20th Sunday in Ordinary Time
August 14, 2016
Dear Parishioners,

When Michael Jordon returned to basketball after his first retirement in the ‘90’s he sent a two word message to the press. Most people took it as very, very good news. I’ll let you decide what meaning might be yours when I use the same two words: I’m back!

Last Sunday at the 10:45 Mass I was the main celebrant and homilist. This weekend I will be at the 7:30am Mass. Dealing with early vocal fold cancer, which began the week after Easter, has progressed to the point where my voice has returned to very near normal. I finished with radiation June 23rd and recovering from the side effects began very quickly. But after five weeks it felt like I was at a plateau. Then one day my voice just began sounding ‘normal’. Initially it was only for short periods (less than a half hour) but it has continued to progress where I celebrated Mass with the Staff at our summer planning session on August 2nd. Then I had a funeral on August 6, Sunday Mass August 7th and here we are today. It will continue to heal for a while and my voice will become stronger and more consistent. Right now, most people would never know that I had been dealing with this. I couldn’t be more grateful for the quality of the voice that I have. There was a point when I wasn’t so sure I would be able to return to public ministry. Any more improvement is an extra blessing.

Thanks for all your prayers and support throughout this long haul. Every day for weeks I received several cards with assurances of prayers. Thank you to the many people who had me enrolled in the prayer of a number of different religious communities. I could not be more loved and more graciously held in prayer before the Lord than I am here at St. John of the Cross.

Thanks too for your support of Fr. Bill during this period when I could not celebrate Mass. In addition to all the priestly challenges, he is also dealing with his father’s terminal illness and you have been so very supportive of him. Fr. Bill and I are so blessed to belong to this community. Thank you.

It’s the middle of August which means school begins soon. The faculty comes back tomorrow for five days of preparation for the new school year. The workmen are finishing up the enhanced security to the main school entrance which required relocating the front office and the chapel. New traffic patterns for accessing the school will need to be learned by parents and delivery personnel. By creating a foyer with a double set of doors, adding numerous cameras, changing to a fob system rather than keys for many doors, restricting access to the main doors during the day and having an electronic check-in system for visitors all add additional security for our children and staff. The entire cost was covered by savings.

It’s been a full and busy summer. There is a little summer left to enjoy before the vacation season ends. Even if it is a ‘stay-cation’ take time to re-create your spirit and simply to enjoy family and friends. You’ll never regret it.

Until the Breaking of the Bread,
Fr. David

Now you are the body of Christ and each one of you members of it. (1 Cor. 12:27)
Statement of Archbishop Blase J. Cupich on the Pope’s Commission to Study the Subject of Women Deacons August 2, 2016

Last May, Pope Francis indicated his willingness to appoint a commission to study the subject of women deacons. Today I welcome the news that he has done just that. From the earliest days of the church, women rightly served in key leadership roles. Still, the church must do better. Women deserve to be brought more fully into the decision-making of the church. I look forward to learning more about the work of the commission, composed of an equal number of men and women, as they bring their considerable talents to bear on this important subject in the life of the church.

RSVP to Family Fest
Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

Were you one of the hundreds of volunteers who helped out at this year’s Family Fest? If you were, you are cordially invited to an Appreciation Dinner to be held on Thursday evening, September 1, in the Parish Center. A reception will begin at 6:30pm, dinner at 7:00pm.

An electronic invitation was recently emailed to all volunteers. As noted in the e-vite, RSVPs are being handled through SignUp Genius. A link to SignUp Genius has been posted at the Fest website, www.sjcfest.com. We respectfully ask that anyone planning to join us respond by August 26. If you have any questions, please contact Dave Bennett at davidbennett21@comcast.net.

We hope all volunteers will be able to join us as we celebrate another great Festival and thank all who made it such a wonderful success!

- SJC Fest Planning Committee

All men of the parish are invited to an evening of fellowship, food and fun at SJC!

Food & beverages will be provided by the Men’s Club. Please bring a friend, lawn chairs and competitive spirit! We will also host our 8th Annual Two Man Team Bags Tournament. The Bags Competition will begin at 6:30 pm. The entry fee is $5/man or $10/team. RSVP if you plan to attend the BBQ to Dan Montgomery at tdm30550@gmail.com or 312.952.1435. Also, please let us know if you plan to participate in the Bags Contest. If you don’t have a partner, we will match you up with one. All festivities are on the East Lawn of the Parish Center.

Thank You Men’s Club!

Thank you to the Men’s Club for sharing their time, talent, and treasure with our parish community. Each year the men host or help with events such as the Scout Pancake Breakfast, Crossroads Fish Fry, and Teacher’s Luncheon as well as provide their financial support to parish outreach, SPRED, our parish Caritas Fund, and the Parish Fest. We thank you for all you do and contribute to our parish.
Sacramental Formation for High School Teens
Teens who are interested in receiving any of the Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, First Reconciliation, First Eucharist, and Confirmation are encouraged to journey with other teens at Divine Providence Parish in Westchester. Please call Chris Schweins-DeFoe at 708-562-3422 for more information. Prep sessions, which will be held on Wednesday evenings, will begin in September.

