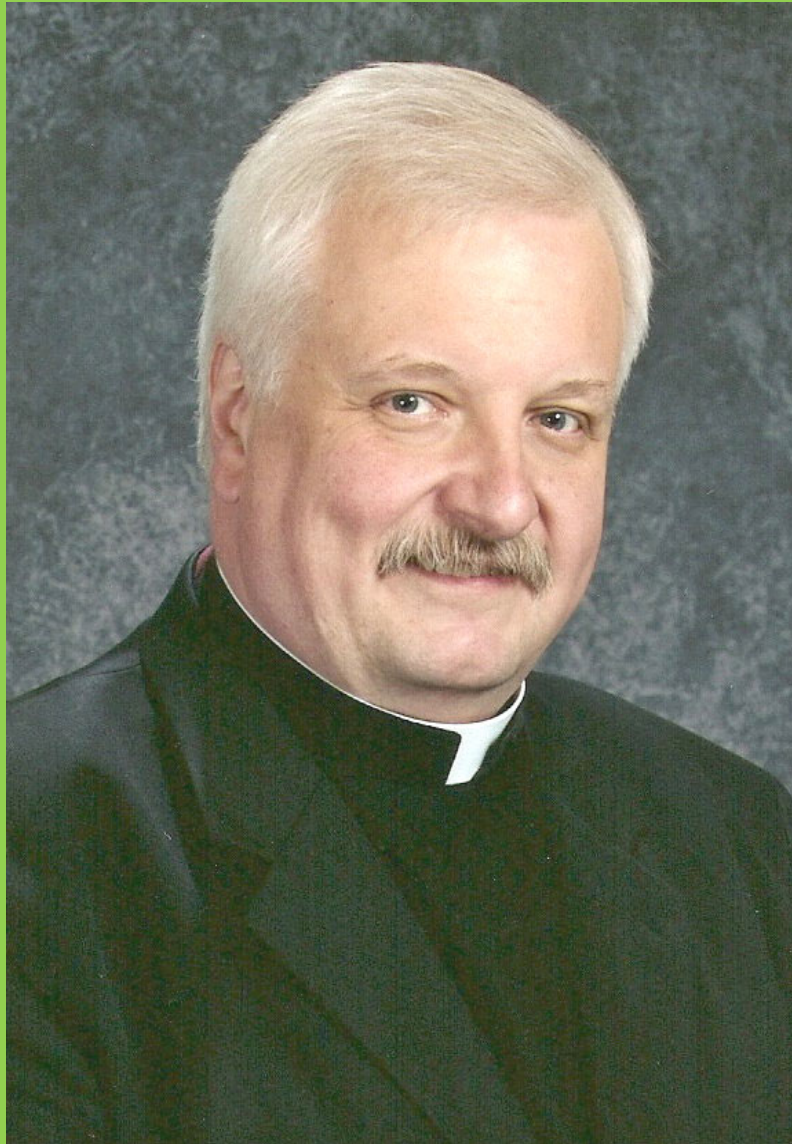
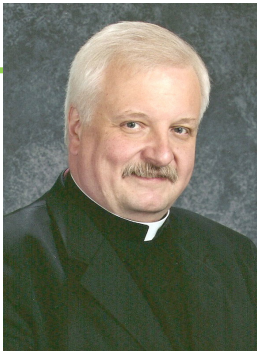


*St. Stephen Deacon & Martyr
Catholic Church*

*17500 84th Avenue, Tinley Park, Illinois 60487
708-342-2400*



*Good Bye and Good Luck Father Tom
Thank You for all that you did for our Parish.
We Wish You all the Best!*



FATHER TOM'S TIDBITS

Dear Friends.

We are coming to the end of our time together. One of the things that I have been contemplating about these past few weeks is what would I write in this farewell Fr. Tom's Tidbits. There are so many memories and emotions running through my mind and heart at this time. Writing this is very hard for me. And yet as the clock on the wall ticks away each second, each minute and each hour, the reality of the end of my time as your pastor is becoming more real. Moving on is never easy and remembering all the wonderful memories and the wonderful people that have been a part of these past three years is not making it any easier.

For those of you who remember the Carol Burnett Show, you know that she ended every show singing her signature closing song, "I am so glad we had this time together...." The lyrics of the song, "I'm so glad we had this time together, Just to have a laugh or sing a song, Seems we just get started and before you know it, Comes the time we have to say, So long!" seem appropriate for this weekend.

