I am the light of the world;
whoever follows me will have
the light of life.

Verse Before the Gospel
Living the Gospel

This long Gospel intertwinens many conversation-encounters on many levels. There is the conversation-encounter of the miracle: Jesus touched, the man “went and washed.” There are the conversation-encounters of relationships: the disciples and Jesus, Jesus and the blind man, the neighbors and the blind man, parents and the Pharisees, Pharisees and the blind man, Pharisees and Jesus. There are the conversation-encounters about seeing: gaining sight, resisting sight; coming to faith, resisting faith. The man born blind gradually comes to a greater understanding about who Jesus is and what it means to be his disciple, while the Pharisees (those who should see) are the ones who remain blind.

The man born blind is healed, his sight is restored, and his conversion to discipleship begins. 

Baptism. The washing of the man in the pool of Siloam is a prototype for Christian Baptism. Through the man’s baptism, we see the sign of this is admissance to Eucharist and reception of the Body and Blood of our Lord. Worship, however, is far more than attendance and engagement in ritual acts, as important as that is. Worship includes a mission to reach out to others who are in need of spiritual insight, of a more sure believing, of a deeper conversation with Jesus that brings re-creation and life. Authentic worship always requires a response of charity on behalf of others. Authentic worship includes an encounter with the One who gives us sight and a conversation that recreates us to full stature in Christ.

Background on the Gospel

As we did last week, we are reading today from the Gospel of John. In today’s Gospel, the healing of the man born blind invites us to focus on the physical and spiritual aspects of sight and light. In the first part of today’s Gospel, we hear Jesus’ response to a prevalent belief of his time: that misfortune and disability were the result of sin. That belief is why Jesus is asked the question of whose sin caused the man’s blindness—his own or his parents’. Jesus does not answer directly, but instead gives the question an entirely different dimension—through this man’s disability, God’s power will be made manifest. Jesus then heals the man.

The healing is controversial because Jesus heals on the Sabbath. The Pharisees, the religious authorities of Jesus’ time, understood that the law of Moses forbade work (including healing) on the Sabbath. They also have trouble believing that Jesus performed a miracle. To determine whether the man was really born blind, the Pharisees question him and his parents. The man challenges the leaders of the synagogue about their assessment of the good Jesus has done. In turn, they expel the man for questioning their judgment.

The final revelation and moment of enlightenment comes when the man born blind encounters Jesus again. Having heard the news of his expulsion, Jesus seeks out the man born blind and reveals himself to him as the Son of Man. In this moment, the man born blind shows himself to be a man of faith and worships Jesus. Jesus replies by identifying the irony of the experience of many who encounter Jesus: Those who are blind will now see, and those who think they now see will be found to be blind.

As in last week’s Gospel about Jesus’ encounter with the Samaritan woman, today’s reading has many allusions to Baptism. The washing of the man in the pool of Siloam is a prototype for Christian Baptism. Through the man’s encounter with Jesus, the man born blind is healed, his sight is restored, and his conversion to discipleship begins. The man born blind gradually comes to a greater understanding about who Jesus is and what it means to be his disciple, while the Pharisees (those who should see) are the ones who remain blind.
Overview of Lenten Opportunities for Prayer, Fasting, & Almsgiving

Fr. Robin Ryan, CP, will finish our Adult Spirituality series on Finding Meaning in Suffering tomorrow evening March 27 at 7pm in the Parish Center.

Catholic Relief Services Rice Bowls: Through CRS’s Lenten faith-in-action program we learn about and pray for people in need in communities around the world, eat simple meatless meals from these countries, and collect our spare change in our Rice Bowls to donate to CRS. See more on page 8 of today’s bulletin. Return your Rice Bowl on Palm Sunday.

Stations of the Cross: Fridays at 6pm in Lent in church

Third Scrutiny: Sunday, April 2 at the 9am Mass

Parish Reconciliation Service: Tuesday, April 4 at 7pm

Private Confessions: Saturday, April 8 after the 8am Mass additional priests will be available to hear confessions. (The sacrament of reconciliation is available every Saturday after the morning Mass, except Holy Saturday.)

Palm Sunday of the Passion of Our Lord: Sunday, April 9

Return Rice Bowls to church

Ecumenical Service at the WS Tower Green 8:15-8:30am

Mass Times:
Saturday 5pm Vigil
Sunday 7:30am
9am
10:45am
12:30pm (Mass starts 15 minutes later than usual.)
5pm

Crossroads Easter Basket Project

Holy Thursday Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper: April 13 at 7pm

Good Friday Passion of the Lord: April 14 at 3pm
Living Stations of the Cross at noon

Holy Saturday Easter Vigil: April 15 at 7:30pm

Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of Our Lord: April 16

Treasuring the Gift of the Lenten Journey

MONDAY
27 The Lord gives us new life.
Abstain from gossip. Try to say one kind thing to each person you interact with today. Pray, help me to be more like you Jesus.

TUESDAY
28 Take up your mat and walk.
Share your faith in some way at work or school today.

