“If we really want to love we must learn how to forgive.”
-Mother Theresa
Forgiveness

An Unfolding Mystery

Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the sons and daughters of God. —Matthew 5:9

The Spirit within us creates an unrelenting desire toward forgiveness and reconciliation. The entire Gospel reveals the unfolding mystery of forgiveness; it is the beginning, the middle, and the end of the Gospel’s transformative message. The energy of being forgiven—in our unworthiness of it—first breaks us out of our merit-badge mentality. The ongoing experience of being forgiven (when we don’t even think we need it) is necessary to renew our flagging spirit and keep us in the infinite ocean of grace. Toward the end of life a universal forgiveness of everything for being what it is becomes the only way we can see and understand reality and finally live at peace.

Zechariah said that God would “give God’s people knowledge of salvation through forgiveness of sin” (Luke 1:77). Only when we experience undeserved love does this inward and outward flow begin to happen. Before that we are a dry, dead cistern. Before that, we are into “religion” perhaps, but not really any dynamic notion of God or even our self. Forgiveness given and forgiveness received are always the pure work of uncreated grace. Such unearned and undeserved forgiveness is necessary to break down the quid pro quo world that I call meritocracy.

Grace re-creates all things. Nothing new happens without forgiveness. We just keep repeating the same old patterns, illusions, and half-truths.

Sometimes grace does not come immediately, but like Job we “sit in the ashes scraping our sores” (Job 2:8). Sometimes neither the desire nor the decision to forgive is present. Then we must grieve and wait. We must sit in our poverty, perhaps even admitting our inability to forgive the offender. That is when we learn how to pray and how to “long and thirst for righteousness” (Matthew 5:6).

True Spirit-led forgiveness always frees and heals at least one of the parties involved, and hopefully both. If it only preserves my moral high ground—as a magnanimous “Christian” person—I doubt if it is true forgiveness at all. It must also quicken and invite the hearts of others, especially the offender. True forgiveness does not leave the offender feeling small and judged, but liberated and loved.

At the New Jerusalem Community in Cincinnati I had “70 x 7” painted over the main doorway. New mail carriers thought it was the address! It was our address, in a way. It is the distinctive hallmark of a people liberated by Christ. Community is not where forgiveness is unnecessary or unneeded. It is where forgiveness is very free to happen. And if it doesn’t happen—on a daily basis—there will be no community; without forgiveness the logic of victimhood and perpetrator rules instead of the illogic of love.

Gateway to Silence:
Create in me a clean heart. —Psalm 51:10
Richard Rohr Daily Meditation

"Forgiveness is the final form of love." - Reinhold Niebuhr

The family is a great training ground for the mutual giving and forgiving without which no love can last for long. Without self-giving and seeking forgiveness love does not last, it does not endure. In the prayer that he himself taught us — namely the Our Father — Jesus makes us ask the Father: “Forgive us our debts, As we also have forgiven our debtors.” And at the end he states: “For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses” (Mt 6:12, 14-15).

One cannot live without seeking forgiveness, or at least, one cannot live at peace, especially in the family. We wrong one another every day. We must take into account these mistakes, due to our frailty and our selfishness. However, what we are asked to do is to promptly heal the wounds that we cause, to immediately reweave the bonds that break within the family. If we wait too long, everything becomes more difficult. There is a simple secret to healing wounds and to avoiding recriminations. It is this: do not let the day end without apologizing, without making peace between husband and wife, between parents and children, between brothers and sisters... between daughters and mothers-in-law! If we learn to apologize promptly and to give each other mutual forgiveness, the wounds heal, the marriage grows stronger, and the family becomes an increasingly stronger home, which withstands the shocks of our smaller or greater misdeeds. This is why there is no need for a long speech, as a caress is enough: one caress and everything is over and one can start afresh. But do not end the day at war!

If we learn to live this way in the family, we can also do so outside, wherever we may be. It is easy to be skeptical about this. Many people — even Christians — think it is an exaggeration. It is said: yes, they are fine words, but it is impossible to put them into practice. But thanks be to God it is not so. Indeed, it is precisely in receiving forgiveness from God that we in turn are capable of forgiving others. This is why Jesus has us repeat these words each time we recite the Our Father prayer, that is, every day. And it is crucial that, in a sometimes pitiless society, there be places, such as the family, in which to learn to forgive one another.

