Thy kingdom come
on earth
as it is in heaven.

July 3, 2016
14th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Dear Parishioners,

I’ve lost my sense of rhythm, a sense of balance of work and rest. The previous several weeks were out of kilter from my normal routine. The daily radiation sessions anchored the time, with mornings being slightly better to do computer work and be available to staff members. The afternoons were a mix of not being able to concentrate, sleep, coming down from the intensity of the seven to twenty five minute sessions of radiation. There isn’t a lot of energy required to get radiation. All you do is lie still on a platform of sorts, like standing still for a chest x-ray. However, the custom made mesh mask that covered my face/neck/shoulders and was anchored to the platform to stabilize my head was a daily challenge. Being immobilized generated a lot of anxiety. That experience required a tremendous amount of energy just to get through the session. A mild tranquilizer was essential, but it also lasted in my system for several hours.

When you read this it will be about ten days since my last radiation session. As I write this my neck is still recovering from the burning caused by the radiation. My voice is weak and raspy, although some tell me I sound stronger. I guess everything is relative. They tell me this will go on for another week or so and then the healing begins in earnest. When will I be able to celebrate Mass again? I wish I had a date to tell you. I’m hoping by the end of the month, but it really is just wait and see. I know I’ll be working on voice quality during the coming year in order to achieve the best possible outcome.

It’s been busy around here with the Garage Sale, SJC Fest and Vacation Bible School following one after another. The Garage Sale was slightly down from last year but still a huge success. I’ll get the numbers on the Fest to you as soon as they are available. The kids seemed to really enjoy VBS.

I’ve been going to Mass at different parishes, near and far. The perspective from the pew and the perspective from the altar are very different. I don’t know how any of you can concentrate. One Sunday I sat behind two families that had young children. There was a little boy in one family around 4 or 5 and a girl from the other family around 6 or 7. They did not appear to know each other beforehand. However they found common ground with each other through an inch worm. An-honest-to-God-I-kid-you-not-inch-worm. I think the little boy found it first. Pretty soon he was passing it to the girl as it crawled from his finger to the palm of her hand. Then she would guide it back to inch its way to the palm of his hand. Back and forth it went pretty much through the entire Eucharistic prayer, the Great Amen, the Our Father and the Sign of Peace. I pretty much didn’t hear a word from the priest. I was totally fascinated with the two kids and the inch worm. Neither of them ever said a word to the other. They smiled a lot. They held the sides of their hands against each other to form a bridge for the inch worm. From their parent’s perspective they were perfectly behaved. When the boy’s mother offered me the sign of peace she added, “It’s not every Sunday you find an inch worm in church.” Indeed, and God is praised.

I’m still recovering and finding a rhythm in little things and little people. And in inch worms.

Until the Breaking of the Bread,
Fr. David

P.S. Happy 4th of July!

Pope Francis reminds us that our love must never be less than concrete if it is to be believable. Our love must be shaped first by our intentions, then revealed in our attitudes, and finally demonstrated in our behaviors. Intentions, attitudes, behaviors—the three-fold way to ensure our love is the real and tangible thing. Prepare the Word.
Thank you from the Family of Fr. Joe McDonnell

We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to Fr. Dowdle, Fr. Vollmer, the parish staff, the magnificent choir and all of the parishioners of St. John of the Cross Parish for the beautiful celebration of Fr. Joe’s life. The outpouring of love we received and your generosity in sharing stories of how Fr. Joe touched your lives moved us. We were reminded that Fr. Joe was much more than our loving uncle, he was a true friend and an amazing priest. It is easy to understand why Fr. Joe never wanted to leave St. John’s; it was his home.

Sincerely,
The Family of Fr. Joe McDonnell

Go to the home page of our parish website to listen to the beautiful homily delivered by Rev. Elliott Dees at Fr. Joe’s funeral Mass.

Seasons of Hope
Parish 6 Week Grief Support Group
Begins Monday, July 11 @7pm

St. John of the Cross Parish is hosting a new 6-week Seasons of Hope Grief Support series beginning Monday, July 11 from 7:00-8:30pm. Seasons of Hope is for anyone mourning the loss of a loved one or struggling with the grieving process. The grief support group is grounded in the healing wisdom, tradition and practice of the Catholic faith, and is respective of all faith traditions. Register online www.stjohnofthecross.org/grief-ministry or call the Parish Center office (708) 246-4404. Direct questions to Steve Weigand at 708-246-4404.