WEDNESDAY
29 God offers pardon to sinners who do penance; have mercy on those who call upon you.
Pray Psalm 23 -The Good Shepherd

THURSDAY
30 God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son.
Think first about others. Pray for those on our parish sick list.

FRIDAY
31 The Lord is close to the brokenhearted.
Fast from complaining today and count your blessings. Think of someone you need to thank. Call, write a letter, or stop them at work or school to say thank you. Praise God for all of your gifts.

SATURDAY
April 1
Heal us and help us to always trust in your will.
Practice unselfish love. Show each person in your family your love by doing a special act of kindness for them. If you live alone, do something for a neighbor.

SUNDAY
2 Fifth Sunday in Lent
RCIA Third Scrutiny at the 9am Mass today.

See the whole Lenten Calendar on our parish website.
We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life. Romans 6:4

In the sacraments we experience the truth that God desires to touch our hearts and transform our lives with his love. The Sacraments of Initiation are transforming, drawing us into the Church and giving us grace to follow God’s will. Cleansed of sin in Baptism, strengthened by the Holy Spirit in Confirmation, and nurtured by Jesus in the Eucharist, our lives change and we have a new life within us. Using ordinary elements of bread, wine, water, candles, oil, and white garments, we encounter in a physical way the invisible reality of God’s grace.

How do the sacraments nourish my life?
Where in my spiritual journey do I most experience “newness of life?”

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, continue your work of transformation in my life. Loyola Press

Lord of light,
grant us your vision of selfless love
that we may make real in our lives
the prayers and hopes
you alone see in the depths of our hearts.
Hear our prayers this day
that we ask of you in the name of
Jesus, the healing Christ. Amen.

Jesus asks us to pray always. To pray always is to live in the presence of God. Therein lies our safety, our peace. This is life in “the secret place of the Most High” (Psalm 91:1). It is where we find our daily bread, all that sustains our life. Most of us live in a world of thoughts and restless anxiety. We need to still ourselves from time to time and be mindful of the presence of God. Prayer can point the way to where true life never ends.

Morning Light
As first light streams through my window and birds are singing to the dawn I rejoice that you have granted me another day of life. Let me use your gift to laugh, to love, to show compassion, to work, to pray and to give. Grant that I will reflect your light in all I do and say this day. Maryknoll

Take the fattened calf and slaughter it. Then let us celebrate with a feast, because this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost, and has been found. Luke 15:23–24

God gives his best to celebrate our return when we repent for going astray. Thankfully God gives us what we need, not what we deserve. When we turn away from God’s love, God is there for us with open arms, mercy, and joy as we turn away from sin. It’s a mindset that human beings have a hard time understanding. This passage from the story of the Prodigal Son reminds us that there is nothing that God is not ready to forgive, and that we are called to the same radical forgiveness.

Is there anything that prevents me from believing in God’s radical forgiveness? Is there anything that prevents me from imitating God’s radical forgiveness?

Thank you loving God for forgiving my sins. Strengthen and heal me to share your love with others. Loyola Press
What are the “Scrutinies”?
These very special rites are celebrated on the middle three Sundays of Lent, at liturgies where the Elect are present. The Elect are those in our midst who are preparing for Baptism. Part of their journey to the font is that they have been received among us, the Rite of Acceptance, and they have been enrolled in the Book of the Elect in the Rite of Election.

Even if these rites are not celebrated at the liturgy we attend, or not celebrated in our parish or congregation at all, it can be wonderful to reflect upon the journey these Elect are making during Lent, as an inspiration and source of renewal for us in our journey.

These are ancient rites and they may, at first, seem strange to us. But they are profoundly rooted in our human experience. We need to examine (scrutinize) how we are, the areas of our lives where we are tempted, or seriously sin - in what we do and what we fail to do. We really need healing and the strength that can come from the support of our sisters and brothers.

Invitation to Silent Prayer
One of the most powerful moments of the Scrutinies is how they begin. After the homily, the Elect are invited to come forward with their sponsors and to kneel down. Then, the whole assembly is invited to pray for them in silence. It is a very solemn moment. This community has cared for these elect for some months now on their journey. We have sent them to reflect more and more deeply on the Word of God, and expressed to them our longing for the day on which they would join us at the table of the Lord. Now we pray for them in this sacred silence, deeply asking God to protect them and heal them in the weeks ahead.

Intercessions for the Elect
We then pray out loud together for the Elect.

Prayer of Exorcism
Then, we pray that they might be freed from the power of the Evil One and protected on their journey.

The Laying On of Hands
In a silent ritual deliberately reminiscent of the rite used for ordination in the Sacrament of Holy Orders, the priest or deacon lays his hands for a brief moment on the head of each of the Elect. It is a solemn act of calling down the Spirit of Jesus to be with them and protect them.

