This weekend proved to be a dark moment in U.S. history. The executive order to turn away refugees and to close our nation to those, particularly Muslims, fleeing violence, oppression and persecution is contrary to both Catholic and American values. Have we not repeated the disastrous decisions of those in the past who turned away other people fleeing violence, leaving certain ethnicities and religions marginalized and excluded? We Catholics know that history well, for, like others, we have been on the other side of such decisions.

These actions impose a sweeping and immediate halt on migrants and refugees from several countries, people who are suffering, fleeing for their lives. Their design and implementation have been rushed, chaotic, cruel and oblivious to the realities that will produce enduring security for the United States. They have left people holding valid visas and other proper documents detained in our airports, sent back to the places some were fleeing or not allowed to board planes headed here. Only at the eleventh hour did a federal judge intervene to suspend this unjust action.

We are told this is not the “Muslim ban” that had been proposed during the presidential campaign, but these actions focus on Muslim-majority countries. They make an exception for Christians and non-Muslim minorities, but not for Muslims refugees fleeing for their lives. Ironically, this ban does not include the home country of 15 of the 19 September 11 hijackers. Yet, people from Iraq, even those who assisted our military in a destructive war, are excluded.

The United States has a long history of welcoming refugees who are fleeing for their lives and Catholic organizations have helped to resettle many families, men, women, and children, from around the globe. Many of our priests, religious and laypeople have accompanied newcomers precisely to assist them in this process. Because of our history of aiding in refugee and migrant settlement for decades, we know the very lengthy and thorough vetting process they must face before they are admitted to our country. We have seen initial fear turn into a generous willingness of local communities to accept and integrate refugees. Here in Chicago generations of migrants have found a new home. We are better for it.

The world is watching as we abandon our commitments to American values. These actions give aid and comfort to those who would destroy our way of life. They lower our estimation in the eyes of the many peoples who want to know America as a defender of human rights and religious liberty, not a nation that targets religious populations and then shuts its doors on them.

It is time to put aside fear and join together to recover who we are and what we represent to a world badly in need of hope and solidarity. “If we want security, let us give security; if we want life, let us give life; if we want opportunities, let us provide opportunities.” Pope Francis issued these challenging words to Congress in 2015, and followed with a warning that should haunt us as we come to terms with the events of the weekend: “The yardstick we use for others will be the yardstick which time will use for us.” 01.29.17

MAY GOD BLESS YOU WITH DISCOMFORT WITH EASY ANSWERS, half-truths, and superficial relationships…
so that you will live deep within your heart.

May God bless you with anger at injustice, oppression and exploitation of people…
so that you will work for justice, equity and peace.

May God bless you with tears to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation and war… so that you will reach out your hand to comfort them and change their pain to joy.

And may God bless you with the foolishness to think that you can make a difference in the world… so that you will do the things which others tell you cannot be done.

Amen.

Elaine Menardi Diocese of Cheyenne, Wyoming
Our faith is lived in schools and parishes, soup kitchens and counseling centers, on street corners and in churches, where people of all backgrounds in every neighborhood of the Archdiocese of Chicago are served.

Your gift to the Annual Catholic Appeal (ACA) helps to sustain Catholic schools, religious education, ministerial formation, and initiatives for life, peace and justice. Through its support of Catholic Relief Services, the Appeal serves people worldwide, without regard for religious affiliation, whose lives are devastated by natural disasters, illnesses, wars and famines.

Many parishioners will be receiving a mailing from Cardinal Cupich asking you to make a pledge to the Appeal. Please respond generously. We will be conducting our parish Appeal at Sunday Mass in a few weeks when you will also have an opportunity to contribute to the Appeal.

Ministry Priorities of the 2017 Annual Catholic Appeal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority Area</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td>$5,000,000 Local Communities: support for parishes and schools serving financially challenged communities</td>
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<tr>
<td>$1,200,000 Parish Life: programs to support parish vitality and evangelization initiatives and liturgy enhancements</td>
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<tr>
<td>$1,200,000 Religious Education: support for youth, young adult, campus and adult religious education ministries</td>
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<tr>
<td>$800,000 Lay Formation: continuing education for lay volunteers and staff serving parish communities</td>
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<tr>
<td>$640,000 Catholic Relief Services: assisting the poor and vulnerable overseas</td>
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<tr>
<td>$535,000 Human Dignity and Solidarity: activities promoting respect for life at all stages, immigration, Kolbe House Prison Ministry, and Peace &amp; Justice initiatives</td>
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<tr>
<td>$400,000 Priest Education: continuing education for priests ordained for our Archdiocese</td>
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<tr>
<td>$275,000 Parish Transformation: programs to revitalize local parish communities</td>
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<tr>
<td>$200,000 Family Ministries: programs for marriage preparation, marriage support and family ministry</td>
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<tr>
<td>$3,750,000 Parish Incentives/Rebates: funds raised in excess of individual parish goals are returned to the parish for use with their local ministries</td>
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<tr>
<td>$14,000,000 Ministries Total</td>
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<tr>
<td>$1,500,000 Cost of Appeal: design, printing, postage, production, staff and vendors who implement the Annual Catholic Appeal</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>$15,500,000 2017 Annual Catholic Appeal Goal</td>
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SJC & ACA & TTWCI

As has been communicated to the parish, instead of conducting a pledge drive to raise $3M for the archdiocesan To Teach Who Christ Is Campaign (TTWCI), we are managing our parish finances differently to retire our $1.2M obligation due to the archdiocese. Similar to the ACA, our donations to TTWCI help to strengthen parishes in need and support the ministries of our local Church. (In 2015 the archdiocese told us that 5 annual payments of $240,240 (totaling $1.2M) will begin in 2018.