Keep up to date with Parish News!
From time to time it is important for SJC to communicate timely information to parishioners. You can add your email to subscribe to receive 1 our weekly bulletin and/or 2 special notices & our weekly e-newsletter. The weekly e-newsletter, which is emailed every Thursday evening, provides a very brief overview of events and information. Special notices from the pastor that need to be communicated at any time are sent to parishioners on this list. Go to the home page of our parish website to sign up.

Ignite for College or High School Students
Ignite is a student-led small group discussion that meets one hour each Tuesday evening over the summer in the Parish Center. Reflect on a scripture passage and discuss its relevance in your everyday life. Join us any Tuesday at 7:30pm. Call Ashley with questions at 708-299-1737.

Last call for Kairos 23!
Kairos 23, sponsored by the parishes of St. John of the Cross, St. Cletus and St. Francis, is open any incoming juniors, seniors and college freshman for the upcoming school year. The retreat will be held at LaSalle Manor in Plano, IL July 28-31. The cost is $275. Register on the St. Francis website, http://sfxlg.org/
Living the Gospel

When Jesus sends disciples forth as “laborers for his harvest,” he predicts two responses to their presence. Either disciples will be welcomed and will be able to minister fruitfully, or they will be rejected and their ministry becomes judgment against the unwelcoming town. In either case, however, the “kingdom of God is at hand.” In either case, the acceptance or rejection of the disciples makes clear that the “kingdom of God” is not dependent upon any one response, but upon God’s gracious gift of Presence. How so? Whether accepted or rejected, disciples “harvest” the “kingdom of God” by their very presence, by their very proclamation of Jesus’ name, by their very fidelity to Jesus’ mission. No wonder disciples rejoice! Their rejoicing is an acknowledgment that God is present and working through them. The “kingdom of God” is present in the very persons of those who take up Jesus’ invitation to be laborers in bringing about an abundant harvest.

The abundance of the harvest is guaranteed in two ways. If Jesus’ disciples are not welcomed, they are not to quit the journey but continue it. Part of the ministry of laborer-disciples is the very “going”—the disciples’ faithfulness to Jesus’ sending them forth to proclaim that the “kingdom of God is at hand.” While response to Gospel proclamation is obviously important, there can be no response at all unless disciples go forth on the journey, proclaim the Gospel faithfully, and rely on God’s gift of divine Presence through them. We must respond to God’s gift of Presence to us before we can call forth response from others. This divine Presence is the source of disciples’ rejoicing. ©Living Liturgy.

May we be faithful laborers for the kingdom of God.
May we rejoice in our call to follow Jesus and produce an abundant harvest for our country, for our world.

Amen.

Background on the Gospel

Today’s Gospel begins immediately after the final verse in last Sunday’s Gospel. After strong language about the difficulties of discipleship, Jesus immediately appoints 72 people to go ahead of him to every town and place he plans to visit, proclaiming that the Kingdom of God is at hand. He sends them in pairs. In the Law of Moses two witnesses were needed for a testimony to be credible. It was probably also a safer way to travel.

Jesus admits it will be difficult, that he is sending them out like lambs among wolves. Yet they are to bring nothing with them, not even a money bag or sandals. They are to greet no one on the way so as not to be distracted from their mission. When they enter a house, their message is simply “peace.” The response they will receive may be positive or negative. Either way, they are to know that the Kingdom of God is at hand. They are not to demand special treatment but eat and drink whatever is given them. They are to stay in one house and are not to look around for one that provides better accommodations. They are to heal the sick as a sign that the Kingdom of God is at hand for them. Like Jesus’ miracles, healing is a sign of the coming of the kingdom. If the town will not receive them, they are to shake the dust from their feet and move on. Even in the case of such rejection they should know that the Kingdom of God is at hand.

When they return from their journeys, they are rejoicing because their mission has been successful. Demons were under their power because of Jesus’ name. Jesus may have sent them out as lambs among wolves, but at the conclusion of this passage he assures them that they have been given power over the enemy and nothing will harm them, not even serpents and scorpions.

