

December 10, 2023 | Second Sunday of Advent





Fr. Larry's Weekly Letter #543

TAKING STOCK OF YOUR LIFE



Here we are in the middle of Advent. Christmas is just 15 days away from this Sunday. Like clockwork, we meet John the Baptist, who arrives on the scene in our Sunday gospel.

Now John the Baptist can be a real irritating guy. He probably is not high on the list of people's favorite saints because he comes across rough and rugged. He doesn't hesitate telling folks how they need to improve their life. He is kind of like that annoying relative who enjoys telling you the hard truth— like you need to spend less time on the computer, get rid of some bad habits, and connect more with your relatives. If you want to know how your life is out of balance, well, John the Baptist would be glad tell you.

The interesting thing is that despite how weird John seemed, large numbers of people were attracted to him, and they were

actually transformed by his message. They understood that he spoke the truth, although his message was uncompromising and undiluted.

Why were folks so attracted to this strange prophet who pops out of the desert? My hunch is that he had the courage to call people to a better life, and that was what they were desperately looking for. They wanted to move on from their sinfulness to a life of care, compassion, and making the steps to forgive others. He helped them to see who they really could be.

What kind of changes do we want to make this Advent? Besides preparing for Christmas, Advent is a time to also spiritually step outside our busy lives; to take a break from our list of things to do, to pause from all our appointments and recognize God's presence right here, right now.

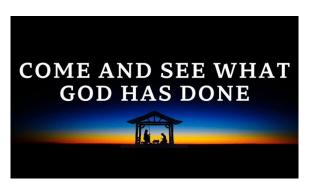
This is a good time to take stock of our lives and see how God is calling us to be our best. Can we be more sensitive to the people around us? Can we be mindful and also take the time to comfort those we know who are sick, trouble or worried? Can we intentionally reach out to those who we know are alone, lonely and depressed and bring them an ounce of joy?

It can be difficult hearing and accepting constructive criticism from those who care about us. But this can actually be one of the best ways that we grow as a child of God. As hard as it may seem, the good news is that we can do something about it.

John the Baptist challenges all of us to review our priorities. He showed us that we can change and become whole and holy. I

Continued on the next page

guess what made him so annoying and effective as a preacher is the fact that he was confident that all things were possible with God!



Our complete Christmas Mass schedule is included in today's bulletin, and it is also posted on our parish website. It is my hope and prayer that our parish is your "spiritual home" this Christmas for you and your family. If you are in town, I truly look forward to praying and celebrating with you.

As you know, our liturgies are well done. A lot of care and preparation go into them so that they are both beautiful and meaningful experiences of prayer. Plus, a real hallmark of our community is our welcome and hospitality, especially to those who are new to our parish, or to those who are just visiting us on the weekend.

Perhaps this Christmas there might be someone you can invite to come with you to Mass. I bet we all know at least one person who has been away from the church, especially since the beginning of the pandemic, and they have not returned to church.

Maybe all they need is a simple invitation to come, see and celebrate with you this Christmas? Wouldn't it be nice to have them sitting next to you in the pew when we all sing Silent Night?

Give it a shot! Make a memory! What a great Christmas present this would be!

Fx. Lany



Katherine Marie Souter Baptized Saturday, November 25th John & Jacqueline Souter



Isla Rae Coen
Baptized Saturday, November 25th
Matthew & Theresa Coen,
older sisters Avery and Elise

Sunday December 10 2023

GOSPEL NEWS

Second Sunday of Advent

Issue #2

TIDINGS OF COMFORT AND JOY

Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11

In our first reading this week, we are invited to share in the comfort of our redemption through Christ. There is no struggle too big, no pain too deep that Jesus cannot carry for us. The joy of this holiday season can also bring to light a heartache beneath the surface: grieving a loved one, feelings of loneliness and isolation, feeling overwhelmed by expectations. Each of us carries a personal battle that we do not have to face alone.

"COMFORT, GIVE COMFORT TO MY PEOPLE"

In the chaos of this season, whether it's running around to find the perfect gift, traveling from near and far to see loved ones, or simply the chaos of our spiraling thoughts, find peace knowing that Christ desires for you to find rest in Him.

