

Church of The Holy Cross

8311 W. 93rd St.
Overland Park, Kansas 66212
Church Office: (913) 381-2755 FAX: (913) 381-2766
E-Mail: churchoffice@holycrossopks.org
Website: www.holycrossopks.org

Pastor: Rev. Robert Conroy
Associate Pastor for Hispanic Ministry:
Rev. David Garavito
Rectory: 341-5618

PARISH STAFF

Pastoral Associate: Robert Bacic
Director Liturgy & Music: Rick Worms, 816-835-7441
Parish Manager: Mark Engen
Administrative Assistant: Pam Seger
Receptionists: Barb Williams
Lina Byrum

Religious Education Staff: 461-0726

Director - Pre.-Gr. 6: Julie Dresser
Session Coordinator: Carol Morris
Program Assistants: Michelle Rieger
Karla Melgar
Confirmation Coordinator: Sandy Schluter

Youth Ministries: 205-0825

Director: Sandy Schluter

Coordinator & Catechist for Hispanic Adult Formation:

Sr. Maria Orozco, S.C.L., 381-2755

La información en español
se encuentra en la página 4.

Holy Cross Catholic School 8101 W. 95th St. 66212 School Office: 381-7408

E-Mail: gradeschool@hccsmail.com

Principal: Mary Jo Gates

Secretaries: Anita Lemmon

Martha Beisser

Early Education Center: 381-7151

E-Mail: preschool@hccsmail.com

Director: Penny Miller

Assistant Director: Stefanie Bridges

Advocates for Annulments:

Debbie Williams, 642-3708

Rebeca Richmond, 671-8722

Parish Center Manager

Allison Carney, 244-5970

MASSES:

Saturday 7:30 a.m., 5:00 p.m. (Sunday Mass)
Sunday 7:30, 9:00, 11:00 a.m., and 2:00 p.m. (Spanish)
Nursery - 9:00, 11:00 a.m., and 2:00 p.m. Masses
Weekdays Mon., Wed., Fri. 9:00 a.m.
Tues. & Thurs. 6:30 a.m.
Tues. 6:00 p.m. (Spanish)
Tues. & Thurs. (School days only): 8:15 a.m. in the school

RECONCILIATIONS:

SACRAMENT OF THE SICK:

BAPTISMS:

MARRIAGES:

Saturday, 3:30 - 4:30 p.m. and **Wednesday**, 5:30-6:30 p.m.

Semi-annually, Fall & Spring, and by appointment

4th Sunday each month

(Parent classes 3rd Tuesday each month. Call the office to register.)

Six months notice required. Call the office for information.

PREGNANT? NEED HELP? All calls confidential. Gabriel Project, 913-602-0306



FROM FR. ROBERT:

+
J.M.J.

Brothers and Sisters,

This year December 25th fell on a Saturday, which means that we have spent a considerable amount of time at Holy Cross for our worship services - the Vigil Masses on Friday evening, the Saturday Masses of Christmas, and today, Sunday, the Feast of the Holy Family, with the normal schedule of celebrations!! What a tremendous time of grace we have all lived. Praised be Jesus Christ.

As you know by now, the Sunday immediately following the celebration of Christmas commemorates the Holy Family. During the Season of Advent we contemplated the individual roles of Mary and Joseph, plus, of course, the coming of Jesus – and today the Church invites us to reflect on the beauty of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph as a family unit. It seems to me that our age needs a profound reflection on the beauty of family life as never before. The traditional family, as we know it, is suffering attacks by critics on all levels of society.

Looking at contemporary resources one finds an incredible variety of interpretations as to how a family may be defined. A simple online search brings out this diversity, as seen below:

A family is “a network of mutual commitment” – National Institute of Mental Health

“A family consists of two or more people, one of whom is the householder, related by birth, marriage, or adoption and residing in the same housing unit.” U.S. Census Bureau, 2005.