"I'm so glad we had this time together," reflects how I am feeling at this time. I feel honored and privileged to have been given the awesome opportunity to be your pastor for the past three years. In reflecting on these past three years one could say it was the best of times and the worst of times. We came together to share many successes and we supported each other through the challenging times. We prayed together; we worked together, we laughed together; and we cried together. We were able to accomplish many great things and we helped to lay the foundation for the future.

We also shared in and celebrated many of life's special moments. We welcomed into our family of faith many young children through the waters of Baptism. We shared in the grief and sorrow of families who had lost family members and celebrated their birth into eternal life. We witnessed the young people of our parish come to the table of the Lord for the first time at their First Communion; we watched as the young people of our community grew in their faith and asked the Church to confirm them. We gathered to share in the joy of the Sacrament of Marriage with those who came to be married in our church and we celebrated many anniversaries. And we held hands and prayed with our sick brothers and sisters. We also welcomed into our parish many new families. I thank you all for the opportunities you afforded me to share with you in these life moments.

Unfortunately, the hardest thing we shared was our shared experience of living through and dealing with the Covid-19 Pandemic that had gripped our world and our lives for the past fifteen months. We shared in the fears and anxieties of this unknown virus; we witnessed the sickness and death that it caused; and we saw the normal routines of our lives be dramatically changed. What was the normal, was no longer normal. But by the grace of God, together, we were able to make the best of the situation. None of this would have been possible without the many volunteers who responded to our call for help. They worked, week after week, sometimes at more than one Mass, to help to insure, as best as we could, the safety of those attending Mass here at St. Stephen's. I want to express my heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to all of you. You really went above and beyond the call of duty!!! May God Bless You!

In looking back at the past three years it is amazing to see how much we did together. Together, we forged forward and made our contribution to the rich tapestry of Saint Stephen's Parish. We took what was given to us by those who went before us. We started fun events like the Mardi Gras, Oktoberfest and an expanded our Filipino Simbang Gabi Celebration, which brought our parish together. We forged relationships with Catholic Charities and sponsored Food Drives for the St. Blase Food Pantry and Halloween Parties for the youth of the Back of the Yards Community. We connected with our friends at Saint Coletta's, which provides services for intellectually and developmentally disabled adults and children, and held food drives for them and welcomed them to our Catholic Charities Dinners. We worked with the Our Lady of the Angels Mission, Saint Jude House for victims of domestic abuse; Catholic Charities, and the Sister of Missionaries of Charity with our Christmas Giving Tree Project. We celebrated and honored our First Responders for the work that they do for us. We hosted the Knights of Columbus Blood Drive and Tootsie Roll Drive and during the Covid 19 Pandemic we opened our doors to them for their meetings. We started a successful "Queen of Hearts" Raffle and offered bimonthly bingo's for our parish bingo buffs. All this and more, and in only three years, WOW!!

We also continued on the rich tradition of providing for the religious education of the young people of our community. We, in conjunction with our neighboring parishes, have continued our support of our parish school, Cardinal Joseph Bernardin School. It is a wonderful school that we should all be very proud of. We

also continued, even in spite of the pandemic, to offer our wonderful Religious Education Program, through which over seven hundred students are learning more about our God, the Church and are preparing for the celebration of the Sacraments of First Reconciliation, First Communion and/or Confirmation. These young people are the future of our Church and preparing them to be good disciples for the future is critical. I want to thank all those involved in their catechesis.

We continued the mission and ministry of our parish, as a living witness to the presence of Jesus Christ in our community and in our world.

In terms of fiscal responsibility and good stewardship we made great strides as well. Always conscious of the need to be a good steward of what was entrusted to us, we took on many projects. We continue to work with archdiocese to address the many issues plaguing our new parish center. This has been a very long and tedious process. We are now at the point of working with a forensic architect, as they begin the process to uncover and address reasons for the issues we are experiencing. Once this information is collected it will be shared with the appropriate parties. Hopefully an resolution can be agreed upon or the other option would be possible legal action.

We also reorganized the staff to better meet the needs of the parish and you, our parishioners. This happened through the well deserved retirement of some of our employees while others moved on to new opportunities. This shift allowed us to continue our current programs and offerings, as well as plan and offer new opportunities for the future. We, as a parish staff, both before the pandemic and during the pandemic, also worked hard to reduce and/or contain costs to allow us to function as best as we could through the pandemic, which limited our income during the pandemic.