As we prepare for the birth of Christ in just a few short weeks, we celebrate the mark of a new year in our Church. Last week, Deacon Neil preached about the transformative nature of Advent. He spoke about the importance of starting anew with the promise of a new year. Perhaps this week we reflect on the healing comfort of Jesus presence. What burdens can the Lord carry for you this season? Let us pray that our hearts may find rest in Him this Advent.



Scripture Snippet

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Mt 11: 28-30

ICSJ Parish

Support the WEEKEND for the Religious Collection

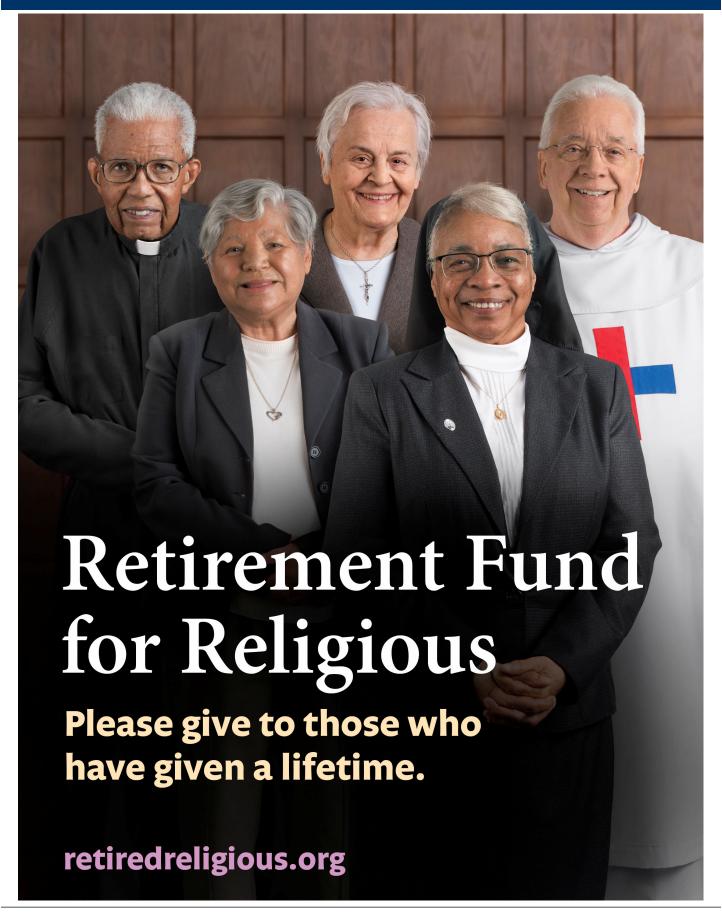
2023 Second Collection Schedule

As Catholics, we are part of a universal Church that extends beyond our own parish boundaries. Second & Special collections combine our resources to support important causes that carry out the mission of the Church. Please mark you calendar with the dates listed below and thank you for your generosity!

Contributions may be made in-person at Mass or online via GiveCentral by visiting icsjparish.org/second-collections

Collection for the Church in Latin America	January 22
Annual Catholic Appeal	February 4-5, February 11-12, February 18-19
Aid for the Church in Central & Eastern Europe	February 26
Sharing Parish: Mother of the Americas*	Palm Sunday – April 2
Holy Land	Good Friday – April 7
Catholic Charities	Mother's Day – May 14
Priests' Health & Retirement	June 11
Peter's Pence	July 2
Missionary Co-Op	July 16
Sharing Parish: Mother of the Americas*	July 30
Seminarian Education	September 17
World Mission Sunday	October 22
Catholic Campaign for Human Development	November 19
Retirement Fund for Religious	December 10
Sharing Parish: Mother of the Americas*	December 31

* for the benefit of Mother of the Americas, ICSJ's Sharing Parish





IMMACULATE CONCEPTION AND ST. JOSEPH PARISH

2023 Christmas Season MASS SCHEDULE

CHRISTMAS EVE - SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24TH

4:00 p.m. Mass (Children's Liturgy) at St. Joseph Church – Fr. Larry Lisowski preceded by a Christmas Music Concert at 3:15 p.m.