“In a Libertarian ‘free society,’ ... Persons define family for themselves.” Spring 1997 issue of *Formulations* published by the Libertarian Nation Foundation

Family: A group of individuals related by blood or marriage or by a feeling of closeness / Gordon Neal Diem, D.A. MedicineNet.com

“Navi Pillay, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, wrapped up her official visit to Iceland with a statement on Friday commending Iceland ‘for the significant progress it has achieved through recent legislation removing legal impediments to same-sex marriages.’ UN News Centre June 21, 2010

It doesn’t take a social scientist or theologian to see that there is tremendous moral confusion in popular culture as to how one defines a family. The citation in number one above, for example – “a network of mutual commitment” - could refer to a family, a sports team, or a row of computers! Take your pick.

In 1983 the Holy See published a *Charter of the Rights of the Family* that reflects current papal teaching and con-

(continued on next column)

READINGS & FAITH SHARING QUESTIONS FOR NEXT SUNDAY: The Epiphany of the Lord

Isaiah 60:1-6; Ephesians 3:2-3,5-6, Matthew 2:1-12.
Questions for Adults: What takes most of your thinking, planning, wishing, and hoping time and energy? Are you finding God there?

For Children: What gift will you give Jesus this week?

ADORATION CHAPEL: On this day following the birth of the Christ Child, plan to welcome Him in His Presence in the Adoration Chapel: Sun., 2pm, 5pm; Mon., 2am; Wed., 3pm, Fri., 4pm. If you can help, call Anne, 649-2049.

STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE:

	December 19, 2010	Fiscal YTD
Needed	\$33,800	\$730,000
Collected	32,698	642,867
Over/(Under)	(1102)	(87,133)
Special Donations	1241	

BULLETIN ITEMS for the Jan.2 bulletin must be received in the church office by 12:00 noon on Dec.27.

(continued from previous column)

stant Catholic tradition. The words of the Charter leave no room for doubt as to what we believe about marriage and family life. I will quote just two sections from the preamble (the entire document can be found on the Vatican website):

“the family is based on marriage, that intimate union of life in complementarity between a man and a woman which is constituted in the freely contracted and publicly expressed indissoluble bond of matrimony and is open to the transmission of life.”

“the family, a natural society, exists prior to the State or any other community, and possesses inherent rights which are inalienable.”

Sacramental marriage is a key component in the composition of a traditional family according to Sacred Scripture: *From the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother (and be joined to his wife), and the two shall become one flesh.’ (Genesis 2:24) So they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, no human being must separate.* Mark 10:6-9

Husband and wife are brought together in faith and united by the power of God. This covenant has been founded and endowed with grace by the Creator, and it brings forth blessed fruit in the generation of children. (CCC1660)

The Holy Family is a perfect model for our times. In days past children (and many adults) used to put the letters “J.M.J.” at the top of each blank page before beginning their work. This beautiful invocation of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph was a simple reminder to place all our actions in God’s hands. Let us pray for the return of this simple gesture...that it might help us grow in awareness of the beauty of family life.

ADOPT A CAUSE: In light of the recent burglaries at Holy Cross, we have asked a local security company to draw up a plan for improving vigilance of church assets. This is a cause close to everyone's heart, and I invite those who are interested and able to make a donation for this particular cause.

Religious Education

Tues. Aft. Classes will meet on Jan.4, 4:30pm in the church hall. No classes on Dec.21 and 28. Enjoy this time with your family and friends.

Families Growing in Faith Together will meet Tues., Jan.4, 6:30pm in the church hall..

Confirmation classes will not meet on Dec.26 due to Christmas holiday. We resume classes on Jan.2, and will meet in church hall. Remember, high school students meet 6-7:30pm. 7th & 8th grade students meet 6:30-8pm.

Candidate Sponsor sessions rescheduled...Due to scheduling of hall renovations & moving/unpacking, **Candidate/Sponsor sessions scheduled for Dec.4 & Dec.11 will be rescheduled in Feb.2011.** Exact dates should be available soon.

