Walk in the Light of Christ

First Sunday of Advent
November 27, 2016
Dear Parishioners,

I hope your Thanksgiving celebration was a good celebration for your family and for your spirit. Gathering with family that you may not see frequently is a more satisfying encounter than Facebook or other media. But it may also be a different kind of stress. Conversation is not tweeting. The way technology affects communication between people is evolving. The mistake ‘older’ people sometimes make is to dismiss innovation as inferior to their experience. Maybe texting helps teens to make an initial contact with someone else without the awkwardness and stress of an interpersonal encounter. I don’t think talking is ever going to go out of style but the long term impact of social media is still unknown, I think.

And now we begin all over again with the first Sunday of Advent. The church urges slowing down, quiet, waiting with anticipation. The culture demands frenetic activity, more shopping, decorating, partying, consumption. Certainly a clash of expectations and finding a balance is a hit and miss proposition at best. Maybe the Little Blue Book can help you find six minutes a day to be a bit more contemplative. I do think it requires a deliberate choice if you are going to change behavior patterns. It rarely is ‘one and done’ but must be deliberately chosen over and over for some time. Maybe the four weeks of Advent aren’t enough time to make a complete change, but they are certainly enough time to try. The way the calendar falls this year we get four full weeks. Use this time well. The busy part comes at you. The silent waiting must be pursued. It’s your choice.

If you haven’t already, make space in your prayer to include those preparing to be baptized and those who will be received into full communion at the Easter Vigil. They ‘officially’ begin the catechumenate period of the RCIA. A fuller explanation can be found elsewhere in this bulletin.

You can also keep our second graders in your prayer as they receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation this Saturday for the first time. The children and their parents come in groups at three different times. They have about a half hour of final preparation in the Parish Center before coming over to church. Each group takes about an hour to give everyone a chance to receive the sacrament, children first followed by their parents. It seems that more parents receive the sacrament every year, which is not only good modeling for their children but also a wonderful moment of experiencing forgiveness for themselves as well. We are fortunate to have as many retired and other priests who are willing to help us out. It takes about three hours all together for the whole group to be dealt with. It is always a privilege to be the minister of this sacrament of healing. What a gift to see the mercy of God in action!

The next four weeks will fly by. It is up to each of us to decide how. Do what you have to do, but also choose what your soul needs to do.

Until the Breaking of the Bread,
Fr. David

Hear our prayers O gracious Father.
In all of creation, in your gift of life itself,
you have shown your great love for your human family.
May we give you thanks for your many blessings
by living lives that are worthy of such love.
We make these prayers to you in the name of Jesus,
Our Lord and Savior. Amen.
Retired Religious Collection: December 10-11

The Need
Across the United States, hundreds of religious communities lack financial resources sufficient to meet the retirement and health-care needs of aging members.

Lack of Funds
- Many elder religious worked for years for small stipends, leaving a large gap in retirement savings. At the same time, fewer religious are able to serve in compensated ministry.

Rising Costs
- Like many Americans, religious communities face the monumental challenge of funding eldercare.

Changing Demographics
- By 2026, it is projected that religious past age 70 will outnumber those under age 70 by nearly four to one.

Thank you for your generosity to the Retired Religious Collection.

Advent Taizé Prayer
Tuesday, December 6
7:00 - 8:00pm
In Church

Merry Moms
Bring Holiday Cheer!
A group of moms in our parish would like to help you get your home ready for the holidays. If you or someone you know is elderly or sick or alone, this spirit-filled group of moms will put up your inside Christmas decorations and then come back after the holidays to pack them back up. The Merry Moms welcome anyone who would like to join their efforts too! Call JoAnn McGarry today to schedule the Merry Moms to visit your home or to help the Moms. 847-562-6095.

St. John of the Cross

The SJC study group invites anyone interested to celebrate the feast day of St John of the Cross on Wednesday, December 14 by watching a movie about the life of St John of the Cross from 3:30pm-4:30pm in the Parish Center.

Advent Procession at Mass
Families, neighbors, or parish groups are invited to be a part of the opening procession of Sunday Mass during Advent by carrying the Advent candle. Sign up online today!