Grief Support at Little Company of Mary
Adults: Six consecutive Wednesdays beginning September 28 from 6:30pm to 8:30pm. Groups formed specific to loss. Registration required. ~ Children: Eight consecutive Mondays beginning September 19 from 6pm-7:30pm for children ages 5 to 18 years old who have lost a loved one. Early registration required. For more info and registration call 708-229-5484 or 708-229-4299.

Protecting God’s Children Workshops at SJC
Thursday, August 25 from 9am-Noon or 6:30-9:30pm, Wednesday, September 14 from 9am-Noon or 6:30-9:30pm, Monday, September 19 from 6:30-9:30pm
Register at www.virtus.org. Select “First-time registrant,” choose “Begin the registration process,” and choose “Chicago, IL,” and follow steps. This workshop is for all parents, coaches and volunteers who have contact with children. Q? Call Mary Beth at 708-246-4404 or 4454.

Parish Domestic Violence Awareness Group
Our next committee meeting will be on August 29 at 7pm in the Parish Center. Contact Chairperson, Mary DeMars, for more information: demarsmaryp@yahoo.com. All are welcome.

Job Help
Interfaith Career Network invites everyone to hear speaker, Jim Fitzgerald, an accomplished Career Transition Specialist & Executive Coach, discuss “Nine Ideas A Smart Job Seeker Should Know” on Thursday, August 18 from 7-9pm in the Parish Center. Jim’s candid and insightful presentation promises to be very positive and helpful if you’re looking to make a career transition. For more info go to interfaithcareernetwork.org. All ICN Programs are free and open to all.

Volunteer in the YC Office
Assist the YC Staff as they prepare school supplies for the new year. Work in two hour shifts on August 9 or 11 from 9:30-3pm in the YC Office. Adults, teens, and confirmation candidates welcome. Call Liz Clawson at 708-246-6760 or clawson@sjc.pvt.k12.il.us to sign up.

Food Pantry Donations
Bring healthy nonperishable food items to the church narthex. This month’s donations will go to St. Francis Xavier Parish Food Pantry in LaGrange.

Join us in Song!
Children’s Cherub Choir (Grades 1-3) Practice is on Wednesdays from 3:45—4:30pm in church. The start date is Wednesday, September 7 with registration and a brief meeting at 4:20pm
Children’s Youth Choir (Grades 4-8) Practice is on Thursdays from 3:45-4:30pm in the church. The start date is September 8 with registration and a brief meeting at 4:20pm.

5 Alive Choir (Young adults & 8th grade and older) Practice is right before Mass at 4:15pm in church. No regular commitment needed. Come when you can. The start date is Sunday, September 11.

Contemporary Ensemble This group of singers, drums, guitars, and other instruments sings the best in contemporary worship music weekly at the Saturday 5 p.m. Mass and rehearses on Thursday evenings. Rehearsals resume on September 8 at 7:30pm in church.

Traditional Choir This choir rehearses weekly on Wednesday evenings and sings choral classics along with traditional hymns, spirituals and gospel style music each Sunday at the 10:45am Mass. Rehearsals resume on September 7 at 7:30pm in church.

Questions for the Children’s Choirs and 5 Alive Choir can be directed to Ann Bourjaily-Maney at (708)246-4171 or bourjman@sbcglobal.net. Questions about the Adult Choirs can be directed to Jessica Koch, Director of Music, at jkoch@stjohnofthecross.org.

Wednesday Morning Bible Study
Join us on Wednesdays from 9:15-Noon in the Parish Center beginning Wednesday, September 7 as we begin a year long study of the Book of Isaiah. Our study includes a video presentation, at home study materials, commentary and questions for discussion. Please register by August 19 by dropping off an envelope with a check for $50 for materials and your contact information. Questions can be directed to Madonna Muscarello @630-325-7990.

The secret to joy: never suppress positive curiosity; get involved, because life is meant to be lived.

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Pope Francis @Pontifex Aug 2

Jesus speaks to you every day. Let His Gospel become yours and let him be your navigator on life’s journey.

Pope Francis @Pontifex Jul 31

Jesus is call you to leave your mark on life: one that transforms your own life and the lives of others.

Pope Francis @Pontifex Jul 30
Living the Gospel

This is surely a bad news, good news gospel. The bad news is that Jesus’ coming throws the world headlong into fire, anguish, division. The good news is that, in spite of Jesus speaking to the contrary, he does grant peace—to his disciples after his resurrection. His appearance after his resurrection to the fearful disciples includes the comforting gift, “Peace be with you.” Faithful discipleship, faithful witnessing to the Good News of salvation, includes both the peace and the suffering, misunderstanding, and anger that sometimes come from radically living the call to be faithful to God’s will, to be single-minded about continuing Jesus’ saving ministry, to live counter to what our world is trying to shock us into accepting. No, Jesus’ gift of peace does not eliminate the fire, anguish, and division that come from faithful discipleship. Their absence from our daily living might be something of a judgment that we are not living up to Gospel demands. But good comes out of the negative aftermath of our saying yes to God.