Fr. David has asked parishioners to continue their generous support of three revenue sources, giving moderate annual increases to Sunday Offertory and the Annual Catholic Appeal (as the amount given over our goal returns to the parish) and to support our annual parish fundraiser, the SJC Fest. By maintaining strength in these three key areas and managing parish expenses carefully, we can successfully sustain parish operations and retire our TTWCI debt.

Thus far (as reported in our FY 15-16 Annual Report available on the parish website) due to your incredible generosity, we have been able to set aside $608,802, half of the amount we owe to the archdiocese. Two thirds of this total has come from the last two Annual Catholic Appeal rebates we have received. As we move forward with the 2017 ACA, we again ask for your continued generosity enabling us to set aside additional rebate money to retire our debt.
Living the Gospel

In this Gospel Jesus calls us to assess whether our discipleship has lost its potency because our salt has become flat and our light has become dim. The good news is that no matter how bland or dim our discipleship, Christ never throws us out, tramples us underfoot, or hides us. Here is the twist of the gospel: Jesus calls disciples to be the “salt of the earth” and the “light of the world,” yet to be such, Christ must first be our salt and light. We need first to encounter Christ who always remains with us, making it possible for us to mature in our discipleship.

While the gospel uses metaphors to help us understand who we are as disciples of Jesus, this is not simply pretty language that may give us a poetic thrill but then be forgotten. We must act decisively as God acts: we are to feed the hungry, “shelter the oppressed and the homeless,” “clothe the naked,” remove oppression, and refrain from “malicious speech.” Practically speaking for us today, this might mean that we get involved in some of the parish ministries directed to social outreach; or we might tutor one of the schoolchildren. Maybe being Christ-salty or Christ-shining simply means that we take stock of our already too-busy days and reflect on what has value or meaning for the good of others and what has become habit to no real avail. Discipleship always involves ongoing discernment about how we are in relation to God and others. Anything short of being the best person we can be as God’s instruments of salvation is selling short being true to ourselves. ©Living Liturgy

Background on the Gospel

Following upon the teaching of the Beatitudes, Jesus uses the now familiar metaphors of salt and light to describe the life of discipleship. We take salt and light for granted in our society, but these commodities were more precious in ancient cultures. Just as now, salt was used in Jesus’ time for flavoring, as a preservative, and as a healing agent. Similarly, the widespread use of electricity in the modern world makes us less aware of the value and importance of light in our lives.

Still, our familiarity with this passage from Matthew's Gospel speaks well to the abiding power of the imagery that Jesus presented. Jesus' call to be salt for the earth and light for the world powerfully states our mission as Church and as Christians. Our commitment to social justice flows from the exhortation that Jesus gives us in today's Gospel. Some of the activities that this commitment leads us to are given more concrete expression as the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy. When we feed the hungry, clothe the naked, console those who mourn, and so on, we show ourselves to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. When we do these things with the community of faith, the Church, we are indeed acting as "a city set on a mountain" that cannot be hidden! Loyola Press

Readings for the Week

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<th>Monday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Book</td>
<td>Gen 1:1-19</td>
<td>Ps 104:1-2a, 5-6, 10 and 12, 24 and 35c</td>
<td>Mark 8:33-36</td>
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<td>Tuesday</td>
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<tr>
<td>No Book</td>
<td>Gen 1:20-2:4a</td>
<td>Ps 8:4-5, 6-7, 8-9</td>
<td>Mark 7:1-13</td>
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<td>Wednesday</td>
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<tr>
<td>No Book</td>
<td>Gen 2:4b-9, 15-17</td>
<td>Ps 104:1-2a,27-28, 28bc-30</td>
<td>Mark 7:14-23</td>
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<td>Thursday</td>
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<tr>
<td>No Book</td>
<td>Gen 2:18-25</td>
<td>Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5</td>
<td>Mark 7:24-30</td>
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<td>Friday</td>
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<tr>
<td>No Book</td>
<td>Gen 3:1-8</td>
<td>Ps 32:1-2, 5, 6, 7</td>
<td>Mark 7:31-37</td>
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<td>Saturday</td>
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<tr>
<td>No Book</td>
<td>Gen 3:9-24</td>
<td>Ps 90:2, 3-4abc, 5-6, 12-13</td>
<td>Mark 8:1-10</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6th Sunday in Ord. Time</td>
<td>Sir 15:15-20</td>
<td>Ps 119:1-2, 4-5, 17-18, 33-34, 1 Cor 2:6-10</td>
<td>Matt 5:17-37</td>
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Prayer

The Beatitudes Examen
The Examen is a prayer designed to help a person make a daily review with a focus on gratitude and openness to the Holy Spirit’s direction. The steps of the Examen—pray for the Holy Spirit’s guidance; review the day; identify where you saw God at work and give thanks for it; identify where you could have done better; pray with a view to tomorrow’s challenges—can be custom fitted to any focus. This Examen focuses on the Beatitudes from last Sunday’s Gospel.