FUN Christmas Gift Idea:
2017 Fest Mega Passes!
Surprise your family members this Christmas with Mega Passes for the upcoming SJC Fest on June 22, 23, 24 & 25, 2017. Special holiday gift Mega Passes will be available in the Parish Center office during the month of December on weekdays 9am-4pm. Each Mega Pass is $50 and is good for unlimited rides for all four days of the Fest. (Mega Passes are $65 at the door.) Get ready for FUN!

UPDATE from Fr. Bill on his father:
Many of you continue to ask how my Dad is doing. In mid-October Dad had another CT-Scan of his kidney. The results showed that the mass has grown by .7 cm. His doctors confirm that it is slow growing and have decided that no treatment be given at this time. Dad will have another scan in 6 months. He remains in good spirits, watching football and sports on television. Recently he began some physical therapy. He continues to have his appetite. Most importantly he is not suffering any pain. My family and I are grateful for your prayers and kind wishes. They are a tremendous source of support and comfort for us.

Fr. Bill
Begin Again in Each Moment

One of Jesus’ favorite visual aids is a child. Every time the disciples get into head games, he puts a child in front of them. He says the only people who can recognize and be ready for what he’s talking about are the ones who come with the mind and heart of a child. This is what we call “beginner’s mind.” The older we grow, the more we’ve been betrayed and hurt and disappointed, the more barriers we put up to the primal delight and curiosity of small children. We must never presume that we see. We must always be ready to see anew. But it’s so hard to go back and be able to say, “I don’t know anything.”

Say to yourself: “I don’t know anything.” Imagine you are an erased blackboard, ready to be written on, a tabula rasa. For by and large, what blocks spiritual learning is the assumption that we already know, or that we don’t need to know. We have to pray for the immense guidance that is offered us in the beginner’s mind. We need to say with the blind man, “Lord, I want to see.”

Spirituality is about seeing. It’s about intimate relationship with things rather than achieving results or meeting requirements. Once you see fully, the rest follows. You don’t need to push the river, because you are already in the river. God’s life of love is being lived within you, and you must simply learn how to say yes to that life. If you exist on a level where you can see how “everything belongs,” you can trust the flow and trust the life. This Life is so large and deep and spacious that it even includes its opposite, death. This is the only true life available to us. As Paul wrote to the Colossians, “You have died [the small ego self], and the life you now have is hidden with Christ in God [the Godself]. When Christ is revealed—and he is your life—you too will be revealed in all your glory with him” (Colossians 3:3-4).

Gateway to Silence:
God’s life is living itself in me.

God
of Love,
Your son, Jesus,
is your greatest gift to us.
He is a sign of your love.
Help us walk in that love
during the weeks of Advent,
As we wait and prepare for his coming.
We pray in the name of Jesus, our Savior.
Amen.
Living the Gospel

Daily living is filled with planned events at set hours: eating, drinking, marrying, working. In this way, human beings measure time. For us, time is duration, relentless minutes ticking on. Once past, there is no recovery of lost hours. Wasted time is lost time. Wasted opportunity is lost growth. Wasted preparedness is lost encounter. There is, however, another time that cannot be measured: God’s time, the fullness of time in which is the fullness of Life. God’s time has no duration. All simply is. All is full of Life. This describes eternity, and even now in our measured time we experience eternity, God’s time. We have those moments when our attentiveness is so acute that the now is all there is. When Jesus admonishes us to “stay awake,” he is inviting attentiveness to his abiding Presence that is now even as its fullness is yet to come. Try as we might, however, it is difficult to “stay awake” and keep our eyes constantly on Christ’s comings. We easily get distracted by all of the everyday demands on our time.

“As it was” and as it is, “[s]o will it be also at the coming of the Son of Man.” How we live now has consequences beyond our eating, drinking, marrying, working. How we live now is how we will be: taken into God’s time, or left in the never-ending succession of hours and days, weeks and years. How we live in our time is a doorway into God’s time. How we live in our time prepares us for Christ’s Second Coming, while it also prepares us for living more fully even now. Advent calls us to immerse ourselves in God’s time and to stay awake for the Life that is yet to come—and is already now. ©Living Liturgy

Background on the Gospel

Today is the first Sunday of Advent, which is also the first Sunday of a new liturgical year for the Church. The Advent season includes the four Sundays that precede Christmas. It is a time of preparation for the coming of the Lord. In this season, we recall two central elements of our faith: the final coming of the Lord in glory and the incarnation of the Lord in the birth of Jesus. Key themes of the Advent season are watchful waiting, preparation, and justice.

