The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord.
Blessings on the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time.

Since 1974 the National Catholic Education Association has designated the final week of January as Catholic Schools Week. This determination includes the Memorial of St. Thomas Aquinas, patron of Catholic schools, colleges, and universities on January 28. This year’s theme is Catholic Schools: Learn. Serve. Lead. Succeed. This bulletin has information about Sunday's Open House at St. John of the Cross Parish School.

Deacon Richard Voytas formally joins our pastoral staff on February 1. He (and his wife, Gale) previously ministered at St. Daniel the Prophet Parish, Chicago. He was ordained a deacon for the Archdiocese of Chicago by Francis Cardinal George in 2006. I trust that we will make Gale and Rich welcome.

On Saturday, February 2 we welcome the Most Rev. John Manz, auxiliary bishop of Chicago and our regional Episcopal Vicar, to administer the sacrament of Confirmation. Throughout this week, kindly remember our Confirmandi and their parents, sponsors, and catechists in your prayers.

February 2, forty days after Christmas, is the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord. Sometimes called Candlemas, it is the World Day for Consecrated Life. We take this opportunity to pray with and for religious sisters, brothers, and priests for their ministry and witness through their vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. One tradition associated with this feast is the blessing of candles used in prayer. The rituals of Groundhog Day are related to this custom.

When it not a Sunday, the Church celebrates St. Blase on February 3. Using unlit candles that were blessed the day before, this memorial includes the tradition of the blessing of throats. Next weekend, the Masses will conclude with a general blessing of throats using the formula that requests the intercession of Blase, the martyred bishop and baptismal patron of our Cardinal Archbishop.

On the next page in this bulletin you will find information about the scheduled ministerial review of Father Bill Vollmer. Your feedback is requested because it is helpful.

Recent adjustments to the church sound system caused some problems for those who use the assisted hearing devices. We regret the inconvenience and believe that it has been corrected. Please inform us if any difficulties remain.

Let us continue to pray for one another and for our parish.

Father Reszel

Sister Anastasia/Support-A-Student Fund
2nd Collection Today

The Sr. Anastasia Fund, named in memory of our first school principal, is dedicated to educating our parish children in the faith. Begun when the convent building was sold to the IBVM community, it functions like an endowment fund in distributing funds to both the school and the YC program as reported in the Annual Report. The Parish Finance Committee administers the annual distribution. As always, your generosity to support the mission of our parish is most appreciated.

About Sister Anastasia O’Connor IBVM

In 1961 with five IBVM Sisters, Sister Anastasia became the first principal and trailblazer who launched our parish school on its way to becoming the highly respected Catholic elementary school it is today. In 1967 Sister Anastasia left SJC to serve in an administrative position within the IBVM Community. Delighted to return in 1973, she served eleven more years as the educational leader of our school and parish community.

Sister Anastasia cherished the children, the parents, the faculty and staff, the parishioners and the many priests she met during her days at St. John of the Cross. Love, lived in service to others, enabled her to live her motto, “To do your will, O God, is my desire.” Sister passed away on Easter Sunday, 2011.
Reverend Marc Reszel, Pastor  
St. John of the Cross Parish  
5005 Wolf Road  
Western Springs, IL 60558  

Dear Father Reszel:  

Upon the recommendation of the Vicar for Deacons, I am pleased to assign Deacon Richard L. Voytas of the Archdiocese of Chicago to assist you at St. John of the Cross Parish.  

This assignment will be effective from February 1, 2019 for a probationary period of six months. Enclosed is a temporary ministerial agreement for you and Deacon Voytas to complete, execute, and return to the Office for the Diaconate. In accordance with the policies of the Archdiocese, prior to August 1, 2019, an evaluation form will be sent to you by the Vicar for Deacons to determine if you and Deacon Voytas are in agreement that this assignment should be extended.  

Please know that I am grateful for your ministry to the people of St. John of the Cross Parish and hope that the assignment of Deacon Voytas will be beneficial for all concerned.  