Dismissal of the Elect
The Elect are then sent forth to reflect upon the Word and this powerful gesture of love on the part of this community, that cares for them so deeply, with the love of Christ. Creighton Univ

As we journey together to Easter we pray for our elect, Gil Clark who will receive the sacraments of initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist) and Kaitlyn Accosta who will be received into the Catholic Church, completing the sacraments of initiation (Confirmation and Eucharist). For those already baptized, the scrutinies invite us to embrace the same spirit of self-searching and repentance. The scrutinies remind us of the seriousness of our Christian life and inspire us to turn from evil and pursue good. They enliven our recommitment to Christ at Easter.
Prayer: The Examen

St. Ignatius believed that we can find God in all things, at every moment, even in the most ordinary times. To do this, we must take time to reflect on our experience, to look at the data of a day and discern their meaning.

Ignatius recommended a five-step method of prayer called the Examen to help us find God in all things. The Examen encourages us to look back over a period of time and pay attention to what is happening in and around us. Then we look ahead, to what comes next, so that we can act in a way worthy of our vocation as Christians. These are the five steps of the Examen:

1. Pray for God’s help.
2. Give thanks for the gifts of this day.
3. Pray over significant feelings.
4. Rejoice and seek forgiveness.
5. Look to tomorrow.

Each week in the bulletin we will take an in depth look at each step. Today we focus on Steps 2 and 3.

Give Thanks for the Gifts of This Day

The second step of the Examen is giving thanks. Gratitude is the first, most important step on the spiritual journey. An attitude of gratitude, practiced often enough, helps us find God in all things and can transform the way we look at our life and at other people.

The Grace I Seek: I pray for the following graces: wonder at God’s ongoing creation; gratitude for the gift of God creating me and creating the world.

Review the Day: Review the day and name the blessings, from the most significant and obvious to the more common and ordinary. God (not the devil) is found in the details, so be very specific! As you take stock, honor the gifts of others in your life, but don’t forget to recognize the gifts in you, for they, too, are God given. Don’t feel that you must mechanically go through the day hour by hour or make a list of all the day’s gifts. Instead, savor whatever gifts God shows you. With God’s gentle guidance, let the day go through you.

Read: Read Psalm 100. Read slowly and prayerfully. Ask yourself: What am I thankful for?

Pray over Significant Feelings

In the third step of the Examen we look at our feelings. Ignatius believed that God communicates with us not only through mental insight but also through our “interior movements,” as he called them: our feelings, emotions, desires, attractions, repulsions, and moods. Feelings are neither positive nor negative: it is what you do with them that raises moral questions.

The Grace I Seek: I pray for the following graces: wonder at God’s ongoing creation; gratitude for the gift of God creating me and creating the world.

Reflect on Your Feelings: As you reflect on the day, you may notice some strong feelings arise. They may be painful or pleasing—for example, joy, peace, sadness, anxiety, confusion, hope, compassion, regret, anger, confidence, jealousy, self-doubt, boredom, or excitement. Pick one or two strong feelings or movements and pray from them. Ask God to help you understand what aroused those feelings and where they led you:

Did they draw you closer to God? Did they help you grow in faith, hope, and love? Did they make you more generous with your time and talent? Did they make you feel more alive, whole, and human? Did they lead you to feel more connected to others or challenge you to life-giving growth?

Or did the feelings lead you away from God, make you less faithful, hopeful, and loving? Did they cause you to become more self-centered or anxious? Did they lure you into doubt and confusion? Did they lead to the breakdown of relationships?

Read: Psalm 117

A psalm of thanksgiving. Shout joyfully to the LORD, all you lands; serve the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful song. Know that the LORD is God, he made us, we belong to him, we are his people, the flock he shepherds. Enter his gates with thanksgiving, his courts with praise. Give thanks to him, bless his name; good indeed is the LORD, His mercy endures forever, his faithfulness lasts through every generation. Psalm 100

Praise the LORD, all you nations! Extol him, all you peoples! His mercy for us is strong; the faithfulness of the LORD is forever. Hallelujah! Psalm 117
We begin our prayer:
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

O God, who renew the world through mysteries beyond all telling, grant, we pray, that your Church may be guided by your eternal design and not be deprived of your help in this present age. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. (Collect, Monday of the Fourth Week of Lent)

Reading (Lectio) Read the following Scripture two or three times. John 9:1, 6-9, 13-17, 34-38

As Jesus passed by he saw a man blind from birth. He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva, and smeared the clay on his eyes, and said to him, “Go wash in the Pool of Siloam”—which means Sent—So he went and washed, and came back able to see. His neighbors and those who had seen him earlier as a beggar said, “Isn’t this the one who used to sit and beg?” Some said, “It is,” but others said, “No, he just looks like him.” He said, “I am.” They brought the one who was once blind to the Pharisees. Now Jesus had made clay and opened his eyes on a sabbath. So then the Pharisees also asked him how he was able to see. He said to them, “He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and now I can see.” So some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, because he does not keep the sabbath.” But others said, “How can a sinful man do such signs?” And there was a division among them. So they said to the blind man again, “What do you have to say about him, since he opened your eyes?” He said, “He is a prophet.” They answered and said to him, “You were born totally in sin, and are you trying to teach us?” Then they threw him out. When Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, he found him and said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” He answered and said, “Who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?” Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.” He said, “I do believe, Lord,” and he worshiped him.

