Model His Love.

Fifth Sunday of Easter
April 24, 2016
Background on the Gospel

Today’s Gospel again comes from the Gospel of John. Like last week, today we hear words spoken by Jesus before his death and Resurrection. Jesus is teaching at the Last Supper.

John’s Gospel does not include an institution of the Eucharist narrative; instead, Jesus washes his disciples’ feet. Immediately after, Jesus predicts his betrayal by Judas. Today’s Gospel follows that prediction. It can be read as a continuing explanation of Jesus’ act of washing his disciples’ feet. It begins with the announcement that this is the moment when the Son of Man will be glorified. This theme continues throughout John’s Passion. Jesus will be glorified in his death on the cross and in his Resurrection, and the disciples will glorify Jesus in the love they show.

John’s Gospel does not present a sentimental view of love. This is a type of love that is shown in service and sacrifice. It is difficult to choose to love when faced with hatred and anger. Jesus tells the disciples that all will know that they are his disciples because of the love they show for one another. This description of the early Christian community will be repeated in the Acts of the Apostles: “See how they love one another.” Christian love is the hallmark of Christianity. We see it lived in the witness of the martyrs. We see it in the example of the lives of the saints. We see it in the holy women and men who live and love daily, making small and large sacrifices for others.

Living the Gospel

Two departures are noted in this Gospel: that of Judas (“When Judas had left”) and that of Jesus (“I will be with you only a little while longer”). Judas’s departure initiates the events of Jesus’ passion, death, and resurrection. Jesus’ imminent departure initiates his giving the disciples the commandment to love as he has loved. Jesus’ passion and death is the full revelation to us of what it means to love as Jesus loved. Love means giving one’s life for others. It is the full revelation of how we are to love: not counting the cost, but always looking to the glory that is the outcome of deep and abiding love. This is God’s glory. This is Jesus’ glory. This is our glory. Jesus’ resurrection is the full revelation of this glory.

Glory and love are promised to us—but we share in them only if we imitate Jesus’ self-giving way of living. As the gospel says, Jesus was with the disciples “only a little while longer”; Jesus departed. However, he remains with us. Through our own self-giving love we continue his mission of loving others unto salvation whereby God is glorified. Loving one another, then, isn’t just a nice idea. Loving one another is the very way we participate in Jesus’ saving mission and make him present. Our loving others as Jesus loves us assures us that this love leads not to leave-taking, but to the glory of the fullness of Presence and Life. In so many ways we already act out of the love that Jesus commands in this gospel. We need only to do the everyday things we are already doing with new meaning: we share in Jesus’ mission when we love others as he loves us.

©Living Liturgy

Love each other
as God loves each one of you,
with an intense and particular love.

Be kind to each other:
It is better to commit faults
with gentleness
than to work miracles
with unkindness.

Mother Teresa

May we live faithfully Jesus’ command to love one another
as he loves us. May we grow
in faithful discipleship by
encountering more fully
the risen Christ
in our daily
living.
Amen.
A Larger Knowing

*We must know spiritual things spiritually.*

(See 1 Corinthians 2:12-13)

Francis and Clare of Assisi are two prime examples of people who chose to live on the "edge of the inside" rather than front and center and who understood life as participation. As we've explored in the last few weeks, knowing things from the outside-in and from the bottom-up offers a more authentic view of reality. But that's not the only reason why Francis and Clare were able to see things differently than most of us do. Was it because they were more moral, more "chosen, more detached, more loving, more sincere? These are all likely true, yet I believe the very foundation of what we mean by holiness or mysticism is knowing and loving from our Source. Francis and Clare knew by *participation in a Larger Knowing that many of us call God*. Or, as Paul says, "They knew as fully as they were known" (1 Corinthians 13:12).

This kind of shared knowing or full consciousness (conscire: con means "together"; scire means "knowing") is what many teachers mean by contemplation. True contemplatives surrender some of their own ego boundaries and identity so that God can see through them, with them, and in them—with a larger pair of eyes. It is quite simply a higher level of seeing; it is deep consciousness.

Perhaps you have wondered why some people understand spiritual things in a much more compelling way than the rest of us do. They believe the same doctrines that we do, but their faith is alive and changes both their minds and hearts in obvious ways. Many of us think we get the "what" of a doctrine, but it does not radically change us or inspire others. As Jesus says, "they are merely human rules" (Matthew 15:9). Big Truth is intended to deeply change the seer himself or herself, or it is not Big Truth. Some form of contemplative practice is the key to this larger seeing and this larger knowing.

When we see things in a unitive way, in conscious union with the eyes of God, what we see is qualitatively different. Basically, it is no longer self-referential but very expansive seeing because we are participating in the larger reality of God, which is Love. This changes everything. This is what the true contemplative is seeking, and thus seeing, day after day.

Gateway to Silence:

*Remain in my love.* —John 15:9

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St. Teresa said,

“The important thing is not to think much but to love much; and do that which best stirs you to love.”

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The Yahweh Prayer

A rabbi taught this prayer to me many years ago. I write about it in the second chapter of my book *The Naked Now*. The Jews did not speak God's name, but breathed it with an open mouth and throat: inhale—*Yah*; exhale—*weh*. By our very breathing we are speaking the name of God and participating in God's breath. This is our first and our last word as we enter and leave the world.