_Blessed are: the poor in spirit, those who mourn, those who are meek, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, those who are persecuted for righteousness’s sake._

**Step 1:** Ask the Holy Spirit to guide your memory over the past few months.
**Step 2:** Call to mind the people you encountered who were poor or mourning or meek...any people described by the Beatitudes. As you think of these people, give thanks for them and for how they brought the Kingdom of God into your life.
**Step 3:** Call to mind when you were poor in spirit or mourning or meek, etc. Ask God to help you perceive that you have been blessed in these experiences, even if they were difficult. Ask God to help you believe that these experiences open your life to God’s grace and love.
**Step 4:** Ask forgiveness for any time you resented or resisted the times of poverty or mourning or other beatitude experiences: Know that God already knows where you are weak or unpracticed and that everything you do is met, first of all, with God’s great mercy.
**Step 5:** Identify one or two beatitude experiences or qualities that you desire to nurture in your attitudes and behavior during the next few weeks. Ask for help in being open and ready to learn and grow.

Remember that you live one moment at a time and that God gives you opportunities one moment, one decision, one action, at a time. No one lives out all the Beatitudes at one time. For instance, your beatitude experience might be mourning. Mourning can be all-consuming, and that might be your beatitude for weeks, months, a year, or longer. Allow your life to be what it is. Ask God to help you recognize the beatitude to which you are called right now, and don’t concern yourself further. _Ignatian Spirituality_

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_O bless the Lord, my soul._

_I will make you a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth (Is 49:6)._ As Christians, we bear the light of Christ to the whole world in our every action. Even when he seems far from us, when we feel most alone, his Spirit is nearby to support and strengthen us in this task.

Let us pray that we may be generous and patient with those people in our lives who annoy and frustrate us; that we may bring kindness and comfort to those we know who are lonely or sick; and that we may be heralds of mercy to the hungry, thirsty, naked, homeless, sick, and imprisoned.

What we need is to love without getting tired. How does a lamp burn? Through the continuous input of small drops of oil. What are these drops of oil in our lamps? They are the small things of daily life: faithfulness, small words of kindness, a thought for others, our way of being silent, of looking, of speaking and of acting. Do not look for Jesus away from yourselves. He is not out there; He is in you. Keep your lamp burning, and you will recognize Him.

-Mother Teresa
Last week we celebrated Catholic Schools Week. Our students began the week by speaking at all of the Masses on Sunday. We also held a very successful and busy Open House. On Monday our students donated canned goods and built a beautiful lighthouse out of the cans symbolizing, “We are the Light of the World.” Our parents distributed donuts at drop off and provided our teachers with a wonderful lunch. Our students made cards for our priests, and our staff treated our pastoral staff to a chili lunch. It was another successful week celebrating Catholic education.

This Week at SJC
Tuesday, February 7 Parent Association Meeting 9am Parish Center
Friday, February 10 7th and 8th Grade Dance 7-9pm School

Lord our God, in your wisdom and love you surround us with the mysteries of the universe. Send your Spirit upon our students and fill them with your wisdom and blessings. Grant that they may devote themselves to their studies and draw ever closer to you, the source of all knowledge. Amen.

Kairos 25
There are openings available for our Kairos Retreat for all parish high school Juniors and Seniors. The retreat will be held at the Cabrini Retreat Center in Des Plaines, March 16-19. Consider being a part of this life changing weekend. See our website, www.stjohnofthecross.org/crossroads/retreats/ for information and registration.

New Communion Minister Training
Becoming a communion minister is a wonderful way for a teen to serve our parish. Training for all new ministers will be on Sunday, February 12 at 2:30-4pm in church. No registration. Just come. Invite your parent to be a minister too!

Teen Leadership Opportunities
If you would like information on this year’s Leadership Conferences, please contact Katie Hayes.

Summer Work Tours
Deepen your relationship with God through service. Our parish sponsored Work Tours are open to any teen in the parish. The deadline to register for one of our Summer Work Tours is February 9. Sign up today!
- June 19-23 SJC and Local Sharing Parish
- July 16-22 Habitat for Humanity in Franklin, WV
- July 24-28 Our Lady of Charity in Cicero, IL
See our website: www.stjohnofthecross.org/crossroads/work-tours/ for details and a registration packet. 3 adult chaperones are needed for each of the work tours.

YC Schedule of Classes
Classes K-6  10:15-11:30am  Sun, Feb 5, 12, 26
6:15-7:30pm  Mon, Feb 6, 13, 27
FFC  Noon to 1:30 pm  Sun, Feb 5 (begin in MPR)
Jr Hi Sm Groups  Feb 26 - 7th Grade on campus 6:30pm
Feb 26 - 8th Grade in home setting
Outreach

Service Opportunity
Bring baked or store bought cookies, cupcakes or brownies on disposable plates for the Helping Hand Center's annual Pasta Supper. Desserts can be dropped off in the Parish Center lobby on Thursday, February 9 or Friday, February 10 from 9am-2:30pm.

Dear St. John of the Cross,

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! These words seem so inadequate to express my appreciation, as well as the appreciation of the people of St. Thaddeus for all you have been and have done for us over many, many years.