Let me take this opportunity to wish you and all at the St. John of the Cross Parish community every blessing; you are in my prayers. In the days ahead, I would be grateful for your remembrance of me in prayer and at the Lord’s Table. With kind personal regards, I remain  

Sincerely yours in Christ,  

Archbishop of Chicago

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SJC Officially Welcomes Deacon Rich Voytas!  
Deacon Rich Voytas was ordained for the Archdiocese of Chicago on May 28, 2006 at Holy Name Cathedral by Cardinal Francis George. He served at St. Daniel the Prophet Parish (Chicago) in many ministries. Rich is especially passionate about serving those in need, the elderly, homebound and sick, and is very active at the St. Blase Food Pantry serving the homeless. He also serves on the Catholic Charities Advisory Board.  

Deacon Rich may be a familiar face to many at our parish as he has helped out regularly with infant baptisms for the last six years. Since moving to our parish recently, we are pleased to announce that he has now been officially assigned to SJC beginning February 1, 2019.

Ministerial Evaluation  
According to Archdiocesan policies lay leadership and parishioners are to be given the opportunity to recognize Fr. Bill Vollmer’s gifts and to share their sentiments about his ministry. Thus, we are providing a parish-wide survey as part of his review process. The survey can be easily accessed by going to our parish website home page.  

It can also be accessed by going to the Archdiocese’s web page (https://www.archchicago.org/) and clicking on Offices and Ministries, located on the top panel. This will bring you to an alphabetical listing of offices. Under ‘M’ select Ministerial Evaluation. You will then be directed to the Ministerial Evaluation webpage. In the middle of the page, you will find “360 Catholic Leadership Review for Priests.” Please click on the word ‘Link’ next to your appropriate language to access the survey. Paper copies of the survey are also available in the Parish Center office.  

Surveys should be mailed or completed before February 20, 2019.  

Tax Statements  
Thank you for your generous contributions to our parish. Tax statements will be mailed at the end of the month to parishioners who have received them in past years. If you have not received one in the past and would like one this year, please call Christina in the Parish Center office.
Background on the Gospel

Today's Gospel reading combines two separate passages taken from the Gospel of Luke. First we hear the opening verses where Luke establishes the purpose of his Gospel. His style is typical of polished Greek and Roman literature. In this passage, we learn that Luke may have written to a specific person, Theophilus; but the word Theophilus may also be a general reference, functioning as the phrase “Dear Reader” might in contemporary writing. In Greek, the word Theophilus translates as “lover of God.”

Today's Gospel reading then skips several chapters in which one would find the Infancy Narratives, Jesus' baptism by John, the temptations Jesus faced in the desert, and the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. In chapter four of Luke's Gospel, we hear that Jesus is in his hometown of Nazareth, attending the synagogue on the Sabbath, which is said to be his custom. In this account, we find another important clue that Jesus lived as a faithful, observant Jew. We will continue to read from Luke's Gospel in sequence for the next two Sundays.

As Jesus stands in the synagogue, he reads from the scroll handed to him; it contains the words of the prophet Isaiah. At this early moment in his ministry, Jesus announces his mission in continuity with Israel's prophetic tradition. This reading from Isaiah defines Jesus' ministry. We will find more evidence of this as we continue to read from Luke's Gospel throughout the year. Jesus' ministry will include bringing glad tidings to the poor, liberty to captives, healing to the sick, freedom to the oppressed, and proclaiming a year acceptable to the Lord.

Through this text from Isaiah, Jesus announces God's salvation. The “year acceptable to the Lord” is a reference to the Jewish tradition of Sabbath years and jubilee. The Sabbath year was observed every seventh year. It was a year of rest when land was left fallow and food stores were to be shared equally with all. A year of Jubilee was celebrated every fiftieth year, the conclusion of seven cycles of Sabbath years. It was a year of renewal in which debts were forgiven and slaves were freed.

This tradition of Jubilee is the framework for God's promise of salvation. And yet in Jesus, something new begins. Jesus not only announces God's salvation, he brings this salvation about in his person. Jesus is Yahweh's Anointed One, filled with the Spirit of God. The Kingdom of God is now at hand. It is made present in Jesus, in his life, death, and Resurrection. Jesus will send the Holy Spirit so that the Kingdom of God can be fulfilled.