**Breathe the syllables with open mouth and lips, relaxed tongue:**

Inhale—*Yah*

Exhale—*weh*

During a period of meditation, perhaps twenty minutes, use this breath as a touchstone. Begin by connecting with your intention, your desire to be present to God. Breathe naturally, slowly, and deeply, inhaling and exhaling *Yah-weh*. Let your focus on the syllables soften and fall away into silence. If a thought, emotion, or sensation arises, observe but don't latch on to it. Simply return to breathing *Yah-weh*.

You may be distracted numerous times. And perhaps your entire practice will be full of sensations clamoring for attention. Contemplation is truly an exercise in humility! But each interruption is yet another opportunity to return to Presence, to conscious participation in God's life.
4 Things to Remember if Life Doesn’t Have You in the Easter Season

Our lives do not always align with the liturgical seasons. Easter season is upon us, but life might have us in Lent. Perhaps we are living a Good Friday moment or we are still in the tomb, waiting in hope for our Easter moment to arrive. What can we do when our lives are not congruent with the Easter season we are celebrating?

Having lived “off-season” many times before, here are four things I find helpful.

1. **Store up what the Easter season offers.**
   - This is a season of new life, and we hear many Gospel stories of hope of what comes after Lent, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday. Let the words we hear fill us and strengthen us in our waiting.

2. **Name what helps us wait in hope.**
   - Ignatian spirituality’s defining characteristic is finding God in all things. With that in mind, look for God’s presence and ask yourself: What relationships in your life help you wait in hope for your Easter moment to arrive? What prayer tools support you in holding onto your relationship with God? What activities in your life increase your faith, hope, and love as you wait for a personal resurrection?

3. **Remember the accompanying presence of God.**
   - The Easter season reminds us that we are not alone. Jesus’ Resurrection assured us for the gift of companionship in our lives. No matter what we are living in our lives, we do not face it alone. God is with us, and we will never be abandoned.
   - Pope Francis reminds us of this in Lumen Fidei:
     
     *Faith is not a light which scatters all our darkness, but a lamp which guides our steps in the night and suffices for the journey. To those who suffer, God does not provide arguments which explain everything; rather, his response is that of an accompanying presence, a history of goodness which touches every story of suffering and opens up a ray of light.*

4. **Trust that Easter will come.**
   - God’s gift of mercy assures us that new life will come. At some point our personal Lent will end, our Good Friday moments will pass, our waiting at the tomb will conclude, and we will experience the new life God births in our lives.

   Our lived season of Easter may come while our churches are celebrating Pentecost or Ordinary Time, and that’s OK. For now, though, if our lives do not align with this current season, we store up and collect the wisdom that is offered to us now as we wait for our Easter season to arrive. B. Eldridge.

A friend of mine was stuck in traffic in New York City late on a summer Friday afternoon. He was really stuck—sitting in his car on a narrow east-west cross street in Manhattan, going nowhere. He grew impatient, then angry. After a while, he started to think about how pitiful his life was. His friends were smarter, wealthier, happier than he was. He hadn’t accomplished anything significant. He was stuck in life, just as he was stuck in traffic.

Then he called a friend and asked for help. The guy said, “if you’re just sitting there in traffic, make a gratitude list.” So my friend pulled out a notebook and pen and made a list of all the things he was grateful for. A few were big things—family, friends, job—but most of them were little things. The weekend was coming up. An excellent novel he was reading. A compliment from his boss the previous day. An exhilarating jog along the East River that morning. His comfortable car. Soon his mood lifted. The exercise in gratitude restored balance to his thinking. It wasn’t a trick. My friend saw that his life really was full of good things. Gratitude was the truth.

I recently ran across a comment on gratitude by Dietrich Bonhoeffer. “We pray for the big things and forget to give thanks for the ordinary, small (and yet really not small) gifts,” he said. We strive for the grand spiritual adventure, which we haven’t had, and neglect the many gifts from God that we do have. Bonhoeffer urges us to “be satisfied with the small measure of spiritual knowledge, experience, and love that has been given us.” Make a gratitude list. Ignatian Spirituality.
Today’s Gospel is an invitation for us to look into our hearts and to see how we are living the kind of love Jesus preached—especially within our families. For we must begin to change the world there or we won’t change it at all. M. Link

The Holy Year of Mercy reminds us that God always loves first, unconditionally, and he welcomes us just as we are, by embracing us and forgiving us like a father.

The Apostle John speaks to the early Christians about the two commandments that Jesus taught us: to love God and love our neighbor. In the passage from the First Letter of John we read: “Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God.” This word, love, is a word that is often used but when you use it, you don’t know exactly what it means. What then, is love? Sometimes we think of the love in soap operas: no, that doesn’t seem like love. Or love might seem like enthusiasm for a person, which then burns out.

The real question then is: where does true love come from? John writes: “He who loves is born of God” for “God is love.” The Apostle does not say: “All love is God.” He says instead: “God is love.” John continues, saying that “God loved us so much that he sent his only son into the world, so that we might live through him. Thus, God gives his life in Jesus, in order to give us life. Love is beautiful, to love is beautiful, and in heaven there will be only love. And if love is beautiful, one is always strengthened and grows in the gift of one’s own life: one grows by giving of oneself to others.