There are so many ways that you have touched our lives. In the early days some of our students attended your school. Many parishioners attended for your liturgies and other festivities. Your monthly sharing gift helped us remain financially solid. Thanksgiving turkeys and Easter hams were donated to our St. Vincent de Paul Society for the baskets they distribute to feed the hungry in our area. The Halloween candy always puts a big smile on the students’ faces.

The very generous Share Christmas program which has been successfully and expertly put together for so many years allowed us, in your name, to make Christmas special for so many families. The Share Christmas program also supported the teen mothers’ program that we are affiliated with on the south side. Without your help none of this would have been possible.

Our choir felt welcomed and celebrated participating each year at your 5pm Mass and enjoyed a tasty meal to follow. The warmth of the congregation and the spirit at the meal was always appreciated. The students’ cards were an inspiration and a warm welcome.

I would be remiss if I didn’t extend a warm thank you to Fr. David Dowdle and staff. Most of all a BIG THANK you goes out to Anne Marie Calistro and Bill Bright for their love and support over the years. I will miss our many times together.

Recently Cardinal Cupich has joined Thaddeus and St. Margaret of Scotland into a merged single parish. The Spirit of St. Thaddeus will continue as we become one new parish.

In the name of the parishioners of St. Thaddeus, we thank you for all your support, prayers and love over these many years. Please keep us in prayer.

Fr. Frank Sasso and St. Thaddeus Parish

About St. Thaddeus
Our longest term Sharing Parish, St. Jude Thaddeus, the first church to be founded and built by the Archdiocese of Chicago to serve a part of the African American Community is now officially closed. The merger of St. Thaddeus with St. Margaret of Scotland on the southeast side of Chicago brings to close our sharing relationship that began under the leadership of our founding Pastor, Fr. Bill Bennett.

We will always be grateful to Fr. Frank and the previous pastors at St. Thaddeus for the annual invitations to join their praise filled worship and for the exceptional hospitality that was ever present. After the St. Thaddeus choir visits here, we always cooked a meal to serve their choir members and others who joined them. Enjoying the meal with our friends from St. Thaddeus was like sitting and sharing a meal with our own family.

Our heartfelt thank you to Fr. Frank and the St. Thaddeus people for making us part of their community!

We pray that our parish may continue to be a community of light and salt for the world.

Food Pantry Collection
During the month of February our nonperishable food donations put in the church narthex will be delivered to neighbor parish, St. Francis Xavier in LaGrange. Thank you for your care and generosity to those who are experiencing difficult times and need our help.
Congratulations Confirmation Class of 2017
Saturday, February 4, 2017
St. John of the Cross Parish
Colin Luke McHugh
Martin Francis McNamara
Sarah Catherine Meece
Margaret Genevieve Meehan
Frank Giovanni Metcalf
Jack Anthony Miglieri
Hayden Henry Miles
Grace Anne Miller
Joelle Isabella Mologousis
Angelique Teresa Monroy
Ella Joan Montesano
Vincent Patrick Montesano
Dominic Dominic Morgan
Charles Aloysius Morrissey
Colin Ignatius Morrissey
Martin Patrick Mullarkey
Madeline Teresa Mulligan
Jacob Edward Muth
Kailey Kateri Nestor
Andrew Andrew Niemeyer
Brendan Thomas Nolan
Chase Christopher Norbut
Shae Genevieve O'Connor
Elizabeth Cecilia O'Donnell
Grace Elizabeth O'Donnell
Ava Phoebe O'Hea
Margaret Mary O'Malley
Quinn Patrick O'Malley
Abigail Anne Orndorff
Sophia Nicholas Padgett
Mia Juliana Parente
Benjamin Giles Penachio
Matthew John Peso
Nicholas John Pethokouris
Sydney Faith Pierce
James Francis Pittacora
Michael Anthony Porter
Kelli Brigid Powers
Lauren Hemma Prestopino
Anna Philomena Pritz
Caleb Vincent Quick
Maria Thecla Quinn
Norah Margaret Reedy
Emma Francis Richards
Daniel Peter Roemer
Dylan Edward Rudich
Madeleine Honora Ryan
Patrick Michael Ryan
Giana Alexandra Salerno
Jake Gennaro Santaniello
John Patrick Santaniello
Mia Bridget Schabow
Katelyn Bernadette Schick
Taylor Antoinette Schullo
Nathan Maximilian Scriba
Liam Patrick Shannon
Caitlin Cecilia Sheehan
Molly Mary Sheehan
Kennedy Teresa Sheppard
Carson Michael Short
Margaret Cecilia Sizemore
Lily Angela Skwarek
Ava Rose Smith
Noah Michael Soenen
Gioia Francesca Solano
Anthony Anthony Sorrentino
John Michael Spitkovsky
Ryan Mark Stark
Samuel Dominic Stillo
Max Peter Stomberg
Madison Cecilia Stremplewski
Angelina Teresa Strysza
Brigid Elizabeth Sullivan
Fiona Cecilia Sullivan
Robert Sebastian Sullivan, II
James Edward Sykora
Madeline Clare Tallard
John James Taylor
Edward Francis Thomas
Ryan Elizabeth Tier nan
Isabelle Bridget Tobin
Cayden Julianna Torsberg
Sarah Francis Turchich
Isabella Faith Tylka
Joshua Ignatius Vavra
Olivia Cecilia Vie
Nancy Elizabeth Vlk
Ryan Pachomi us Vyverberg
John Peter Wall
Patrick Maximilian Walsh
Mary Anne Ward
Anne Adele Warren
Lucas Luke Waunn
Noah Nicholas Wehner
Madelyn Maria Weiland
Lucille Catherine Wenstrup
Jack John Whelton
London Gianna White
Lauren Clare Witt
Jackson Michael Yates
Logan Augustine Younker