The Holy Spirit is Jesus' gift to the Church. The Holy Spirit enables the Church to continue the mission of Jesus. When we do what Jesus did—bring glad tidings to the poor, liberty to captives, healing to the sick, and freedom to the oppressed—we serve the Kingdom of God.

Living the Gospel

When embarking on an important work, task, or life choice, we often indicate so. One proposes marriage to another in a meaningful way. And special events like birthdays, baptisms, and anniversaries are marked by rituals. Afterwards, we settle into routine. Luke does something similar when he begins his gospel. He opens with a four-verse prologue that is one long sentence in Greek! And the Greek he writes is florid, high in style, and reminiscent of classical Greek. After these four verses he descends from that style to the more common (koinē) Greek.

There are many things to note in this brief opening to the gospel, but it is significant that Luke says he is relying on the eyewitness of others, and thereby indicates that he was not an eyewitness himself. He is at least a second-generation Christian, who has looked into this story and told it so the believer Theophilus (the name means “God-lover”) might have surety. And in fact, the word, “surety” (asphelia in Greek) concludes the first four-verse sentence in Greek, indicating its importance. By this emphasis on surety, even the modern reader recognizes that the story of Jesus is no mere myth.

We also read about Jesus’ preaching in the synagogue at Nazareth in chapter 4. Luke is intent to show that the Scriptures of old are fulfilled in Jesus. Jesus reads the prophecy and proclaims that the message is fulfilled in their midst. The message will be Jesus’ guiding light. He will refer to it again when John the Baptist’s followers come to Jesus and ask if he is the one they should expect. Jesus causes the blind to see and proclaims glad tidings to the poor. In so doing, he is the fulfillment of the hopes and expectations of the prophets, for the Spirit of the Lord is upon him. ©Living Liturgy

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Practice: Giving Yourself

Turning around, Jesus saw John the Baptist’s disciples following him and asked, “What do you want?” —John 1:38

Jesus stopped and called to the blind men: “What do you want me to do for you?” —Matthew 20:32

What do you want? What do you most deeply desire? Jesus was a master at helping people connect with their authentic longings. Sometimes that meant meeting a very practical or physical need, like hunger or pain. Sometimes that meant connection and acceptance. Our needs and dreams change over time. Every once in a while, it’s good to take stock and check if our day-to-day choices align with our values and goals.

Quaker author and elder Parker Palmer writes about his evolving perspective and priorities as he grows older:

Most older folks I know fret about unloading material goods they’ve collected over the years, stuff that was once useful to them but now prevents them from moving freely about their homes. There are precincts in our basement where a small child could get lost for hours.

But the junk I really need to jettison in my old age is psychological junk—such as longtime convictions about what gives my life meaning that no longer serve me well. For example, who will I be when I can no longer do the work that has been a primary source of identity for me for the past half century?

I won’t know the answer until I get there. But on my way to that day, I’ve found a question that’s already brought me a new sense of meaning. I no longer ask, “What do I want to let go of, and what do I want to hang on to?” Instead I ask, “What do I want to let go of, and what do I want to give myself to?”

The desire to “hang on” comes from a sense of scarcity and fear. The desire to “give myself” comes from a sense of abundance and generosity. That’s the kind of truth I want to wither into.

What do you want to let go of in the coming year?

What do you want to give yourself to?

What is keeping you from giving yourself fully?

"Be faithful to the touch of the Holy Spirit upon your soul. The Holy Spirit, when free, works marvels within us." -Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat
Outreach

Culinary Service Team

9am on Friday, February 15
Planning Meeting in the Parish Center

Join us as we gather to plan the menu for 3 dinners that we will cook in the Parish Center kitchen that will be delivered to people in need during the month of March. We will cook for 75-100 people each time and deliver to Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation, St. Blase in Summit and BEDS Plus in LaGrange. Precious Blood feeds youth participants after school as well as adults who come to PBMR for meetings. In addition to providing basics to 1000 people each week from their food pantry, St. Blase also provides a weekly hot meal. BEDS Plus shelters and feeds the homeless in our community. All food will be purchased and ready for the chefs to begin cooking on:

9am-Noon on Friday, March 1
9am-Noon on Friday, March 15
9am-Noon on Friday, March 29

Help is needed prepping, cooking, packaging and cleaning up after. No chef experience necessary, but cooks are asked to bring their own apron. Help with one morning or all three. Sign up is on our parish website home page.