In this new liturgical year, the Gospel of Matthew will be the primary Gospel proclaimed (Lectionary Cycle A). In today’s Gospel, we hear Jesus speak about the need for wakefulness, for watchful waiting, for the coming of the Son of Man.

Matthew’s Gospel is dated by most scholars after 70 A.D. Most believe that Matthew wrote for a primarily Jewish community, but one that was no longer centered on the Temple in Jerusalem. These were Jewish Christians trying to come to terms with their relationship to Judaism in a new situation: Judaism after the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. There may have been Christians who believed that the events of the world around them gave evidence of the imminent return of the Lord in glory.

The passage from Matthew we read today is rather straightforward. No one knows the precise time of the coming of the Lord in glory, so watchful waiting and vigilance are required. The passage speaks to the uselessness of looking for signs; there will be none. As a thief sneaks in during the night, so will the Lord’s coming in glory be.

The question for us as members of the Christian community, then, is how do we prepare for this? Today’s passage speaks more about the manner of waiting, rather than the details of the preparation. Jesus compares the vigilance required of Christians to the vigilance of a homeowner who knows the plans of the thief. If one knows that the thief’s action is imminent, one remains watchful. As Christians, we know that our Lord is coming even if we cannot know the precise timing. Jesus calls us to be watchful and vigilant, like the homeowner. If we become lax in our Christian living, we may be caught unprepared. Loyola Press

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<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ps 122:1-2, 3-4b</td>
<td>Ps 72:1-2, 7-8,</td>
<td>Ps 19:8, 9, 10, 11</td>
<td>Ps 118:1 and 8-9,</td>
<td>Ps 27:1, 4, 13-14</td>
<td>Ps 147:1-2, 3-4:5-6</td>
<td>Ps 72:1, 2, 7-8, 12-13, 17</td>
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St. John of the Cross Parish  First Sunday of Advent  November 27, 2016  Page 5
Prayer for Advent
Lord God in heaven, our hearts desire the warmth of Your love
And our minds are searching for the light of Your Word.
Increase our longing for Christ our Savior and give us
The strength to grow in love, that the dawn of his
Coming may find us rejoicing in his presence and
welcoming the light of his truth.
We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord. Amen.

- The Roman Missal

Act of Love
O my God, I love You above all things with my whole
heart and soul because You are all good
and worthy of all my love.
I love my neighbor as myself for the love of You.
I forgive all who have injured me and ask pardon of all
whom I have injured.
Amen.

It is the beginning of Advent, and here in Michigan, it is the
beginning of winter weather, too.
Today, water falls in an opaque sheath across the window in
my living room. This only happens when the wind comes from
the east. Then the intersection of clear glass and clear water
combine to make a curdled veil.

Why?
What does water not like about being disturbed? If you hold it
perfectly still, it is perfectly clear. But if you throw it, or stir it, or
pour it, it becomes a froth.
Am I like water? Do I need the stillness to see? Do I become a
destructive force when there is too much of me, when I am
frozen, when I am tossed about? They say, after all, that
humans are over 65% water. Maybe I should study my
properties more closely this Advent. by Jane Knuth
Many believers have come to realize that their day goes better when they pray early and often. Here’s a list of suggestions for praying your way through your day. Pick one or two suggestions that seem to be calling you and make a habit of them. You can always add more prayer to your day as time goes by.

1. **Start with a Morning Offering.** Start each day by declaring your intention to make a gift of all the “joys, works, prayers, and sufferings” of the day ahead. Use words such as “God, I offer you my whole day. I offer you all that I am, all that I have, and all that I will do. Help me to know and do your will.”

2. **Think ahead.** Imagine the toughest challenge facing you in the day ahead. Now imagine that these are moments of grace in which God is especially present to you.

3. **Take a quiet time.** Early in your day, spend a brief period of quiet. Starting your day with ten minutes to half an hour in meditative prayer will make a huge difference in your whole day.

4. **Pray as you sit down to eat breakfast.** Ask for strength and direction in your day.

5. **Make lemonade.** Pray during the day whenever you hit a snag and feel frustrated.