For Confirmation info, you can go to our website, www.HolyCrossOPKS.org, click on Faith Formation to find link to Middle & High School Sacramental Prep.

Youth Ministry

Sandy Schluter, 205-0825, sschluter@holycrossopks.org

For questions regarding Middle and High School Rel. Ed or Youth Ministry, contact Sandy at 205-0825 or sschluter@holycrossopks.org.

Holy Cross High Schoolers ... "Regular" youth group will not meet on Dec.29 to meet in our renovated youth room (located where former youth room was, room next to the kitchen). Stay tuned for details. Go to Sandra K Schluter and add yourself as a friend to get info by Facebook.

Our next **HOMERS** date is Jan.12. Homers Coffeehouse is located in downtown OP. We meet 7pm-8:15pm. Bring a few dollars for a smoothie, latte, hot chocolate, etc. We gather together for fellowship and fun, in a relaxed and inviting atmosphere. Hope to see you there!

Mission 2011 is set! We'll travel to Twin Cities, MN, June 12-18, & work with Catholic Heart Workcamp. Students entering 9th grade in Fall of 2011 are eligible to attend. Non-refundable \$75 deposit will hold your spot. Total cost for 7 days lodging, food, & transportation is \$400. We will have several fundraising opportunities throughout year. Act now. At this time, we have filled all spots from last year, but have added 10 more spots. This trip filled before Dec. last year. Contact Sandy for more info.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN CORNER

"Our Family, Our Future"

UPDATE:

Total Pledged: \$2,092,202

Total Received: \$1,690,948

CASH DONATIONS FOR CHRISTMAS FAMILIES

IN NEED: Due to construction project, we don't have ability to collect/store food items. Therefore, we are asking for quick responses for cash and gift card donations. Please prayerfully consider helping by **donating cash or donating gift cards to Wal-Mart, Target, Kohl's or grocery stores.** Make checks payable to Holy Cross and marked "Christmas baskets" in the memo section. Donations may be dropped off or mailed to church office. Call Carol Reardon at 913-244-6443 with any questions. Thanks in advance for your generous response so others may enjoy Christmas.

St.Monica's and The Peach Tree will be rescheduled to a later time because of a scheduling conflict with Fr. Terrell. Continue to watch bulletin for new time & date.

Holy Cross provided 357 dinners to the hungry on Dec.17, at **St.Mary's Food Kitchen.** Our total number of dinners provided for 2010 was 4121. Thanks to everyone who provided food, helped serve, and gave monetary donations.

Please Pray for Those Asking for Prayers: Mary Ellen Alfino, David Ferguson, Kevin Haeusser, Thomas Hill, Mary Bernadine Horan, Mason Kempf; Greg Lamping, Ed Nease, Lindsay Ripley, Theresa Ryan, Bob Schmidt, Laurie Seger, Ginny Shepard, Andrea Tumbleson, and Zaylee Foley Zahabi..

REST IN PEACE: Prayers are requested for **Joe Edmonds** of Holy Cross.

Mass Intentions For The Week



Monday	9:00 a.m.	Esther Bauman
Tuesday	6:30 a.m.	Mary Jo Janner
	6:00 p.m.	JoAnn Power (Spanish)
Wednesday	9:00 a.m..	Inez Byrum
Thursday	6:30 a.m.	Joseph Orrick
Friday	9:00 a.m.	Spec.Int.-Greg Lamping
		MARY, MOTHER OF GOD (Vigil)
	5:30 p.m.	Maria Nguyen
Saturday		MARY, MOTHER OF GOD
	9:00 a.m.	Angela Derks
	12:00 noon	Rosa Nguyen (Spanish)
	5:00 p.m.	John Jaklevic (Sunday Mass)
Sunday	7:30 a.m.	People of the Parish
	9:00 a.m.	Frances Schoenfelder
	11:00 a.m.	Alice McNamara
	2:00 p.m.	Loretta McMichaels (Spanish)

Due to a conflict with the use of the basement on the 9th, there will be no SUNSHINE meeting in January.