CONGRATULATIONS CONFIRMATION CLASS OF 2017
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2017
ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS PARISH
Parish News

Congratulations to the Liska family who had their baby baptized on January 22 by Deacon Joe Pepitone. Pictured from the right is Kristin and Scott Liska holding Margaret Elizabeth with their godparents.

Looking for a Job? interfaithcareernetwork.org
Job Search Boot Camp: 5 Tuesdays beginning this week, Tuesday, February 7 from 7-9pm at the First Presbyterian Church of La Grange. This Boot Camp will kick off with how to prepare your job search strategy, learn the fundamentals of networking and how to approach your job search with a positive mindset.

How to Organize Your Job Search: Wednesday, February 15 from 7-9pm in the Parish Center. Learn best practices, tools, and resources on how to better organize your job search.

Be At Peace
Be at peace. Do not look forward in fear to the changes of life; rather, look to them with full hope as they arise. God, whose very own you are, will deliver you out of them. He has kept you hither to, and He will lead you safely through all things; and when you cannot stand it, God will bury you in His arms. Do not fear what may happen tomorrow. The same everlasting Father who cares for you today will take care of you then and every day. He will either shield you from suffering or give you unfailing strength to bear it. Be at peace and put aside all anxious thought and imaginations.
St. Francis de Sales 1567-1622

Bishop Barron’s
Pivotal Players Series
February 16 at 1pm & 7pm
The last of the current series from Bishop Bob Barron’s Pivotal Players in Catholicism focuses on Michelangelo. The master of sculpture and painting is not a saint but serves as the privileged representative of the creative potential engendered by the Catholic Faith. The Church professes that beauty is a route of access to God, and through humanity’s creative artistry we glimpse the power and glory of the Lord. All are welcome to join us for our video and discussion. No registration—Just come.

Toward a Habit of Gratitude
To be grateful is to recognize the Love of God in everything He has given us -- and He has given us everything. Every breath we draw is a gift of His love, every moment of existence is a grace, for it brings with it immense graces from Him. Gratitude therefore takes nothing for granted, is never unresponsive, is constantly awakening to new wonder and to praise of the goodness of God. For the grateful person knows that God is good, not by hearsay but by experience. And that is what makes all the difference. Thomas Merton
Divorce Support at SJC
7 Thursdays @7-8:30pm beginning Feb. 23

The Divorce and Beyond ministry of St. John of the Cross provides support, healing and guidance to the recently divorced or those in the process of divorce. Divorce and Beyond is a faith-based, Christian support ministry that welcomes all faith traditions.

Each session highlights a different aspect of the divorce-healing process. Session topics include *Managing anger, blame, loneliness, and achieving growth and personal happiness*. Sessions are led by Divorce and Beyond graduates who are committed to fostering the personal and spiritual growth of all participants.

Register online: [www.stjohnofthecross.org/divorceandbeyond](http://www.stjohnofthecross.org/divorceandbeyond) or by calling Steve Weigand, Pastoral Associate, at the Parish Center. A $10.00 fee for participant manual may be paid at the first session.

seasons of hope

Seasons of Hope is a grief support ministry grounded in the healing wisdom, tradition, and practice of the Catholic faith. It is for anyone mourning the loss of a loved one or struggling with the grieving process. With the support of our faith community, Seasons of Hope sessions will help you explore your unique journey of grief and find healing and spiritual growth through scripture, prayer, reflection activities and faith sharing. The 6 week winter session will begin on Monday, February 6 at 7pm in our Parish Center. Register on our parish website or by calling our Pastoral Associate, Steve Weigand, at the Parish Center.

Grief Support for Children & Teens
Adventist St. Thomas Hospice Amita Health offers a 6 week grief support for children (ages 4-12) and teens (ages 13-17) beginning March 2 through April 6 from 6-7:30pm in Hinsdale. There is a support group for parents/guardians that meets at the same time. Group size is limited. Not cost to attend. Call Rosie at 630-856-6993 or rosemarie.cohen@amitahealth.org for more information or to register.

Grief Support for Widows
Joyful Again Retreat on March 4-5 in Lemont. Call 708-354-7211 to learn more and register.
The French novelist and essayist, Leon Bloy, once made this comment about God’s power in our world: “God seems to have condemned himself until the end of time not to exercise any immediate right of a master over a servant or a king over a subject. We can do what we want. He will defend himself only by his patience and his beauty.”

God defends himself only by his patienc and his beauty! How true! And how significant for our understanding of power!

The way we understand power is invariably bound up with how we see power exercised in our world. Our world understands power precisely as a force that can lord it over others, a force that can compel others to obey. In our world, power is understood to be real only when it can forcibly assert itself to make others obey it. For us, strong people have power, political rulers have power, economic systems have power, billionaires have power, the rich and the famous have power, muscular bodies have power, and the playground bully has power; power that can make you buckle under, one way or the other.