Excerpt from Pope Francis November 4, 2015 General Audience.
Parish News

Fr. Elliott Dees
AND THE PARISHIONERS OF ST. PASCAL’S
INVITE YOU TO JOIN US IN CELEBRATING THE
INSTALLATION OF

Fr. Elliott Dees

AS PASTOR OF ST. PASCAL’S PARISH
OCTOBER 7, 2017
4:00PM

ST. PASCAL
3935 N. MELVINA AVENUE
CHICAGO, IL 60634

RECEPTION TO FOLLOW IMMEDIATELY
IN HEIMSATH HALL
NO RSVP NECESSARY

Eucharistic Adoration
Prayers for
Rachael Schopp
All are invited to commit to praying one hour per week through the intercession of the Blessed Mother Mary as we celebrate the feast of her birth on September 8 through the centennial of Our Lady of Fatima on October 13. Please pray for Rachael's healing along with your own intentions. Eucharistic Adoration is available at SJC on Mondays from 2:30 until 9pm in the Mary Chapel. Adoration is also available 24/7 at St. Isaac Jogues in Hinsdale, Holy Trinity in Westmont, and Visitation in Elmhurst.

Respect Life Sunday:
October 1
Life Chain: Every year people are invited to join hands in towns across the nation to witness our respect of life at all its stages. Join fellow parishioners on Sunday, October 1 along Ogden Avenue between Wolf and Grand from 2:30-3:30pm.

“Clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.” (Colossians 3:12-13)
Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Next weekend we celebrate the seminarians of the Archdiocese of Chicago through our second collection. By offering our financial support we provide these young men with the critical education and training they need to shepherd our parishes and administer the sacraments. Last year, more than $978,000 was collected and I am thankful for your past and present support.

Pope Francis reminds us that, “The Church and the world need mature and balanced priests, intrepid and generous Pastors, capable of closeness, of listening and mercy.” There are currently 54 seminarians preparing for a life of service as your future parish priests. Our seminarians’ motivation and enthusiasm in their pursuit to answer God's call is inspiring. They are the future guides for the spiritual and intellectual formation of our Catholic communities and are well deserving of our prayers and financial support.

Contributions made to this collection alleviate monthly expenses such as tuition and fees ($1,672), room and board ($638), and health insurance ($171) for each seminarian and will be used solely for the formation of new priests for the Archdiocese of Chicago. You may utilize the remittance envelopes provided to your parish or should you find it more convenient, feel free to contribute online through our website at www.archchicago.org/seminarianfund.

For your generous support in the past and for your consideration of support again this year, I thank you. May God continue to bless you abundantly. Please know that I keep you in my daily prayers and intentions, and I ask for yours in return.

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Cardinal Blase J. Cupich
Archbishop of Chicago

It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you. John 15:16
Living the Gospel

Life in the church demands that we forgive one another not only because it is the compassionate thing to do, but because this is how God acts and expects us to act. It belongs to the very “being” of God to forgive; if we are of God, then it is also of our very “being” to forgive. Jesus tells a striking parable in this gospel about two instances of forgiveness of debts—one lavishly given, the other withheld in miserliness. The implication made in the parable is that God acts like the extravagant king. But not so. God’s forgiveness of us is always even beyond extravagance, even beyond measure. We measure; God does not. As infinite as God’s forgiveness is, to receive it is not without a substantial condition. We are to forgive one another as God forgives—from the heart, “seventy-seven times.” Only forgiveness that comes from the heart is immeasurable.

Our relationship to each other is described in terms of our relationship to God. Forgiveness is absolutely central to the message of the whole gospel because it is necessary in order for our relationships with God and each other continually to grow stronger and more graceful. Christ’s dying and rising models for us our own dying and rising: “no one dies for oneself.” We always die (to ourselves) for the sake of the other. Forgiving entails dying to damaged relationships so that we might all belong to the Lord and rise to every new Life with him. Forgiving means God has hold of us and enables us to act in a Godlike manner. Forgiving means that the cost of reconciling petty hurts or even major ruptures pale in comparison to the immeasurable forgiveness of God. 

Background on the Gospel

Today’s Gospel reading directly follows last week’s Gospel in which Jesus taught the disciples how to handle disputes and conflict within the Christian community. In today’s reading Peter asks Jesus how many times one ought to extend forgiveness to another. Peter proposes a reasonable number of times, perhaps seven. Jesus replies by extending Peter’s proposal by an enormous amount; not just seven times should one forgive, but 77 times. The parable of the unforgiving servant is Jesus’ elaboration of his initial reply to Peter. Through the parable we come to understand the depths of God’s mercy toward us and the results of our acceptance of God’s forgiveness.

The king in the parable decides to settle accounts with his servants. We are told that one servant in particular owes the king an enormous sum of money. Despite the promise of the servant, it is unlikley that he would ever be able to repay the debt that he owes. The king is moved by the humility of the pleading servant and mercifully forgives the debt. Rather than displaying gratitude for this forgiveness, the servant confronts a fellow servant who owes him a small debt—a pittance when compared with the amount that was owed to the king. The unmerciful servant refuses the pleas of his fellow servant and sends the servant to prison.