Please join us in praying the ROSARY before daily Mass every Mon.-Sat. We will begin 20 minutes before each Mass. On Mondays only, we will begin at 8:30am with Mother of Perpetual Help Devotions followed by the rosary. On Fridays we will pray the Rosary for Life.

Fr. Bob & Holy Cross parishioners pray the Rosary at 9:30am on the first Saturday of every month at Planned Parenthood, 4401 W. 109th St, just southeast of 435 & Roe in Fox Hill Office Park. Come join us.

Advice & Aid Pregnancy Centers, Inc. needs volunteers & will offer a Volunteer Informational Meeting, Mon., Jan.10, 7-9pm. at 11031 W.75th Ter., Shawnee, KS. For more info or to RSVP, contact Mary Newcomer at 913-962-0200 or volunteer@adviceandaid.com

The Celebration Committee would like to thank everyone for their donations. We hit the two week 100 gift goal and NOW...



HOLY CROSS CELEBRATION 2011
JANUARY 29, 2011 @ 5:00 PM

It's time for the home stretch!!

While you are out shopping for last minute and after Christmas deals, please remember that we are still taking gifts for every room (especially for our Men's Room and Religious and Holiday).

The more gifts we have means more excitement for the evening which means more money raised for the church and school! Gifts can be dropped off at the church or school office.

Now that you have received your tickets for Celebration, please send them in as soon as possible. Most of the plans for the evening happen after we have a final headcount so be sure you are counted!

May all have you have a very blessed Christmas!

www.holycrosscelebration.com

Proceeds from the evening benefit Holy Cross Parish and School.

To Women of Holy Cross Parish

SAVE the DATE: 2/12/11

for

A Morning of Reflection

~

A time to Strengthen and
A time to Inspire one another,
A time to Prepare for Lent.

Saturday Morning
(After the 7:30 Mass)

February 12, 2011
In Lickteig Hall

Sponsored by the CRHP Continuation Committee

School News

Celebration 2011-Denim and Diamonds is quickly approaching. Mark your calendar for Jan.29 and reserve your seats. If you would like to donate an item to the auction you can drop it off at the school during our office hours. The planning committee is working hard to make this a special evening with some new twists. We hope to see you all there.

Upcoming Events:

Jan.4 All Classes resume

Jan.6 All School Mass 9AM in the church

Jan.17 No School / No EEC-Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Mark your calendar for our annual Open House Feb.6, 10:30am-2pm. Tours in both English and Spanish will be available. Discover what our parish school has to offer your children. Holy Cross School and Early Education Center provides an outstanding academic experience rooted in our Catholic faith. We serve children PK3yr.old -8th grade. For more information visit us on the web. We look forward to seeing you at our Open House.

Stay up-to-date with information about the school. Go to www.holycrosscatholicsschool.com where you can link to the Principal's Weblog, our Facebook page and Twitter. Click the "Family Login" button to see our newsletter and calendar.

Our office hours are 8:00am to 4:00pm on school days. You may purchase SCRIP certificates and Trash Bags during our office hours.



MISAS EN ESPAÑOL:
todos los domingos a las
2:00 p.m. y los martes
a las 6:00 p.m.

MISAS EN INGLÉS:
 sábados 5:00 p.m.
 y domingos 7:30 a.m.,
 9:00 a.m. y 11:00 a.m.
 Los invitamos a participar
 en cualquiera de estas
 liturgias.

RECONCILIACIÓN:
 sábados, 3:30 a 4:30pm;
 martes, 5:30 p.m., antes
 de la Misa en español; y
 miércoles, 5:30-6:30pm.

MATRIMONIO: Llame a
 la parroquia 6 meses antes
 de la fecha en que desea
 casarse para tener una
 entrevista con un sacerdote.

BAUTISMO: Segundo
 sábado 11 a.m., y tercer
 domingo de cada mes
 después de la Misa de las
 2:00 p.m. Padres y
 padrinos deben asistir a una
 clase de preparación. Favor
 de anotarse con anticipa-
 ción, llamando a la ofici-
 na de la iglesia, 381-2755.