But such a notion of power is adolescent and superficial. Power that can make you buckle under is only one kind of power and ultimately not the most transformative kind. Real power is moral. Real power is the power of truth, beauty, and patience. Paradoxically, real power generally looks helpless. For example: If you put a powerfully muscled athlete, the CEO of a powerful corporation, a playground bully, an academy-award winning movie star, and a baby into the same room, who has the most power? Ultimately, it’s the baby. At the end of the day, the baby’s helplessness overpowers physical muscle, economic muscle, and charismatic muscle. Babies cleanse a room morally; they do exorcisms, even the most callous watch their language around a baby.

That’s the kind of power God revealed in the incarnation. Against almost all human expectation, God was born into this world, not as Superman or Superstar, but as a baby, helpless to care for its own needs. And that’s how God is still essentially present in our lives. Pulitzer prize-winning writer, Annie Dillard, suggests that this how we forever find God in our lives, as a helpless infant lying in the straw whom we need to pick up, nurture, and provide with give human flesh.

She’s right, and her insight, like that of Leon Bloy, has huge implications for how we understand God’s power in our lives and for how we understand God’s, seeming, silence in our lives.

First, God’s power in our lives: When we examine the biblical account of Adam and Eve and original sin, we see that the primary motivation for eating the apple was their desire to somehow grasp at divinity, to become like God. They wanted God-like power. But they, like us, badly misunderstood what makes for genuine power. St. Paul shows us the antithesis of that in how he describes Jesus in the famous Christological hymn in the Epistle to the Philippians. Paul writes there that Jesus did not deem equality with God something to be grasped at, but rather that he emptied himself of that power to become helpless, trusting that this emptying and helplessness would ultimately be the most transformative power of all. Jesus submitted to helplessness to become truly powerful.

That insight can shed light on how we understand God’s apparent absence in our world. How might we comprehend what is often called “the silence of God”? Where was God during the Holocaust? Where is God during natural disasters that kill thousands of people? Where is God when senseless accidents and illnesses take the lives of countless persons? Why doesn’t God forcefully intervene?

God is present and intervening in all these situations, but not in the way we ordinarily understand presence, power, and intervention. God is present the way beauty is present, in the way a helpless, innocent newborn is present, and in the way truth as a moral agent is always present. God is never silent because beauty, innocence, helplessness, and truth are never silent. They’re always present and intervening, but unlike ordinary human power, they’re present in a way that is completely non-manipulative and fully respectful of your freedom. God’s power, like that of a new born, like the power of beauty itself, fully respects you.

When we look at the struggles within our world and within our private lives, it often seems like divine power is forever being trumped by human power. As the cartoon character, Ziggy, likes to put it: The poor are still getting clobbered in our world. But, like David, standing with a just a boy’s slingshot before Goliath, a giant who looks overpowering in terms of muscle and iron; and just like the apostles being asked to set five little loaves of bread and two tiny fish before a crowd of 5000, God always looks underwhelming in our world. But we know how these stories end.

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser
New Communion Minister Training
Training for those desiring to be communion ministers at Sunday and holy day Masses will be held in church on Sunday, February 12 from 2:30-4:30pm. Communion ministers should be high school age or older. Scheduling is based on your availability. No registration required for the training session. This is a wonderful opportunity for parents and their teens to serve our parish and attend Mass together.

Tax Statements
Thank you for your generous contributions to our parish. Tax statements have been mailed to parishioners who have received them in past years. If you have not received one in the past and would like one this year, just call the Parish Center office.

SAM for Men
All men are invited to a morning of Contemplative Prayer on:

Saturday, February 18
from 8:45-10:30am in the Parish Center

Am I present to my spouse and family? Am I too invested in work and my career that I have become separated from those I love? Am I living an authentic life of integrity with God and those I love? How do I cope in a world where truth is hard to find? How do I maintain my emotional and spiritual health in a very demanding world?

Contemplative prayer is a universal practice found at the core of all great religious traditions leading from the mind to the heart. It is a way of life built on stillness, silence and simplicity. Contemplative prayer is a healthy way to cope with the pressures of everyday life and it can be practiced anywhere! Let us show you how to begin – and to keep on beginning. To learn more about the use of Contemplative Prayer and its benefits, plan on attending this morning of reflection.

Home Visits
If you, a family member or someone you know are homebound and unable to attend weekly Mass, a trained Minister of Care will bring you or your family member Holy Communion. You and the minister decide on the day, time, and frequency of visits. Call Pastoral Associate, Steve Weigand, in the Parish Center for information.

Free Programs at The Well for SJC
St. John of the Cross Parish sponsors programs throughout the year at The Well in LaGrange. The cost to our parishioners is waived for these two sponsored programs in February. Simply call the Parish Center Office to register. The Well is located just north of SJC at 1515 N. Ogden Avenue.