6. **Pray with joy.** Pray when you feel glad to see or hear from someone—a friend, a coworker, a student, a customer.

7. **Pray before your noontime meal.** Ask for patience, perseverance, and hope.

8. **Take a three-minute prayer break.** In midafternoon simply breathe and ask to be refreshed. Imagine rays of light filling your soul.

9. **Pray at transition times.** Be aware of your body as one part of the day comes to an end and another begins. Slow down and breathe deeply.

10. **Pray before your evening meal.** In addition to thanking God for your food, take a moment for everyone at the table to answer the questions “Who blessed me with their presence and their actions today?” and “Whom did I bless?”

11. **Pray to let go of the cares of the day.** Find a “trigger moment,” such as putting your keys on your dresser; turning off the television, radio, or computer; or laying out clothes for the next day, that can serve as a reminder to take a moment for reflective prayer.

12. **Finish your day with night prayer.** Before you drift off to sleep, thank God for all the gifts you received and for rest, assurance, calm, and peace.
During the Thanksgiving season, our students at each grade level spend time reflecting on what they are thankful for. Our first graders studied the first Thanksgiving by participating in a readers’ theatre during their Learning Resource Center time, and they also shared how they celebrate Thanksgiving in their own homes. The fifth grade made Thanksgiving crosses that are displayed throughout the school, and our pre-school students adorned their classroom doors with their thanks. And, in art class our Kindergarteners designed their own Trinity trees.

**This Week at SJC**
**Monday, November 28**
Advent Prayer Service 9:15am Gym  
**Friday, December 2**
Out of Uniform  
**Saturday, December 3**
Second Grade – First Reconciliation

**Family Faith Formation**
Families are the primary teachers of faith. Our actions serve as examples of how we live our faith. We pray together as a family. We attend Mass together as a family. We share stories of faith together, and we grow in faith together. 70 parish families choose the responsibility of forming their children in faith each year through a special formation program. Our Family Faith Connection Program provides them with weekly lessons, weekly scripture study, monthly Mass reflections, monthly family gatherings and annual spiritual and service experiences. Parents often comment on how much they learn as they work with their children on the lessons. At our November gathering the families experienced several types of prayer experiences. They offered names of loved ones who passed away, which became our Litany of Saints; they created one chaplet rosaries and learned about Pope Francis’s 5 Finger Prayer. Through song, crafts, discussions and presentations these families continue to deepen their relationship with Christ.

**YC Schedule ~ No YC Nov 27/28**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YC Classes</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>K-6</td>
<td>10:15-11:30am</td>
<td>Sun, Dec 4, 11, 18</td>
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<td>6:15-7:30pm</td>
<td>Mon, Dec 5, 12, 19</td>
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**FFC**
Noon to 1:30 pm  
Sun, Dec 4 (begin in MPR)

**Jr Hi Sm Groups**
Dec 4th: 7th gr 6:30pm in Parish Center / 8th gr-homes  
home settings  
Sun, Dec 18

**Adapted Catechesis**
9:00-10:00am  
Sun, Dec 4, 18
Thank you for helping us feed those who are hungry.

More than 200 SJC volunteers worked together on Harvest Saturday to collect, sort, pack and deliver over 800 boxes of food to local food pantries. Parishioners from our Sharing Parish, St. Gall, joined in on the efforts. Thank you for helping to feed those in need.

Church League Basketball Kickoff Today

The Crossroads Church League Basketball season starts today, Sunday, with a mandatory meeting at 6:00pm in the multipurpose room of school. Each player must attend with a parent.

NCCYM
Katie Hayes, Youth Ministry Director, and Katie Nicholson, Youth Ministry Coordinator, will attend the National Conference on Catholic Youth Ministry next week. Please keep them in your prayers.

Parish News

advent by candlelight
Tuesday, November 29
7-10pm

Join us for a truly special, memorable evening filled with Joy & Hope as we prepare for Christmas.

Be a Table Coordinator for 8 or 12. Coordinators decorate their table with special holiday touches using their linens, candles, and centerpiece decorations. Dishes, flatware and stemware provided in addition to coffee, soda and dessert.

For questions or to reserve your place contact Lee Rosenberg at 708-269-6046 or fletchrosen@gmail.com. $10 per person.

