to the priest. He will then call them forward with their sponsors and they will be asked a series of questions about their preparedness to celebrate the Sacraments of Initiation. After this, they will sign their names in the book of the elect which will be presented to Bishop Andrew Wypych at Holy Name Cathedral at the Rite of Election celebrated later that afternoon. The Rite of Election refers to the biblical idea of being “chosen by God” into a relationship. We believe that God continues to call people into a covenantal relationship through the Sacraments of Initiation. At the cathedral our catechumens and candidates will be affirmed by their godparents and sponsors that they are ready and have the desire to be initiated into the Catholic faith. Having entered the Cathedral as catechumens and candidates, Rob, Shler, Randy, Amy, Sarah, Marla and Marti leave as members of the “elect,” those to be initiated at the Easter Vigil.

Let us all continue to pray for our catechumens and candidates as they continue their preparation for the Sacraments of Initiation, Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist.

Fr. Bill
Saintly Senior Valentine Luncheon
Friday, February 12
11:30am
Parish Center
Delicious Luncheon & Entertainment
Tickets: $15 members
$20 nonmembers
RSVP by February 8
?? Gerry Mazzone 708-246-0721

Please join fellow men of the parish for the next SAM discussion:
“Sunday Mass …
What’s the Point and
Why Bother?”
Saturday, February 20
Parish Center
9:00am—10:30am

Next Marriage Encounter Weekend: Elk Grove Village
February 12-14

Marriage Encounter Weekends are a special time for a married couple away from all distractions: work, kids, bills, and other pressures and concerns. When was the last time you had a weekend like that? It takes place at a local hotel or facility where presentations are given in the conference room and couples reside at the hotel/facility for the entire weekend.

A series of presentations made by the Presenting Team, consisting of 3 married couples and 1 priest. Each presentation builds on the last as we examine ourselves, our behaviors and attitudes, our relationship with our spouse and God. Communication tools are taught on the weekend helping couples connect in healthy, constructive ways on areas that can deepen their intimacy and connectedness.

Marriage Encounter Weekends have been given in the US since 1967. Decades of research, planning and tried and true wisdom have gone into the content of the Weekend and how it unfolds for couples and religious. We ask all participants to attend ALL talks and participate intently using the tools with their Spouse in order to maximize their experience. All sharing between spouses is PRIVATE, and this is NOT a weekend to solve problems! This Weekend will help couples in good marriages communicate even better.

WWME.org

Divorce Support
The Divorce and Beyond Series which had been scheduled at our parish for this February – March has been postponed. We are in need of 2-3 adult facilitators to lead small group sessions. No experience needed. Please call Steve Weigand (708) 246-4404 for more information.
Dear SJC: These are good days. The days are made brighter and more hopeful through the generous efforts of the people of St. John of the Cross Parish and the $1500 sharing donation that was received. Your support of Kolbe House Jail Ministry certainly is an example of one of the corporal works of mercy—visiting the incarcerated—that is being highlighted during this Jubilee of Mercy.

Our ministry focuses on the men, women, and children who are detained in jail. The word mercy also gets detailed in Kolbe House’s efforts to support the recently released and their families. The past Christmas season was made better for many families because of the good will of the people of SJC. We were able to provide for some men and women who were struggling to make ends meet. We also helped out women and their children with gifts and personal items that assured them that people cared for them. These are good days.

As we move ahead may the Lord bless all of our common efforts in serving those in most need around us. Know that you and the people of SJC are held in prayer and heart. I remain Rev. Arturo Perez Rodrigues,

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**Shelter the Homeless:**
**Laundry Service Project**
Help do laundry for BEDS Plus. 3 to 5 bags will need to be picked up on Sunday morning after 8am on February 6, April 2 and/or May 7 at the First United Methodist Church of Western Springs. The cleaned laundry can be dropped off the following Saturday before 5pm. Please contact Laurie Smillie at smillie@sjc.pvt.k12.il.us or call 708.246.6760 to help with this project.

**Food Pantry Collection**
Bring nonperishable food to the church narthex for those in need. During the month of January our donations will go to St. Barbara Food Pantry in Brookfield. Try to bring a few cans with you when you come to Mass. Feeding the hungry is a corporal work of mercy!

**Work Tour Registration Open**
Registration for our summer work tours and conferences is now open. See our website, www.stjohnofthecross.org/crossroads/work-tours/ to download a registration packet.