Your Body's Wisdom: Connect to Your Heart
Facilitator: Kate Wester
Saturday, February 11 from 10:00 – Noon
Although you think that it’s your brain that’s running the show, we are now learning that it’s actually the heart and our emotions that have the biggest impact on our well-being. In this workshop we’ll explore the connection between our physical and metaphoric heart. You’ll learn ways to develop self-compassion and shift negative emotions, as well as ways to connect more deeply to your emotions. This workshop is largely based on the work of SomaSoul, developed and taught by Dan Leven in Lenox, Massachusetts. For more information on his work and teaching go to: www.leaveninstitute.com

The Body as a Portal to the Divine Mystery
Facilitator: David Ellzey
February 17-18  Friday from 7-8:30 pm and Saturday from 9 am – 4 pm
In this workshop, we will use questions of self-inquiry, techniques of letting go, movement, and the exploration of empty space to guide you past the misperception of the body and yourself as a fixed and limited object. You’ll experience what fluid freedom means in body, emotions, mind, and spirit. This work is ultimately devoted to translating this expansive freedom and healing into living consciously in daily life with a quieter mind, more love, and awakened awareness – especially amidst these very challenging times.

David Ellzey is the well-known author of The Ocean of Now, a pioneer teacher of the Sedona Method of emotional well-being, a global coach of conscious living, and a transformational performer. David has a rare insight into the human condition, the body, and awakened awareness. His calming presence and laser clarity deftly guide you to unravel limitations in mind, body, and spirit. Transformation, self-realization, and embodied awakening are the result. www.davidellzey.com

Copies of his book are available for purchase in Joseph’s Corner Gift Shop.

Nothing is impossible if we turn to God in prayer. We can all be builders of peace. Pope Francis @Pontifex Jan 30
Hope lets new life blossom, like a plant that grows from the seed fallen on the earth. Pope Francis @Pontifex Jan 26
The Week Ahead
Monday, February 06
9:30am Spiritual Journeying
10:30am Step 11 Christian Meditation
1:00pm Little Rock Scripture Study
1:30pm Christian Meditation Planning
2:30pm Adoration
5:30pm Finance Council
YC Classes
7:00pm Boy Scouts
7:00pm Seasons of Hope Grief Support

Tuesday, February 07
8:30am Student Aspire Workshop
9:00am Parent Association
9:05am Tuesdays with Mary Rosary
3:30pm Cub Scouts
3:30pm School Play Practice
7:00pm RCIA
7:00pm YC Council Meeting
7:30pm Christian Meditation

Wednesday, February 08
9:15am Wednesday Morning Bible Study
9:30am Bridges
1:00pm Prayer Shawl Ministry
2:30pm Christian Meditation
3:30pm Cub Scouts
3:45pm Cherub Choir Practice
7:00pm Chicago Catholic Scripture School
7:00pm Grecco Faith Sharing
7:30pm Traditional Choir Practice

Thursday, February 09
9:00am Flourish Meeting
2:00pm Divine Dance Book Study
3:45pm Youth Choir Practice
6:00pm Fostering Faith Workshop
6:00pm School Play Practice
7:00pm Outreach Meeting
7:30pm Contemporary Ensemble
7:30pm Mom’s Club Yoga
7:30pm SAM Core Group Meeting

Friday, February 10
7:00pm School Student Council Dance

Saturday, February 11
7:00am Christian Meditation
9:00am Promise for Engaged Couples
9:00am Marriage Workshop

Sunday, February 12
YC Classes
1:00pm Crossroads Kairos Meeting
1:30pm Baptisms
2:00pm School Play Practice
2:30pm New Communion Minister Training
4:00pm YC BEDS Meal Prep

Student Ushers: Annual Catholic Appeal
All 7th grade Confirmation candidates are required to help as student ushers at Masses the weekends of February 18-19 and February 25-26. All students must attend a practice session before serving as an usher. Sessions will be offered 5 different times in church:
Thursday, February 14
from 3:45-4pm or 4:15-4:30pm or
Tuesday, February 21
from 3:45-4pm or 4:15-4:30pm
For your convenience an extra practice has been scheduled for Saturday, February 18 at 9am in church.
Parents are welcome to wait for this short, but mandatory practice. Please sign up today on our parish website for one Mass and one practice time. If a time does not appear on the sign up, the Mass has already been filled. Sign up early to get your first choice.

Catholic High School Scholarships
The Rev. Joseph McDonnell Catholic High School Scholarship, made possible by the SJC Women’s Club, awards scholarships to 8th grade and high school students of St. John of the Cross Parish who attend or plan to attend a Catholic high school. See the website for eligibility requirements and an application. Applications are due in the Parish Center office by February 8.

SJC Moms’ Club Upcoming Events1~2~3!
1. Our parish Moms’ Group is hosting a Yoga night with parishioner, Marie Gerken on Thursday, February 9 at 7:30pm. Take a little break from your night time mom duties and enjoy a mindful evening with music and candlelight. All levels are welcome, even if you’ve never done yoga before. Wear comfy clothes, bring a yoga mat for the floor and a water bottle. We’ll provide some light snacks and beverages for afterward. RSVP to sjcmomsclub@gmail.com. A $5 free will offering will help offset costs.

2. Frankie Ace will perform on Saturday, February 25 from 3:30-5pm in the school first floor multipurpose room. More details to come later in the month thru evite. We had a huge turnout last year and the kids were completely mesmerized! A really fun family-friendly afternoon in the dog days of winter!