To better manage our energy costs we worked with ComEd to secure a grant that allowed us to have our entire parish campus retrofitted with LED lighting, at a reduced cost. The switch to LED lighting will save the parish money on our future electric bills.

St. Stephen's is probably the only parish in the archdiocese that owns a farm. When the farm property was purchased for the parish campus, the Hoger Family, from whom the farm was purchased, was given a life estate agreement that allowed them to live on the farm, at no cost, until both Mr & Mrs Hoger would pass away. Mrs. Hoger died in late December of 2019. So the farm property has reverted ownership to the parish. Unfortunately the property is not in the best of condition structurally. The archdiocese has listed the property with a real estate agent with an asking price of \$1.3 million dollars which is on the high side of the valuations we have received to this point. Hopefully we will have a buyer soon. Unfortunately, because of how the funding package for our Parish Life Center was put together, there is a over \$600,000 lien on the property that is owed to the archdiocese and must be paid from any proceeds from the sale of the farm. Any difference between the sale and what is owed will be the responsibility of the parish.

There are some major projects that will have to be addressed in the future, both long term and short term. The roof of the church needs to be replaced. We did receive an payment from the roofing material maker, but that prorated payment does not include any funding for the labor part of the replacement. We also need to replace the HVAC unit that covers the narthex and the chapel. And the biggest project will be the replacement of the parish parking lot. The estimated cost for the new parking lot is well over \$1 million dollars. And there are still outstanding loans on the church and on the parish life center.

So, you can see that together we did a lot in terms of the buildings and finances of the parish. I hope you will continue your support of our parish. It is because of the dedication and hard work of so many, that we have what we have. We should be proud of all that St. Stephen's is.

But, even though our time together is coming to an end, that does not mean the road ends here. There is still much that needs to be done, more that needs to be accomplished. I ask that you continue to dream the dreams and support our parish going forward. Your new pastor, Fr. Michael Wyrzykowski will do a great job in leading the parish community into the next chapter in the life of the parish. I ask that you support him and work with him to continue the mission and ministry of the parish. He is a great guy and he will be a wonderful pastor.

We are also welcoming Fr. Robert Stuglik as our new associate pastor. Fr. Bob will be a great asset to our parish. I encourage you to welcome him warmly to St. Stephen's.

So as the days of me being your pastor are winding down, I want you to know that I will truly miss all of you. Saying good-bye will be very hard for me because you are so special to me. I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for all the love, care and support you shared with me. You made these past three years of my life special for me. Know that even though we are separated physically, know that you will always be in my heart. Someone once said good-bye is forever, so I won't say good-bye; I will just say until we meet again, take care. If I can ever do anything else for you, please contact the parish office and they will be able to contact me.

Thank you and May God Bless You!



and staff we were able
to pay off the loan on the
Parish Center!!

Thank You to Everyone who
helped to make this possible!!!





Registration for our Religious Education Classes are now being accepted.

The St. Stephen Parish Religious Education Program assists parents with the sacred responsibility of educating their children in the Catholic faith. The passing on of our Catholic Faith and traditions is the key focus of our Religious Education (RE) program. We see our mission as supportive to families as they raise their children in the Catholic faith.

Classes are set to begin Monday September 13, 2021.

- In Person Classes will be offered on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday. Sunday classes will also be offered if the minimum of 10 students per classroom is met.

- Family Catechesis (Home Study) is available for grades 3, 4, 5, and 6 only)
- Students preparing for Sacraments (grades 1, 2, 7, and 8) must attend in person classes.
- Families are encouraged and expected to attend Mass each weekend.

For students preparing for Sacraments, there is a two year minimum of preparation in keeping with Archdiocesan policies. Families will receive a supplemental calendar outlining what is required. This calendar is provided during the academic year in which the Sacraments of Eucharist or Confirmation will be celebrated.

Our RE classes are small with trained, dedicated, volunteer catechists who give generously of their time. We are always looking for additional catechists and catechist aides to serve full time or to serve as a substitute.