SJC’s Food Collection in Church

Through your incredible generosity, for over 25 years our parish has collected nonperishable food and household paper products to help those less fortunate. The need for supplemental food for families and seniors continues to grow as more people are living in poverty, are out of work or are not making as much as they should be—more families are struggling to cover the basic necessities of modern American living: food, shelter, health care, clothing and transportation.

Each month our donations are delivered to a different food pantry. In January our donations will be delivered to St. Barbara’s in Brookfield. When you come to Mass please bring one or two food items to share with the St. Barbara’s Food Pantry. Thank you for your continued generosity to those living in poverty in our area.

Interfaith Community Partners

Make a difference in the life of a home-bound senior by providing transportation to appointments or errands, or checking in with a senior by phone. Interfaith Community Partners will provide training and work around your schedule. Sign Up at: interfaithcommunitypartners.org/volunteering/

Kolbe House Jail Ministry

Our Sharing Parish Kolbe House at Assumption Parish prays with and assists those who are incarcerated. They also help them transition to the next phase of their lives. Our parish has the opportunity to assist in their mission by contributing the following items. Please bring your donation to the Parish Center. Thank you for your kindness and generosity.

- New T-shirts XL and XXL
- Boxer shorts XL and XXL
- Men’s athletic socks
- Toiletries for women and men including bar soap, shampoo, deodorant, toothbrushes and toothpaste.

Pray the 9 Day Novena to St. Maximilian Kolbe. Go to www.stjohnofthecross.org/yc/confirmation/maximilian-kolbe-novena-service-project/

God of love,
help us to use the gifts you give us
for the people who need us.
Help us to see their need and,
inspired by your Son,
reach beyond ourselves, to the very margins
and bring all to you, the center.
May all we do be in preparation
to serve more fully,
seeking you in the world
that we are invited to create with you.
Send your Spirit to keep us aglow
with the desire of justice. Amen.
ALL MEN OF THE PARISH – SAM IS CALLING!

Spirituality Among Men (SAM) is an SJC Men’s Club program that provides a regular forum for men of the parish to meet and openly talk about contemporary topics related to our faith.

We focus on dialogue – there are no debates, there are no losers and no winners in our discussions. Our objective is to provide both spiritual and practical perspectives on the challenges each of us face as husbands and fathers. We try to help each other grow our faith through these encounters in small ways that we can take home to our families and out into the world.

In the past we have discussed topics such as: Contemplative Prayer, Christian Meditation, the death penalty, bold discipleship, and the perspective of 20-somethings on the Church in the 21st century.

The SAM core group is currently working on plans for the 2019-2020 fiscal year. We will be holding a series of short (no longer than 60 minutes) conversational meetings at 7:30pm on 3 consecutive Tuesdays in February:

Tuesday, February 5,
Tuesday, February 12, and
Tuesday, February 19
7:30pm in the Parish Center

We invite all men of the parish to join us for any one or all three of the meetings. You don’t have to be a current member of the Men’s Club and it is OK if you never have attended a SAM Gathering. Just come along and bring your thoughts on the challenges that dads and husbands face today – your challenges. We’d love to have your input. If you don’t like the idea of coming alone, bring a friend!

For more information, please contact Dick Halm at 630.240.2955 (dhalm1018@gmail.com) or John Cisek at 312.327.1295, John Spitkovsky 708.579.3316, Dan Schick 708.359.8814, Joe Brosnan 708.606.6825, or Tim Kenny 708.386.0600.

Consider Alpha: Faith, Fellowship, Food

Alpha is a series of small group interactive sessions that freely explore the basics of the Christian Faith without dogma and without judgment. Alpha is for everyone. Whether you have a lot of faith to share or not sure if you have any, if you are curious about life’s questions, Alpha is for you! Each session includes a short film and a discussion where you are welcome to share your thoughts. Take a chance and see what happens. Wednesday evenings at 6:30pm in the Parish Center.
St. John of the Cross Parish congratulates the following families who had their infants baptized by Deacon John Schopp, assisted by Baptism Team Leaders, Betsy and Sean Sullivan. Pictured from the left are: Colin and Michelle Finn with Jack Martin and John and Megan Steigauf with Shea Elizabeth.