God loved us first; he gave us life out of love, he gave life and his Son out of love. When we find God, there is always a surprise: it is first he who waits for us; it is he who finds us. This is precisely what happens to Andrew when he goes to Peter to tell him: We have found the Messiah, come! Peter goes, and Jesus looks at him and says to him: Are you Simon? You shall be Peter. He was waiting for him with a mission. Jesus loved him first.

We can see in the Gospel how God loves: when we have something in our heart and we want to ask the Lord's forgiveness, it is he who is waiting for us, to grant forgiveness. This Year of Mercy is also in part so that we may know that the Lord is awaiting us, each of us. He is waiting to embrace us, nothing more, in order to say: son, daughter, I love you. I let my Son be crucified for you; this is the value of my love; this is the gift of love.

Always ponder this truth: The Lord is waiting for me, the Lord wants me to open the door of my heart, because he is there waiting to enter. It is unconditional.

Of course, someone might say: Father, no, no, I would like to, but I have so many ugly things inside! He is waiting for you, just as you are. You should be as you are. This is how he loves you, he embraces you, kisses you, forgives you.

Go with haste to the Lord and say: Lord, you know that I love you. Or if you don’t feel like it say: Lord, you know that I would like to love you, but I am such a sinful man, such a sinful woman. Do so with the certainty that he will do as the father did with the Prodigal Son who spent all his money on vices. I will not let you finish your speech, I will silence you with an embrace: the embrace of God’s love.

Excerpt from Pope Francis Morning Meditation in the Chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae 01.08.16

Mercy: the bridge that connects God and man, opening our hearts to the hope of being loved forever despite our sinfulness. Pope Francis @Pontifex Apr 3

Mercy Challenge
In order to share the mercy we have found in Jesus, we must eventually talk to others about Him. This week, take some time to share with another person one thing about your life that is different because you have encountered Jesus.
Catholic Relief Services

Last weekend a 7.8 magnitude earthquake occurred along the coast of Ecuador. Catholic Relief Services teams are on the ground evaluating needs in the most affected areas for providing emergency relief and support. Please pray for those who were injured or killed and the families suffering loss and devastation. To donate online go to our parish website home page. Donations may also be directed to Ecuador Earthquake Emergency Appeal Catholic Relief Services, 3525 S. Lake Park Avenue, Chicago, IL 60653.

God, you are in the midst of those who suffer. May all affected by the earthquake in Ecuador feel your healing presence. God, you are in the hands of those who reach out. Help responders in their courageous work. God, you are in the still small voice. The gentle whisper that follows. May our ears always hear; may our hearts always cry out for one another; may we always walk like you walk in solidarity with those who suffer so as to reflect your presence and comfort. Amen.

Join the Friends of St. Gall, one of our Sharing Parishes, on Friday, May 13 from 6-10pm for a special Dance Competition fundraiser. Dancers include: Fr. Gary Graf, Fr. Adam Sandoval, Fr. Terry Keehan, and our own Fr. Bill Vollmer. The competition, which will begin at 7pm at Local 399 at 2260 S. Grove Street, will be judged by Msgr. Ken Velo and Mary Dempsey, DePaul College Prep President. Tickets are $50 in advance (dancingwiththepriests.eventbrite.com Or call 217-836-7034) or $60 at the door. Includes appetizer, buffet, cash bar and lots of laughs and entertainment.

We pray for the earthquake victims in Ecuador and Japan. May God and all our brothers and sisters give them help and support. PopeFrancis @Pontifex Apr 18

To form a family is to be a part of God’s dream, to join him in building a world where no one will feel alone. Pope Francis @Pontifex Apr 20

Love is the only light which can constantly illuminate a world grown dim. Pope Francis @Pontifex Apr 14
Become a Minister of Care
There is a great need for more Ministers of Care. Ministers of Care visit the homebound or hospitalized bringing Holy Communion, praying and visiting. Training for new ministers will be provided at the Carmelite Center in Darien and will be followed up by an information session at our parish. Fees will be covered by SJC. Sessions at the Carmelite Spiritual Center will be on Tuesdays and Thursdays, May 3, 5, 10, 12 from 7-9:30pm Call or email our Pastoral Associate, Steve Weigand, at the Parish Center for more information.

Become a Lector at Sunday Mass
New lector training Sunday, May 15 from 2:30-4pm. Call the Parish Center to register.

Substitute Ushers
Consider being a substitute usher at Sunday Mass. Serve once a month as your schedule allows. Training provided. Call Steve Weigand to learn more.

Minister of Care Renewal Training
Every 3 years Ministers of Care are required by the Archdiocese to attend a Renewal Workshop in order to remain current with standards and practices for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. St. Louise de Marillac Parish in La Grange Park is hosting a Renewal Workshop on Saturday, May 14 from 9am to noon. Save the date now…registration information coming soon!

Interfaith Career Networking Programs
Tools, Tips and Techniques For Your Job Search
Thursday, May 5 from 7-9pm at St. Cletus School. Understand your job search from a recruiter’s perspective. Learn what it takes to get noticed in today's job market.

Career Transition Boot Camp
Tuesday, April 26 from 7-9 pm at First Presbyterian Church of La Grange for Week #3 of their 5-week workshop. Learn how to craft and practice your Elevator Speech.