RSVP by Wednesday, November 23 to the Parish Center, or mail to Lee Rosenberg at 4540 Woodland Avenue, Western Springs, or sign up on the parish website.

Name:
Phone:
Email:

[ ] Yes, I am coordinating a table.

If you have a table / seating preference, list here:
Outreach

LIVESTOCK for LIFE

The Livestock for Life Program gives others hope by supplying them with a hen, pig, or goat. Raising livestock provides a source of income and livelihood for many in Jinja, Uganda. The donation made in your honor will continue to strengthen this vulnerable community for years to come.

You may purchase on-line with your credit card or drop off a check with the form below to the Parish Center. Each gift is $40.

While Holy Cross Parish in Jinja, Uganda is no longer a SJC Sharing Parish, we continue to encourage participation in the Livestock for Life Program.

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<th>LIVESTOCK for LIFE</th>
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Drop off at Parish Center. Gift cards may be picked up at the Parish Center or it can be mailed to you or the recipient.

Ways You Can Help Others

Bake or Buy Christmas Cookies
Christmas cookies are needed for the LaGrange Community Nurses Association Holiday Open House on December 3. Drop off cookies at the Parish Center lobby on December 1 & 2 before 4pm.

Buy Stamps for Inmates
Donate postage Stamps for Kolbe House to enable those in prison to send Christmas Cards to their families. Bring stamps to the Parish Center or put them in the Sunday Offertory Collection basket at Mass.

Food Pantry Drive
Nonperishable food brought to the church narthex during November and December will be delivered to Mary Queen of Heaven. Family favorites include canned vegetables (corn, peas, green beans), cereal, tuna, boxed mashed potatoes, stuffing, pasta, pasta sauce, rice, and baby food.

Donate Christmas Mugs
Fill a Christmas mug with candy as a gift for special needs young adults at the Ray Graham Association Center in Chicago. Wrap in clear wrap and drop off at the Parish Center lobby by December 7.

Wrap Gifts for Charity
Help the Companions Journeying Together Aunt Mary’s Storybook Project by wrapping gifts at Chicago Ridge Mall on various days in December. Email Jenny for days and times at jxacosta@gmail.com. Proceeds from the wrapping fees go to the Storybook Project.

Companions Journeying Together, a non-profit organization, provides a forum to personally impact the emotional, spiritual, and social lives of the incarcerated and their families at 12 different area jails. Companions Journeying Together staff and trained volunteers bring a selection of brand new books, along with audio recorders into the jail or prison. They assist participating parent inmates in choosing an age-appropriate book for each one of their children. Each participant is given an opportunity to record him or herself reading the book for their child. If the participant wishes, they may end with a message of love to the child and thanks to the caregiver. On behalf of the parent, the books and CD are then sent to the caregiver for the children.
The Share Christmas experience at St. John of the Cross Parish is a strong and beautiful tradition that will fill your heart with joy as you make someone else’s Christmas special!

Our gifts are delivered to the following grateful recipients in the Chicago area: Blessed Sacrament Church, Little Brothers/Friends of the Elderly, St. Thomas of Canterbury, Santa Maria Addolorata, St. Margaret/Thaddeus, St. Mark, St. Agatha, St. Gall as well as families in our own parish community.

Join in on the fun! Sign Up for Share Christmas takes place before and after all Masses this weekend and continues through the December 3-4 weekend. Sign Up will also take place on Thanksgiving Day after the 9:30am Mass.

For your convenience our parish Scrip reps will be available in the church community room for you to purchase food and gift certificates. Cash, checks or credit cards (Visa, MasterCard, Discover) will be accepted. A 3% convenience fee will be applied to credit card purchases.

What can I buy?
- An unwrapped gift for a child (infant to 18 years old)
- A food gift card from Jewel for Walmart or a Christmas meal
- Gift cards for families from Sears, Walmart, Kohl’s, Target or JC Penny
- Food and gift cards for a Christmas meal and presents for a family

Please note, providing gift cards for our recipient families allows them to select the sizes and colors that more closely meet their needs. Similarly, providing food cards lets them choose food based on their family preferences and health/allergy concerns. Whether you choose to provide a store bought individual gift, or a gift or food card, know that your generosity will make all the difference in Christmas for our grateful recipients.