These painful consequences of faithful living sharpen the choice each of us must make: to be “baptized” with Jesus into his suffering and death. And this choice is not made once and for all. It is a choice we make every day. We do not seek division, but we do seek consistency in living Gospel values. We do not seek anguish, but we do suffer with Christ when it comes. Sometimes strife and division are a sign of our faithful commitment. Gospel living is not always easy! The real shock is that we choose it and are faithful.

Background on the Gospel

Having reminded the apostles and the crowd that facing the coming judgment takes patience, Jesus now goes on to speak of how difficult it will be to wait. He tells them that he has come to set the earth on fire. Recall that in chapter 3 of Luke’s Gospel, John the Baptist tells the crowd that he is baptizing with water, but someone mightier is coming who will baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire. The fire Jesus speaks of here is the distress caused by the coming judgment. It is also the fire of the Spirit that Luke, in the Acts of the Apostles, will describe descending on the disciples on Pentecost. That fire will strengthen them to go out to the whole world to preach the good news of Jesus’ Resurrection.

Jesus will be the first to experience the distress of the coming judgment. His baptism will be the conflict into which he will be immersed as he approaches Jerusalem and his death on the cross. His followers will not be spared that distress. The angels at Jesus’ birth proclaimed peace on earth, and Simeon, holding the baby Jesus in the Temple, said to God: “Master, now you may let your servant go in peace.” Here Jesus tells the crowd not to think he has come to bring peace; he has come to bring division. Simeon said as much when he turned to Mary and said that the child was destined for the rise and fall of many and to be a sign that will be contradicted. Peace is the ultimate end of the Kingdom of God, but peace has a price. Jesus is warning the crowd that wherever the Word of God is heard and acted upon, division occurs. Fathers will be divided against sons and mothers against daughters.

The coming judgment forces us to look at the implications of our commitments. As Jesus warned in last Sunday’s Gospel, a commitment of faith requires us to change our attitude toward material possessions and to take even more seriously our moral responsibilities. Here he reminds the crowd that those who commit to him will find it affects the way they relate to friends and family members. The angel who announced the birth of John the Baptist to Zechariah said John would go before Jesus to turn the hearts of fathers toward their children. But a commitment to Jesus forces us to change the way we live our lives, and this can put strains on relationships.

We don’t expect to hear such difficult words from Jesus in the Gospel. But it is good to be reminded once in a while that the decision to do the right thing, the good thing, is not always easy and without conflict. Jesus himself did not make easy decisions and avoid conflict. In today’s reading, he reminds his followers to be prepared for difficult decisions and conflict as well.

May we choose
faithful discipleship
no matter what its cost.

May we overcome
anguish with joy, and
division by reconciliation.

“All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.”

Matthew 28: 19-20

How can I be a disciple of Jesus in my community?
How do I encourage others to be disciples of Jesus?

©Living Liturgy

St. John of the Cross Parish August 14, 2016 20th Sunday in Ordinary Time Page 5
On August 15 we celebrate the feast of Mary's Assumption into heaven. We believe that Mary, who was without sin, was taken, body and soul, into the glory of heaven.

The Gospel recalls Mary's actions after the announcement of Jesus' birth by the Angel Gabriel. Mary goes to visit her cousin Elizabeth who is also with child. Elizabeth greets Mary with full recognition of the roles they and their unborn children will play in God's plan for salvation. Mary responds to Elizabeth's greeting with her song of praise, the Magnificat.

The Gospel for this day reminds us that Mary's Assumption into heaven is best understood with regard for the full spectrum of Catholic beliefs about the person of Christ and the person of Mary. Only Mary, who was born without stain of original sin—the Immaculate Conception—could give birth to Christ, who is fully God and fully human. This is called the Immaculate Conception. Because of Mary's role in God's plan of salvation, she does not suffer from the effects of sin, which are death and decay. Mary is the first to receive the fullness of the redemption that her son has won for all of humanity. The Church, therefore, recognizes Mary as the sign of the salvation promised to all.

Today's Gospel highlights Mary's faith. Mary's faith enabled her to recognize the work of God in her people's history and in her own life. Her openness to God allowed God to work through her so that salvation might come to all. Mary is a model and symbol of the Church. May we be like Mary, open and cooperative in God's plan of salvation.

St. John Paul II

Our Lady knows our hearts, can hear our prayers, can help us with her motherly kindness. She always listens to us and, being Mother of the Son, participates in the power of the Son and in his goodness. We can always entrust the whole of our lives to this mother. The Blessed Mother's birth into heaven generates in us an ever new capacity to await God's future.

St. John Paull II
Prayer

Open your hearts to the love God instills in them. God loves you tenderly. What he gives you is not to be kept under lock and key, but to be shared. The more you save the less you will be able to give. The less you have, the more you will know how to share. Let us ask God, when it comes to ask God for something, to help us to be generous.