Virtus training (a free, 3 hour course required by the Archdiocese for the protection of children) is required as well as a criminal background check and other compliance items. For more information, please contact Dee at 708-342-1544 or by email her at dee@ststephentinley.com



JESUS SAID TO JAIRUS,

**“Do not be afraid;
just have faith.”**

MARK 5:36

FAITH PRECEDES HEALING

As always on Sundays in Ordinary Time, the Old Testament reading illumines today's Gospel. In the longer form, Jesus performs two healings; and the Book of Wisdom proclaims our God the God of life, who “fashioned all things that they might have being” and formed human beings in “the image of his own nature,” to be “imperishable” (Wisdom 1:14; 2:23). People of faith, therefore, choose to live God's “undying justice (righteousness)” (1:15) in this mortal life, thus beginning, even now, the undying life for which we were created. To choose otherwise is to choose the other side: the devil and death (2:25). Mark presents the two healings as a story within a story, a “story sandwich,” a literary device that reinforces his message for those who originally would have heard, not read, the story. Mark wants to emphasize an essential truth of his Gospel: that Jesus does not perform miracles to compel faith, but rather that faith precedes healing.

JUST HAVE FAITH

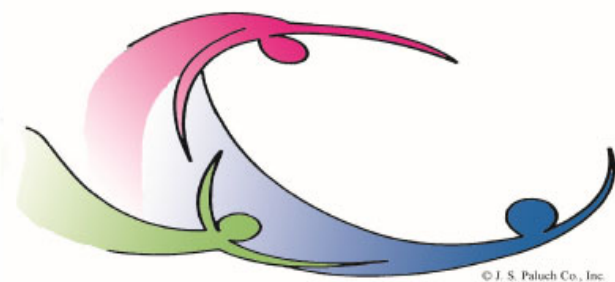
Jairus' daughter is the child of an important, privileged man, who publicly seeks out Jesus and loudly proclaims—and demonstrates—his faith, “falling at Jesus' feet and pleading earnestly with him” (5:22–23). The anonymous woman virtually “sneaks up behind” Jesus and, though clearly filled with faith, keeps that faith to herself until Jesus draws “the whole truth” out of her after her cure (5:27–28, 33). All the more impressive, then, that Jesus delays his healing of the seemingly “more important” and younger woman for the unknown, truly marginalized older woman. Returning to the “domestic church,” so to speak, of Jairus' house from the public setting of the older woman's cure, Mark tells us that Jairus' daughter has died. In the face of a hopelessness even more definitive than that of the hemorrhaging woman, people tell Jairus “why trouble the teacher any longer?” (5:35). But Jesus does not consider his response to Jairus' faith hopeless or a bother: “Do not be afraid; just have faith” (5:36). Despite death's apparent triumph at Jairus' home, Jesus grasps the child's hand—even though the law prohibited touching the dead—and bids her, “Talitha koum—Little girl, I say to you, arise!” (5:41).

WHY BOTHER?

So Mark seems to be asking us: Like Jairus on his way home or like the woman after twelve years, will we wonder, why bother? Or keep walking in faith with Jesus? Is a silent touch of Jesus' garment—a quiet prayer of faith—enough for us? In the face of apparent hopelessness, will we choose faith over despair despite the ridicule of the crowd, remembering that Jesus has grasped us by the hand in baptism and commanded us to rise? Note the Gospel's ending: after bidding Jairus' daughter rise, Jesus commands that she be given something to eat (5:43). So, too, Jesus invites us now to feast at his eucharistic sacrifice and banquet!

TODAY'S READINGS

Wis 1:13–15; 2:23–24
Psalm 30:2, 4–6, 11–13
2 Corinthians 8:7, 9, 13–15
Mark 5:21–43 [5:21–24, 35b–43]



**Thirteenth Sunday
In Ordinary Time
June 27, 2021**

**You changed my mourning into dancing;
O Lord, my God
forever will I give you thanks.**

—Psalm 30:13

Treasures From Our Tradition

As Independence Day draws near, we think of the men and women of the military who serve with courage and competence, some far from home. How does the Church accompany them? In 1939, Pope Pius XII created an independent jurisdiction of the Catholic Church called the "Military Vicariate." In 1985 Pope John Paul II created the "Archdiocese for Military Services, USA." Spanning the globe and serving nearly one and a half million Roman Catholics, more than one thousand priests minister in hospitals, on military bases of all the armed forces, on ships at sea, and on the battlefield. The AMS does not ordain priests, but accepts priests on loan from religious orders and dioceses.