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**June 20-26**
**Habitat for Humanity, Newburgh, NY**
Serve on work sites, building, painting and gardening.

**June 27-July 1**
**Notre Dame Vision Conference**
Exploration of your Christian calling facilitated by Notre Dame college students.

**July 18-22**
**Our Lady of Charity, Cicero, IL**
Serve our Sharing Parish, parishioners, and local agencies by painting, cleaning, organizing and gardening.

**July 23-30**
**Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Williamsburg, KY**
Local tours and community building with their parishioners.

**June 24-26**
**Youth Leadership Conference (YLC) at Lewis University in Romeoville, IL**
Dynamic speakers, sessions and liturgy celebrated with over 700 teens & adults.

Plan on attending an important informational meeting on Saturday, February 20 at 1pm in the Parish Center. Teens should attend with at least one parent. Our work tours are not possible without the help of adult chaperones. Contact Joe Gazdacka at 708-246-3965 if you are interested.

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**Learn About Our Ministry**
Adults who have considered joining the Crossroads team are invited to our next update meeting on February 7 at 10:00am. Join us and learn what the leadership team is all about.
What is the real root of human loneliness? A flaw within our make-up? Inadequacy and sin? Or, does Augustine’s famous line, You have made us for yourself, Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you, say it all?

Augustine’s adage, for all its merit, is not quite enough. We are infinite souls inside finite lives and that alone should be enough to explain our incessant and insatiable aching; except there is something else, that is, our souls enter the world bearing the brand of eternity and this gives all of our aching a particularized coloring.

There are various explanations of this: For example, Bernard Lonergan, the much-esteemed theologian and philosopher, suggests that human soul does not come into the world as a tabla rasa, a pure, clean sheet of paper onto which anything can be written. Rather, for him, we are born with the brand of the first principles indelibly stamped inside our souls. What does he mean by this?

Classical theology and philosophy name four things that they call transcendental, meaning that they are somehow true of everything that exists, namely, oneness, truth, goodness, and beauty. Everything that exists somehow bears these four qualities. However these qualities are perfect only inside of God. God, alone, is perfect oneness, perfect truth, perfect goodness, and perfect beauty. However, for Lonergan, God brands these four things, in their perfection, into the core of the human soul.

Hence we come into the world already knowing, however dimly, perfect oneness, perfect truth, perfect goodness, and perfect beauty because they already lie inside us like an inerasable brand. Thus we can tell right from wrong because we already know perfect truth and goodness in the core of our souls, just as we also instinctively recognize love and beauty because we already know them in a perfect way, however darkly, inside ourselves. In this life, we don’t learn truth, we recognize it; we don’t learn love, we recognize it; and we don’t learn what is good, we recognize it. We recognize these because we already possess them in the core of our souls.

Some mystics gave this a mythical expression: The taught that the human soul comes from God and that the last thing that God does before putting a soul into the body is to kiss the soul. The soul then goes through life always dimly remembering that kiss, a kiss of perfect love, and the soul measures all of life’s loves and kisses against that primordial perfect kiss.

The ancient Greek Stoics taught something similar. They taught that souls pre-existed inside of God and that God, before putting a soul into a body, would blot out the memory of its pre-existence. But the soul would then be always unconsciously drawn towards God because, having come from God, the soul would always dimly remember its real home, God, and ache to return there.

In one rather interesting version of this notion, they taught that God put the soul into the body only when the baby was already fully formed in its mother’s womb. Immediately after putting the soul into the body, God would seal off the memory of its pre-existence by physically shutting the baby’s lips against its ever speaking of its pre-existence. That’s why we have a little cleft under our noses, just above center of our lips. It’s where God’s finger sealed our lips. That is why whenever we are struggling to remember something, our index finger instinctually rises to that cleft under our nose. We are trying to retrieve a primordial memory.

Perhaps a metaphor might be helpful here: We commonly speak of things as “ringing true” or “ringing false”. But only bells ring. Is there a bell inside us that somehow rings in a certain way when things are true and in another when they are false? In essence, yes! We nurse an unconscious memory of once having known love, goodness, and beauty perfectly. Hence things will ring true or false, depending upon whether or not they are measuring up to the love, goodness, and beauty that already reside in a perfect form at the core of our souls.