A key theme of today’s Gospel and last Sunday’s Gospel is discipleship—its challenges, its difficulties, and its rewards. Sharing in the mission of Jesus is difficult, but everyone is called to do it, not just some professionals trained for ministry. Even for us today, the harvest is plentiful. We should pray to the master of the harvest to send out workers for his harvest. Loyola Press

©Living Liturgy.
Heavenly Father, I am so thankful for this nation. For all the sacrifices others have made to build and defend this country, I am grateful. Thank you for the opportunities and freedoms we have in the United States of America. Help me never to take these blessings for granted. Help me to live my life in a way that glorifies you, Lord. Give me the strength to be a blessing in someone’s life today, and grant me the opportunity to lead others into the freedom that can be found in knowing Christ. Amen.

We All Need Somebody to Lean On

Independence resonates deeply for Americans; dependence, even interdependence, not so much. Yet nations, political parties, and people need to trust and rely on one another to survive. The son, “Lean on me” reminds us: “Swallow your pride. For no one can fill those of your needs / that you won’t let show.” Pride is stubborn, but remember: YOU depend totally on God for everything from your next breath to eternal salvation, and mutually with others for joy and hope. Pray for our nation and pray for those you lean on. Oh, and look around for those who may need to lean on you.

Fall in Love

Nothing is more practical than finding God, than falling in Love in a quite absolute, final way. What you are in love with, what seizures your imagination, will affect everything. It will decide what will get you out of bed in the morning, what you do with your evenings, how you spend your weekends, what you read, whom you know, what breaks your heart, and what amazes you with joy and gratitude. Fall in Love, stay in love, and it will decide everything.

Fr. Pedro Arrupe, SJ (1907-1991)

"Christ is the food for our soul; let's stay off of the starvation diet." Scott Hahn

Hear our prayers O Lord, and be with us on our journey. May your peace guide our steps and your hope light our way as we journey through this life to the joy of your kingdom where you live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.
The other day, I was sorting through some old papers and came across the “Fall in Love” prayer attributed to Pedro Arrupe, SJ. His thoughts are so simple yet so profound. I was glad to come across them again.

The first time I read these words, though, I was completely intimidated. It was my first Ignatian retreat, and Arrupe’s words presented such a challenge that I had to fight the urge to hightail it out of the retreat center! I wasn’t sure if I was ready to be this honest with myself. And while I was indeed searching and wanting to know God, I wasn’t yet sure if I had found God at all. I wondered, How am I supposed to “fall in love and stay in love” with a God I am just getting to know?

There came no immediate answer from above and no immediate rising to the challenge on my part. I just kept sitting with God—and wondering.

It wasn’t until many years later that the answer to my question started to reveal itself as I was reading St. John of the Cross’s Ascent of Mount Carmel. St. John advised, “In the first place, it should be known that if a person is seeking God, His beloved is seeking him much more.” This concept was profoundly liberating to me. I had been seeking, trying so hard to know God, but I perceived myself as being on a solitary quest. Reading St. John, I realized that I was not alone at all—God was already seeking me! This struck a chord deep within my heart. Ours is not a God who lets us “go it alone.” Ours is a God of relationship. If we are seeking God, we are responding to the One who has already been calling us. Suddenly, the task of “falling in love” and “staying in love” with God seemed so much easier, because being “in love” requires relationship.

Despite this realization, though, I still find Fr. Arrupe’s words challenging. They still stretch me out of my comfort zone and urge me to conduct a sort of “spiritual check-up” as I look at the truths of my daily life. If we dare to rise to the challenge, Arrupe can help us all to come to a more authentic relationship with God. We can ask ourselves:

1. What is it that gets me out of bed in the morning?
2. What is it that I do with my waking hours?
3. What often seizes my imagination?
4. What brings me joy and makes me grateful?
5. What breaks my heart?
6. With what am I actually in love?

For most of us, if we tackle these questions honestly, we will come across some inconsistencies. We may be surprised that our thoughts and desires are not where we thought they were or where we want them to be. That’s OK; we’re not saints yet! As we journey forth, it’s OK to make adjustments if we’ve gone off-course.

If we do want to re-align our lives, we must remember that we aren’t on the quest alone. We are in relationship with God. And every strong relationship needs an ongoing investment of time. In his recent apostolic exhortation, Amoris Laetitia (The Joy of Love), Pope Francis advises young married couples that “Love needs time and space; everything else is secondary” (224). The same words ring true for our relationship with God. If we really want to fall in love and stay in love with God, we must give God our time, and we must allow room for the Holy Spirit to work in our hearts.

We must take the time to be with God. This being with will determine the everything of how we live.

Ignatian Spirituality
God our Father, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. We thank you for giving us the bread we need. Holy is your name.