A few other servants tell the merciful king about the actions of the unforgiving servant. The king punishes the servant because he refused to show the kind of mercy he had himself received from the king. Jesus concludes by indicating that this is how it will be with God and those who refuse to forgive one another.

There is a temptation to quantify forgiveness as Peter tried to do, but Jesus’ point is that forgiveness is not about quantity—the number of times we extend forgiveness to another. In the parable the king’s forgiveness is like God’s forgiveness, and it transforms us, helping us to be as forgiving as God. The lesson is clear: If we hoard God’s mercy while showing no mercy to others, we risk forfeiting the effects of God’s mercy in our lives.

Reflection:

1. Why, at times, is it so hard to forgive?
2. What helps you to forgive?
3. What does it mean to live for the Lord?

"To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you.”
- C.S. Lewis

What are we to take from this Gospel?

Three things come immediately to mind.

1. As Christians, forgiveness is not an optional part of our lives;
2. We can’t expect or ask God to forgive us unless we are willing to forgive one another; and
3. The forgiveness we offer to each other must be real and sincere.

Reflection:

1. Why, at times, is it so hard to forgive?
2. What helps you to forgive?
3. What does it mean to live for the Lord?

"When you hold resentment toward another, you are tied to that person or condition by an emotional link that is stronger than steel.
Forgiveness is the only way to dissolve the link and get free." - Catherine Ponder
Often, we talk so much about our lives and the lives of our neighbors—what we should do to fill our lives with God’s grace and peace and happiness, what we must do to make our neighbor’s life happy—that we forget the basic reason why you and I and all men live. We live and breathe and have our being for one reason only: to love God. God created us for this one reason, to love him. He gave us power over all things of the earth for one reason only, that we may love him. He gave us our lips to be voices for the stars and the sun and the birds and the animals and the trees and rocks and mountains, and the exotic orchids and the simple dandelions, so that they can sing their hymn of praise to their God through you and me: “God, we love you!” The world would echo with this cry: “God, we love you!” It should be the song of every man, the whisper of every child: “God, we love you!” There is no reason for living, no sense to life, no reason why our heart should beat, or our lungs should breathe, or our minds should act, without this love. We have been made “God-lovers,” and our lives are restless, empty, barren things unless they be filled in every part with the song of songs, “God, we love you.”

—Excerpted from With God in America by Walter J. Ciszek, SJ

The Lord is kind and merciful, slow to anger, and rich in compassion.
Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all my being, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.
He pardons all your iniquities, heals all your ills.
He redeems your life from destruction, crowns you with kindness and compassion.
He will not always chide, nor does he keep his wrath forever. Not according to our sins does he deal with us, nor does he requite us according to our crimes.
For as the heavens are high above the earth, so surpassing is his kindness toward those who fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far has he put our transgressions from us. Psalm 103

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.
O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

Practice: The Welcoming Prayer by Richard Rohr

I’d like to offer you a form of contemplation—a practice of forgiving reality for being what it is—called The Welcoming Prayer.

First, identify a hurt or an offense in your life. Remember the feelings you first experienced with this hurt and feel them the way you first felt them. Notice how this shows up in your body. Paying attention to your body’s sensations keeps you from jumping into the mind and its dualistic games of good guy/bad guy, win/lose, either/or.

After you can identify the hurt and feel it in your body, welcome it. Stop fighting it. Stop splitting and blaming. Welcome the grief. Welcome the anger. It’s hard to do, but for some reason, when we name it, feel it, and welcome it, transformation can begin.

Don’t lose presence to the moment. Any kind of analysis will lead you back into attachment to your ego self. The reason a bird sitting on a hot wire is not electrocuted is quite simply because it does not touch the ground to give the electricity a pathway. Hold the creative tension, but don’t ground it by thinking about it, critiquing it, or analyzing it.

When you’re able to welcome your own pain, you will in some way feel the pain of the whole world. This is what it means to be human—and also what it means to be divine. You can hold this immense pain because you too are being held by the very One who went through this process on the cross. Jesus was holding all the pain of the world; though the world had come to hate him, he refused to hate it back.

Now hand all of this pain—yours and the world’s—over to God. Let it go. Ask for the grace of forgiveness for the person who hurt you, for the event that offended you, for the reality of suffering in each life.

I can’t promise the pain will leave easily or quickly. To forgive is not to forget. But letting go frees up a great amount of soul-energy that liberates a level of life you didn’t know existed. It leads you to your True Self.