5:00 p.m. Mass at Immaculate Conception Church – Fr. Larry McBrady

CHRISTMAS DAY - MONDAY, DECEMBER 25TH

8:00 a.m. Mass at St. Joseph Church – Fr. Larry McBrady 9:30 a.m. Mass at Immaculate Conception Church - Fr. Larry Lisowski 11:00 a.m. Mass at St. Joseph Church – Fr. Larry McBrady

FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY - SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31ST

5:00 p.m. Mass (Saturday night) at Immaculate Conception Church – Fr. Larry Lisowski 8:00 a.m. Mass at St. Joseph Church – Fr. Larry McBrady 9:30 a.m. Mass at Immaculate Conception Church – Fr. Larry Lisowski 11:00 a.m. Mass at St. Joseph Church – Fr. Larry McBrady

NEW YEAR'S DAY - MONDAY, JANUARY 1ST

9:30 a.m. Mass at Immaculate Conception Church – Fr. Larry McBrady 11:00 a.m. Mass at St. Joseph Church – Fr. Larry Lisowski

EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD - SUNDAY, JANUARY 7TH

5:00 p.m. Mass (Saturday night) at Immaculate Conception Church – Fr. Larry McBrady 8:00 a.m. Mass at St. Joseph Church - Fr. Larry Lisowski 9:30 a.m. Mass at Immaculate Conception Church - Fr. Larry McBrad 11:00 a.m. Mass at St. Joseph Church – Fr. Larry Lisowski



Your holiday giving is important.

God calls us to be good and faithful stewards. Sharing our blessings helps us to build the Kingdom of God. As we approach Christmas and the year end, please review your parish contributions. Your financial support at this time is important, helping our parish pay its bills and continue the mission and ministry of Jesus.

There are many easy ways to give:



- 1. Make one-time or recurring contributions on our GiveCentral page by using this QR code above or by visiting www.rebrand.ly/GiveToday-To-ICSJ
- 2. Send your gift with Venmo to either venmo@icsjparish.org or the username ICSJ-Chicago.
 - 3. Send a gift check my mail to ICSJ Parish, 1107 N. Orleans Street, Chicago, IL 60610.
- 4. Take advantage of tax deductions for this tax year if your gift is made on or before December 31st.
- 5. Gifts of stocks and other securities, held more than one year, are excellent gifts. You may be able to deduct the stocks' fair market value and avoid paying capital gains tax on the appreciation of the stock.
 - 6. Consider gifts from an IRA as a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD).
- 7. Gift annuities are an option for parishioners wishing to donate to their parish over a long time frame.
 - **8.** A matching gift donation from your employer is an easy way to multiply your giving. Check to see if they offer this option.
 - 9. Consider donating your time, talent and resources to the church or school!
 Visit www.icsjparish.org/mission for ideas on how you can "be the face of Jesus in today's world."

Thank you for your loyalty and support!

C.L.O.W. in Advent! Children's Liturgy of the Word

Ages 4- 3rd Grade

During the beginning of Mass, Children will hear the Word of God, pray with friends, and do a small craft related to the Gospel.

Children return to their parents' pews after the Prayers of the Faithful.

December 3rd, 10th, and 17th 9:30 Mass at Immaculate Conception led by ICSJ teacher, Kendra Yocom



ICSJ MUSIC MINISTRY PRESENTS

MNES-

A CONCERT SERIES

The ICSJ Music Ministry presenta Tunes on a Sunday Afternoon, a series of free community concerts featuring the talents of our ICSJ choir members and musicians, and other special guests.

JOIN US FOR OUR NEXT PERFORMANCE!



Sunday, December 10th. 2pm St. Joseph Church

SSONS & CAROLS R CHRISTMAS

'Tis the season! Join the Music Ministry team for a sing-a-long of all of your favorite carols



YOUR SUPPORT FOR THE SERIES IS GREATLY APPRECIATED! SCAN THE QR OR VISIT ICSJPARISH.ORG/TUNES



GIVING TREE

NOV. 18TH - DEC. 10TH

Help make this Christmas merry and bright for the families of the incarcerated via Kolbe House Jail Ministry, our parish refugee families and our sharing parish, Mother of the Americas. With the help of Santa's Volunteers and the Knights of Columbus, we will also be supporting families in need in our neighborhood via Art on Sedgwick, families of Blessed Maria Gabriella Church, families of Union Baptist Missionary Church, and ICSJ's Food Pantry families.