Mother Teresa—in My Own Words

"We must dig deeply in Christ. He is like a rich mine with many pockets containing treasures: however deep we dig we will never find their end or their limit. Indeed, in every pocket new seams of fresh riches are discovered on all sides.”
—St. John of the Cross

Through the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the intercession of Saint John, may we treasure the gifts of life which God have given us!

Pray for our teachers who will return in the next week to prepare for the start of the new school year:

Lord God,
your spirit of wisdom fills the earth and teaches us your ways. Look upon and bless our teachers. Let them strive to share their Knowledge with gentle patience and endeavor always to bring the truth to eager minds. Grant that they may follow Jesus Christ, the way, the truth, and the life, forever and ever. 
R/. Amen.

~from Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers

A Prayer for Vision

Disturb us, Lord, when we are too well pleased with ourselves; when our dreams have come true because we have dreamed too little; when we arrived safely because we have sailed too close to shore. Disturb us, Lord, when with the abundance of the things we possess, we have lost our thirst for the water of life. Stir us, Lord, to dare more boldly, to venture on wider seas, where storms will show your mastery; where losing sight of land, we shall find the stars. We ask you to push back the horizons of our hopes and to push us into the future in strength, courage, hope and love.

Amen.

~Author Unknown

You are holy, Lord, the only God, and Your deeds are wonderful. You are strong. You are great. You are the Most High. You are Almighty. You, Holy Father are King of heaven and earth. You are Three and One, Lord God, all Good. You are Good, all Good, supreme Good, Lord God, living and true. You are love. You are wisdom. You are humility. You are endurance. You are rest. You are peace. You are joy and gladness. You are justice and moderation. You are all our riches, and You suffice for us. You are beauty. You are gentleness. You are our protector. You are our guardian and defender. You are our courage. You are our haven and our hope. You are our faith, our great consolation. You are our eternal life, Great and Wonderful Lord, God Almighty Merciful Savior. 

St. Francis of Assisi
Twelve-Step Spirituality: Steps 8, 9, & 10

Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

Making a list of the persons we have harmed is a reversal of the normal egoic style of making lists of what others have done to us. We are only able to do it because of the housecleaning we’ve done in the previous steps. For most humans, there is only a slow softening of the heart and a gradual loosening of our attachment to our hurts, our victimhood as a past identity, or any need to punish or humiliate others. We grow into a sense of self-responsibility instead of blaming or accusing others.

Bill Wilson saw the Twelve Steps finally leading to emotional sobriety. Sobriety is not just about no longer drinking. The goal is to become spiritually awakened, to have found some degree of detachment from our own emotions. Our emotions are not bad until and unless we are attached to them; they are helpful indicators and symptoms of what’s going on, often subconsciously, within us. However, emotions are primarily “narcissistic reactions.” They’re self-referential because they are actually based in our body, not easily available to conscious control. The body carries all of our shame, guilt, childhood conditioning, and past hurts.

We are all trying to get our programs for happiness met by one another, when only God can really meet them, so of course we’re going to be hurt and we are going to hurt others. Bill Wilson understood that we’ve got to stop depending on other people or outside events to meet our needs. We need to reverse the flow and draw it from the inside out—based on the absolute union between God and the soul—instead of from the outside in. Wilson often said, “It’s better to give than to receive” (see Acts 20:35). The union between God and the soul is the only stable, secure, and sustainable program for happiness.

Alcoholics Anonymous acknowledges that the process is gradual and in relationship with others:

There is a long period of reconstruction ahead. We must take the lead. A remorseful mumbling that we are sorry won’t fit the bill at all. We ought to sit down with the family and frankly analyze the past as we now see it, being very careful not to criticize them. Their defects may be glaring, but the chances are that our own actions are partly responsible. So we clean house with the family, asking each morning in meditation that our Higher Power show us the way of patience, tolerance, kindness, and love.

The spiritual life is not a theory. We have to finally live it. . . .

Wisely, Step Ten does not emphasize a moral inventory, which becomes too self-absorbed and self-critical, but it speaks of a “personal inventory.” In other words, just watch yourself objectively, calmly, and compassionately. You will be able to do this from your new viewing platform and perspective as a child of God. “The Spirit will help you in your weakness” (Romans 8:26). From this most positive and dignified position, you can let go of and even easily “admit your wrongs.” You are being held so strongly and so deeply that you can stop holding onto or defending yourself. God forever sees and loves Christ in you; it is only we who doubt our divine identity as children of God.

Whenever we do anything stupid, cruel, evil, or destructive to ourselves or others, we are at that moment unconscious—unconscious of our identity. If we were fully conscious, we would never be violent, even in our thoughts, toward anyone. Loving people are always highly conscious people. To rely on any substance or habit is to become unconscious.

To be fully conscious would be to love everything on some level and in some way—even our mistakes. To love is to fall into full consciousness, which is contemplative, non-dualistic, and includes everything—even “the last enemy to be destroyed, which is death itself” (see 1 Corinthians 15:26). That is why we must, absolutely must love. Only love is stronger than death.