SERVICIOS EN
ESPAÑOL: Para hablar
 en español, llamen a la
 oficina de la iglesia,
381-2755: lunes,
 miércoles y jueves 2-5
 pm.; martes 2-7pm.
 Pueden llamar también
 a los Sacerdotes, al
 341-5618 y dejarles un
 mensaje.

“Encuentro”

ANUNCIOS

DEL PADRE ROBERTO:

Hermanos y hermanas,

J.M.J.

Diciembre 25 cae este año un sábado, queriendo decir que hemos pasado bastante tiempo en Holy Cross para nuestros servicios de adoración-las Misas de vigilia los viernes por la noche, las Misas del sábado de Navidad y hoy, domingo, la Fiesta de la Sagrada Familia, con el horario normal de celebración. ¡Hemos vivido un tremendo tiempo de gracia! ¡Bendito sea Jesús Cristo!

Durante el Tiempo de Adviento contemplamos los roles individuales de María y José, además de la venida de Jesús. Hoy, la Iglesia nos invita a reflexionar en la belleza de Jesús, María y José, como una familia. Me parece que hoy en día debemos reflexionar profundamente en la belleza de la familia como nunca lo hemos hecho. La familia tradicional, como la conocemos, está sufriendo ataques de críticos en todos los niveles de la sociedad.

Mirando recursos contemporáneos, encontramos una variedad de interpretaciones de como debemos definir la familia:

1. La familia es “un sistema de compromiso mutuo”.
2. “Una familia consiste de dos ó más personas, uno es el cabeza de familia, relacionado por nacimiento, matrimonio o adopción y residiendo en la misma casa”.
3. “En una sociedad Libertina libre, cada persona define la familia”.
4. Familia: un grupo de individuos relacionados por sangre, matrimonio o un sentimiento de cercanía.
5. Navi Pillay, UN Comisionado de los Derechos Humanos, terminó su visita a Islandia con el siguiente comentario: felicitando a este país “por el progreso obtenido a través de la reciente legislación, removiendo los impedimentos legales para los matrimonios del mismo sexo”.

No se necesita ser un científico o teólogo para ver la tremenda confusión moral en nuestra cultura popular, sobre cómo definimos una familia. La interpretación #1 de arriba, puede referirse a: ¡una familia, un equipo de pelota o un grupo de computadoras!

En 1983, la Cátedra de San Pedro publicó una *Carta de los Derechos de la Familia*, reflejando las enseñanzas papales al corriente y la constante tradición Católica. Las palabras de la Carta no deja espacio para dudas en lo que debemos de creer sobre el matrimonio y la vida familiar. Las cuotas siguientes son del Website del Vaticano:

1. “La familia está basada en el matrimonio, esa unión íntima de vida entre un hombre y una mujer, que es constituida en los esponsales libres expresando públicamente el lazo indisoluble del matrimonio y es abierto a la transmisión de vida.”
2. “La familia, una sociedad natural, existe primero que el Estado u otra comunidad y posee derechos inherentes que son inalienables.”

El matrimonio Sacramental es un componente muy importante en la composición de una familia tradicional, según las Sagradas Escrituras:

Desde el principio de la creación, “Dios los hizo al hombre y a la mujer. Por esta razón, el hombre dejará su padre y madre (y será unido a su esposa) y los dos serán una misma carne y sangre.” Por lo tanto, lo que Dios ha unido, nadie podrá separar”. Mark 10:6-9

Esposo y esposa serán traídos juntos en fe y unidos por el poder de Dios. Este convenio ha sido fundado y creado con la gracia del Creador y produce la fruta bendita en la generación de los niños. (CCC1660)