In 1824 a Jesuit priest named Adam Marshall enlisted in the Navy and died at sea in 1825. He was assigned as a "schoolmaster," but he sought out and ministered to Catholic sailors. Twenty years later, President Polk was worried that the war with Mexico was seen as anti-Catholic, so he recruited two Jesuit priests to serve in the army as chaplains. At the time of the Civil War, only about ten percent of Americans were Catholic. Military policies forced Catholic soldiers to attend Protestant services. The Church protested this rule, and many priests volunteered to become chaplains. Their witness and the courage of the "Nuns of the Battlefield" (several orders of sisters who assisted Civil War victims) helped temper prejudice against Catholics and pave the way for the life and ministry of this vigorous and unique archdiocese.

—Rev. James Field, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time Who's More Generous?

Does the Christian duty to help the poor seem to be overwhelming? We hear more and more are out of work, more and more are homeless, and we see more and more pictures of starving children. Even in St. Paul's time there was more than enough poverty to go around. He was trying to build interest (in our second reading) in a project to help the Christians in Jerusalem. We see two of his reasons here.

First he tells what fine Christians they are, and hopes that they will be just as good in giving to his collection. (Reminds me of letters from the bishop, telling parishioners how good and generous they have been in the past.) But Paul isn't just flattering the Corinthians; he is challenging them to continue to show their love for God in their support for fellow Christians. The second reason was to show a good example: By helping the church in Jerusalem, they would show that Christians were united in faith and love for each other. He also doesn't make a competition out of who could be most generous. He expects them to be more interested in love for each other than in outdoing each other.

The main example he uses is Jesus, who made himself poor (i.e., human) so that we could be rich in grace and forgiveness. Paul challenges them, and us, to follow that example in giving from our wealth so that others can survive. Note that he doesn't expect them to live in poverty, just to share what they have out of love for Christ. Perhaps they may need help themselves sometime, and could count on the other church to do the same for them.

Today, we can ask ourselves, "Do I give to the poor because I feel guilty about all that I have? Or do I want to show my love for Jesus when I see him in the poor? Do I give because I want the parish to look more generous than the neighboring parish, or to show that we are all united in concern for each other?" By looking at why we give to charities, we may find ourselves being even more generous than we expected.

Tom Schmidt, Copyright (c) J. S. Paluch Co.

Feast of Faith

Preparation of the Gifts

The altar is prepared, the gifts are received. Several brief rites follow with accompanying prayers, some prayed silently by the priest and deacon and others said aloud. We call this part of the Mass the “preparation.” What kind of preparation is happening? First, the presider holds up the paten or bowl containing the hosts, and says words that Jesus must have said many times, since they derive from ancient Jewish meal prayers: “Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation!” We have brought forward our gifts, our offering to God, and now we acknowledge that they are not really ours—the gifts that we give are God’s gift to us. It is “through your goodness” that we have gifts to offer. It is significant that we offer not wheat and grapes, but bread and wine; “fruit of the earth and work of human hands.” Bread and wine are both God’s work, and ours. These preparatory rites also prepare us for what we are about to do in the Eucharist, a mystery in which divine and human meet; a holy collaboration in which our action is caught up into God’s divine plan.

—Corinna Laughlin, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.



Jesus' Example Of Helping Others

In today's second reading Paul offers a wonderful argument to his converts at Corinth for seeking to help those in need. He is dealing with a practical problem, arranging a collection for the poor of the church of Jerusalem; but as he often does, he develops an important teaching about Jesus to make his point.

After asking that they show their faith by generous gifts, he reminds them of the “gracious act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich” (2 Corinthians 8:9). In the Incarnation our Lord assumed our human nature, certainly becoming poor for one who is God. The ultimate gracious act of this poverty was going to the cross with all its terrible sufferings. By this act of poverty we definitely become rich. Now our sins can be forgiven; we can share in the very life of God through the sacraments; we can attain eternal salvation!

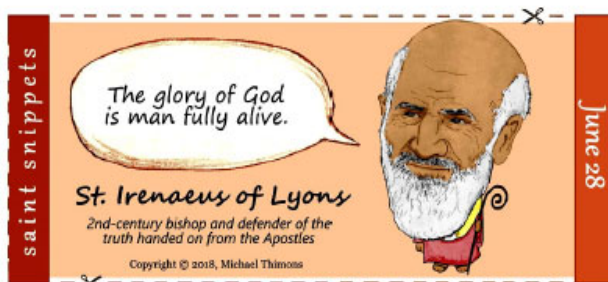
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Readings for the Week