Meditation (Meditatio) After the reading, take some time to reflect in silence on one or more of the following questions: • What word or words in this passage caught your attention? • What in this passage comforted you? • What in this passage challenged you? If practicing lectio divina as a family or in a group, after the reflection time, invite the participants to share their responses.

Contemplation (Contemplatio) Read the scripture passage again, followed by this reflection: How does this passage connect with the experience of your daily life? So he went and washed, and came back able to see. From what sins and failing do I need to be cleansed? What people, things, attitudes, etc. keep me from clearly seeing God’s will for me? “What do you have to say about him, since he opened your eyes?” How has Jesus opened my eyes to his actions in the world and to the needs of others? How do my words and actions speak to what I believe about Jesus? When Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, he found him and said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” How does my faith in Christ sustain me through trials and difficulties? What actions can I take in the coming days to offer spiritual or material assistance to Christians facing persecution?

Prayer (Oratio) Read the scripture passage one more time. Bring to the Lord the praise, petition, or thanksgiving that the Word inspires in you. After all have had a chance to make their prayer, all recite the Lord’s Prayer and the following: Closing Prayer: The Lord God has given me a well-trained tongue, That I might know how to answer the weary a word that will waken them. Morning after morning he wakens my ear to hear as disciples do; The Lord God opened my ear; I did not refuse, did not turn away. (Isaiah 50:4-5)
Call to Family, Community and Participation
Catholic social teaching inspires and guides how we are to live and work in the world. In this principle, Call to Family, Community and Participation, we remember that human beings are social by nature—we need each other. We, like the early disciples, are called to come together and grow as a community—whether that community is in our classroom, workplace or family.

Encounter Mexico
Maria de la Luz Lugo Martínez remembers what it was like growing up in Ejido Hidalgo, Mexico. “We said we were rich because we had a lot of corn, beans and animals.” But now, with few jobs and even less rain, young people—including Maria’s children—are leaving the community in search of a better life.

To help families like Maria’s, CRS launched a greenhouse project empowering women with meaningful work and community. Women visit their community greenhouses to grow cactuses to sell—but they also go for so much more. “At the greenhouses, we laugh, we talk, we spend time together. Sometimes we leave our homes angry or sad. But then we start working with the plants, and we forget. Talking, laughing—we forget our problems for a while,” says Maria.

As the cactuses grow, so do the economic opportunities. “We didn’t believe we were going to get that far. It’s a lot of joy, a lot of excitement to see so many plants flowering.”

The flourishing cactuses aren’t the only things that give Maria pride. Even though they live far away, she still remains close to her family. “I give thanks to God that he gave me all my children, grandchildren,” she says. “They give me strength and courage to work hard. My children call and say, ‘Don’t give up, Mom. Have faith in God.’”

During Lent we reflect on the role we each have in building up God’s one human family.

- Use your CRS Rice Bowl and Lenten Calendar to guide your Lenten prayer, fasting and almsgiving.
- Read the Stories of Hope and daily reflections to inspire your Lenten journey—and guide your Lenten almsgiving.
- Prepare simple meatless meals on Fridays throughout Lent, in solidarity with our brothers and sisters around the world.

Learn more on our parish website. Return your Rice Bowl on Palm Sunday at Mass.

God of all people,
You walk with us on our life’s journey.
You know our joys and struggles.
You know us better than we know ourselves.
This Lenten season, may we too learn to walk with others.
Through prayer, fasting and almsgiving, may we encounter you in our neighbors in need and live your call to serve our human family.
Amen.

Almsgiving: CRS Rice Bowl
Crossroads Girls Basketball
There is still time to register for Church League Basketball. All high school girls in the Parish are invited. Practice begins this week, so register today at www.stjohnofthecross.org/crossroads/sports/.

Living Stations of the Cross
The next rehearsal for our Good Friday presentation of the Stations of the Cross will be held on April 6 from 6:00-7:30pm.

Easter Basket Service Project
Parish 3rd and 4th graders are invited to help Crossroad teens make Easter baskets for underprivileged children. Join us in the Parish Center on Sunday, April 9 from 6-7:00pm. We provide the baskets but ask that everyone bring small toys and candy to fill them.

Parish School
It has been a busy week for school field trips and service. Second grade spent a day at the DuPage Children's Museum participating in a Geo Spaces Learning Lab. This activity allowed them to collaborate with each other combining their math and science units. Our sixth grade spent the day at Feed My Starving Children. Each year our sixth grade volunteers at this organization to help prepare food for malnourished children. Rounding out the week, our fifth graders headed to the Food Bank to prepare labels and package food for the clients that the Food Bank serves. Our students raised over $1000 to benefit St. Baldrick’s Foundation.

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YC Registration
for 2017-2018 Year

REGISTER FOR THE COMING SCHOOL YEAR!

Parents of all youth Kindergarten through 8th Grade are invited to register at our YC Office.
Monday-Thursday 8:30am-4pm or by appointment by emailing Janet Caschetta, Director of YC, jcaschetta@stjohnofthecross.org

New families: Youth Catechesis is SJC’s religious education program for children. Our volunteer Catechist and Catechist Aides are engaging and inspiring as they lead your children to a closer relationship with Our Lord, Jesus. Please bring a copy of each child’s baptismal certificate if not baptized at SJC.