And that core, that center, that place in our souls where we have been branded with the first principles and where we unconsciously remember the kiss of God before we were born, is the real seat of that congenital ache inside us which, in this life, can never be fully assuaged. We bear the dark memory, as Henri Nouwen says, of once having been caressed by hands far gentler than we ever meet in this life.

Our souls dimly remember once having known perfect love and perfect beauty. But, in this life, we never quite encounter that perfection, even as we forever ache for someone or something to meet us at that depth. This creates in us a moral loneliness, a longing for what we term a soulmate, namely, a longing for someone who can genuinely recognize, share, and respect what’s deepest in us.

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser, theologian, teacher, and award-winning author, is President of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, TX.
Job Search Help: Interfaith Career Network
How to Fortify Your Job Search Tactics: Thursday, February 4 from 7-9 pm at St. Cletus  
Mike Vogel, Director of Sales with Indeed.com will share ideas on utilizing LinkedIn, Indeed, Glassdoor and other sites to improve your chances in the ever-evolving job market.

Career Transition Boot Camp Week 2:
\begin{itemize}
\item \textbf{Tuesday, February 2, 7-9 pm at First Presb. Church of La Grange}  
Dennis Hamilton will provide a special presentation on crafting your elevator speech. Time will be allowed to practice your personal statement with fellow attendees.
\end{itemize}

Free Resume Review: Saturday, February 6 from 9-11 am at St. Cletus  
Come in for a helpful 20-minute one-on-one conversation with a search related professional for help with your resume and elevator speech and discuss search strategies.

Nurturing Your Child’s Spirituality at The Well in LaGrange  
Tuesdays 10:30-Noon Feb 9; Mar 8; Apr 12; May 10  
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. Facilitator: Bridget Sperduto Cost: $15/session Go to csjthewell.org

Adult Confirmation  
Adults who have been baptized, received First Eucharist, and who have participated in religious formation, but who have not been confirmed are invited to attend vicariate confirmation preparation sessions beginning February 15 from 7-9pm at St. Frances of Rome in Cicero. Class dates are February 15, 22, & 29, March 7, 14, 21, & 28 and April 4 & 11. Confirmation will be held at St. Ferdinand Church in Chicago on April 26, 2016 at 7pm. To register contact Javier Castillo at 312.534.8032. Please call or email Fr. Bill Vollmer if you have any questions.

Lent 2016
Lent begins on February 10. Please note a small change in our Ash Wednesday Mass Schedule:  
6:30am Mass  
7:30am Mass (Note time change)  
9:15am School Mass  
4:00pm Word Service  
6:30pm Mass  
In Little Black Books for Lenten prayer will be available after all Masses the weekend before Ash Wednesday on February 6-7.

12-Step Spirituality for Everyone  
Also mark your calendar to join Steve Weigand’s Lenten Journey of Discovery Series on Tuesday evenings and Thursday afternoons during Lent. See page 14 of today’s bulletin.

SJC Sponsored Program at The Well  
“Only the Heart Can Slow the Pace of a Digital Life” on Saturday, February 13 from 9:00-3:00 pm (includes lunch) with presenter, Wayne Muller.  
Free to SJC parishioners. Call the Parish Center to register.

The heart needs time, to know what only the heart knows.  
The essential qualities of life we hold sacred or precious, all need time to grow. Love needs time to deepen, find its roots, blossom in fullness of color and fragrance. Wisdom requires time to be tested, challenged, deepening its reliability in seasons of distress.  
As we slowly carve time into smaller and smaller parcels of care and attention, we deny the heart what it needs to actively guide and shape our lives, our choices or decisions. Together, we create a way of life that denies the need for any real wisdom, trust, honesty, community, or love in the world. And, rather than slow down, we choose to do without.  
This is the world we built. This is how we live, but is this the world we want? We cannot fix this alone, we need one another. So let us come together and explore how to save our lives, remember the ancient rhythms of life and time, remember the Sabbath, and claim the unhurried time we need for life, beauty and joy.  