Gateway to Silence: Create in me a clean heart. —Psalm 51:10

"To forgive is the highest, most beautiful form of love. In return, you will receive untold peace and happiness." - Robert Muller

St. John of the Cross Parish  September 17, 2017  24th Sunday in Ordinary Time  Page 6
**Fall Support Groups**

**Grief Support for Kids & Teens**
Registration is underway for the next 6 week fall grief group for kids and teens from 4-16 years old on Thursdays beginning October 5- November 9 from 6-7:30pm. Caregivers or parents meet at the same time. Call Rosemarie Cohen, Bereavement Coordinator, at Adventist St. Thomas at 630-256-6993. Space is limited. No cost to attend.

**Lost Child Pilgrimage**
The Shrine of Our Lady of Pompeii in Chicago invites anyone grieving the death of a child to a very special day of reflection, healing and hope on Saturday, October 28 from 8:30am to 1:30pm. For more information go to www.ourladyofpompeii.org or call 312.421.3757.

**Grief Support for Widows**
Joyful Again is a 2 day program for those who have lost their spouse. The next session to be held in our area is November 11-12 at Our Lady of Angels in Lemont. Call 708-354-7211 for more information and to register or joyfulagain7211@gmail.com Register early.

**SJC Grief & Divorce Support Groups**
SJC offers support groups three times per year. Mark your calendar to attend. Go to our parish website to learn more and register. Or Call Pastoral Associate Steve Weigand with questions.
- Seasons of Hope Grief Support Group for adults is offered on 6 Monday evenings in the Parish Center from 7-8:30pm on October 23, 30, November 6, 13, 20 and 27.
- Our Divorce Support Group is offered on 8 Thursday evenings from 7-8:30pm in the Parish Center on October 26, November 2, 9, 16, 30, December 7, 14, and 21.

**Spiritual Side of Cancer**
When you or your loved one develops cancer, you may find yourself clinging to your faith for hope or questioning your faith all together. Meetings on the second Thursday of each month from 5-6pm on October 12, November 9, December 14 at The Wellness House in Hinsdale. Call 630-654-5111. Drop-ins welcome. All faith backgrounds welcome.

"It's one of the greatest gifts you can give yourself, to forgive. Forgive everybody." - Maya Angelou

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**SIX WEEKS WITH THE WORD OF GOD**

**YOUNG ADULT SCRIPTURE FAITH SHARING**

Are you looking for a meaningful way to grow in your Faith and learn more about the Word of God? The Archdiocese of Chicago is launching Six Weeks With the Word of God: Young Adult Scripture Faith Sharing to provide you with a wonderful opportunity to do just that for young adults ages 18-30.

Beginning in the third week of September, groups of young adults will meet in nine different locations across the Archdiocese of Chicago on a weekly basis in a comfortable community environment, from outdoor parks to parish halls. Six Weeks With the Word of God sessions will combine elements of study, support, and fun, ultimately enabling attendees to help one another to find God in their lives.

Meet other young adults at St. Joseph College, St. Clement, St. Peter’s, Sheil Catholic Center at NU, Archbishop Quigley Center and more! Come to our kick off tomorrow evening, Monday, September 18 at 7:30pm at Nacional 27 at 325 Huron in Chicago. Fr. John Kartje will lead a discussion on Making the Leap of Faith: A Talk on Science and the Bible. Free drinks and food to be enjoyed by all.

For more information, please visit pvm.archchicago.org/events/six-weeks-with-the-word-of-god. You can register to join a Six Weeks With the Word of God group by visiting www.cvent.com/d/15qhhd.

Pass the word to your kids who live downtown!!

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**Are you interested in learning more about the process of becoming Catholic? RCIA or Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults is for the unbaptized or baptized Christians who desire to enter into the Catholic faith or baptized Catholics who have not celebrated the sacraments of Eucharist and Confirmation. Contact Pastoral Associate Steve Weigand today at sweigand@stjohnofthecross.org or 708-246-4404.**

RCIA 2011: Jan, Sherri, Scott, Marc, Allison, Stephen, Dave, Amber, Brian, Todd and Ryan (not pictured)
**Mayslake Ministry Fall Conference**

Register now for our Annual Fall Conference featuring Bishop Robert Morneau of Green Bay and author of the best-selling book, *Spiritual Direction: A Pathway to Spiritual Maturity* on Saturday, October 7 from 9:00am-Noon at St. John Neuman Parish in St. Charles. Attendance counts for continuing ed credits for catechists and teachers. Register online at mayslakeministries.org or 630-852-9000. Fee: $65 per person.

**The Well in LaGrange**

Please check out our new YouTube video offering an entertaining sneak preview of our new space! On YouTube, search for "The Well Spirituality Center WELLcome" We look forward to welcoming you into our new space and our new program year. We have some exciting new programs coming up – among them:

**Practicing Peace**: an hour of Centering Prayer, music, ritual and sharing. Meets twice a month; next session is Monday, September 25, 11am-noon.