Didn’t Jesus tell us that we must love even our enemies? A. A. says at Step Ten, “we have ceased fighting anything or anyone—even alcohol.” [2] When we can on some level even love our sins and imperfections, which are our “enemies,” we are fully conscious and fully liberated. God, who is Universal Consciousness itself, knows all things, absorbs all things, and forgives all things—for being what they are. If Jesus commands us to love our enemies, then we know that God must and will do the same. Yet the vast majority of Christians still believe in a punitive God and a pathetic notion of retributive justice, which is totally unworthy of God. This false and toxic image of God normally only recedes if we have an inner life of prayer, which is the next step.

What hope and joy a God of Infinite Love gives us all! Among many other things, it takes away all fear of admitting our wrongs to God, to ourselves, and to others.

Gateway to Silence:
Thy will be done.
In this year of Mercy, Pope Francis was invited and summoned us to become aware of our need always of God’s mercy and to share that mercy with others who hunger and thirst for its fulfillment. “The works of mercy are charitable actions by which we come to the aid of our neighbor in his or her spiritual and bodily necessities. Instructing, advising, consoling, comforting are spiritual works of mercy as are forgiving and bearing wrongs patiently. The corporal works of mercy consist especially in feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and imprisoned, and burying the dead. Among all of these giving aims to the poor is one of the chief witnesses to fraternal charity: it is also a work of justice pleasing to God.” (CCC #2447)

The celebration of the Eucharist, the only repeatable Sacrament of Initiation, shapes and molds us more fully into the image and likeness of God. The Eucharist challenges us to see as God sees. It nourishes and sends us forth to become the Body of Christ. It raises to a greater consciousness our need to be recipients and instruments of God’s mercy. The Eucharist is a great teacher of who Christ is, who we are, what we believe and how we are to live our lives.

The authentic sense of the Eucharist becomes itself the school of active love for neighbor. We know that this is the true and full order of love that the Lord has taught us; ‘By this love you have for one another, everyone will know that you are my disciples.’ The Eucharist educates us to this love in a deeper way; it shows us, in fact, what value each person, our brother or sister has in God’s eyes, if Christ offers himself equally to each other, under the species of bread and wine. If our Eucharistic worship is authentic, it must make us grow in awareness of the dignity of each person. The awareness of that dignity becomes the deepest motive of our relationship with our neighbor.”

(John Paul II, On the Mystery and Worship of the Holy Eucharist)

From one of the Eucharistic Prayers
“Open our eyes to the needs of our brothers and sisters; inspire in us words and actions to comfort those who labor and are burdened. Make us serve them truly, after the example of Christ and at his command. And may your Church stand as a living witness to truth and freedom, to peace and justice, that all people may be raised up to a new hope.”

Food for Thought
How might a more intense exercise of the works of mercy deepen your level of participation in the Eucharist? What’s missing when a Christian sees no connection between the Eucharist and the works of mercy?

Once the mercy of God really and truly takes hold in our lives, we know clearly what we must do. We resolve to live now in light of that mercy. We cannot carry on as before, when we did not fully know or grasp the dimensions of God’s mercy.

“Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back, four times as much.” (Luke 18:21)
SJC welcomes Maureen Hill as our new YC Coordinator for Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grades! Maureen and her husband, Jeff, who have been SJC parishioners since 1996, have three children. Sons, Michael and Jack, attended YC throughout grade school and are now in college and high school respectfully. Their daughter, Clare, is currently in 8th grade and will be confirmed this year at SJC.

Maureen is excited to be working with all our YC families and looks forward to meeting you this coming year, especially bringing our little ones to the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Eucharist for the first time.

We are seeking parishioners to share their faith with our Kindergarten and First Graders. If you would like more information, you can reach Maureen at 708-246-6760, ext 250 or by email at hill@sjcross.org

Maureen joins Laurie Smillie, Jr. High Coordinator, Cathy Mahoney, Middle School Coordinator, and Janet Caschetta, our Director of Youth Catechesis. Look for more about the start of our YC Program in the coming weeks!

Can you help us pass on the faith to our parish children as a YC Catechist or Aide?

A catechist is...
A person who faithfully believes in Jesus and is a witness to His message....

A person who enjoys the company of children and youth....

A practicing Catholic willing to spend a couple of hours a week sharing faith they received...

A person who wants to learn more about the Bible and Christ's teaching......

A parent, grandparent, single person, college student or high school student...

Answer God’s call today! You will enrich your life and the life of the children you teach. You will be successful! We will provide detailed, step-by-step lesson plans and all of the materials you need, ready-to-go. Class includes music, games, DVDs, crafts, special presentations, etc.

You attend an orientation to familiarize yourself with SJC’s Youth Catechesis Program.

Class times: Sunday mornings 10:15-11:30am or Monday evenings 6:15-7:30pm.