Save the Date!
Dad & Daughter Sock Hop  
Sunday, March 6  
5-7pm  
Parish Center

YC Schedule
\begin{table}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
Classes K-6 & 10:15-11:30am & Sun, Jan 31, Feb 7, 21 \\
& 6:15-7:30pm & Mon, Feb 1, 8, 22 \\
FFC & Noon-1:30 pm & Sun, Feb 7 \\
Adapted Catechesis & 9:00-10:00am & Feb 7, 21 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}
This Lent you are invited to take a journey from the head to heart. Originally associated with Alcoholics Anonymous, 12-Step Spirituality is widely recognized as an approach to life for everyone. 12 Steps for Everyone is a 6 week Lenten journey rooted in Christian spirituality and based on our belief that there is a profound hunger inside each of us that only God can fill.

That desire for intimacy with God is our deepest longing and can only be satisfied in relationship with God. In the attempt to fill the ‘hole in the soul’ with something other than God, we exchange lasting peace and serenity for short-term pleasure.

The Lenten Journey of Discovery is for anyone: Does your faith and prayer life need a jump start? Do you experience increased levels of stress and fatigue? Do you feel weighed down by worry, anxiety or fear? Are you looking for a way to manage unhealthy patterns of behavior?

Adapted from talks by Fr. Anthony Ciorra, Fr. Richard Rohr and others, 12-Steps for Everyone utilizes the spiritual principles of AA so that anyone with a willingness to ‘Let Go and Let God’ can begin to experience lasting peace and serenity.

Participants will receive a binder that includes Scripture references, reflection questions, additional resources and suggestions on how to get the most from each step. All sessions are held in the Parish Center. Each session will be offered twice weekly on Tuesday evenings and Thursday afternoons. Register by February 5 for material prep.

Week 1: February 9 & February 11    Week 2: February 16 & February 18    Week 3: February 23 &February 25
Week 4: March 1 & March 3    Week 5: March 8 & March 10    Week 6: March 15 & March 17

A Lenten Journey of Discovery . . .

to find happiness, hope, peace and freedom

12-Step Spirituality for Everyone

Tuesdays 7pm-8:15pm
or
Thursdays 1:30pm-2:45pm
Beginning February 9th

12-Step Spirituality for Everyone Lenten Registration

Name:
Email:
Phone:
Preferred Day: Tuesday _______ Thursday _______ Drop off at the Parish Center or register on our website.
Monday, February 1
9:30am Spiritual Journaling
10:30am Step 11 Christian Meditation
1:00pm Little Rock Scripture Study
2:30pm Adoration
3:30pm Spirituality of John of the Cross
6:15pm YC Faith Formation
7:00pm Boy Scouts
7:00pm Consolation Minister Training

Tuesday, February 2
9:00am School Parent Association
9:05am Tuesdays with Mary Rosary
3:45pm Funeral Server Training
7:00pm RCIA
7:00pm YC Council
7:30pm Christian Meditation

Wednesday, February 3
9:30am Gospel of John Bible Study
2:30pm Christian Meditation
3:45pm Cherub Choir Practice
7:00pm Chicago Catholic Scripture School
7:00pm Crossroads Coordinator Meeting
7:30pm Traditional Choir Practice

Thursday, February 4
9:00am Flourish
3:45pm Youth Choir Practice
7:00pm Crossroads Parent Book Club
7:30pm Contemporary Choir Practice

Friday, February 5
Confirmation Rehearsal

Saturday, February 6
8:00am Lorraine Janda; Helen M. Bukovsky
5:00pm Robert Plechaty; John Spalo

Sunday, February 7
7:30am Mary Irene Zotti; Kevin McGuire
9:00am Richard J. Fox; George Sarros
10:45am Nancy Barron; Mary Irene Zotti
12:15pm Mike Marshall; Rick Zech
5:00pm Linda Christ; Frances Campanile

Pray for Our Sick
Jean Allen
Guido Arquilla
Lorraine Brandt
Judy Burke
Margaret Cochran
Mildred Fitzgerald
Lynn Freking
Christopher Gallagher
John Gazdacka
Don Heldmann
Karen Hult
Lynn Jeffery
Curtis Kerzich
Don King
JoAnn Klein
George Kojima
Carol Martin
John Martin
Bobbie Miasiora
Frank Mraz
Dan Mulchay
Alice Myers
Roberta Oliquist
Marian Pascale
Steve Pechous
Maurice Redmand
Keri Rohr
Frank Sullivan
Ron Tamer
Theresa Vana
Robert VanWhye
Don Vollmer