Rediscover Jesus Book Series
Join us on Thursdays at 2-3pm (facilitated by Steve Weigand) or 7-8pm (with Deacon John Schopp) for a discussion series on the book Rediscover Jesus by Matthew Kelly. Books are available in the Parish Center or church.

A Journey with Julian of Norwich
The Spiritual Journeying group (formerly Spiritual Journaling) will begin study of the book Julian of Norwich: Showings (Classics of Western Spirituality) on Monday, May 2 from 9:30 to 11am. We read together, spend some time in quiet reflection, and then have time for sharing and discussion on what we have read. New members are always welcome. We meet weekly, but it is OK if you can't come every week. For more information or if you would like us to order a book for you, contact Betsy at 2singers2@gmail.com or 708 246 8315.

Thank You
We would like to thank you for participating in our Women’s Club Spring Drive “Baby Shower” benefitting the Teen Parent Connection. We collected and donated over 1250 items with 1000 of the items being diapers! Many area teen parents will benefit from your generosity. We would also like to thank Marie Raffl who helped connect us to this worthy organization and who personally drove the items to their Center! Thank you Marie!!

First Communion Choir
All SJC Music Ministers and any child, second grade and older, are invited to sing with the Combined Choirs of St. John of the Cross Parish for our upcoming First Eucharist liturgies.

For the Saturday, May 7 11am & 2pm Masses, rehearsals will be at 10:30am & 1:30pm in church.
For the Saturday, May 14 11am & 2pm Masses, rehearsals will be at 10:30am & 1:30pm in church.

For more information, contact Ann Bourjaily-Maney at bourjman@sbcglobal.net. Thank you for sharing the gift of song with our little ones!

Pray for our First Communicants
The names of parish second graders who will be receiving their First Holy Communion on May 7 and 14 are hanging on our prayer tree in the church narthex. Parishioners are invited to take a name and remember that child in your prayers.
Cross
The cross
procession leading
to everywhere
birth to death
death to birth
from the moment
gentle fingers
trace a blessing
on the forehead
of the baby newborn
and reborn
from the moment
a young hand learns
to begin a prayer
and make a pattern
“In the name of the Father…”
and to wonder
whether left to right
or right to left
makes a difference
to a God who hears us
even before we speak

The cross
everywhere
for who has not seen
row upon row
of cross upon cross
to tell of one death and many
whether named or unknown

The cross
everywhere
from tenderness
of young fingers
to wrinkles and blisters
that reveal a life
of many more crosses

The cross
everywhere
a touch of jewelry
a meeting of freeways
small and great
seen and unseen

The cross
procession leading
to everywhere
pointing to
the meeting and gathering
of north and south
of east and west
God and God’s people
together
a triumph forever

Ronald J. DeHondt (Liturgical Gestures, Words, Objects)
Baptisms & New Members

St. John of the Cross Parish community congratulates the following families on the baptisms of their infants.

Matthew and Shawn Mullarkey hold Matthew McCutcheon who was baptized on April 3.

Griffin and Sarah Keenan hold their boys and their infant twin girls, Whitney Elizabeth and Charlotte Grace also baptized on April 3.

Pictured with their godparents on April 10, the following families had their babies baptized (from the left): Larry and Emma Frutkin with Lucien Charles, Neil and Kristen Davies with Sean Vincent, and Larry and Brooke Conrath with infant Isla Belle.

Please help us welcome our new members to the St. John of the Cross Parish faith community:

Suzanne and Robert Russell and Family
Patricia Chiappetta and Family
Monica and Brian Sodikoff and Family
Anne Marie and James Leonard and Family
Kathryn and Luke Cutkomp and Family

Rebecca and Edward Thomas and Family
Thomas Snow
Shelly and Dennis Hurta and Family
Michelle and Sean Corry and Family

If you would like to register to become a member contact Elizabeth Russell-Jones in the Welcome Center.
Parish Elections

Elections for positions on the three consultative bodies, the Parish Advisory Council, the Youth Catechesis Council and the School Advisory Board will be held the weekend of May 14-15, 2016 before and after all Masses. Ballots will be available at the entrances to church. Please affirm the following parishioners who have submitted applications to serve our parish. Parishioners may also vote on the home page of our parish website between May 12-15.

Youth Catechesis Council Candidate: Maria Young
Maria Young has been a parishioner at St. John of the Cross for 5 years. She lives in Western Springs with her husband Russell and sons Mitchell (12) and Logan (9). Maria grew up in Evergreen Park and is a graduate of the University of Illinois-Champaign. As a stay at home mom she volunteers with the school PTO and has taught YC for several years. Maria has always been impressed with the YC program and looks forward to this opportunity.

Youth Catechesis Council Candidate: Veronica Puc
Veronica Puc is a Group Executive Producer at Leo Burnett in Chicago. She is married to Travis Lampe, an artist and art director, and has two beautiful girls, ages 7 and 9. She is active at her children’s school and has taught religious education at St. John of the Cross for the past two years. Her first language is Slovenian, and she substitutes at the Slovenian school which her daughters attend on Saturdays. Veronica graduated from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, and has been living in Chicago and surrounding area since then, though she has traveled extensively both for her job and with her family. She currently lives in La Grange.