Parents: Please consider being a catechist or class aide. All are encouraged to share your time and talents.

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Free Program at The Well for SJC
Cosmos, Christos, and Commitment
Probing Anew the Mystery of Our Living God
Saturday, April 1 9-3pm
Facilitator: Mary Ellen Sheehan, IHM
This workshop challenges us to explore the relationship between scientific and religious accounts of our creation, inviting us into an ever more integrated life in communion with God, ourselves and our earth. Bring your attitudes, wonderings, questions, and convictions!
Saturday, April 1 from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. The $75 cost is waived for our parishioners. Call the Parish Center Office to register.

Ecumenical Palm Sunday Service
The Christian Churches of Western Springs invite you to begin Holy Week together on Palm Sunday with a Blessing of the Palms. Join Fr. Bill and the other village clergy on April 9 from 8:15-8:30am at the Tower Green of Western Springs. Rain Location: Grand Avenue Community Center, 4211 Grand Avenue.

Domestic Violence Ministry Benefit
In honor of Fr. Chuck Dahm’s 80th birthday, all are welcome to attend a dinner dance on Friday, March 31 at the Diplomat West in Elmhurst. Fr. Dahm has preached at SJC and is the Director of the archdiocesan Domestic Violence Ministry. Proceeds will support domestic violence education, training, and prevention initiatives. For tickets go to domestic-violence-outreach-benefit-gala.everbrite.com.

Fish Fry Thank You
Many thanks to the SJC Men’s Club members and Crossroads teens who worked together for another fabulous parish Fish Fry! The support and esprit de corps that exists among our groups is a gift and true example of serving others. Over 200 parishioners enjoyed our annual Fish Fry, the proceeds from which help our teens attend summer work tours. Thank you!!

Garden Angels Spring Clean Up Planned
If you are interested in sharing your time and energy to help our parish Garden Angels group with spring clean up on campus or want to help during Holy Week please contact our Head Angel Jan Grabacki at 331-903-3135 or beaconjan@aol.com. Helpers from Confirmation candidates and up welcome!

Fasting means not only abstaining from food, but also from any unhealthy attachment, and especially sin.
Pope Francis@Pontifex Mar 17

The word of God helps us to open our eyes to welcome and love life, especially when it is weak and vulnerable.
Pope Francis@Pontifex Mar 15

What You Need to Know About Domestic Violence
Domestic violence is a pattern of coercive behavior that one person exercises over another to gain power and control. This behavior may include physical violence, sexual abuse, emotional and psychological intimidation, verbal abuse and threats, stalking, isolation from friends and family, economic control, and destruction of personal property. Domestic violence affects people of all ages, income levels, faiths, and education levels.

Pillars is the largest nonprofit provider of mental health and social services in our area. Its mission is to build healthier communities by making connections and changing lives.

Pillars provides adults and dependent children affected by domestic violence an environment that is physically and psychologically safe, where victims can learn about their options for change and become empowered to make informed decisions about the future.

Pillars provides domestic violence shelter at Constance Morris House located at an undisclosed location in the western suburbs of Chicago that is available 24 hours a day.

Pillars also provides:
- A confidential, 24-hour domestic violence hotline staffed by trained counselors and staff: 708.485.5254.
- Individual, family, and group counseling provided by licensed therapists or social workers
- Legal advocacy at Bridgeview and Maybrook Courthouses and assistance with Orders of Protection
- Links to ongoing support services such as emergency financial assistance and housing programs

Be aware and take action when you or someone you know are facing a domestic violence crisis. Don’t wait until it’s too late.
The Women's Club Board will soon be filling open positions. Board members work together to plan and coordinate spiritual, social, and service events for the women of St. John of the Cross. Current board members invite you to set aside just a few minutes of your day to pray this short prayer as it looks to fill open positions and for the continued good works of the club. Have you ever thought of becoming a board member? Please email the Women's Club Co-President, Margaret Hynes, hynesmath@yahoo.com, with your interest.

Infinite Spirit, be with me as I make the effort to pause all the labors of my body; all the thoughts of my mind; all the worries, doubts, and fears of my heart. Help me to willingly be present with the gentle quietness of Your presence, in these moments of prayer that I offer up to You for the women of St. John of the Cross. As the Women’s Club prepares for the transition of its board members, unite your Divine Spirit with the Divine Spirit of each woman of the parish. Guide her to recognize she is a member of the Women's Club. Foster these women to be loving sisters to one another; to pray and work together to grow in spiritual and social well-being; and to continue to provide charitable service filled with Your grace. As each woman eternally grows in relationship with You, I ask you to make the Women’s Club a dwelling place for your treasured daughters of St. John of the Cross. Amen

Written by Marie Gerken, inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Be in the Know

Annual Flower Sale
In its 22nd year, the Women’s Club Flower Sale brings beautiful locally grown landscape quality flowers for your garden. Orders will be taken through Thursday, April 27. Pick-up will be on Wednesday, May 3 from 2 to 6:30pm in the lot north of church — Just in time for First Holy Communions and Mother's Day! See colors photos of flowers and order online or by dropping your order form at the Parish Center office.