You hold us in your strong arms like a mother with her newborn infant. You have raised your children from generation to generation, planting seeds, harvesting grain, baking fresh bread, preparing meals, feeding your people, hold us up when we are too weak to stand on our own, teaching us how to walk and enabling us to go forth in the world as your sons and daughters.

God our Mother, your are the womb of our power, our tenderness and our courage. We forget too often that you are God. Holy is your name.

We who are as varied as your names are numerous, as varied as the ways in which you reveal yourself to us, we delight to be your cooperative imaginative workers in a world abundant with redemptive images.

God our Father, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. We thank you for giving us the bread we need. Holy is your name.

We see you in the sun and the moon, the rain and the wind, coming with power. We see you in the liberation of humanity from injustice and oppression. We see you coming with power. Holy is your name.

God our Mother, your are the womb of our power, our tenderness and our courage. We forget too often that you are God. Holy is your name.

We see you in our friends and lovers, our spouses and children. We know your passion, your commitment to right relations amongst us. We experience you, coming with power.

God our Father, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. We thank you for giving us the bread we need. Holy is your name.

We see you in the bodies of hungry people, broken people, tortured people, in a tortured earth. We tremble, yet we believe that you are coming with power. Holy is your name.

God our Mother, your are the womb of our power, our tenderness and our courage. We forget too often that you are God. Holy is your name.

We believe in you, we love you, we expect you to be with us, as we remember the power your revealed to us in the life of Jesus, your Son and our brother. Amen.

Come Lord with power into our midst.
Come with power into our prayer.
Come with power into our lives.
Come with power into our work.
Come with power into our togetherness.
Transform our prayer, our lives, our work, our togetherness,
that we may more truly be the body of Christ,
your beloved and our Savior.
Amen.

Prayer for Parish Groups. D. Harrington & J. Kavanagh
IVC Volunteer Opportunity

Semi-Retired? Retired? Open the Doors of Your Heart! The Ignatian Volunteer Corps may be for You! Members of this Jesuit service program volunteer in poor and marginalized communities 2 days per week (Sept-June), grow deeper in their Christian faith by reflecting and praying in the Ignatian tradition, and meet monthly with other IVC members and a spiritual reflector. IVC members serve as tutors, employment counselors, food pantry volunteers, elderly companions, hospital chaplains, and more! Detailed information is online at www.ivcusa.org/chicago.

Learn more at an information session to learn more and meet current IVC volunteers on **Tuesday, July 19 1:30pm at St. Francis Xavier Parish**. RSVP to Jacqueline Fitzgerald at 312-961-6206 or jfitzgerald@ivcusa.org.

JUBILEE OF MERCY

**SELL**

Sometimes, following the merciful path of Jesus means letting go of or selling off what holds us in bondage. Once we are free, we can walk with him. “There is still one thing lacking. Sell all that you own and distribute the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.” (Luke 18:22)

Stop in the church narthex to read all the words of mercy we have reflected on so far during this Jubilee Year of Mercy.

“**The simplest acts of kindness are by far more powerful than a thousand heads bowing in prayer.**”
—Mahatma Ghandi

**Every Can Makes a Difference**

1 in 7 Americans struggles to get enough to eat. In fact, hunger or food insecurity exists in virtually every community in the United States. An average food-insecure family of four may forgo up to 100 meals a month because they lack enough money to buy food. For the majority of people seeking food assistance, pantries are now a part of households’ long term strategies to supplement monthly shortfalls in food. Seniors are disproportionately represented among those visiting pantries. Statistics from Feeding America.

Please bring healthy nonperishable food to the church narthex to help feed those who will visit the St. Barbara Food Pantry in Brookfield during the month of July.

"Our task in the present . . . is to live as resurrection people in between Easter and the final day, with our Christian life . . . as a sign of the first and a foretaste of the second."
—N. T. Wright, Surprised by Hope
St. John of the Cross Parish congratulates the following families who had their infants baptized by Deacon Joe Pepitone on June 19. Pictured from the left are: William and Maureen Rohe and William Rex, Todd and Elizabeth Lux and Cooper Gene, Steven and Lisa Dudash and Cole Samuel, Patrick and Lindsey Cox and Claire Ross with Deacon Pepitone.

New to SJC?
If you would like to learn all about our parish contact Elizabeth Russell-Jones in the Parish Center Welcome Office. Call or email erussell-jones@stjohnofthecross.org.