Youth Catechesis Council Candidate: Jeremy Decker
Jeremy and his wife, Raleigh, and children, Aubrey and Elijah, joined St. John of the Cross in 2012 after relocating from Denver. Jeremy coaches Aubrey’s lacrosse and basketball teams, Eli’s soccer team and spends a lot of time with Eli at hockey practices and games. When he’s not enjoying his kids’ sports, Jeremy loves to cook for family and friends, including Chicago-style pizza, pickling and barbeque. Jeremy currently serves as the Senior Director of Marketing and Strategic Initiatives for the Association of Legal Administrators. He has over 20 years of experience in marketing, brand development and sponsorships including his recent position as Director of Branding, Media and Sponsorships for the Division of Athletics and Recreation at the University of Denver. Jeremy earned his MBA from the University of Denver and his Bachelor degree in advertising from Bradley University.

Youth Catechesis Council Candidate: Jennifer Smykowski
Jennifer and Pete Smykowski joined SJC in 2007. After moving a few times within Western Springs, they are finally settled in Old Town. Jennifer, who received a Bachelor of Science from University of Illinois, is an accountant with a company based in Oklahoma. Although she travels some, her job allows her to work at home. They have two children, Sophia, a 1st grader at Laidlaw, and Tommy, a 4 year old preschooler. Jennifer has taught YC for two years and looks forward to participating on the YC Council.

The Lord asks us to be men and women who radiate the truth, beauty and the life-changing power of the Gospel. Pope Francis @Pontifex Apr 5
Parish Advisory Council At-Large Candidate: Randall Ferrari
Randy Ferrari and his wife, Joyce, have been members of St. John of the Cross Parish family since 1996. They have two married sons and are grandparents to four grandchildren. Randy has retired from a long career in insurance management. Growing up on the southside of Chicago, (is a Sox fan but hopes the northsiders make it to the World Series) Randy graduated from St. Joseph College in Indiana. During his senior year of college he converted to Catholicism. Randy serves our parish as an Usher at the Saturday 5pm Mass, as a board member for the Men’s Club and also provides unskilled labor to the parish Gardening Angels. Since joining our parish Randy has been continually struck by the talent, commitment, generosity and faith of our parishioners. As an At-Large PAC representative, Randy hopes to tap into our parish’s vast talent pool for input and expertise.

Parish Advisory Council At-Large Candidate: Beth White
Beth White has been a parishioner at St. John of the Cross Parish for eight years. During this time, she has served our parish as a small adult faith sharing group facilitator, the communications coordinator for the Our Legacy Capital Campaign, the marketing coordinator for the 50th Anniversary closing dinner, a member of the RCIA team, an RCIA sponsor, and as a Communion Minister. Beth is the Vice President of Advancement at Cristo Rey Jesuit High School in Pilsen. Prior to this role, Beth was the Director of Marketing and Communications at Catholic Theological Union in Hyde Park. She earned a M.A. in Theology from St. Meinrad School of Theology and a B.A. in Diplomacy/Foreign Affairs at Miami University in Ohio. Beth has one daughter, Megan, who is a junior at Lyons Township High School. Megan is a member of the 5 Alive Teen Choir where she cantors, has helped out with Vacation Bible school since seventh grade, and works as a receptionist in the Parish Center. Beth welcomes the opportunity to continue serving the parish as an At-Large Representative on the PAC.

School Advisory Board Candidate: Julie Krema
Julie and her husband Larry, who have three children, joined St. John of the Cross Parish in 2014. They have been very active volunteers in both school and parish activities. In addition to holding an undergraduate degree in accounting, an MBA in Finance from University of Chicago, and a Masters in Education from DePaul, Julie is a certified elementary education teacher. Previous professional experience includes corporate budgeting, financial analysis and strategic planning. Prior to joining SJC, Julie served on her parish’s school board and finance council, co-chaired her school’s capital campaign, and was involved in fundraising for an orphanage in Mexico. With enthusiasm, honesty and integrity, Julie welcomes the opportunity to serve on our School Advisory Board to preserve and improve upon the superb educational experience provided at SJC.

School Advisory Board Candidate: Dan Timotic
Dan, who holds an undergraduate degree in business and an MBA from DePaul University, is a Chartered Financial Analyst. As founder of the company, T2 Asset Management, Dan has over 20 years of investment management experience with institutions, endowments, foundations, pension plans and individuals. He and his wife Melissa feel fortunate to be able to send their two daughters to SJC Parish School where they learn important life lessons that will guide them as they grow to be compassionate, faith-filled individuals. While Melissa is able to volunteer at the school already, Dan welcomes the opportunity to serve on the School Advisory Board to help provide the best guidance and education for our parish school children.

School Advisory Board Candidate: Agnieszka Bucko
Agnieszka grew up in Poland, graduating from Cracow University in economics and international trade. In 2001 Agnieszka moved to the U.S. and worked in environmental project management and finance. Agnieszka holds an MBA from Elmhurst College and is the founder of Gemi Kinds, Inc, a pediatric orthopedic footwear company. Agnieszka and her husband, Tomasz, joined SJ in 2012. Two of their three children, Robert and Dawid attend our parish school. Agnieszka, who has volunteered in the school in a variety of ways through the Parent Association and served on the Winter Gala committee, welcomes the opportunity to continue serving through the School Advisory Board.
We are very excited to perform what is considered by many to be the perfect musical comedy, *Guys And Dolls*. Set in Damon Runyon's mythical New York City, *Guys And Dolls* is a highly recognized and exciting musical. The immortal score written by Frank Loesser is a crowd pleaser and features a wonderful cast of 80 fifth through eighth grade students. It's a wonderful romp through Times Square then off to El Café Cubana in Havana and even to the sewers of New York City. The musical proves to be an energetic and colorful production. The play runs April 29 and 30 at 7:00 p.m. and May 1 at 2:00 p.m. If you'd like tickets to the production please contact Lisa Milani at lisamilani8@gmail.com. Tickets will also be available at the door.