**Forest Therapy Walk**: This three-hour sensory-focused guided excursion in the forested area behind the Well will offer encounters with other-than-human nature. Thursday, September 21, 9-Noon, repeats October 12.

**Painting the Stars: Science, Religion and an Evolving Faith**: Based on a DVD series featuring Christian evolutionary theologians, this group meets once a month for guided discussion, ritual, and other opportunities to integrate this transformative material into our spiritual lives. First session is Tuesday, September 26, 9:30-Noon.

**The Book of Joy: Lasting Happiness in a Changing World**: Explore JOY! every week for 8 weeks through discussion and conversation, as our book group considers the delightful spiritual exchange between the Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu. One group meets at The Well on Thursdays from 1-2:30pm starting September 28; the other group meets Fridays from 9-11am in River Forest starting on September 29. Go to www.csjthewell.org to register and for further details on these and many other programs. Or call 708-482-5048.

"We must develop and maintain the capacity to forgive. He who is devoid of the power to forgive is devoid of the power to love. There is some good in the worst of us and some evil in the best of us. When we discover this, we are less prone to hate our enemies.”

- Martin Luther King Jr.

God of mercy and forgiveness, through your Son you have taught us that there is no limit to forgiveness. May we forgive all who have wronged us, just as you have forgiven us. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Little Rock Scripture Study: Old Testament**

The Little Rock Scripture Study Group began an overview study of both the Old and New Testament. The first five weeks will be spent exploring the saga of God's people and their journey with God. *The Panorama of the Old Testament* written by biblical scholar Stephen Binz invites students to survey the variety of books found in the Old Testament, to better understand the themes, characters and God's overall plan of salvation. In the second five weeks the group will study the New Testament beginning with the Gospels and finishing with Revelation. Each session includes dvd learning and group discussion. A materials fee of $32 for all ten weeks can be paid at the first session. Mondays at 1pm Parish Center. Direct questions to Roberta at 630-986-0021.

**Bible Study: Vatican II Documents**

Join the Wednesday Morning Bible Study Group as they read and discuss the 16 Vatican II documents on Wednesdays from 9:30-11:30am in the Parish Center. A series of films by Fr. John Trijillo will start each session. The documents are available on line at ewtn.com or vatican.va or in print at Amazon. For more info contact Joan Willems at 708-352-8628 or jmwillems2004@yahoo.com.

**CCSS: Chicago Catholic Scripture School**

Anyone wishing to deepen their understanding of scripture is welcome to attend the Chicago Catholic Scripture School at St. John of the Cross Parish. CCSS provides an in-depth knowledge of the Bible within a Roman Catholic framework, allowing students to deepen their relationship with God's revealed Word. CCSS covers the bible in 4 years (12 units). Students may register for one unit at a time or one year. To learn more call 312.915.7466. CCSS is now part of the Institute of Pastoral Studies at Loyola University Chicago. SJC Classes meet on Wednesday evenings in the Parish Center from 7-9pm. Call today to register.
St. Francis Xavier Food Pantry
Gives Thanks to SJC

We are so grateful for the bounty of food you collected and shared with us in August. Our weekly clients appreciate the variety of food we offer because of your generosity and thoughtfulness. A special thanks to Shawn Sweeney, Molly Murphy Bruton, Margaret Cunningham, Jeanne Federico, Donald Fitzgerald, Diane Harken, Susan Mazur, Chris Sever who stocked their vehicles, transported and unloaded about 150 bags of food plus cases of hams, toilet paper and paper towels. WOW! Thank you for partnering with us to help our neighbors in need of food assistance.

Bring nonperishable foods and household products with you when you come to Mass. Each month SJC shares your donations with different area food pantries. Thank you in advance for your generosity and for checking product expiration dates.

Walk for CareNet

SJC is participating in a Walk for CareNet to support women and families in our community who experience unplanned pregnancy. Help us empower women and save lives by joining this family friendly run/walk on September 30 hosted by St. Isaac Jogues. Check in starts at 8am with breakfast foods served. For more info call Lolly Maloney at 630-261-5675.

Food Pantry Collection

This month our food donations brought to the church narthex will go to the food pantry at St. Thomas of Canterbury in Chicago. Thank you in advance for checking product expiration dates!!

Precious Blood
Ministry of Reconciliation

Pig Roast Fall Fundraiser
Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation
Sunday, October 111:30am-4pm
11:30am Mass with Blessing of PBMR Newly Renovated Mother Brunner Home Followed by Food and Fun
2-4pm tours of all PBMR facilities
See our newly renovated Mother Brunner Home, our Art Gallery with a powerful photo display, “Still My Mother; Still My Father”, picturing children visiting their incarcerated parents, and meet our staff, talk with some of our youth and their families. Come and join in the fun and delight in our amazing Community Vegetable Garden, sit in our Peace Garden and learn how valuable you are to our ministry!!
Tickers: $50 per person at door or online at pbmr.org
Call 773-653-5467 for more information.