La Sagrada Familia es el modelo perfecto de nuestros tiempos. En días pasados, niños (y muchos adultos), ponían las letras J.M.J., en el tope de cada papel en blanco antes de empezar el trabajo. Esta invocación bella a Jesús, María y José, era un simple recuerdo de poner todas nuestras acciones en las manos de Dios. Oremos por el regreso de este simple gesto.... Que ésto nos ayude a crecer y estar concientes de la belleza de la vida familiar

INTENCIONES PARA LAS MISAS: Martes, 12/28, 6:00 p.m.: JoAnn Power
Domingo, 1/2, 2:00 p.m.: Loretta McMichaels

LECTURAS Y PREGUNTAS PARA COMPARTIR LA FE EL PRÓXIMO DOMINGO Diciembre 26, 2010 - La Sagrada Familia: Eclesiástico 3:2-7, 12-14; Colosenses 3:12-21; Mateo 2:13-15, 19-23.

Preguntas semanales de Adultos para Compartir la Fe: ¿Qué es lo que toma más de su pensamiento, planear, desear, esperar, tiempo y energía? ¿Encuentran a Dios Allí? **Preguntas para los Niños:** ¿Qué les darán a Jesús esta semana?

EDUCACIÓN RELIGIOSA: Las clases resumirán el 4 de Enero, 2011.

CONFIRMACIÓN: *Sesiones para Candidatos y Padrinos: pospuestas hasta Febrero, 2011.*

Para más información sobre Confirmación, Ministerio Juvenil o clases de Escuela Intermedia o Superior, llamen a Sandy: 205-0825, o el website siguiente: sschluter@holycrossopks.org.

The "CALLED BY NAME" program is an opportunity for priests of the Archdiocese, to invite their parishioners to get involved in vocations, and for pastors to receive feedback from parishioners. The goal is to provide feedback which will help develop vocations in young people, and IDENTIFY those who may have a religious vocation or calling. Please be thinking of single men or women (of high school age or older) who in your opinion have the qualities to make a good priest, sister, or brother. Among such qualities would be commitment to God and Church, desire for service, concern for others, and leadership abilities. You will be receiving a vocation Referral Card to be completed at Mass on the weekend of Jan.15-16, 2011.

The 37th Annual **SNOW BALL**, benefiting Catholic Charities Foundation of Northeast KS, will be held Sat., Jan.15. Join us for cocktails, dinner and dancing at the Hyatt Regency, Crown Center Exhibition Hall. Proceeds from this black tie gala will help provide the most basic needs such as food & utilities to children & families in our community. For more info, contact Kerry Gentry, 913-433-2046 or kgentry@catholiccharitiesks.org, or www.catholiccharitiessnowball.org.

St.Thomas Aquinas Rugby Team Texas Hold 'EM Poker Tournament: Jan.7, 2011. Doors open at 6:00. Tournament starts at 7:00. Advance Entry Fee: \$50 for the tournament with \$1000 to the winner. \$60 at the door. Holy Trinity Fr.Quigley Center, 9201 Summit, Lenexa, KS 66215. For full details and to register go to www.kcblues.org/STApoker.

Daniel Carr, Kyle Rieger, & Josh Staley all received their Eagle Scout rank at a Court of Honor on Dec.4. All three boys attended Holy Cross Catholic School and graduated in the same class (2008). All three are members of Troop 284 in Overland Park, They and their families are members of Holy Cross parish. Daniel Carr & Josh Staley attend Bishop Miege H.S., and Kyle Rieger attends Rockhurst H.S.

Archbishop's Quo Vadis Retreat: Are you a single man 18-35 who wants to challenge himself to grow closer to Christ, and discover the meaningful life He want for you? Will you leave the ordinary behind for 2 1/2 days to join other men of faith and integrity? The retreat will be held at Savior Pastoral Center 8pm Jan.1 to 11am Jan.4, 2011. The retreat is free. There will be Mass, communal prayer, a service project, inspiring stories and movies, and time to relax and visit with seminarians. Archbishop Naumann will meet personally with guests to offer spiritual direction and advice. To get more info or register see our website www.kckvocations.com or email vocation@archkck.org. Please register by Dec.22.