**Day of Service – June 3**
All current and incoming high school teens are invited to join us for a Day of Service on June 3. We will leave from the Parish Center at 9am, travel to local service sites and return by 5pm. Sign up online at www.stjohnofthecross.org/crossroads.

**Religious Jewelry Sale Today!**
The Crossroads rosary and religious jewelry sale continues in the Parish Center after all Masses this weekend. Purchase beautiful First Communion, Confirmation, and Mother’s Day gifts and support our Summer Work Tours.

**Registration Closing Soon**
The deadline to register for a Summer Work Tour is May 1. Registration forms are on our website, http://www.stjohnofthecross.org/crossroads/work-tours/.

**Year-end Leader’s Brunch**
Volunteers are needed for our year-end Leader’s Brunch on May 1 from 9am-12:30pm. Contact Ann Smith at anngsmith@gmail.com if you can help.

**We’re Hiring!**
We have a job opening for a full-time Youth Ministry Coordinator. See the website for a job description.

Registration for Youth Catechesis, our parish religious education program for children in grades kindergarten through 8th grade, for the coming school year is underway. Stop in the YC office to register your child. New families are asked to bring a copy of each child’s baptismal certificate when registering if not baptized at SJC.

To get priority session placement, please pray about sharing your time & talents in a classroom!! All are encouraged! We have parishioners without YC students, high school teens and parents spreading the love of Christ to our students - JOIN US!

It is essential that children see that prayer is something truly important for their parents.

Pope Francis @Pontifex Apr 12
St. John of the Cross Parish has had a sharing relationship with Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation (PBMR) in Chicago for the last 3 years. Our goal is to support their mission through ongoing mutual prayer, donations of clothing, food, homemade food, vegetable and flowering plants, and monthly financial donations that help enable the work at PBMR to continue and to grow.

To celebrate our partnership, Fr. Dave Kelly, Director of PBMR, will preside at our 10:45am Mass next Sunday, May 1. After Mass the PBMR staff and SJC parishioners are invited for coffee and donuts in the Parish Center hosted by our Women’s Club. (Fr. Dave Kelly is pictured to the left.)

Precious Blood Center is located in Chicago’s Back of the Yards/New City, a community that struggles with issues of poverty, gangs, and racial division. The many facets of PBMR can be summed up in three words: hospitality, hope and healing. Precious Blood is a place where youth come, families gather and stories are told; a place where connections are made and relationships between offenders and victims are repaired and rebuilt; a place whose mission is to build relationships that support, sustain and result in changed lives.

PBMR works with formerly incarcerated or court-involved youth and ministers to those in the Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center. The Center also reaches out to at-risk inner city teens who are struggling with school or social pressures in an effort to help them achieve and work toward a successful future. Through prayerful outreach in a supportive environment PBMR accompanies families and individuals who have been impacted by violence as well as mothers and grandmothers who have a child incarcerated.

Parishioners of all ages are invited to take part in our Planting for Hope Service Project for PBMR. Simply plant your choice of flower, vegetable, or herb seeds in small cups or pots. Give them plenty of sun and water. Bring your seedling plants to the Parish Center the week of May 16. Our plants will be delivered to Sister Carolyn at PMBR. Sister will gather youth in the community to transplant our seedlings in and around Precious Blood.
In a recent article in *America* magazine, Grant Kaplan, commenting on the challenge of the resurrection, makes this comment: “Unlike previous communities in which the bond among members forges itself through those it excludes and scapegoats, the gratuity of the resurrection allows for a community shaped by forgiven-forgivers.”

What he is saying, among other things, is that mostly we form community through demonizing and exclusion, that is, we bond with each other more on the basis of what we are against and what we hate than on the basis of what we are for and hold precious. The cross and the resurrection, and the message of Jesus in general, invite us to a deeper maturity within which we are invited to form community with each other on the basis of love and inclusion rather than upon hatred and demonization.

How do we scapegoat, demonize, and exclude so as to form community with each other? A number of anthropologists, particularly Rene Girard and Gil Bailie, have given us some good insights on how scapegoating and demonization worked in ancient times and how they work today.

In brief, here’s how they work: Until we can bring ourselves to a certain level of maturity, both personal and collective, we will always form community by scapegoating. Imagine this scenario: A group of us (family or colleagues) are going to dinner. Almost always there will some divisive tensions among us – personality clashes, jealousies, wounds from the past, and religious, ideological, and political differences. But these can remain under the surface and we can enjoy a nice dinner together. How? By talking about other people whom we mutually dislike, despise, fear, or find weird or particularly eccentric. As we “demonize” them by emphasizing how awful, bad, weird, or eccentric they are, our own differences slide wonderfully under the surface and we form bonds of empathy and mutuality with each other. By demonizing others we find commonality among ourselves. Of course, you’re reluctant to excuse yourself and go to the bathroom, for fear that, in your absence; you might well be the next item on the menu.