“Forgiveness is not always easy. At times it feels more painful than the wound we suffered, to forgive the one that inflicted it. And yet, there is no peace without forgiveness.” - Marianne Williamson
On Monday, Preschool and Kindergarten celebrated Grandparent's Day! The children invited grandparents and special friends in for an hour to create a fun project with and sing some songs, read stories, and share a special snack. Each year, our children and special friends look forward to this day with great anticipation!

Next Week At SJC
Monday, September 18  Prayer Service 9:15a.m
Tuesday, September 19  School Picture Day
          School Advisory Board Meeting 7pm
Thursday, September 21  Special Lunch Day
          7/8th Grade Dance 7pm  School
Friday, September 22  No School  - Teacher In Service

Save the Date! Athletic Association Comedy Night Benefit
When? Saturday, October 21 from 7:00 to 11:00pm
Where? The School Gym  Cost? $60.00 per person

“What is forgiven is usually well remembered.” - Louis Dudek

Call Janet Caschetta, Director of Youth Catechesis, to volunteer or register your children. 708-246-6760 or jcaschetta@stjohnofthecross.org

YC 7th grade Small Groups KICK-OFF
Join your small group for an evening of fellowship, games and service!

Sunday September 24, 2017 6:30–8:00pm in the School MultiPurpose Room enter the door #3 between the Parish Center and School. This event replaces your small group meeting.

Service Project Opportunity
We are working on a service project to help the victims of recent natural disasters in the United States. Please watch your email the week before Kick-Off for details on what is needed for donation. Gentle reminder, in order for this to go towards your service requirements, students should earn the money and purchase the donation with their funds to help others in need; sheltering the homeless and feeding the hungry. Bring your donation to the Kick-Off on September 24 at 6:30 pm.

YC begins this weekend!

The best legacy children can receive from parents is faith.
Spirituality Among Men  
September 23 8:45am  
“God Bless the Atheists”

No matter your news source or political persuasion, there appears to be increasing tension between the secular and the sacred in American society. What is the role of personal belief in a world of instantaneously shared social media, and why do so many people today reject the Church outright or even the possibility of God without discussion?

Why do the atheists sound so angry, and what is my response to a loved one who is a seeker but no longer a believer? Maybe the problem we must consider is not what others say but rather what we ourselves believe. At times the anxiety we feel in the face of unbelief is the necessary gut-checking of our own beliefs. Maybe that uneasiness is God’s invitation to get reacquainted.

We are all seekers by nature and if we are fortunate, that process never ends. SAM (Spirituality Among Men) invites you to refresh your understanding of God as we discuss various misconceptions that may be preventing us from deepening our faith. As we grow, our notion of God must expand and in so doing old notions must pass away.

Join us on September 23 for a great discussion in the Parish Center!

SAM, Spirituality Among Men, is a monthly Saturday morning discussion and fellowship group for all men of our parish. No need to register. Just come to the Parish Center for coffee, bagels, fellowship and some good discussion. SAM gatherings end no later than 10:30am.

Principles of a Happy Marriage

Marriage Enrichment Retreat

Are you newly retired and now empty nesters? Or are you crazy busy with 3 kids in grammar school and both of you are working full-time? Or did you just add a new baby to the mix? Over time life changes both you and your spouse and your relationship. Learn new ways to understand each other, deepen your friendship and love, identify factors that undermine happy marriages, and ensure that your relationship thrives instead of just survive. Based on years of research by the Gottman Institute, the 7 Principles of Happy Marriage Workshop will strengthen and simply guide you and your spouse to enjoying life and each other more.

Whether you have been married 5 years or 25 years you can learn new habits that can improve every marriage—making the most important relationship in your life even better!

Offered for the second time at St. John of the Cross Parish, this successful workshop is led by a husband and wife Gottman trained team over 3 Saturday mornings. You will find the workshop to be easy to understand, positive, engaging and fun.

September 23, September 30 and October 14 from 9am-Noon in the Parish Center

The cost is $150 per couple and includes 2 copies of the book The 7 Principles for Making a Marriage Work, a journal/notebook and refreshments. Child care is available. This workshop is not intended for couples needing therapy or professional assistance. Confidential tuition assistance is available. Direct questions to Pastoral Associate Steve Weigand.

Sign up today at www.stjohnofthecross.org.