Give the YC Office a call today at 708-246-6760 or email Janet Caschetta, Director of Youth Catechesis, at jcaschetta@stjohnofthecross.org to volunteer your time.

What are we leaving the children? What examples are we setting? Do we teach them to walk in faith and truth? Or do we teach them with words but allow our lives to go in another direction?

A Christian has to take care of children, the little ones, and pass on the faith, pass on what he lives, what is in his heart. We cannot ignore the little plants that grow. We all have a responsibility to give our very best, and the very best that we have is our faith.

Pope Francis
Freshmen: Join us for our Freshmen Experience....starting Sunday, September 11 at 6pm in the Parish Center. Throughout your first semester we will introduce you to the teens and adults who lead our ministry and will show you how you can continue on your journey of faith. It’s fun to see old friends from junior high and new friends from high school that you didn’t even know are parishioners! Throughout this first semester you’ll learn all the great ways you can serve, grow and continue to experience God’s goodness.

Sophomores-Juniors-Seniors: Plan to reconnect with your leaders & friends on Sunday, September 11 at home groups—specific group times will come from your leaders! Here are some additional ways you can get connected:

⇒ Join our Day of the Spirit Retreat Team to lead the Oct. 22 retreat for our 8th graders. Meeting dates are Aug. 21, 28*, Sept. 11, 18 Oct. 16, 18 from noon-2pm in the Parish Center. Email Katie N if you are interested: knicholson@stjohnofthecross.org

⇒ Join our Freshmen Experience Team to introduce our freshmen to the awesomeness of our ministry. You’ll give ideas and suggestions as we plan out their first semester and help facilitate the start of their evenings together. Email Katie H if you are interested: khayes@stjohnofthecross.org

REGISTER at www.stjohnofthecross.org/crossroads so we have parent permission and support of our ministry!

ALL TEENS OF OUR PARISH ARE INVITED TO CONNECT WITH OUR SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES & SOCIAL EVENTS & MORE ... WE ARE GEARING UP FOR A GREAT YEAR!! COME BE A PART OF CROSSROADS!!
Outreach

Sharing Connections Volunteer Truck Crew!

Sharing Connections is a 501c3 not for profit in Downers Grove. We are looking to expand our volunteer truck crew to help pick up furniture in the local community. No experience is necessary and training will be provided, but you must be at least 18 years old. We are looking for both helpers and drivers. There is a 3 person crew on each truck and pick-ups are done every Monday and Thursday. Please apply online at or call (630) 971-0565 for more information.

What is Sharing Connections?

Sharing Connections brings together community members by enabling families and businesses to share their gently used furniture and household items with families needing assistance. This is a unique opportunity for the community to directly make an impact by passing on something they no longer need to make a difference in the life of a family.

SC operates out of a 9,000 square foot warehouse and distributes donated furniture and household items to over 6,000 individuals annually. Families served receive over $1,200 on average, of furniture, household items and clothing.

SC staff works closely with referring partner organizations. Organizations such as domestic violence shelters, housing organizations, food pantries, schools, veteran, and teen parent organizations refer clients to SC after they have determined the need for beds, cribs, furniture and other household items. Fitting with the vision of SC, distribution of cribs and beds for children is a major focus of programming at Sharing Connections.

The families served by SC include the previously homeless, unemployed and working poor, veterans, victims of domestic violence, immigrants, individuals with mental or physical disabilities, victims of fire, flood and natural disasters, etc. They have housing, but are faced with the harsh reality that their “home” is empty or severely under-furnished — without cribs and beds for the children, a table, chairs and dishes to share meals, or even a sofa to sit on and relax. Our clients have an average salary of approximately $12,400 a year for a family of four. After basic expenses such as rent, utilities, food and clothing are paid, there’s little if anything left for the common household furnishings most take for granted. These individuals and families must overcome many obstacles on their way to self-sufficiency.

Go to their website to learn items they accept, schedule a pick-up, or learn about group projects. sharingconnections.org

Have you thought about running a 5K, half marathon, or marathon?

Looking to cross “running a race” off your bucket list?

Are you looking for a good cause to give you some extra motivation for the training?

Join Team Taller de José for a fall race!

Taller de José is a resource center in Chicago’s Little Village neighborhood, connecting people to services and services to people. We offer the unique ministry of accompaniment in which we literally walk with people—emotionally, spiritually, and physically—to assist individuals and families in leading better lives.

Taller de José is extremely grateful to the St. John of the Cross Parish community for their support of Taller de José during the summer mission appeal this year. For those who are interested in getting more involved with Taller de José, we invite you to accompany us and “walk” with those we serve by running for them.

Team Taller de José has opportunities for those of all levels of running experience, including discounted entries for the Chicago Half Marathon and Lifetime 5K on September 25, and the 2016 Chicago Marathon (for those who are already registered). Contact Anna (amayer@tallerdejose.org) or visit our website (tallerdejose.org) for more information or to join the team!

If your business is interested in being a sponsor for Team Taller de José, contact Anna (amayer@tallerdejose.org) for sponsorship opportunities.