Moreover, we do that too in our individual lives to maintain balance. If we’re honest, we probably all have to admit the tendency within us to steady ourselves by blaming our anxieties and bad feelings on someone else. For example: We go out some morning and for various reasons feel out of sorts, agitated and angry in some inchoate way. More often than not, it won’t take us long to pin that uneasiness on someone else by, consciously or unconsciously, blaming them for our bad feeling. Our sense is that except for that person we wouldn’t be feeling these things! Someone else is blame for our agitation! Once we have done this we begin to feel better because we have just made someone else responsible for our pain. As a colorful commentary on this, I like to quote a friend who submits this axiom: *If the first two people you meet in the morning are irritating and hard to get along with, there’s a very good chance that you’re the one who’s irritating and hard to get along with.*

Sadly we see this played out in the world as a whole. Our churches and our politics thrive on this. Both in our churches and in our civic communities, we tend to form community with our own kind by demonizing others. Our differences do not have to be dealt with, nor do we have to deal with the things within ourselves that help cause those differences, because we can blame someone else for our problems. Not infrequently church groups bond together by doing this, politicians are elected by doing this, and wars are justified and waged on this basis - and the rich, healthy concepts of loyalty, patriotism, and religious affiliation then become unhealthy because they now root themselves in seeing differences primarily as a threat rather than seeing them as bringing a fuller revelation of God into our lives.

Granted, sometimes what’s different does pose a real threat, and that threat has to be met. But, even then, we must continue to look inside of ourselves and examine what in us might be complicit in causing that division, hatred, or jealousy, which is now being projected on us. Positive threat must be met, but it is best met the way Jesus met threats, namely, with love, empathy, and forgiveness. Demonizing others to create community among ourselves is neither the way of Jesus nor the way of human maturity. Loyalty to one’s own, loyalty to one’s religion, loyalty to one’s country, and loyalty to one’s moral values must be based upon what is good and precious within one’s family, community, religion, country, and moral principles, and not on fear and negative feelings towards others.

The lesson in Jesus, especially in his death and resurrection, is that genuine religion, genuine maturity, genuine loyalty, and genuine patriotism lie in letting ourselves be stretched by what does not emanate from our own kind.

*Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser*
Monday, April 25
9:30am Spiritual Journaling
10:30am Step 11 Christian Meditation
2:30pm Adoration church
6:15pm YC Faith Formation
6:30pm Deanery Meeting
7:00pm Seasons of Hope
Tuesday, April 26
9:05am Tuesdays with Mary Rosary
6:30pm Crossroads Kairos
7:00pm RCIA
7:30pm Christian Meditation
Wednesday, April 27
9:30am Gospel of John Bible Study
1:30pm Used Uniform Sale
2:00pm Christian Meditation
3:30pm John of the Cross Study Group
3:45pm Cherub Choir Practice
7:00pm Chicago Catholic Scripture
7:30pm Traditional Choir Practice
Thursday, April 28
2:00pm Rediscover Jesus Book Study
3:45pm Youth Choir Practice
6:30pm Crossroads OFCYM Meeting
7:00pm Rediscover Jesus Book Study
7:00pm Divorce & Beyond Support Group
7:30pm Contemporary Choir Practice
Friday, April 29
9:30am Spiritual Journaling
10:30am Step 11 Christian Meditation
2:30pm Adoration church
6:15pm YC Faith Formation
6:30pm Deanery Meeting
7:00pm Seasons of Hope
Saturday, April 30
7:00am Christian Meditation
Sunday, May 01
10:00am Crossroads Leader Brunch
1:30pm Baptisms

Hear our Easter prayers, O Lord. May your spirit of love make its dwelling among us so that we may be your people, your holy city of newness and love. We offer these prayers in the name of our Risen Lord. Amen.

**Mass Intentions**

**Monday, April 25**  
*St. Mark*  
7:45am Mike Marshall; Thomas Steven Polcyn

**Tuesday, April 26**  
*Easter Weekday*  
7:45am Catherine Kelly; Our Beloved Dead

**Wednesday, April 27**  
*Easter Weekday*  
7:45am Edmund Burke; Thomas Stack

**Thursday, April 28**  
*St. Peter Chanel; St. Louis Grignion de Montfort*  
7:45am Thomas McCarthy; Winnie & Tony Sweeney

**Friday, April 29**  
*St. Catherine of Siena*  
7:45am Bridget Dowdle; Adele Zurowski

**Saturday, April 30**  
*St. Pius V*  
8:00am Matt Stefani; Edward Reilly
5:00pm William & Grace Kuzel; George Jakicic

**Sunday, May 1**  
*Sixth Sunday of Easter*  
7:30am Fred Nicholson; Shirley Kazragis  
9:00am Daniel O’Brien; Gary Whitener  
10:45am Kay Schaefer; Rick Zech  
12:15pm Edith Grieve; Jim McDonnell  
5:00pm Mike Marshall; Bubbles Sabath