3. Our next scheduled playdate will be Friday, March 24 at 9:15am in the Parish Center. Drop in for coffee and fellowship with other parish moms and playtime for the little ones.

Save the Date
for the our
Annual School Gala
celebrating our school and teachers!
Saturday, March 4
at 6pm at SJC!
Mass & Reconciliation Schedule & Intentions

**Monday, February 6**  
St. Paul Miki & Companions  
7:45am Muriel Albertson; Lorraine Janda

**Tuesday, February 7**  
Weekday  
7:45am John Spalo; Rev. Richard Dempsey

**Wednesday, February 8**  
St. Jerome Emiliani; St. Josephine Bakhita  
7:45am Meaghan Mary Collins; Shirley Walsh

**Thursday, February 9**  
Weekday  
7:45am Mariann Gibbs; Martin Kelly

**Friday, February 10**  
St. Scholastica  
7:45am Dolores Williams; Patricia Cebula

**Saturday, February 11**  
Our Lady of Lourdes; Blessed Virgin Mary  
8:00am John Bradley; Our Beloved Dead

~ Reconciliation Follows Mass ~

5:00pm Robert Plechaty; Lorraine & Robert Brandt

**Sunday, February 12**  
Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time ~ World Marriage Day  
7:30am Maria Maggiore; Robert Iovino  
9:00am Adeline Linger; Allan Winings  
10:45am Charlotte Meany; Mary & Cerillo Trinco  
12:15pm Laura Stark; Miroslav Chybik  
5:00pm Rae Ann Stein-Ellis; Giovanni Mazzei

Pray for Our Sick

Robert Arbuckle  
Rosemary Balazs  
Jerry Benesh  
Judy Burke  
Glori Ann Byrd  
Paul Cervony  
Nancy Cottone  
Tim Crain  
Alexander DeLosReyes  
Fr. David Dowdle  
Mildred Fitzgerald  
Colleen Franke  
Lynn Freking  
Bedelia Fries  
Kathy Gros  
Randall Hemauer  
Kathy Holden  
Karen Hult  
Bob Karpiai  
Lucine Kassis  
Curtis Kerzich  
George Kojima  
Carrie Kowalski  
Athie Lanahan  
Erin Lively  
Warren McGee  
Bobbie Misiora  
Jennifer Ochino  
Patrick O’Donnell  
Jeanne Pinner  
Frank & Marge Pipal  
Mary Ann Piwowar  
Sharon Portillo  
Helen Ragus  
Gail Schmidt  
Leona Shell  
Deloris Simonek  
Ray Simonek  
Peter Smykowski  
Brooks Tonn  
Don Vollmer  
Monica Westell  
Eric Wilson

Pray for Our Sick

Robert Arbuckle  
Rosemary Balazs  
Jerry Benesh  
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Nancy Cottone  
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Karen Hult  
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Curtis Kerzich  
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Athie Lanahan  
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Gail Schmidt  
Leona Shell  
Deloris Simonek  
Ray Simonek  
Peter Smykowski  
Brooks Tonn  
Don Vollmer  
Monica Westell  
Eric Wilson

Pray for Our Beloved Dead

Mary Kay McGorey, wife of Deacon Tom McGorey, mother of Pattie Bomher, Margie DiGangi, Katie Watson and Tom, grandmother of 15, great grandmother of 10  
Christina Carinato, wife of Matthew, mother of John and Donna  
Murtha Marty Rooney, husband of Mary, brother-in-law of Bettina & Frank Gembala  
Ted Bruce, husband of Mariana, father of Barb Gustafson

Let us imitate the attitude of Jesus toward the sick: he takes care of everyone, He shares their suffering and opens their hearts to hope. Pope Francis @Pontifex January 31

You who are my life, my very being, my peace and my joy; You who are my hope, my wealth and my strength; I bow before you. You are my home, my place of rest, my heaven, my salvation. You are the source of all the work of my hands, of all the gifts of what has been, of all the opportunities of what will be. Keep me, Lord, in your grace. Prayer for Parish Groups

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 & 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  
Staff 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  
PFC Michael Frazee, grandson of Kay and John Johnson
Join our YC students by placing an “0” in Super for

Souper Bowl Sunday

More than 26 years ago, a Super Bowl Sunday prayer inspired a group of young people to do something more than celebrate a football game. They created Souper Bowl of Caring, and have rallied youth to raise over $8 million each year for those in need. On Sunday, February 5th, millions of Americans will tune in to the Super Bowl football game. There will be parties with abundant food, friendship and fellowship. At the same time, there will be people worrying about staying warm, finding shelter and a warm meal. Please give generously.

Many food pantry shelves are empty after the busy holiday season and your family can help!

Please bring nonperishable food items to class on February 5 or 6 or to the YC office before Thursday, February 2!!

Everything collected is donated to local area food pantries chosen by St. John of the Cross Parish - nothing but stats are sent to the Souper Bowl of Caring headquarters. Check out their website at www.souperbowl.org

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

Please check expiration dates. The food pantries can not except expired food. Thank you.

Thank you for Putting your Faith First and teaching your children about the Corporal Works of Mercy to Feed the Hungry by participating in this Souper Bowl of Caring! Our young people are developing hearts for giving that can last a lifetime. Call the YC Office with any questions. 708-246-6760