New Baby? Ready for Baptism?
Our parish offers a dynamic preparation for all parents of infants that welcomes, supports and strengthens their role as first teachers of the faith, and joyfully celebrates the Sacrament of Baptism. As your child grows, the parish also offers family-style preschool 5 times per year for both parent and child. Call Theresa or Mary Beth in the Parish Center to learn more!

Please help us welcome our new members to the St. John of the Cross Parish community.

Teresa Perez Cavnaugh and Paul Cavnaugh & Family
Kelly and Michael Seehausen & Family
Julie and Ryan Di Pompeo
Kristi and Alexander Annes & Family
Ashley and Joseph Lee & Family
Claire and John Brooks & Family
Katie and Louis Cerone & Family
John Maul
Karen and Thomas Haggerty
Gosia and Peter Dominik & Family
Ellen and Kevin Burt & Family
Mary Beth and Mark Hardy
Kristee and James Mann & Family
Rosemary and Richard Koranda

If you recognize the name of a friend or neighbor be sure to extend a welcome and encourage them to become involved at SJC. If you would like to register to become a member, please contact our Welcome coordinator, Elizabeth Russell-Jones, in the Parish Center or visit our website at: www.stjohnofthecross.org/welcome.

Upcoming SJC Sponsored Programs at The Well Spirituality Center
1515 Ogden Avenue in LaGrange Park.
To register please call the Parish Center office
Free for SJC Parishioners

Moving Through the Energy of Grief
Saturday, March 2, 9-11:30am
Facilitator: JoAnne Scullin
Grief is a powerful emotion that affects us energetically and can leave one bereft. Come join us for a morning of education, the experience of being with ourselves and our grief, and of connecting with others – all from an energy perspective. Cost: free to members of cosponsoring parishes SFX and SJC.

The Journey Back to Your Beautiful Heart
Friday Presentation, March 8, 7-8:30pm
Saturday Workshop, March 9, 9:30-3pm
Facilitator: Bruce Sanguin
What enabled Jesus to realize his own human, divine and cosmic heart? What are the major obstacles that prevent us from evolving more deeply into our radiant hearts? We will look at the devastating impact of shame on the evolution of heart intelligence, and specific practices that can lift the burden of shame so that we can each be the radiant human being that is our soul’s destiny. Cost: Friday Presentation - free to members of cosponsoring parishes SFX and SJC; Saturday Workshop - $80 (includes lunch)
New Eagle Scouts

Congratulations to parishioners, George Zurowski, son of Chris and Julie Zurowski and Michael Korenchan, son of Jim and Beth Korenchan, on receiving their Eagle Scout Award!

Job Search Assistance:

Come on Tuesday, January 29 from 7-9pm to Week 3 of Job Search Boot Camp at the First Presbyterian Church of La Grange. Our focus will be on crafting and practicing your Elevator Speech. For further information, contact Susan Sedler at sqsedler@aol.com.

Quarterly Resume Review: Join us on Saturday, February 9 from 9:30-11:30am for a helpful one-on-one conversation with a HR or other search related professional for some ideas and suggestions that may enhance or refresh your resume. Looking for some helpful job search strategies? Need some coaching with your elevator speech? This is a great opportunity for you or someone you know in a job search. There is no charge for this service. Please join us at St. Cletus Parish Center.

Join Us for Coffee after Mass

All are welcome to gather for coffee in the church community room after morning Mass on the first Friday of each month. It’s a great way to connect with fellow parishioners. Join us on Friday, February 1.

Catholic High School Scholarship Applications

Each year through fundraising efforts, the Women’s Club is able to offer scholarships to 8th grade students in YC and our parish school and current high school students of our parish to help defray Catholic high school tuition costs. Applications are due February 11 and can be found on the home page of the Parish website.
Come Follow Me…

Just as that first community of disciples, we are called to follow Jesus, the Lamb of God — to learn from him, be inspired by him, to live in him. We are all called by Jesus to share his word—not only in our speech, but in our daily actions; when we love our enemies, extend our generosity to those in need, and become sources of mercy and compassion. A practical way that we can proclaim the Gospel and Spirit of Jesus Christ is through our support of the Annual Catholic Appeal which enables us to reach out to parishes, individuals, and communities in need.