We are utilizing an online sign up system for gifts. Tags will be on trees in both churches, but do not have gifts listed on them. Rather, each tag has the link and QR code listed here, and by following either you are able to review the options and sign up for the gift(s) you'd like to give. Therefore, it is not necessary to have a tag to give a gift; simply sign up online! Please note that while many spots list several gifts, these are simply for ideas and not obligatory for purchase. The recommended amount per spot is \$25-\$50.

When returning your gift(s), please return wrapped and print the confirmation email sent to you by SignUp to attach to your gift. If you don't have printer access, please label the gift with your name and its contents. Thank you for your generosity this holiday season.

VISIT rebrand.ly/giving-tree



Gifts can be returned at the Masses on 11/25&26, 12/2&3, 12/9&10, or at the SJ Parish Office at 1107 N Orleans M,W, or F from 10-3. All gifts must be returned by 12/10. For more information, help signing up for a gift, or with any questions, please contact Allie at aklazura@icisparish.org

Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

at our Sharing Parish, Mother of the Americas 3047 W Cermak Rd., Chicago, IL 60623

Ways to Join in the Celebration:

Novenas - Rosary & Mass

Dec. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11: 6pm

Dec. 10: 5pm

Saturday, December 9th Feast of San Juan Diego with Bishop Bartosic

.4:00pm - Rosary

5:00pm - Mass

Tuesday, December 12th

5:00pm - Mass

6:30 -7:30pm - Native

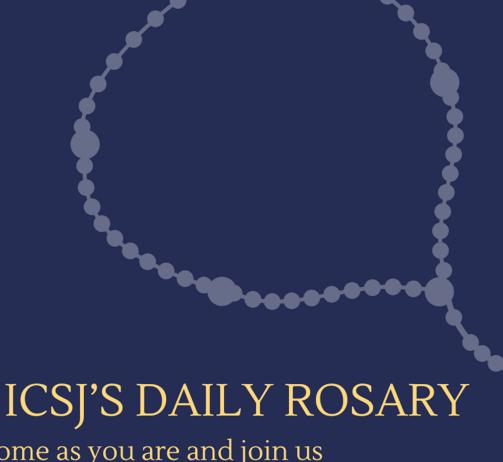
Dancers

**If you would like a ride, please email Allie at aklazura@icsjparish.org



Saturday, December 16th 2:00pm - Concert

For more information please visit: motheroftheamericas.org or call: 773-521-8400



Come as you are and join us in praying the Holy Rosary every... Monday through Friday 12:30pm Saturday and Sunday at 7:30am

No experience needed. We will guide you.

Pick up a card in the back of church that looks like this page for the zoom meeting ID and password or email Angela at agore@icsjparish.org or call (312)787-7174 ext 1

Wisdom, Women & Wine Updates

SERVICE PROJECT

Please join ICSJ's Wisdom, Women & Wine group share Christmas joy by donating something from the list below to support our neighbors at MADO Healthcare. MADO Healthcare partners with people who live with mental illness to offer hope in recovery and wellness.

We will be assembling 50+ Christmas gift bags for MADO residents. Donations can be dropped off at IC or SJ in boxes marked MADO by Sunday, December 17. The gift bags will be assembled on **Sunday, December 17th from 1:30pm-3:30pm** at St. Joseph Church.

Suggested Donations:

- Toiletries: TRAVEL sized shampoo, body wash, deodorant, lotion, etc.
- Individually wrapped snacks or candy
- Men's socks
- Women's gloves
- Dollar store treasures

BOOK CLUB

The next WWW Book Club is on **Friday, January 26th at 3:30pm**. We will be discussing *The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store* by James McBride.

To RSVP for either of these events or for any questions, please email Colleen at cm.424.svdp@gmail.com

KnitWits

We are a group of knitters and crocheters who have been getting together for several years. Our purpose is to make baby blankets, hats and/or 8x8 squares for an organization called Children's Place



www.childrens-place.org. One of their many services helps newborns who are brought to this facility if their parent(s) cannot care for them. The babies either go into the foster system, or are adopted. In some cases, they do go back to their birth parent(s).

If you enjoy knitting and/or crocheting (or would like to learn), join us! We get together at St. Joe's once a month. Our next KnitWit gathering is

Monday, December 18th 10AM-1PM.