"Forgiveness is God's command." - Martin Luther
Breaking Bread Supper Club
Begins a New Season @SJC

Adults of the parish are invited to join our parish Supper Club. It’s a great way to meet fellow parishioners for an evening of fun, sharing conversation and good food. Adult parishioners of all ages and stages of life have enjoyed the Supper Club as a way to meet and get to know others on a smaller scale. 8 to 10 adults are grouped together to share dinner and conversation in each other’s homes about 4-5 times during the year. Scheduling is up to each group. The host provides the entrée and beverages while others bring an appetizer, salad, side, and dessert. Nothing gourmet—just good food, good conversation & good friends.

Register on our parish website home page. Then be sure to come to our

Wine & Cheese Kick-Off Get-Together
Monday September 25 from 7:00–8:00pm
In the Parish Center

when you can meet your group. Parishioners can still join if they cannot make the Wine and Cheese gathering. For more information contact Marilyn Montgomery at gardengrow04@hotmail.com.

PLEASE RSVP to SJC Parish Center (Checks payable to SJC Women’s Club)
OR you may sign up online through the Parish website
Pray to End Domestic Violence

- Archbishop Cupich will celebrate a Mass to End Domestic Violence on Saturday, September 30 at 5:15pm in Holy Name Cathedral. Everyone is invited. He will preach on our need to reach out to victims of domestic violence and their children and work to build healthy relationships in our families. A reception in the parish hall will follow the Mass.
- The Domestic Violence ministries of St. Cletus, St. Francis Xavier and St. John of the Cross Parishes invite you to join us in an ecumenical prayer service for victims and families who have been impacted by domestic abuse. Prayer and song will be highlighted by a survivor story. The service will be held Tuesday, October 3 at 7pm in St. Francis Xavier Church. All are welcome.

Job Search Assistance Programs

- 5 Week Boot Camp Job Search Workshop Begins: Interfaith Career Network Fall Boot Camp will run for 5 Tuesday evenings beginning on Tuesday, September 19 from 7-9pm at the First Baptist Church in LaGrange. Whether you are looking to change jobs or re-enter the workforce, this workshop will teach you the tools to help land the right job for you. This workshop is open to all and there is no fee to attend. For further information, call 708.352.2740.
- Learn How to Ace the Interview: Job seekers are encouraged to attend a session on interviewing on Thursday, September 21 from 7-9pm in the Parish Center. Speaker, career coach and author, Tom Nosal will discuss how to answer the more difficult questions in a job interview such as: Tell me about yourself? What are your salary expectations? Tell me about your weaknesses? Everyone is welcome to ICN meetings/workshops and there is no cost to attend. For more go to interfaithcareernetwork.org.

Parish School Used Uniform Sale

As the cooler weather approaches, it’s a great time to take another look at your school uniform supply! The Parent Association will be collecting gently used uniforms to be resold at our Used Uniform Sale on Monday, September 25th from 2-6pm in the Parish Center. Please make sure your donations are freshly washed and free of stains, holes or tears. Check those closets again! We will also be collecting 1st Communion clothing and accessories. Please consider donating suits, ties, veils, dresses, shoes, etc. Donation bins are located in the school lobby and in the Parish Center.

Minister of Care Training

Ministers of Care visit the homebound and hospitalized bringing Holy Communion, praying, and visiting. Training for new ministers is provided at the Carmelite Center in Darien on two Saturdays, September 23 and 30 from 9am to 1pm. All training fees are paid by the parish. Call Steve Weigand if you are interested in learning more about this important ministry.

"Forgive, and you will be forgiven."
- Luke 6:37
St. John of the Cross Parish congratulates the following families who had their children baptized last Sunday by Deacon Rich Voytas assisted by Jeannie and Mike Francis. Pictured from the left are: Kyle and Megan McMillin with James Donald, Emmanuel and Elizabeth Juarez with Azaiah Ambrose, and Nathan and Kress Good with Connor Thomas.

"Anger begets more anger, and forgiveness and love lead to more forgiveness and love." - Mahavira

On Sunday, October 8 at 12:30pm an Anointing Mass will be celebrated for all those who would like to receive the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.

A Sacrament of Healing
We come before the Lord for healing. Like all sacraments, the Anointing of the Sick is a liturgical and communal celebration. The sacrament includes the following principle elements: the priest in silence lays his hands on the head of the sick or elderly person and prays over them. He then anoints their forehead and hands with the Oil of the Sick saying, “Through this holy anointing may the Lord in his love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit. May the Lord who frees you from sin save you and raise you up.”

What are the effects of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick?
The special grace of the sacrament unites the sick person to the passion of Christ, gives strength, peace and courage to endure sufferings of illness or old age, imparts the forgiveness of sins if the sick person was unable to obtain it through the sacrament of Penance, provides for the restoration of health and helps to prepare the person for passing over to eternal life.