Many families in our parish have received the Annual Catholic Appeal request mailing from Cardinal Cupich. On behalf of those served by the ministries and services funded by the ACA, we thank you for your generosity.

In February our parish will have an opportunity to make a commitment to the Appeal and all the important endeavors it supports. The Appeal helps to sustain Catholic schools and parishes, support programs of religious education, ministerial formation and the many initiatives for the protection of life and the promotion of peace and justice. Through Catholic Relief Services, the Appeal also funds loving help to neighbors who are far away but who are our neighbors in need. Responding to his call to live as authentic disciples, together may we live in prayer, love, good works, and compassion eager to do God’s will. No money donated to the Annual Catholic Appeal has been or will be used to defray expenses related to misconduct issues. 

Lord Jesus, Son of God, Son of Mary, you came that we may have life, and have it more abundantly. You are the Word through whom we were made. Teach us to live the Gospel of Life. Soften our hearts that we may be compassionate toward the most vulnerable. Embolden us to be voices for the voiceless. Help us always to remember that what we do for the least ones, we do for you—never to forget the incomparable value of every human person. In your Holy Name, we pray. Amen.

Prayer by: Father William Dailey, CSC; University of Notre Dame
The best legacy children can receive from parents is faith.

YC Schedule
January 27 K-6: 10:15-11:30am
January 27 7th & 8th Grades: In Homes
January 27 Adapted Catechesis: 9-10am
January 28 K-6: 6:15-7:30pm
February 1 Confirmation Rehearsal
February 2 Confirmation
February 3 K-6: 10:15-11:30am
February 3 Adapted Catechesis: 9-10am
February 3 FFC Noon-1:30pm
February 4 K-6: 6:15-7:30pm
February 4-5 Super Bowl Food Collection
February 10 K-6: 10:15-11:30am
February 10 7th & 8th Grades: In Homes
February 11 K-6: 6:15-7:30pm
Feb 10-11 4th Grade Parent Attends with Child

Souper Bowl Food Collection

Every year on Super Bowl weekend our YC students take time to celebrate “Souper Bowl Sunday” by collecting food for people in need. In sharp contrast to football parties filled with abundant food and friends, students learn that many people right in our area worry about staying warm, finding shelter and feeding their family a warm meal.

Students are asked to bring non-perishable food to their class on Super Bowl Sunday/Monday, February 3-4. Parishioners can help too by bringing food donations to the YC office or the Parish Center before February 2. All food donated will be delivered to the food pantries at our neighboring parishes, St. Cletus and St. Francis Xavier.

The following items are suggested. Please remember to check code dates as the food pantries cannot accept expired food.
- Cereal (hot or cold), boxed pasta, dry pinto beans (2-3 lbs bags only), soup, liquid hand soap, hand sanitizer, canned fruit and vegetables, pasta sauce (no glass jars please), peanut butter and jelly, canned chili, chicken, tuna, ham, box meals (Potato Buds, Beefaroni, Betty Crocker complete meals)

All are invited to join YC by placing an “O” in Super for Souper Bowl Sunday
Parish School News: 5th Grade Basketball Champs

The St. John of the Cross Parish School 5th grade boys basketball teams finished off their first season as victors. Both of our teams walked away with championship trophies. Our White Team received third place league finish while our Green Team won the league championship. St. John of the Cross Parish School offers no cut athletics beginning in grade 5. These students are certainly learning the importance of teamwork.

Learn more about St. John of the Cross Parish School:
www.stjohnofhtecross.org/school
Everything is of one piece. Whenever we don't take that seriously, we pay a price.

The renowned theologian, Hans Urs Von Balthasar gives an example of this. Beauty, he submits, is not some little “extra” that we can value or denigrate according to personal taste and temperament, like some luxury that we say we cannot afford. Like truth and goodness, it’s one of the properties of God and thus demands to be taken seriously as goodness and truth. If we neglect or denigrate beauty, he says, we will soon enough begin to neglect other areas of our lives.