Boutique
Shopping Night
Shop ~ Sip ~ Socialize
Grab your girlfriends on Thursday evening, May 11 and head over to The Village Club in Western Springs for a night of shopping and fun! Shop clothes, giftware, table linens, soaps, bags, jewelry and specialty foods. Drinks and appetizers will be served. Tickets are $10.

44th Annual Garage Sale
Get ready! Mark your calendar to donate and to volunteer! Our sale date is Saturday, June 17 from 9am to 2pm and Half Priced Bag Sale is Monday, June 19 from 9am to 1pm. Donation drop off will begin June 10. Call Mary Beth White with sale or volunteer questions. 708-246-6339.
What is meant when certain schools of psychology today warn us about our “shadow”? What’s our shadow?

In essence, it’s this: We have within us powerful, fiery energies that, for multiple reasons, we cannot consciously face and so we handle them by denial and repression so as to not have to deal with them. Metaphorically speaking, we bury them in the hidden ground of our souls where they are out of conscious sight and mind.

But there’s a problem: What we’ve buried doesn’t stay hidden. While these energies are out of conscious sight and conscious mind, they continue to deeply impact our feelings, thoughts, and actions by pushing through in all kinds of unconscious ways to color our actions, mostly negatively. Our deep, innate energies will always act out, consciously or unconsciously. Carl Jung, one of the pioneer voices in this, says that we are doomed to act out unconsciously all the archetypal configurations which we do not access and control through conscious ritual.

Perhaps a simple image can be helpful in understanding this. Imagine living in a house with a basement beneath your living room, a basement into which you never venture, and every time you need to dispose of some garbage you simply open the basement door and dump the garbage there. For a while, that can work, it’s out of sight and out of mind; but soon enough that garbage will begin to ferment and its toxic fumes will begin to seep upward through the vents, polluting the air you breathe. It wasn’t a bother, for a time, but eventually it poisons the air.

That’s a helpful image, though it’s one-sided in that it has us only throwing our negative garbage downstairs. Interestingly, we also throw into that same place those parts of us that frighten us in their luminosity. Our own greatness also scares us, and we too bury huge parts of it. Our shadow is not just made up of the negative parts that frighten us; it is also made up of the most luminous parts of us that we feel too frightened to handle. In the end, both the negative and positive energies inside us, which we are too frightened to handle, come from one and the same source, the image and likeness of God imprinted in us.

The most fundamental thing we believe about ourselves as Christians is that we are made in the image and likeness of God. However it isn’t very helpful to imagine this as a beautiful icon stamped inside our souls. Rather we might think of it as irrepressible divine energy, infinite eros and infinite spirit, constantly wrestling with the confines of our finitude. No surprise then that we have to contend with energies, feelings, pressures, and impulses that frighten and threaten us in their magnitude.

Ironically, the struggle with this can be particularly trying for sensitive people; the more sensitive you are, morally and religiously, the more threatening these energies can be. Why? Because two fears tend to afflict sensitive souls: First, the fear of being egoistical. Greatness isn’t easy to carry and few carry it well, and sensitive souls know this. The wild and the wicked unreflectively feed off of sacred fire, except they aren’t known for their sensitivity and too often end up hurting others and themselves. Sensitive souls find themselves considerably more reflective and timid, and for good reason. They’re afraid of being full of themselves, egotists, unhealthily imposing. But that timidity doesn’t everywhere serve them well. Too sensitive in dealing with certain energies inside them, they sometimes end up too empty of God.

The second reason sensitive people tend to bury much of their luminosity is because they’re more in touch with that primal fear within us that’s expressed in the famous Greek myth of Prometheus, namely, that our most creative energies might somehow be an affront to God, that we might be stealing fire from the gods. Sensitive people worry about pride, about being too full of ego. Healthy as that is in itself, it often leads them to bury some or much of their luminosity.

The consequence isn’t good. Like the negative parts of ourselves we bury, our buried luminosity too begins to ferment, turn into toxic fumes, and seep upward through the vents of our consciousness. Those fumes take the form of free-range anger, jealousy, bitterness, and cold judgments of others. So much of our undirected anger, constantly looking for someone or something to land on, is the shadow side of a greatness, which is repressed and buried.

Where to go in the face of this? James Hillman suggests that a symptom suffers most when it doesn’t know where it belongs. We need more spiritual guides who can diagnose this. Too often our spiritualities have been naïve in their diagnosis of human pride and ego. We need more spiritual guides who can recognize how we too much bury parts of our luminosity and how our fear of being too full of ourselves can leave us too empty of God.

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser
Returning the Blessings that God has Given

As part of our ongoing engagement process, we have come to realize the importance of parishioners sharing their personal stories of what drew them to our parish community, what they love about SJC, and how they connect and strive to live as joyful and authentic witnesses in the world. Being a disciple of Jesus means being consistently ready to bring the love of Jesus to others, anytime and any place.