Donations can also be made on our parish website at www.stjohnofthecross.org. Click on the Giving tab and direct your donation to the Special Collections link to choose Share Christmas. Your gifts will be used to purchase food and gift certificates.

Drop off days are Monday and Tuesday, December 5 and 6 between 9am-7pm and Wednesday, December 7 from 9am-4pm at the Parish Center. The gifts will then be delivered to the parishes on Saturday, December 19. If you have a van or small truck or if you are free to help load and deliver, please call us. Questions can be directed to Lolly Maloney at 630-261-5675 or lollymaloney@gmail.com or the Parish Center.

Find us ready Lord...not standing still.
Find us working and loving and doing your will.
Find us ready Lord...faithful in love and building the kingdom that’s here and above!
At the 5:00pm Mass this weekend (November 27) we will celebrate the Rites of Acceptance and Welcoming with Gil Clark and Kaitlyn Kalata-Acosta. Through Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation they will complete the Sacraments of Initiation.

Through the celebration of these rites, Kaitlyn and Gil are publicly declaring their intention to enter into a formal relationship with the Church, learning our ways and particularly our Catholic Christian lifestyle. We, the Church, accept their commitment and pledge our support throughout their journey of faith. For those preparing for baptism, this rite makes them official members of the Church. They are given an official title and a role to play in the Church, that of “catechumen” which means “one in whom the Word of God echoes.”

The rites of the Catholic faith are filled with symbols and symbolic actions. The first is a door. The doors of the Church are important because they symbolize transition and crossing over. But doors are also liminal spaces in that we still live in the in-between time until Christ comes again to invite the faithful into the doors of the kingdom. Consequently, in the Rite of Acceptance and Welcoming, those wishing to answer God’s call are met at the threshold of the Church and ritually welcomed to enter through our doors.

Another symbol is the cross. Those answering God’s call to the faith need to learn how to let go and die to their old way of life which is often painful and difficult, but the cross is the ultimate sign of victory and salvation. In the Rite of Acceptance and Welcoming, the Church sets apart and makes holy those who are committing themselves to following Christ by signing their bodies with the sign of our faith, the cross.

A third symbol is the Assembly. When God’s people gather on Sunday to proclaim the Scriptures, offer prayers for the world, and remember Christ in the sharing of a meal, the Eucharist, Christ is truly present. It will be through the assembly, the faith community of St. John of the Cross, that the catechumens and candidates will learn how to live as Christ.

Gil and Kaitlyn need to be able to depend on us to apprentice them into a life of faith within our Catholic community. Because they are not yet baptized and are not yet in full communion with the Catholic faith, our catechumen and candidates cannot yet participate in the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Therefore, after the homily, the catechumens and candidates are sent forth to feast on the Word of God.

This evening the Catholic community of St. John of the Cross welcomes Gil Clarke as a catechumen and Kaitlyn Acosta as a candidate into the Period of the Catechumenate. Let us continue to pray for them as they enter into the Catechumenate period of the RCIA process.

Men’s Club December Event

All men of the parish are invited to the annual Men’s Club Smoker at nearby Casa De Montecristo in Countryside on Thursday, December 15 at 6:30pm. You are welcome to BYOB. Please RSVP to Dan Montgomery at tdm30550@gmail.com or 312-952-1435.

CATHOLICISM: The Pivotal Players

Discover the figures who shaped the Church and changed the world

CATHOLICISM: The Pivotal Players, a multi-part film series that illumines a handful of saints, artists, mystics, and scholars who not only shaped the life of the Church but changed the course of civilization, continues! Thursdays at 1pm or 7pm in the Parish Center.

All are welcome. Call the Parish Center for more information. There is no fee to attend. See schedule below:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
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<tr>
<td>December 15</td>
<td>1pm or 7pm</td>
<td>Blessed John Henry Newman</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 12</td>
<td>1pm or 7pm</td>
<td>G.K. Chesterton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 16</td>
<td>1pm or 7pm</td>
<td>Michelangelo</td>
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BISHOP BARRON: Blessed John Henry Newman’s conversion was unexpected, as the summons to discipleship so often is, and that summons compelled a decision. The decision led necessarily to sacrifice, even suffering, but despite the conditions the Lord imposed, John Henry Newman accepted.