Pray for Our Beloved Dead
Lois Glas, wife of Frank Sr. and mother of Frank
Michael Kassis, father of Fadia Jugovich and grandfather of Nicole, Michelle, Jessica, and Emily
Milo Vanasek, husband of Ann, father of Ron, Paul and Eric, grandfather of Emily, Adam, Andrew and Christopher

Pray for Our Loved Ones Serving Our Country
Sgt. Steven Foody, son of Tom & Sandra Foody
Specialist Sebastian Grabacki, son of David & Jan Grabacki
A1C Joshua Tischler USAF Pararescue, grandson of Betty & Frank Madler & Mary Tischler
A Navy Seal, a relative of our parishioner
PFC Daniel Pett, nephew of Kathryn Stinetz
Capt. James Maicke, grandson of Phil & Mike Maicke

Mass Intentions

Monday, February 1 Weekday
7:45am John McDermott; Bob Santucci

Tuesday, February 2 Presentation of the Lord
7:45am Lois Stork; Mike Marshall

Wednesday, February 3 St. Blaise; St. Ansgar
7:45am Joseph Hickey; Rita Gangi

Thursday, February 4 Weekday
7:45am Bill Schlacks; Marie Coyne

Friday, February 5 St. Agatha
7:45am Joseph & Frances Druffel; Patrick McNamara

Saturday, February 6 St. Paul Miki & Companions
8:00am Lorraine Janda; Helen M. Bukovsky
5:00pm Robert Plechaty; John Spalo

Sunday, February 7
5th Sunday in Ordinary Time
7:30am Mary Irene Zotti; Kevin McGuire
9:00am Richard J. Fox; George Sarros
10:45am Nancy Barron; Mary Irene Zotti
12:15pm Mike Marshall; Rick Zech
5:00pm Linda Christ; Frances Campanile

Find a listing of staff emails on our parish website. Click on the About Us tab.

Our 2017 Mass book will be available for your Mass Intentions beginning on Tuesday, February 2 at 9am. All Mass intentions are $10 each.

Tax Statements
If you would like a tax statement of your donations to our parish please contact Marguerite Chrusciel. mchrusciel@stjohnofthecross.org.
Join the YC students
by placing
an “O” in Super
for
Souper Bowl
Sunday

More than 25 years ago, a Super Bowl Sunday prayer inspired a group of young people to do something more than celebrate a football game. They created **Souper Bowl of Caring**, and have rallied youth to raise over $8 million each year for those in need. On Sunday, February 7th, millions of Americans will tune in to the Super Bowl football game. There will be parties with abundant food, friendship and fellowship. *At the same time, there will be people worrying about staying warm, finding shelter and a warm meal. Everything collected will be donated to an area food pantry chosen by the SJC YC Council. Please give generously.*

Families are asked to participate and demonstrate God’s love by caring for neighbors through the Souper Bowl of Caring.

Many food pantry shelves are empty after the busy holiday season and your help is so important. Please bring food items to class on February 7th or 8th or to the YC office before Thursday, February 4th.

**Our young people are developing hearts for giving that can last a lifetime.**

Everything collected is donated to a charity chosen by St. John of the Cross - nothing but stats are sent to the Souper Bowl of Caring headquarters. Check out their website at [www.souperbowl.org](http://www.souperbowl.org)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kindergarten</th>
<th>Cereal (hot or cold)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Grade</td>
<td>Boxed Pasta and dry pinto beans (beans in 2 to 3 pound bags only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Grade</td>
<td>Soup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Grade</td>
<td>Shampoo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Grade</td>
<td>Canned Fruit or Vegetables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th Grade</td>
<td>Pasta Sauce (no glass jars please)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th Grade</td>
<td>Box Meals (Potato Buds, Beefaroni, Betty Crocker complete meals)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7th Grade</td>
<td>Peanut Butter and Jelly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th Grade</td>
<td>Canned chili, chicken or tuna</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Please check expiration dates, the food pantries can not except expired food. Thank you.*

**During this Jubilee Year of Mercy, we sincerely thank you for Putting your Faith First and teaching your children about the Corporal Works of Mercy to Feed the Hungry by participating in this Souper Bowl of Caring!**

Any family wishing to volunteer to sort or drive food to local LaGrange pantries on Sunday after YC class or Tuesday (pickup the collection from Monday evening) please contact the YC office.