You can come for a half hour, a couple hours or for the entire time...whatever fits your schedule. Or, you can make a blanket, a hat or 8x8 squares at your convenience and drop off at IC or SJ. If you have any questions, please leave a message for me at ICSJ or send an email to me, Kathy at kmustl@yahoo.com.

Mark your calendar with our future dates...

January 15 2024 February 19 2024 March 18 2024 April 15 2024 May 20 2024 June 17 2024

WARNING - SPAM EMAIL ALERT

Fr. Larry, Fr. McBrady and the parish staff do not solicit individuals for gift cards or money via email or text. We have had several reports from parishioners receiving spam emails from Fr. Larry. The emails look legitimate with a picture and full signature but they're not! Please mark them as "Spam" or "Phishing."



DOLPHIN DAYS

NEWS FROM IMMACULATE CONCEPTION - ST. JOSEPH

COME TOUR OUR STELLAR SCHOOL!

Prospective families are invited for a personal tour of our school to meet teachers, students, and school leaders, and to hear what everyone loves about ICSJ School!

CALL OR USE THIS QR TO CONNECT

Jodi Thyen, our Director of Marketing and Admissions can be reached at 312-944-0304!



APPLICATIONS STILL BEING ACCEPTED

We are currently accepting applications at all grade levels for the 2024-25 school year. The online application can be found on our website or by scanning the QR code to the right.



APPLY

INTERESTED IN COACHING?

We are currently looking for volunteers to coach Co-ed Track & Field as well as Girls Volleyball. These are both spring sports and the students range from 4th-8th grade. Contact Jared Sterenberg at jsterenberg@icsjschool.org.



ST. NICHOLAS CAME FOR A VISIT...AND, CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2ND GRADERS!

On Wednesday, December 6, St. Nicholas paid our North Park Campus friends a visit, bringing goodies and telling stories about how he lived his life putting others ahead of himself and donating to those in need. Here is is with our 2nd graders who also celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation last Saturday! Congratulations and blessings to 2nd Grade!



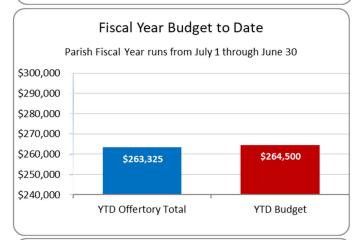




Learn more about Immaculate Conception-St. Joseph School at www.icsjschool.org!



Weekly Offertory - December 2023 ■ Weekly Offertory Total ■ Weekly Budget \$14,625 w/o 12/3 \$11,500 w/o 12/10 \$11,500 w/o 12/17 \$11,500 w/o 12/24 \$11,500 w/o 12/31 \$11,500 The parish budget requires over one weeks' worth of collections just to cover parish ultilities, maintenance, and insurance each month. It takes \$3,093 per day to run our parish.





Have you considered a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD)?

A QCD gift (a.k.a. IRA charitable rollover) allows individuals age 70½ or older to authorize their IRA administrator to make a direct transfer of funds from their IRA to qualified charities, tax-free. This way of giving does not generate taxable income, which may lower your annual income level. If you are age 72 or older, the amount you transfer may count towards your required minimum distribution.

If you would like more information on how to make a QCD gift to Immaculate Conception and St. Joseph Parish please contact: Nancy Gies at ngies@icsjparish.org or (312) 787-7174 ext 7.

Sign up for eGiving

eGiving is a secure and convenient way of giving to Immaculate Conception and St. Joseph parish. It is eco-friendly and cost-saving. Just click **HERE** and to make your one-time, weekly, or monthly donation.

To all our faithful parishioners who give their time, talent and treasure—thank you for your generosity!

Get Involved

Check out all the opportunities here at ICSJ parish, click **HERE.** Or let's set up a coffee so we can get to know each other, your talents and strengths and where they might be used best here at ICSJ. Contact Elly Rodriguez at erodriguez@icsjparish.org or (312)787-7174 ext 4.