Monday:	Gn 18:16-33; Ps 103:1b-4, 8-11; Mt 8:18-22
Tuesday:	Vigil: Acts 3:1-10; Ps 19:2-5; Gal 1:11-20; Jn 21:15-19 Day: Acts 12:1-11; Ps 34:2-9; 2 Tm 4:6-8, 17-18; Mt 16:13-19
Wednesday:	Gn 21:5, 8-20a; Ps 34:7-8, 10-13; Mt 8:28-34
Thursday:	Gn 22:1b-19; Ps 115:1-6, 8-9; Mt 9:1-8
Friday:	Gn 23:1-4, 19; 24:1-8, 62-67; Ps 106:1b-5; Mt 9:9-13
Saturday:	Eph 2:19-22; Ps 117:1bc-2; Jn 20:24-29
Sunday:	Ez 2:2-5; Ps 123:1-4; 2 Cor 12:7-10; Mk 6:1-6a

Saints and Special Observances

Sunday:	Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Monday:	St. Irenaeus
Tuesday:	Ss. Peter and Paul
Wednesday:	The First Martyrs of the Holy Roman Church
Thursday:	Saint Junípero Serra; Canada Day
Friday:	First Friday
Saturday:	St. Thomas; First Saturday



Today's Readings

First Reading — God did not make death, nor does God rejoice in the destruction of the living (Wisdom 1:13-15; 2:23-24).

Psalm — I will praise you, Lord, for you have rescued me (Psalm 30).

Second Reading — Your abundance should supply the needs of the others (2 Corinthians 8:7, 9, 13-15).

Gospel — Your faith has saved you (Mark 5:21-43 [21-24, 35b-43]).

The English translation of the Psalm Responses from the Lectionary for Mass © 1969, 1981, 1997, International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved.

"Little girl,
I say to you, arise!"
Mark 5 : 41



CATHOLIC CORNER

PRAISE THE LORD FROM THE EARTH

Praise the Lord from the heavens; Praise the Lord from the earth; Hallelujah! (Psalm 148.1, 7, 14)



O summer!

What a wonderful time of the year, a time to recognize and appreciate everything God has created for us!

Sometime during the next few weeks, ask someone in your family to take a "creation alphabet walk" with you. Try to find something to be grateful for that begins with each letter of the alphabet.

You might even find two or three for some letters. Write what you notice on these lines. One has already been done to get you started.

Pray the verses from Psalm 148 before and after your walk as thanksgiving for all that God has created. Later, take some time to read and pray the entire psalm. It is a splendid song of praise and gratitude!

A _____	N _____
B _____	O _____
C _____	P _____
D Daisies _____	Q _____
E _____	R _____
F _____	S _____
G _____	T _____
H _____	U _____
I _____	V _____
J _____	W _____
K _____	X _____
L _____	Y _____
M _____	Z _____

The Little Ones

Jim Burrows



God's Word for Children



Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Because Jesus was rich in graciousness, he became poor for our sake.

He willingly suffered to take away our sins.

Think of his sacrifice as you do this long "take-away" math problem.

The final sum will show what Jesus' gift of redemption costs us.

Write this word in the cash register window.

Salvation's cost:



Prayer for America

Dear God, we thank you for the bountiful blessings you have bestowed on us. Guide us in being good stewards of these gifts. Let us care for all of your beautiful creation, from the redwood forests to the gulfstream waters. Make us instruments of your peace in order to put an end to rockets' red glare and bombs bursting in air.

Help us to love and care for all of our neighbors - locally and globally - so that we might be truly crowned with brotherhood from sea to shining sea. Amen.

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<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">catholicmatch® Illinois</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p style="text-align: center;">CatholicMatch.com/myIL</p> </div>		<div style="border: 2px solid red; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">OPEN 24 hours SUPERWASH CAR WASH</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2 Automatic & 4 Self-Serve Bays Dry Vacuums • Vending • Pet Wash</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AUTOMATIC TOKENS 5 for \$20 (\$5.50 Wash)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">17502 Duvan Drive, Tinley Park (SW Corner Duvan & 175th Street) www.SUPERWASH.com</p> </div>	<p style="text-align: center;">\$29.95/Mo. billed quarterly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One Free Month • No Long-Term Contract • Price Guarantee • Easy Self Installation <p style="text-align: center;">Call Today! Toll Free 1.877.801.8608</p>
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		<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Kathleen Creswell Cunningham, Attorney At Law REAL ESTATE • WILLS • TRUSTS • ESTATES CTL 19201 S. LaGrange Rd., Suite 205, Mokena info@crosstownlegal.com CROSS TOWN LEGAL 708.478.9700</p> </div>	

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