New Baby? Ready for Baptism?
Learn about infant baptism at our parish. Call the Parish Center office weekdays from 9am-4pm or go to our parish website under Sacraments.

Welcome!
Help us welcome our newest parishioners to SJC! If you recognize a neighbor or name, be sure to reach out and connect with them.
Thank YOU!!

Thank you for supporting the 2016 Women’s Club Garage Sale. We could have never done it without your donations and the time, efforts, and energy of every volunteer, especially the room chairs (!), our security team, and hospitality committee. Thank you also to everyone who came and bought treasures at the sale. It is always amazing to see the parish come together and organize such a huge successful sale.

A special thank you to the Garage Sale Co-Chairs, Mary Beth White and Laurie Klafta. Every year these dedicated women plan, organize and run the event. Board members and volunteers alike are so grateful to work alongside Mary Beth and Laurie.

Please consider joining us next year for another successful sale. It is a great way to get involved for a good cause and meet fellow parishioners of all ages.

Look for more pictures in next week’s bulletin!
The Right to Life is Fundamental

In the Preamble to the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson made it very clear that all human beings "are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights". Chief and first among those he enumerated was the Right to Life.

Jefferson and our founding fathers knew that without the right to life, no other rights are possible. How can one have the right to vote or the right to free speech, for example, if one does not firstly have the right to exist?

The rights mentioned in the Declaration are no less valid than those articulated in our Constitution. In fact, they are foundational to all the rights and protections which the Constitution guarantees. This applies especially to the right to life, which is not only paramount but is also clearly protected under the 14th Amendment by due process of law.

We need to impress upon our children the importance of these two documents and how they already guarantee every American, born or unborn, week or strong, the blessings of Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness.

Heavenly Father, the beauty and dignity of human life was the crowning of your creation. You further ennobled that life when your Son became one with us in his incarnation. Help us to realize the sacredness of human life and to respect it from the moment of conception until the last moment at death. Give us courage to speak with truth and love and with conviction in defense of life. Help us to extend the gentle hand of mercy and forgiveness to those who do not reverence your gift of life. To all, grant pardon for the times we have failed to be grateful for your precious gift of life or to respect it in others. We ask this in Jesus' Name.

Amen.
Twelve-Step Spirituality: Step 1

We admitted we were powerless over alcohol— that our lives had become unmanageable. The Twelve-Step program makes spirituality more palatable for many who have not had good experiences with religion. It avoids all the metaphysical, super religious language and just describes the journey itself. It could be called a rather clear and simple phenomenology of the process of transformation. (Phenomenology is the study of the direct objects of experience, as opposed to any metaphysical theory.)

The first step of the journey is the admission of powerlessness. It is where no one wants to go and no one will go voluntarily. We have to be led there through our own failure and experience of death. In men’s work, we call it the Great Defeat. Franciscans call it poverty. The Carmelites call it nothingness. The Buddhists call it emptiness. The Jews call it the desert. Jesus calls it the sign of Jonah. The New Testament calls it the Way of the Cross. We’re all talking about the same necessary step.

Powerlessness is an experience we all share anyway, if we are sincere. But Bill Wilson found we are not very good at such humble honesty; it’s much easier to live in denial. It seems we are not that free to be honest, or even aware, because most of our garbage is buried in the unconscious. So it is absolutely necessary that we find a spirituality that reaches to that hidden level. If not, nothing really changes.

It is not necessarily bad will or even conscious denial on our part. We just can’t see what we are not told to look for. Amazing really. As Jesus put it, we see the splinter in our brother’s or sister’s eye and miss the log in our own (see Matthew 7:3-5). The whole deceptive game of projection is revealed in that one brilliant line. For many people, the only thing strong enough to make us look at our log is some experience of addiction, some moral failure, or some falling over which we are powerless.

If you’ve done the first step, if grace and God have been able to lead you to a place where you admit you’re powerless, then your spiritual journey has begun. Until that point, it’s all just information, words, dogma, and doctrine. Ironically and paradoxically, you go must go through the place of powerlessness to discover your inner source of Power and Life. In fact, the only people whose power you can trust are those who’ve made journeys through powerlessness.

Gateway to Silence:
Let go and let God.
Last week we looked at the first period of the RCIA process called Inquiry and Evangelization. The end of this first period is ritualized at a Sunday Mass and is called the Rite of Welcoming. This celebration marks the end of the Inquiry period and entrance into a more formalized preparation period called The Catechumenate.