Mass Intentions

week of December 9-15

Saturday, December 9

5pm at Immaculate Conception with Fr. Larry Lisowski: **Robert L. Berner Jr.**

Sunday, December 10

8am Mass at St. Joseph with Fr. Larry McBrady: **Meghan Boyle**

Sunday, December 10

9:30am Mass at Immaculate Conception with Fr. Larry Lisowski:

In thanksgiving for Gabe and Beth Rodriguez on their 29th wedding anniversary

Sunday, December 10

11am Mass at St. Joseph with Fr. Larry McBrady: Robert L. Wojeik

Monday, December 11

9am Mass at St. Joseph with Fr. Larry

Lisowski: Fr. Fred Tomzick

Wednesday, December 13

9am Mass at St. Joseph with Fr. Larry Lisowski:

For the well-being of Lynn Ray

Friday, December 15

9am Mass at St. Joseph with Fr. Larry McBrady: For the well-being of Rich Geoden

What is a Mass Intention?

Immaculate Conception and St. Joseph parish offers the possibility for you to request that a Mass be celebrated for a particular intention. Requesting a Mass intention means that you are asking that the grace of Christ's sacrifice in his death and resurrection be applied for a particular purpose, for example, for a deceased person or a living person who is ill or in thanksgiving for a favor received. An intention can also be made for an occasion of a birthday, anniversary or special need, or it can be directed to a cause, such as an increase of vocations or respect for life. Usually, a single intention is attached to a given Mass. But it is also possible to gather several intentions in one Mass with exactly the same effect.

To request a Mass Intention, please visit www.icsjparish.org/mass-intentions or call Angela at the parish office (312)787-7174 ext 1.

Prayer Request

Every month, we receive dozens of prayer requests on our website. No matter where you live in the world, you are invited to share your needs with those who have committed to pray on your behalf. Please visit www.icsjparish.org/the-prayer-connection to submit a prayer Request. To join our ICSJ prayer ministry, email Angela at agore@icsjparish.org

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Consider taking advantage of celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Going to confession is great for one's soul. Receive the wonderful gift of healing and peace that our God longs for us to have in our life.

Contact Fr. Larry, at pastor@icsjparish.org, to schedule a time to meet.



IMMACULATE CONCEPTION AND ST. JOSEPH PARISH

A family of families

OUR Vision

WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO?

Inspired by God's great love, we are called to be the face of Jesus in today's world, welcoming all to our Family of Families, and walking as disciples through our works of compassion and mercy.

OUR Mission

HOW DO WE GET THERE?

We will be
disciples on a joyful mission,
constantly committed
anew to praying,
serving, growing, sharing
and belonging
in Jesus' name.

Be the Face of Jesus and change the world!



Imaging having a deep, rich prayer life which brings clarity, comfort, hope and joy into your life and to others!



Imagine feeling really close with God, who loves you always!



Imagine being God's hands and feet in this world, that desperately needs help and healing!



Imagine brimming with faith and God's love so that it spills over into every relationship and aspect of your life!



Imagine creating a diverse, loving community where everyone is welcomed and appreciated for who they are!

Visit icsjparish.org/mission for ideas on taking the next step!



Welcome

Inspired by God's great love, we are called to be the face of Jesus in today's world, welcoming all to our Family of Families, and walking as disciples through our works of compassion and mercy.

Our Two Places of Worship







Immaculate Conception Church

1431 N. North Park Avenue, Chicago, IL 60610



Free parking available in church parking lot; street parking also available.

St. Joseph Church

1107 N. Orleans Street, Chicago, IL 60610



Street parking available, tree parking 3.2.... across the street at ICSJ School, 363 W. Hill St. Street parking available; free parking available

Mass Schedule

Sunday

8:00 a.m. - St. Joseph Church 9:30 a.m. - Immaculate Conception Church 11:00 a.m. - St. Joseph Church

Saturday

5:00 p.m. - Immaculate Conception Church

Monday · Wednesday · Friday 9:00 a.m. - St. Joseph Church

Contact Us

Parish Office: 312-787-7174 • Visit Us Online: www.icsjparish.org

Main Office

1107 N. Orleans Street, Chicago, IL 60610

Main Office Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. (closed Thursday)

North Park Office

1431 N. North Park Ave, Chicago, IL 60610

North Park Office Hours

Tuesday, Wednesday 4:00-8:00 p.m., Saturday 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

For questions regarding Weddings, Registration, Mass Intentions, Baptisms, Giving, volunteering, and other general information, please visit our website or call the Parish Office.

Follow ICSJ Parish on Social Media







Staff Directory

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