This week we visited with four long-time parishioners (in spite of Bill Bright) who have been involved in a variety of ways in our parish, and in particular, Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation (PBMR). Like Jesus who had a special place in his heart for the poor, these ladies share their love and cooking talents to help feed the people at PBMR both physically and spiritually. Cooking with Chef Anna Maria, in a few short hours they made 10 pans of meat and cheese lasagna that will be delivered to PBMR to feed the people who come after school or for different activities. The staff at Precious Blood, Frs. David and Dennis and Srs. Donna and Caroline, work to help neighborhood families overcome the realities of life in areas like Englewood and Woodlawn.

As they cooked, they talked and shared wisdom. The ladies discussed that how in our culture and in their homes, food is central and is for sharing. Oftentimes they purposely make more than enough so that extras can be shared with others. To them, sharing food is the soul of everything. A Special Note: Anna Maria’s regular helper, Ada Novi, was missed!

This simple act of giving of one’s time, sharing culinary talents—of giving from their hearts—gives these ladies a deeper understanding and unexplainable joy. How is the Holy Spirit calling you to bring the hope, joy and peace of Jesus to the world? What does love—the commitment to others and the needy among us—require?

Thank You Note from Fr. Dave Kelly at Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation

I write this letter with much gratitude for your generosity. I realize, especially during this time of the year, there are many organizations and projects that seek your support. I am honored that you have given to PB.

Raheem is a young man in our woodworking/carpentry program. He comes from some difficult background, but you’d never know unless you sat and talked with him. He is not boisterous or argumentative; he just goes about his business and regularly expresses his gratitude at what the Center has done for him.

He missed a couple days of work and when he did come in, I asked him about it. “Man, Fr. Kelly, I had to find me a place to stay.” He went on to tell me how the family lost their apartment, and that everybody had to find a place to stay. His aunt only had so much room, so he slept in an abandoned car for a couple of days. After a long conversation and many phone calls, we found him some temporary housing even as we worked for something more permanent for his family.

He is working part-time at PBMR and going to school at the community college. Even with the stress and strain of his life, he pushes forward with little or no complaints. Raheem is a teacher—teaching us to keep pushing forward, even when things look bleak.

I thank you for all of your support and the blessing of your financial assistance.

Fr. Dave

P.S. Raheem came in with a smile and said that his family finally got back into an apartment. His gratitude was a gift in itself.

Pictured from the top assembling lasagna are Shawn Sweeney and Leslie Karas; browning meat is Diane Harken; and cooking the noodles is Team Leader & Chef, Anna Maria Brotto.

March 26, 2017
Special Lenten Opportunities for Reconciliation

Parish Reconciliation Service: Tuesday, April 4 at 7pm in church
Hear God’s word proclaimed, then take part in an examination of conscience. 8 priests from our parish and elsewhere will assist with individual confession and absolution as you are ready. Perfect for all ages.

Private Confessions: Saturday, April 8 after the 8am Mass additional priests will be available to hear confessions. (The sacrament of reconciliation is available every Saturday after the morning Mass, except Holy Saturday.)

SJC’s Food Collection
Every month our parish partners with an area food pantry by providing much needed nonperishable food. During the month of March the food collected in our church narthex will be delivered to St. Francis Xavier’s food pantry. Please remember to check code dates on food you donate.

Learn About the Needs at SFX’s Food Pantry
SFX’s mission is twofold: (1) to provide supplemental nutritious food assistance to those in need in a safe, respectful and prayerful environment and (2) to partner with our community to support the pantry through food drives and volunteer opportunities.

♦ SFX’s food pantry serves an average of 90 families, or 275 individuals living in the 60525 and 60526 zip codes. The pantry is open on Tuesdays 51 weeks throughout the year.
♦ Each family receives non-perishable and perishable food as well as toilet paper.
♦ Nonperishable food items needed include: nonsugared cereal, pasta, mac 'n cheese, rice, potatoes, tomato sauce, tuna, peanut butter, jelly, low sugar canned fruits and low sodium canned vegetables, soup, and beans.
♦ “Specials” when available are given to clients. These include coffee, tea, snacks, condiments, baking goods, personal hygiene products, baby items, laundry and dish detergent and paper towels.
♦ SFX receives weekly food donations from Panera, Starbucks, Aracely's Bakery, Trader Joes and DeVries Grocery Store. DeVries also accepts monetary donations on behalf of the food pantry which are used to purchase meat for clients.
♦ Fresh produce is provided via Trader Joes through a grant from the Greater Chicago Food Depository (GCFD) and Share the Harvest, a group of community gardens that share fresh produce. Since Summer 2014, SFX has had a pantry garden in Denning Park, through the Park District of LaGrange. Leftover perishables are donated to the Constance Morris House, a home for abused women and children and BEDS Plus, an overnight shelter organization.
♦ Homeless clients receive a bag specially packed to meet their needs (ready-to-eat foods with pop-top cans, paper plates, bowls, utensils, cold drinks, etc.).