Here are his words:

“Our situation today shows that beauty demands for itself at least as much courage and decision as do truth and goodness, and she will not allow herself to be separated and banned from her two sisters without taking them along with herself in an act of mysterious vengeance. We can be sure that whoever sneers at her name, as if she were an ornament of a bourgeois past, whether he admits it or not, can no longer pray and soon will no longer be able to love.”

Here’s a simpler expression of that. There’s a delightful little African tale that highlights the interconnectedness of everything and illustrates how, if we separate a thing from its sisters, we soon pay a price. The tale goes this way:

Once upon a time, when animals still talked, the mice on a farm called a summit of all the other animals. They were worried, they lamented, because they had seen the mistress of the house buy a mousetrap. They were now in danger. But the other animals scoffed at their anxiety. The cow said that she had nothing to worry about. A tiny little contraption couldn’t harm her. She could crush it with her foot. The pig reacted in a similar way. What did he have to worry about in the face of a tiny trap? The chicken also announced that it had no fear of this gadget. “It’s your concern. No worry for me!” it told the mice.

But all things are interconnected and that soon became evident. The mistress set the mousetrap and, on the very first night, heard it snap. Getting out of her bed to look what it had caught and she saw that it had trapped a snake by its tail. In trying to free the snake she was bitten and the poison soon had her feeling sick and running a fever. She went to the doctor who gave her medicines to combat the poison and advised her: “What you need now to get better is chicken broth.” (You can guess where the rest of this is going.) They slaughtered the chicken, but her fever lingered. Relatives and neighbors came to visit. More food was needed. They slaughtered the pig. Eventually the poison killed her. A huge funeral ensued. A lot of food was needed. They slaughtered the cow.

The moral of the story is clear. Everything is interconnected and our failure to see that leaves us in peril. Blindness to our interdependence, willful or not, is dangerous. We are inextricably tied to each other and to everything in the world. We can protest to the contrary but reality will hold its ground. And so, we cannot truly value one thing while we disdain something else. We cannot really love one person while we hate someone else. And we cannot give ourselves an exemption in one moral area and hope to be morally healthy as a whole. Everything is of one piece. There are no exceptions. When we ignore that truth we are eventually snake-bitten by it.

I emphasize this because today, virtually everywhere, a dangerous tribalism is setting in. Everywhere, not unlike the animals in that African tale, we see families, communities, churches, and whole countries focusing more or less exclusively on their own needs without concern for other families, communities, churches, and countries. Other people’s problems, we believe, are not our concern. From the narrowness in our churches, to identity politics, to whole nations setting their own needs first, we hear echoes of the cow, pig, and chicken saying: "Not my concern! I’ll take care of myself. You take care of yourself!” This will come back to snake-bite us.

We will eventually pay the price for our blindness and non-concern and we will pay that price politically, socially, and economically. But we will even pay a higher price personally. What that snake-bite will do is captured in Von Balthasar’s warning: Whoever ignores or denigrates beauty will, he asserts, eventually be unable to pray or to love. That’s true too in all cases when we ignore our interconnectedness with others. By ignoring the needs of others we eventually corrupt our own wholeness so that we are no longer able to treat ourselves with respect and empathy and, when that happens, we lose respect and empathy for life itself – and for God – because whenever reality isn’t respected it bites back with a mysterious vengeance.

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser
“I’m so overwhelmed, getting more involved helping my parents as they get older.”

“There’s so many decisions to make -- I could really use some help.”

“It’s a matter of time; my parents need me and I want to be there for them. How can I be more prepared?”

If these thoughts have crossed your mind, you are not alone! Virtually every one of us will care for a loved one at some point in our life. Though rewarding, it is not always easy.

Nourish is a new support group at our parish for anyone juggling the challenges of everyday life, health, career and caring for an aging parent, spouse or grandparent, in town or at a distance. Nourish provides caregivers a faith perspective, as well as practical and emotional supports, useful tools, and shared experiences.

The Nourish community understands family caregivers need somewhere to turn to for information, strength and connection during the caregiver journey. Each gathering provides practical approaches, tools and resources to help navigate these times with a Christ-centered view. Topics change and vary by month.

Be empowered.
Discover the blessings that come from caring for another.
Be nourished.