Who may be anointed?
“The Sacrament of the Anointing is not a sacrament for those only who are at the point of death” (Catechism 1514). The sacrament is appropriate for those whose health is seriously impaired by sickness or advanced age. This includes persons who are seriously ill whether at home, in hospitals or in nursing homes, as well as sick children who are old enough to experience benefit from the sacrament. It could be physical, mental or emotional. The sacrament may be repeated if the person becomes ill again or if their condition becomes worse. A person may also be anointed before surgery.
Mass & Reconciliation Schedule & Intentions

Monday, September 18  Weekday
7:45am Joan Kravcik; Harold Otten

Tuesday, September 19  St. Januarius
7:45am Francesco Cosenza; Our Beloved Dead

Wednesday, September 20  Sts. Andrew Kim Tae-gon & Paul Chong Ha-sang
7:45am Irene Rybicki; Beth O’Leary

Thursday, September 21  St. Matthew
7:45am Lillian Geoghegan; Clayton Olson

Friday, September 22  Weekday
7:45am Alice Sobey; Michael Collins

Saturday, September 23  St. Pius of Pietrelcina
8:00am John Broderick Jr;
~ Reconciliation Follows Mass ~
5:00pm Richard Sprague; John Gazdacka

Sunday, September 24  25th Sunday in Ordinary Time
7:30am Byrd Kelly; Elizabeth Tromp
9:00am Daniel O’Brien; Patrick McNaughton
10:45am Arlene Bishop; Gene Gallagher
12:15pm Robert Neri; Harry Tobin
5:00pm Thomas Martin; Edward O’Brien

Pray for Our Sick
Ginny Beutell
Kathleen Carpenter
Crystal Deters
Frank Dine
Nick Dombrowski
Fr. David Dowdle
Lynn Freking
Alice Hogan
Kay Holden
Karen Hult
Bob Jacobs
Virginia Jakubczak
Frank Madler
Carol Martin
Deacon Pablo Perez
Geno Pesce
Blanche Pepin
Frank Pipal
Joe Pustejovsky
Rachael Schopp
Pete Smykowski
Claudine Snow
Brooks Tonn
Don Vollmer
Terry Wall
Sharon Wildman

Pray for Our Beloved Dead
Paul Cervony, son of Helen Cervony, husband of Sandy, brother of Edward, Michael, Mary Jane, & Carol
Margaret Anderson, aunt of Joseph Murphy
Mary Alice Bartell, mother of Rebecca Thomas, grandmother of 2
Joyce Belasick, mother of Mary Ann Sarno & Jayne Vick, sister of Kay Diggins
Genevieve Kuznic, mother of Linda Demke
Frances Olivero, mother of Christine, Janet, John, grandmother of 6, great grandmother of 2,
sister of Mary Angelini
Don Babka, father of Deb, Karen Bernardino and Donald

Pray for Our Loved Ones Serving Our Country
Staff 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 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
Spc. Douglas Junius, grandson of Ann Junius and son of Sue Junius
PFC Kevin Lawinger, grandson of Roe and Bob Lawinger

Pray for Our Inmates
Slava Hadins, Christian participant in the Connecticut Correctional System
David John Maloney, Christian participant in the Connecticut Correctional System

Lord, I am grateful for your endless mercy.
Give me the humility and courage
to forgive those who have hurt me.
Amen.

Marriage Banns
Grace Walsh & Matthew Harris
Stephanie Gerlach & Sam Covey
Kim Nelson & Alex Furth

Look upon us, O God,
Creator and ruler of all things,
and, that we may feel
the working of your mercy,
grant that
we may serve you
with all our heart.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.
Collect

Go to our parish website, www.stjohnofthecross.org, to read more about the many ministries and activities at SJC, register to become a new member, sign up to receive the weekly eblast and the bulletin, and get staff contact information. Call the Parish Center at 708-246-4404 with questions or if we can assist you in any way.
In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. Matthew 5:16

Second Special Collection
Today
at All Masses
for
Hurricane Harvey
&
Hurricane Irma
Relief Efforts

 Millions of survivors remain without homes or power; there are fuel shortages, debris filled streets, downed power lines and standing water all left in the wake of the recent hurricanes. To help meet the immediate needs of the people who have been impacted by these catastrophes, we will have a second collection today at all Masses. Our donations will be split between Christ the Good Shepherd Church in Spring, Texas and the Catholic Archdiocese of Miami, Florida, enabling them to disperse our donations and resource those in their local communities who are most in need. It is our hope that in the months ahead SJC parishioners of all ages will be able to take part in personally serving these victims as needed through our financial, spiritual and physical support, especially in their longer term recovery. Thank you for your generosity and please continue to keep your thoughts and prayers with those affected by these natural disasters. Watch for additional communications from our parish Outreach Advisory Team.