Volunteering at Greater Chicago Food Depository
If you are interested in being part of a group of SJC volunteers that will go to the GCFD call the Parish Center office. We will find a date in the next few months when we can go together. SFX will receive $5/hour credit per volunteer which is used to purchase food from the Depository for SFX Food Pantry.
Pray for Our Sick
Kathy Antczak
Rosemary Balazs
Jerry Benesh
Joseph Borenszi
Paul Cervony
Tim Crain
Fr. David Dowdle
Mildred Fitzgerald
Colleen Franke
Lynn Freking
John Gannon
Jack Gibbons
Erin Gibbons
Kathy Holden
Karen Hult
Bob Karpiak
Lucine Kassis
Curtis Kerzich
George Kojima
Carrie Kowalski
Melody Maly
Bobbie Misiora
Michael O’Brien
Jeanne Pinner
Frank Pipal
Helen Ragus
Leona Shell
Frances Skemp
Deloris Simonek
Ray Simonek
Peter Smykowski
Brendan Steward
Brooks Tonn
Don Vollmer
Monica Westell

**Mass & Reconciliation Schedule & Intentions**  
*Italics: Living Intention*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday, March 27</th>
<th>Lenten Weekday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:45am</td>
<td>Deceased members of Bartucci, Infelise, Capalbo, DiMero families; Patrick McNaughton</td>
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<tr>
<th>Tuesday, March 28</th>
<th>Lenten Weekday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:45am</td>
<td>Lillian Grzywacz; Mary Preston</td>
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<tr>
<th>Wednesday, March 29</th>
<th>Lenten Weekday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:45am</td>
<td>George Polli; Thomas &amp; Marguerite McGuire</td>
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<tr>
<th>Thursday, March 30</th>
<th>Lenten Weekday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:45am</td>
<td>Frank Infelise; Adalina Munaretto</td>
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<tr>
<th>Friday, March 31</th>
<th>Lenten Weekday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:45am</td>
<td>Adele Zuworski; Anne Lynn Mullaney</td>
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<tr>
<th>Saturday, April 1</th>
<th>Lenten Weekday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:00am</td>
<td>Joanna Misantoni Vesper; Our Beloved Dead</td>
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~ Reconciliation Follows Mass ~

| 5:00pm              | Frank Dambra; Bernard Bock |

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<tr>
<th>Sunday, April 2</th>
<th>Fifth Sunday of Lent</th>
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<tr>
<td>7:30am</td>
<td>Steve Pechous; Dave Attaya</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00am</td>
<td>Bernard Bock; Marie Walsh</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:45am</td>
<td>Rosalie Swapa; Delores Hemauer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:15pm</td>
<td>Bill Funke; Anna Trent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:00pm</td>
<td>Don Chopp; James Canny</td>
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Pray for Our Beloved Dead

**Robert Paganelli**, sister of Carol Gilbert

**Jerry Novak**, brother of Len Novotny

**Helen Kastenholz**, mother of Bob, grandmother of 2

**Virginia Barber**, mother of Jean Mathis

**Russel Gunderson**, brother in law of Bob and Mary Beth Newman

**Jacqueline Walsh**, wife of John, mother of Joan, David, Philip, Carol, Barry, James, Peter, and Elizabeth, grandmother of 9, great grandmother of 2

**Randall Hemauer**, brother of Steve, uncle of 3

I invite you not to build walls but bridges,  
to conquer evil with good,  
offense with forgiveness,  
to live in peace with everyone.  
Pope Francis  
@Pontifex Mar 18

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

**Lance Corporal Daniel Pett**, nephew of Kathryn Stinetz

**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 Johnson

**Spc. Douglas Junius**, grandson of Ann Junius and son of Sue Junius

---

**Rev. David P. Dowdle, Pastor**
ddowdle@stjnothecross.org

**Rev. William J. Vollmer, Assoc Pastor**
bvollmer@stjnothecross.org

**Rev. Elliott R. Dees, Assoc Pastor**
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**Deacon John Schopp, Deacon**
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**Bill Bright, Director of Outreach**
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**Janet Caschetta, Director of YC**
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**Kathleen Gorman, Principal**
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**Katie Hayes, Dir of Crossroads**
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**Jessica Koch, Director of Music**
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**MJ Martin, Director of Operations**
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**Katie Nicholson, Crossroads Coord**
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**Steven Weigand, Pastoral Assoc**
sweigand@stjnothecross.org
If God is omnipotent and good, why is there suffering in the world?

The experience of suffering – one’s own or that of a loved one – often presents the greatest challenge to belief in a God of goodness. People of faith struggle with how best to speak to God and about God in the midst of suffering. In these three sessions, we will explore the ways in which the experience of suffering has been addressed in the Bible, the tradition of the Church, and in the thought of some modern theologians. We will enter into this exploration with a view to enriching our own lives of faith and prayer as Christians.

Robin Ryan, CP is a Passionist priest who serves as Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. In addition to teaching theology and working in formation for lay ministers and seminarians, he has engaged in retreat ministry. He is the author of God and the Mystery of Human Suffering: A Theological Conversation Across the Ages (Paulist Press, 2011).