God is inviting you to dream: He wants to show you that you can make the world a different place. Pope Francis @Pontifex Jul 30
Family and Faith: 20th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Luke 12:49-53

Gospel Summary
As Jesus announced his mission, he made it clear that there would be no compromising. Called to repentance and challenged to be ready, discipleship would most likely divide households and communities. He knew already that there were divisions among Jewish leaders. He warned his followers that they, too, might face divisions among their own families. While these repercussions would cause pain, it would also mark the coming of God's Kingdom.

Reflection for Families
Sometimes we have to take an unpopular stand against the ideas of others. When we say "no" to someone who wants to hear "yes," division is created. Parents make decisions that serve a purpose and guide the formation of their children. Friends may say "no" to each other creating division. Of course, healing and reconciliation are vital to the growth of all relationships; and this is basically the same concept as today's Gospel. There will be hard and unpopular acts associated following Jesus. As a loving parent, God won't compromise the plan. As loving family members, we also understand God's motive!

Questions for Reflection
Adults – When has your taking a strong stand on a moral issue created division rather than healing in the short term?

Children – Is it important to do the right thing even if others are angry as a result? Why or why not?

Source: RCL Benziger

The Family Prayer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Adults</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Praise be to God</td>
<td>who made us a family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Praise be to God</td>
<td>for the love that we share.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Praise be to God</td>
<td>for sending us Jesus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Praise be to God</td>
<td>for teaching us to care.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help us, Lord Jesus</td>
<td>fill our lives with your Spirit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help us, Lord Jesus</td>
<td>teach us how to forgive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help us, Lord Jesus</td>
<td>grant us wisdom and patience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help us, Lord Jesus</td>
<td>in your grace may we live.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Come Holy Spirit</td>
<td>fill our lives with your gifts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Come Holy Spirit</td>
<td>help us serve other's needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Come Holy Spirit</td>
<td>teach us faith, hope, and love.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Come Holy Spirit</td>
<td>guide our thoughts and deeds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be with us, God</td>
<td>we ask Mary to help us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be with us, God</td>
<td>we look to Joseph for aid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be with us, God</td>
<td>may we respect one another.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be with us, God</td>
<td>may our hope never fade.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hear us, Lord Jesus</td>
<td>watch over our family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hear us, Lord Jesus</td>
<td>help our faith to grow strong.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hear us, Lord Jesus</td>
<td>come dwell in our hearts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hear us, Lord Jesus</td>
<td>to you we belong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirit, we praise you</td>
<td>you invite us to know you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirit, we praise you</td>
<td>may we walk in your light.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirit, we praise you</td>
<td>may we find you in all things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirit, we praise you</td>
<td>all day and all night.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amen!</td>
<td>Amen!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The family is where we first learn to listen and share, to be patient and show respect, to help one another. Pope Francis @Pontifex Apr 11

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
Unless you are already a full saint or a mystic, you will always live in some fear of death and the afterlife. That’s simply part of being human. But we can, and must, move beyond our fear of God.

As a child, I lived with a lot of fear. I had a very active imagination and too frequently imagined murderers under my bed, poisonous snakes slithering up my leg, deadly germs in my food, playground bullies looking for a victim, a hundred ways in which I could meet an accidental death, and threats of every kind lurking in the dark. As a child, I was often afraid: afraid of the dark, afraid of death, afraid of the afterlife, and afraid of God.

As I matured, so too did my imagination; it no longer pictured snakes hiding everywhere or murderers under my bed. I began to feel strong, in control, imagining the unknown, with its dark corners, more as opportunity for growth than as threat to life. But it was one thing to block out fear of snakes, murderers, and the dark. Not so easily did I overcome my fear of death, fear of the afterlife, and fear of God. These fears are the last demons to be exorcised, and that exorcism is never final, never completely done with. Jesus, himself, trembled in fear before death, before the unknown that faces us in death. But he didn’t tremble in fear before God, the opposite in fact. As he faced death and the unknown, he was able give himself over to God, in childlike trust, like a child clinging to a loving parent, and that gave him the strength and courage to undergo an anonymous, lonely, and misunderstood death with dignity, grace, and forgiveness.

We need never be afraid of God. God can be trusted. But trust in God does include a healthy fear of God because one particular fear is part of the anatomy of love itself. Scripture says: The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. But that fear, healthy fear, must be understood as a reverence, a loving awe, a love that fears disappointing. Healthy fear is love’s fear, a fear of betraying, of not being faithful to what love asks of us in return for its gratuity. We aren’t afraid of someone we trust, fearing that he or she will suddenly turn arbitrary, unfair, cruel, incomprehensible, vicious, unloving. Rather we are afraid about our own being worthy of the trust that’s given us, not least from God.

But we must trust that God understands our humanity: God doesn’t demand that we give him our conscious attention all of the time. God accepts the natural wanderings of our hearts. God accepts our tiredness and fatigue. God accepts our need for distraction and escape. God accepts that we usually find it easier to immerse ourselves in entertainment than to pray. And God even accepts our resistances to him and our need to assert, with pride, our own independence. Like a loving mother embracing a child that’s kicking and screaming but needs to be picked up and held, God can handle our anger, self-pity, and resistance. God understands our humanity, but we struggle to understand what it means to be human before God.