Too often Christian discipleship becomes a caricature. We dabble in it, choosing this or that aspect rather than giving our full assent, believing that blessing is a matter of prosperity rather than the opportunity to love and to serve.

Newman shows forth in his life the spiritual power that is unleashed when one gives assent to what Jesus wants, and what happens when we allow him to lead us onto paths unexpected and unknown.
St. John of the Cross Parish congratulates the following families who had their babies baptized on November 6 by Deacon John Schopp. In the picture on the left are Bradley and Catherine Klauseger with baby Adalynn Colleen and Robert and Jenna Osburn with Annie Eileen. Pictured on the right side are Jessica and Matthew Yang with baby Isabelle Marion and Todd and Michelle Schultz with Hudson Gregory.

Pictured below are families who had their babies baptized on November 13 by Deacon Rich Voytas. From the left are Michael and Kelly Sapp with Emily Ann, Erik and Kristen Vines with Zofia Kristen, Rebecca and Bryant Crane with Leo Bryant, and Ryan and Crystal McMurray with Sloan Renee and little brother.

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.
When I was a graduate student in Belgium, I was privileged one day to sit in on a conference given by Cardinal Godfried Danneels of Brussels. He was commenting on the Eucharist and our lack of understanding of it full richness when he highlighted this contrast: If you stood outside of a Roman Catholic church today as people were coming out of the church and asked them: “Was that a good Eucharist?” most everyone would answer on the basis of the homily and the music. If the homily was interesting and the music lively, most people would answer that it had been a good Eucharist. Now, he continued, if you had stood outside a Roman Catholic church sixty or seventy years ago and asked: “Was that a good mass today?” nobody would have even understood the question. They would have answered something to the effect of: “Aren’t they all the same!”

Today our understanding of the Eucharist, in Roman Catholic circles and indeed in most Protestant and Anglican circles, is very much concentrated on three things: the liturgy of the Word, the music, and communion. Moreover, in Roman Catholic churches, we speak of the real presence only in reference to the last element, the presence of Christ in the bread and wine. While none of this is wrong, the liturgy of the word, the music, and communion are important, something is missing in this understanding. It misses the fact that the real presence is not just in the bread and wine, it is also in the liturgy of the Word and in the salvific event that is recalled in the Eucharistic prayer, namely, the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Most churchgoers already recognize that when the scriptures are celebrated in a liturgical service God’s presence is made special, more physically tangible, than God’s normal presence everywhere or God’s presence inside our private prayer. The Word of God, when celebrated in a church is, like Christ’s presence in the consecrated bread and wine, also the real presence.

But there’s a further element that’s less understood: The Eucharist doesn’t just make a person present; it also makes an event present. We participate in the Eucharist not just to receive Christ in communion, but also to participate in the major salvific event of his life, his death and resurrection.

What's at issue here?

At the Last Supper, Jesus invited his followers to continue to meet and celebrate the Eucharist “in memory of me”. But his use of the word “memory” and our use of that word are very different. For us “memory” is a weaker word. It simply means calling something to mind, remembering an event like the birth of your child, your wedding day, or the game when your favorite sports team finally won the championship. That’s a simple remembering, a passing recollection. It can stir deep feelings but it does nothing more. Whereas in the Hebrew concept out of which Jesus was speaking, memory, making ritual remembrance of something, implied much more than simply recalling something. To remember something was not simply to nostalgically recall it. Rather it meant to recall and ritually re-enact it so as to make it present again in a real way.

For example, that’s how the Passover Supper is understood within Judaism. The Passover meal recalls the Exodus from Egypt and the miraculous passing through the Red Sea into freedom. The idea is that one generation, led by Moses, did this historically, but that by re-enacting that event ritually, in the Passover Meal, the event is made present again, in a real way, for those at table to experience.

The Eucharist is the same, except that the saving event we re-enact so as to remake it present through ritual is the death and resurrection of Jesus, the new Exodus. Our Christian belief here is exactly the same as that of our Jewish brothers and sisters, namely, that we are not just remembering an event, we are actually making it present to participate in. The Eucharist, parallel to a Jewish Passover meal, remakes present the central saving event in Christian history, namely, Jesus’ Passover from death to life in the Paschal mystery. And just as the consecrated bread and wine give us the real presence of Christ, the Eucharist also gives us the real presence of the central saving event in our history, Jesus’ passage from death to life.