During this period, the catechumen, accompanied by his or her sponsor and supported by the whole community, learns the ways of the Catholic Church. He or she participates in the Church’s prayer on Sundays and other special days, meditates on the scriptures found in the Bible, is introduced to the members of the Church by attending the parish’s various meetings, social events, and organizations, and learns how to put faith into action by serving the poor and working for justice. At Sunday Eucharist, the catechumen prays with the community and hears the scriptures proclaimed at Mass. Then, before the Church professes its faith, prays the great Eucharistic Prayer, and shares in Communion, the catechumens are blessed and sent to pray more deeply with the scriptures they have just heard and the prayer they have just participated in. The catechumens do not participate in the Liturgy of Eucharist until they have been baptized.

This part of the process has no time limit. But for the process to really have an effect on both the person and the Church, it should be at least one full year. This is because one learns how to be Catholic not from books or by memorizing facts, but from living the life of the Church. And the Church lives its life through the celebrations of the whole liturgical year.

During this time, there will be special blessings, prayers, and anointings (marking a person with blessed oil) to help strengthen the catechumen as they grow in faith. Throughout the period, the catechumen, sponsor, and church community try to discern how the person is growing in faith—what parts of the Christian lifestyle are strong in the person and what parts need more growth?; how can the Church community help the person grow deeper in faith?; how is the Church itself being blessed by the presence of the catechumen.

This discernment helps the catechumen and the Church recognize God working in the person, and it helps describe the progress the person is making during his or her apprenticeship. Ideally, after a year of participation in the catechumenate, there is more intense discernment by the catechumen and the Church community to help recognize when the person is ready to profess the Christian faith and be baptized into the Catholic Church.

Once the person is deemed to be ready to profess the faith, he or she celebrates the Rite of Election. This celebration takes place at the Cathedral with the Bishop at the beginning of the season of Lent. This rite marks the final turning point in the person’s preparation for baptism. At this celebration, the Church testifies to and affirms the readiness of the catechumen to profess the Christian faith and be baptized at the next Easter Vigil. The Bishop formally accepts the testimony given and officially declares the catechumen to be chosen for baptism. The catechumen is given a new title—Elect—because God has elected or chosen them to become a child of God through the waters of baptism. In preparation for this celebration, the catechumen chooses a member of the Church to be his or her godparent to be a lifelong companion in the faith. At the Rite of Election, the godparent is the one who will testify on behalf of the Church to the catechumen’s readiness for baptism. This Rite begins the next part of the process.

Call Steve Weigand, Pastoral Associate, to learn more about the RCIA journey at SJC.
"I am a citizen, not of Athens or Greece, but of the world." Socrates wrote those words more than twenty-four hundred years ago. Today more than ever these are words which we would need to appropriate because, more and more, our world and we ourselves are sinking into some unhealthy forms of tribalism where we are concerned primarily with taking care of our own.

We see this everywhere today. We tend to think that this lives only in circles of extremism, but it is being advocated with an ever-intensifying moral fervor in virtually every place in the world. It sounds like this: America first! England first! My country first! My state first! My church first! My family first! Me first! More and more, we are making ourselves the priority and defining ourselves in ways that are not just against the Gospel but are also making us meaner in spirit and more miserly of heart. What’s to be said about this?

First of all, it’s against the Gospel, against most everything Jesus taught. If the Gospels are clear on anything, they are clear that all persons in this word are equal in the sight of God, that all persons in this world are our brothers and sisters, that we are asked to share the goods of this world fairly with everyone, especially the poor, and, most importantly, that we are not to put ourselves first, but are always to consider the needs of others before our own. All slogans that somehow put “me”, “us” “my own”, “my group”, “my country” first, deny this. Moreover, this doesn’t just apply at the micro-level, where we graciously step back in politeness to let someone else enter the room before us, it applies, and especially so, to us as whole nations. For us, as nations, there is a certain immorality and immaturity in thinking first of all, and primarily, of our own interests, as opposed to thinking as citizens of the world, concerned for everyone’s good.

And the truth of this is found not just in Jesus and the Gospels, but also in what’s highest and best in us. The very definition of being big-hearted is predicated on precisely rising above self-interest and being willing to sacrifice our own interests for the good of others and the good of the larger community. The same is true for being big-minded. We are big-minded exactly to the extent that we are sensitive to the wider picture and can integrate into our thinking the needs, wounds, and ideologies of everyone, not just those of their own kind. That’s what it means to understand rather than simply be intelligent. When we are petty we cannot understand beyond our own needs, our own wounds, and our own ideologies.