For many years, I feared that I was too immersed in the things of this world to consider myself a spiritual person, always fearing that God wanted more from me. I felt that I should be spending more time in prayer, but, too often, I’d end up too tired to pray, more interested in watching a sports event on television or more interested in sitting around with family, colleagues, or friends, talking about everything except spiritual things. For years, I feared that God wanted me to be more explicitly spiritual. He probably did! But, as I’ve aged, I’ve come to realize that being with God in prayer and being with God in heart is like being with a trusted friend. In an easeful friendship, friends don’t spend most of their time talking about their mutual friendship. Rather they talk about everything: local gossip, the weather, their work, their children, their headaches, their heartaches, their tiredness, what they saw on television the night before, their favorite sports teams, what’s happening in politics, and the jokes they’ve heard recently - though they occasionally lament that they should ideally be talking more about deeper things. Should they?

John of the Cross teaches that, in any longer-term friendship, eventually the important things begin to happen under the surface, and surface conversation becomes secondary. Togetherness, ease with each other, comfort, and the sense of being at home, is what we give each other then.

That’s also true for our relationship with God. God made us to be human and God wants us, with all of our wandering weaknesses, to be in his presence, with ease, with comfort, and with the feeling that we are at home. Our fear of God can be reverence or timidity; the former is healthy, the latter is neurotic.

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser
Monday, August 15
8:00am School Staff Development Day
10:30am Step 11 Christian Meditation
2:30pm Adoration
7:00pm LOSS Meeting
7:00pm Seasons of Hope

Tuesday, August 16
6:30pm RCIA Team Meeting
7:00pm School Board Meeting
7:00pm Summer Choral Reading
7:30pm Christian Meditation

Wednesday, August 17
2:30pm Christian Meditation

Thursday, August 18
10:00am Crossroads Spiritual Gifts Workshop
6:30pm School Early Childhood Night
6:30pm School New Parent Orientation
7:00pm Interfaith Career Network
7:30pm Men's Club Board Meeting

Friday, August 19
8:00am School Teacher Religion In-Service

Saturday, August 20, 2016
7:00am Christian Meditation
9:00am Morning of Meditation

Sunday, August 21
10:00am Crossroads Frosh-Soph Identity Team
12:00pm Baptisms

Gracious Father, hear our prayers. May your Holy Spirit extinguish division and discord among us and ignite a blaze of compassion, justice and hope within us. We ask this in the name of your Son, our Light and Hope, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Pray for Our Sick
Rita Barnes
Anna Marie Berland
Daniel Burke
Judy Burke
Bradley John Burton
Gloria Ann Byrd
Addie Callahan
Bill Cochran
Crystal Deters
Mildred Fitzgerald
Lynn Freking
Marie Frieh
Christopher Gallagher
John Gannon
Kathleen Gros
Robert Hartnett
Randall Hemaer
Alfred Hesse
Karen Hult

John Impens
Lynn Freking
Marie Frieh
Christopher Gallagher
John Gannon
Kathleen Gros
Robert Hartnett
Randall Hemaer
Alfred Hesse
Karen Hult
Frank Pipal
Marge Pipal
Anthony Placek, Jr.
David Sarros
Kelly Seebruch
Deloris Simon
Duane Szmakowski
Mark Tomko
Don Vollmer
Monica Westell

Pray for Our Loved Ones Serving Our Country
Sgt. Steven Foody, son of Tom & Sandra Foody
Sergeant Sebastian Grabacki, son of David & Jan Grabacki
Sr A Joshua Tischler USAF Pararescue, grandson of Betty & Frank Madler & Mary Tischler
A Navy Seal, a relative of our parishioner
Lance Corporal 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
Petty Officer 3rd Class Mathew Strafaci, grandson of Sandra & Jim Strafaci
Lance Corporal David Strafaci, grandson of Sandra & Jim Strafaci

Pray for Our Beloved Dead
Robert Kral, husband of Mary, father of Brian and Julia
Byrd Kelly, mother of Laura Smith, Patrick and Thomas
Tracy Buicarrelli, mother of Jason, daughter of Pete and Gisela, sister of Peter, N. Renee, Aimee Felker, John, Jason and lan

St. John of the Cross Parish
August 14, 2016
20th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Page 15
St. John of the Cross Parish
Morning of Meditation

Knowing Jesus
—from your
Head to your Heart

Presentation by Joan Binder
Also reflections by meditators,
Periods of meditation,
and small group sharing

Saturday, August 20
Hospitality: 8:30am
Program: 9:00 -11:30am
Parish Center

ALL ARE INVITED:
Those who meditate, and
those who want to learn
to meditate.

Free will offering accepted.
Registration requested,
but not required
mary105105@gmail.com
or 708-246-5108