**Pray for Our Sick**  
Jeanne Allen  
Rita Barnes  
Anna Marie Berland  
Robert Bright  
Judy Burke  
Bradley John Burton III  
Crystal Deters  
Mildred Fitzgerald  
Lynn Freking  
Christopher Gallagher  
Kathleen Gros  
Robert Hartnett  
Randall Hemauer  
Alfred Hesse  
Karen Hult  
John Impens  
Ann Kalaska  
Curtis Kerzich  
George Kojima  
Pat Kot  
Bobbie Misiora

**Pray for Our Beloved Dead**  
Michael Sullivan, father of Robert  
Greta Pace, mother of Mark, grandmother of 2  
Cecilia Landahl, mother of Sheila, John, James, Kathleen Frey and Mary Gray  
Hugh Kelly  
Laura Montana, mother of Mark, Eugenie Baron, Marianne Pope & William, grandmother of 5, great grandmother of 3  
Mary Hickey, mother of Al, grandmother of 3  
Gerald Lepinske, brother of Harry

**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 Stimetz  
Capt. James Maicke, grandson of Phil & Mike Maicke  
Sgt. Robert Marburger, son of David and Kathleen Marburger  
Sgt. Larry Waszak, grandson of Bruno and Barbara Gacek
Our Parish Community forming children in faith!
Many volunteers give of their time and talents and are delighted to discover their faith grows in the process. 25 parishioners volunteer at YC even though they do not have children in the program; 31 high-school teens bless our youth with their energy and love of the Lord and many, many parents serve. Please take a moment to thank these amazing individuals, parents, and teenagers when you see them. We honor them for their gift of love!

Please prayerfully consider joining your neighbors and friends in YC next year, and you will be amazed at how much you receive from giving to our children!

All you need is a love for Christ!!

THANK YOU!!!

THIRD GRADE:
Jill Albano
Glenn Aldridge
Peggy Anderson
Joan Clanton
Tireny Dufficy
Jean Garner
Diane Kamenjarin
Barb Kelly
Niamh Kristufek
Eileen Mahler
Liz Ryan
Jennifer Schaller
Eric Schumm
Laurel Schumm
Brian Spears
Diane Trzeciak
Katie Wojtowicz

FOURTH GRADE:
John Amico
Jen Coleman
Carrie Frech
Kristen Hosey
Krystyna Kalata
Chris Kidder
Kristen Lewis
Judy Lipinski
Jen Metz
Mary Liz Miller
Bea Mologousis
Bobby Montesano
Danielle Montesano
Karen Olenec
Erin Sanchez
Courtney Shishman
Dana Whelton

FIFTH GRADE:
Sharon Alex
Nancy Burke
Mireya Duffy
Diana Kennedy
Renee Mahoney
Becki Mares
Pat Martin
Gina McDougall
Jayne Mikulski
Mike Mikulski
Eric Miles
Audrey O’Donnell
Pat Sheneman
Donna Thornton
Meg Vorpahl
Beth Walsh
Ceci Walsh
Tim Woods

SIXTH GRADE:
Patti Ayala-Rodriguez
Patrick Bailey
Kim Carlson
Ryan Carlson
Shannon Cone
Joe Haberkorn
Kellie Hollinger
Jerry Hughes
Angelica Medley
Kyle Norbut
Jackie Pergantis
Maddy Pergantis
Mark Pergantis
Nicole Sommers
Tom Walsh
Leslie Walters

SEVENTH GRADE:
Linda Caplice
Evelyn Cichowski
Alicia Derrah
Celi Doyle
Julia Doyle
Serena Dreher
Gioia Frye
Eva Garza
Anne Hill
Jenny Kaminski
Bing Magpayo
Sarah Martin
Stacy McCarty
Pat Meehan
Cindy Metcalf
Peg Michalski
Kristen Mologousis
Molly Mulligan
Tom Muth
Hugh O’Donnell
Joey Penachio
Sue Pittacora
Nancy Pritz

EIGHTH GRADE:
Peg Arnold
Rosaria Becker
Amy Carolan
Bernadette Cooley
Kathleen Dietz
Michelle Fink
Barb Fitzgerald
Regina Gallo
Steve Gallo
Maureen Hamor
Melissa Hennessy
Sheila Higney
Marian Hughes
Laura Jachim
Eileen Koch
George Makovic
Leslie Makovic
Linda Mikuta
Katie Pruitt
Tom Pruitt
Theresa Reyes
Julie Ryan
Steve Schell
Sue Schell
Gia Schurla
Peter Schurla
Erika Siegfried
Paul Siegfried
Peggy Sloyan
Allison Striegel
Kerri Watson

FAMILY FAITH:
Jane Gill
Mary McGovern

SUPPORT:
Val Brossard
Kayla Cameron
Fiona Dufficy
Ed Jamrozik
Susan Henkel
Molly Herr
Meghan McGarry
Janine Morrissey
Ryan Rodriguez
Cindy Vespa
Marilyn Vorsanger

SPECIAL NEEDS:
Mason Borzym
Anna Geraghty
Susan Geraghty
Charlie Harders
Will Harders
Garret Kiely
Julia Kiely
Julie McDermott
Katie McDermott
Vicki Van Alphen
Ellin Wheelihan
Mary Yocius

THANK YOU!!!

Celebrate ~ Honor ~ Thanks ~ Gratitude