Thus at a Eucharist, there are, in effect, three real presences: Christ is really present in the Word, namely, the scriptures, the preaching, and the music. Christ is really present in the consecrated bread and wine; they are his body and blood. And Christ is really present in a saving event: Jesus’ sacrificial passing from death to life.

And so we go to Eucharist not just to be brought into community by Jesus’ word and to receive Jesus in communion, we go there too to enter into the saving event of his death and resurrection. The real presence is in both a person and in an event

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser
Mass & Reconciliation Schedule & Intentions  Italics: Living Intention

Monday, November 28  Advent Weekday
7:45am Deceased Members of the Madigan & O’Malley families; Our Beloved Dead

Tuesday, November 29  Advent Weekday
7:45am Carole Turlek; Marie Capellani

Wednesday, November 30  Feast of St. Andrew
7:45am Genrose Hlavin; William Dunn

Thursday, December 1  Advent Weekday
9:30am Therese Jurkacek; Marguerite Kohut

Friday, December 2  Advent Weekday
7:45am Jack LaFleur; Joseph Gowgiel

Saturday, December 3  St. Francis Xavier
8:00am Genrose Hlavin; Rev. William Mannion
~ Reconciliation following the 8am Mass ~
5:00pm Dave Kaiser; Phyllis Yocum

Sunday, December 4  Second Sunday of Advent
7:30am Joseph Groom; Walter Dudek
9:00am Caroline Romeniec; Lenny Kamenjarin & Raymond Fatter
10:45am Jill Jodlowski; Paul Stimetz
12:15pm Charles Macke; Jonas Jovarauskas
5:00pm Eileen Quinn; Vyto Shukis

Pray for Our Sick
Robert Arbuckle  Mildred Fitzgerald  Bobbie Misiora
Gary Berger  Lynn Freking  Jennifer Ochino
Katie Berger  Bedelia Fres  Patrick O’Donnell
Glori Ann Byrd  Kathy Gros  Mary Ann Piwowar
Christina Carinato  Karen Hult  Gail Schmidt
Patrick Carmody  Curtis Kerzich  Deloris Simonek
Paul Cervony  George Kojima  Ray Simonek
Nancy Cottone  Athie Lanahan  Don Vollmer
Alexander DeLosReyes  Erin Lively  Eric Wilson

Pray for Our Loved Ones Serving Our Country
Sgt. Steven Foody, son of Sandra Foody
Sergeant Sebastian Grabacki, son of David & Jan Grabacki
Sr A Joshua Tischler USAF Pararescue, grandson of Betty & Frank Madler
A Navy Seal, a relative of our parishioner & Mary Tischler
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
Sgt. Michael Grabarek, relative of the LeFevour and Schillaci families

For Families: During Advent we not only prepare ourselves to celebrate the birth of Jesus, but we also check in to see if we are doing all the things that will keep us ready to receive Jesus when he comes again. Talk to your family about how you are doing in attending to your spiritual life as a family. Recommit yourselves to praying daily, reading Scripture, and staying faithful to God’s commandments. Pray together that through this Advent season your family will be more prepared to receive Jesus when he comes again.
Light the way for family & friends this Christmas... Begin a holiday tradition your children will love!

LUMINARIA KIT FUNDRAISER

Each Luminaria Kit includes 5 white bags, 5 long-burning candles (10+ hours) and enough sand to assemble your luminaries. Free home delivery for seniors!

Order Deadline: Monday, December 5th
Pick-up Date: Sunday, December 11th from 8:00am to 1:00pm

Order online at www.stjohnofthecross.org

To order with cash or check, complete the form below and return with payment to the SJC Parish Center by 12/11. Make Checks Payable to SJC Women’s Club.

Last Name: __________________________ First Name: __________________________
Email: __________________________________ Phone: __________________________

Luminary Kit(s) x $10 = Total Due
Each kit contains 5 bags, 5 candles and enough sand to assemble the luminaries

☐ Seniors check here for FREE Delivery!

Address for Delivery: ____________________________________________

Sponsored by the SJC Women’s Club in partnership with Village True Value Hardware
Please contact Julie Misarti at juliemisarti@gmail.com or 773-294-9099 with questions.