We know this too from experience. On our best days our hearts and minds are more open, more willing to embrace widely, more willing to accept differences, and more willing to sacrifice self-interest for the good of others. On our best days we are gracious, big-hearted, and understanding, and, on those days, it’s unthinkable for us to say: Me first! We only put ourselves first and let our concerns trump our own goodness of heart on days when our frustrations, wounds, tiredness, and ideological infections overwhelm us. And even when we do revert to pettiness, part of us knows that this isn’t us at our best, but that we are more than what our actions betray at that moment. Below our wounds and ideological sicknesses, we remain riveted to the truth that we are, first, citizens of the world. A healthy heart still beats below our wounded, infected one.

Sadly almost everything in our world today tempts us away from this. We are adult children of Rene Descartes, who helped shape the modern mind with his famous dictum: “I think, therefore, I am!” Our own headaches and heartaches are what’s most real to us and we accord reality and value to others primarily in relationship to our own subjectivity. That’s why we can so easily say: “Me first! My country first! My heartaches first!”

But there can be no peace, no world community, no real brother and sisterhood, and no real church community, as long as we do not define ourselves as, first, citizens of the world and only second as members of our own tribe.

Admittedly, we need to take care of our own families, our own countries, and our own selves. Justice asks that we also treat ourselves fairly. But, ultimately, the tension here is a false one, that is, the needs of others and our own needs are not in competition. Athens and the world are of one piece. We best serve our own when we serve others. We are most fair to ourselves when we are fair to others. Only by being good citizens of the world are we good citizens in our own countries.

Putting ourselves first goes against the Gospel. It’s also poor strategy: Jesus tells us that, in the end, the first will be last.

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser, theologian, teacher, and award-winning author, is President of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, TX.
Monday, July 4
9am Mass
Parish Center Closed.
No Adoration Today
Tuesday, July 5
2:00pm Summer Book Discussion
6:00pm Finding Catholic Identity at College
7:30pm Christian Meditation
7:30pm Ignite Bible Study
Wednesday, July 6
2:30pm Christian Meditation
Thursday, July 7
6:00pm Finding Catholic Identity at College
Friday, July 8
Saturday, July 9
7:00am Christian Meditation
Sunday, July 10
12:00pm Baptisms
2:30pm Eagle Scout Ceremony
6:00pm Finding Catholic Identity at College

Pray for Our Sick
Curtis Kerzich
George Kojima
Athie Lanahan
Art McClellan
Bobbie Misiora
Frank McGuire
Nancy Lohr
David Sarros
Kelly Sebruch
Deloris Simonek
Sharon Sine
Duane Szymakowski
Don Vollmer
Monica Westell

Pray for Our Beloved Dead
Josephine Ehlers, grandmother of Kevin Kline
John Gazdacka, brother of Joe
Ed Carlson, father of Peggy Grogan, Ed Carlson, Mary Harper, Ellen Olson, & Nancy Bryne
Lillian Aiello, mother of Penny Stadler and Patricia Brakenridge, grandmother of 4, great grandmother of 6, great great grandmother of 10

We are looking for volunteers to help with light cleaning/dusting in church every six weeks. The cleaning, which takes about 30 minutes, is done on Fridays after morning Mass. Please contact Marietta Moore if you can help. mariettam1@prodigy.net or 708-246-3579.

"If you don't behave as you believe, you will end up believing as you behave."
Archbishop Fulton Sheen
College Orientation: Finding Catholic Faith and Thought on College Campus

Heading off to college later this summer?? Your important first college orientation is right at our parish! Come learn about Catholic Faith and Thought on Campus.

If you are in the 90% who will not be attending a Catholic college, this may be your only Catholic orientation. If you will be attending a Catholic University, come learn about course options and what it means to be at a Catholic institution. Make decisions for yourself about what a life of faith means for you at college.

Sessions are two hours, two nights in the Parish Center.

Choose Either:
**Monday, July 5th and Thursday, July 7th**
**OR**
**Sunday, July 10th and Wednesday, July 13th**
Come for Chipotle at 6:30pm - Session starts at 7:00pm.

RSVP and questions / text to Mary Dorsey  312-203-9025 or Kevin McGann 708-408-8731  kevinmcgann@sbcglobal.net.