Join us at our Next Group Date:
February 14, 2019
Time: 1:00—2:15 p.m.
SJC Parish Center
Topic: Using Music to Communicate

www.nourishforcaregivers.com

Mary Kay is an internationally known speaker and the first female presenter to appear nationally in her own Emmy-nominated PBS special. A self-made business woman deeply dedicated to her faith - Mary Kay trains employees of Fortune 500 companies as well as gives passionate presentations on spirituality and what grace means in her life. Her ability to touch and teach audiences in a unique way is remarkable.

Friday, March 1
Check in 5-7:00pm, Dinner 6-7:00pm,
Gathering 7:00pm, Fellowship 8:00pm

Saturday, March 2
Breakfast 8:00am, Program 9:00am, Lunch 12:30pm,
Closing Prayer 3:00pm

Register on the home page of the Parish website by Thursday, January 31
Overnight guest pricing includes lodging, dinner, breakfast, lunch & program.
Overnight accommodations are limited, so register today!

$150  Single occupancy hotel room  (only three rooms available)
$130  Double occupancy hotel room (per person)
$120  Single occupancy Dorm Room
$110  Double occupancy Dorm Room * (per person)
$65    Commuter (Saturday only) pricing includes breakfast, lunch & program.

* Dorm rooms have 2 twin beds or bunk beds and a sink. There is one community bathroom on each floor.

Contact Connie Madden with questions at conniertm@gmail.com
Mass & Reconciliation Schedule & Intentions

Living Intentions in Italics

**Monday, January 28**  
*St. Thomas Aquinas*
7:45am Anthony Jacyno; Margaret Albertson

**Tuesday, January 29**  
*Weekday*
7:45am Tom McGorey; Michael Hermes

**Wednesday, January 30**  
*Weekday*
7:45am Tom & Mary Kay McGorey; Lucille Paliatka

**Thursday, January 31**  
*St. John Bosco*
7:45am Charlie Smith; Mary Kay McGorey

**Friday, February 1**  
*Weekday*
7:45am Christina Carinato; Richard Potokar

**Saturday, February 2**  
*Feast of the Presentation of the Lord*
8:00am Paul Marcellino; Gerald O’Toole

~ Confessions after Morning Mass ~
5:00pm Shirley Kazragis; Angeline Marcione

**Sunday, February 3**  
*Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time*
7:30am Joe Majerick; Rosemary Wooding
9:00am Roberta Ohlquist; Daniel O’Shea
10:45am Christina Carinato; Tom & Mary Kay McGorey
12:15pm Monica Gilmartin; Joseph Sajdak
5:00pm Mary Szpak; Mary Cunningham

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Pray for Our Sick
Bill Baxter  
Beth Beutell  
Margaret Brooks  
Sam Cibula  
Amanda Cook  
Mary Crescente  
Frances Domanskis  
Fr. David Dowlde  
Aggie Frolik  
Laurian Gawron  
Fran Halisz  
Diane Hennessy  
Linda Hillsman  
Karen Hult  
Peggy Koucky  
Eric Martinson  
Bobbie Misiora  
Ernie Misiora  
Gail O’Toole  
Janet Palko  
Peggy Pellegrino  
Blanche Terry Pepin  
Judi Perzik  
Jeff Reitmeier  
John Ryan  
Rachael Schopp  
David Sipek  
Shawn Sweeney  
Dominic Yocius

Pray for Our Beloved Dead
Larry Dombrowski, brother of Guy Vorsanger  
Maureen Baker, mother of Denny, Meg, Ed, & Eileen  
Anne Cachey, wife of Theodore, mother of Mary Jo Kwasiqroch and Carol Cachey  
Trish Carter, sister of Marita Gocke  
Mary Margaret Burke, mother of Rich and Nancy Burke Woods

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Lord, N. is gone now from this earthly dwelling, and has left behind those who mourn his/her absence. Grant that we may hold his/her memory dear, never bitter for what we have lost nor in regret for the past, but always in hope of the eternal Kingdom where you will bring us together again. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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Celebrating Faith, Service and Education
St. John of the Cross Parish School
Visit Our Open House at the Parish School Today!
Sunday, January 27 from 1:30-2:30pm