"The Image of Mary on Stamps throughout the World"

What: Come celebrate the Advent Season and prepare with Mary at the Savior Pastoral Center! View images of Mary on stamps around the world, as painted by Phil Jensen, of St. Ann in Prairie Village. Phil has collected over 900 stamps from over 185 countries, and then painted an enlarged series of 44 of these images. Come and visit with the artist, view the paintings and the actual stamps, and enjoy some cocktails and appetizers as we prepare for Christmas during this Advent season. The evening will begin with vespers and a rosary in the Savior of the World Chapel at 6pm. All are welcome! **When:** 6-8pm on Tues., Dec.21. **Where:** Savior Pastoral Center, 12601 Parallel Parkway, KC, KS 66109. **Cost:** Free! Donations are always welcome. **How:** Call Martha at 913-721-1097 or e-mail at saviorsec@archkck.org to RSVP by Dec. 21.

St.Thomas Aquinas H.S. 2nd Annual **TRIVIA CHALLENGE** will be on Sat., Jan.22, in auxiliary gym at 7:30pm. Setup begins at 7. Organize your table of 10 for \$150. Single reservations also accepted at \$15/person. Prizes are determined based on attendance with limit of 40 tables. Reservations can be made online www.stasaints.net/triviachallenge. More info at 319-2425.

WHAT'S NEW FOR CHRIS: We at Holy Cross are following development of a child in womb from conception to birth over 9 months from Feast of the Annunciation to Christmas. God said, "Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you." We named this tiny new human being Chris. Chris's heart started beating 18 days after conception. Amniotic fluid cushions Chris throughout pregnancy. Umbilical cord forms like lifeline for baby in "space" of womb. **By Week 5** Chris was 10,000 times larger than original fertilized egg, developing rapidly. **By Week 6** Chris's brain began to control movement of muscles & organs. **By Week 7** Chris began to move, arms bending & flexing, fingers developing, swimming & doing back flips. **By Week 8** Chris was a little under inch long. Everything present would be found in a fully developed adult. **By Week 9** Chris's fingerprints were evident. Chris could feel pain. Chris wriggled and played with fingers, toes, nose, ears! **By Week 10** the most critical part of Chris's development was complete & Chris entered a period of rapid growth. Chris was squinting & swallowing, over an inch long, moving quickly. **By Week 11** Chris was almost 2 inches long & could stand on daddy's little finger nail. Finger nails & hair were starting to grow. Placenta was providing nutrition. **By Week 12** Chris slept, awakened, & exercised muscles energetically, opening & closing mouth while "breathing" amniotic fluid to help develop respiratory system. **By Week 13** Chris had all 20 teeth buds, was almost 3 inches long, & weighed 1 oz.. Vocal cords began to form, & Chris will use them for first cry after birth! **By Week 14** my taste buds were working! I drank sweet tasting amniotic fluid. My skin was very transparent & was very sensitive to pain except for my back and the top of my head. **By Week 15** I had unique fingerprints, fingernails & toenails growing, adult's taste buds, eyebrows & hair on my head sprouting. **By Week 16** I was getting a little baby fat and my heart was pumping as much as 6 gallons a day. I weighed almost 6 oz., & was about 3" long. **By Week 17** I have REM (rapid eye movements) in dreams I don't remember. My vocal cords have formed but no sound because no air. I breathe "underwater," inhaling & exhaling amniotic fluid. **By Week 18** I hear mother's heartbeat and know her voice. My umbilical cord transports 300 quarts of fluid/day and completes round-trip of fluids every 30 seconds. I suck my thumb. **By Week 19** I may cover eyes if bright light on mother's abdomen. I may cover ears if very loud noise. I hear my mom's soothing lullaby. My private parts are clearly visible now. **By Week 20** my hair was growing on head, my heart pumping 6 gallons of blood every day. After 20 weeks now, I will be born in 20 more weeks. I'm over 6" tall and weigh over 10 oz. Mom can distinguish our heartbeats. **By Week 21** my tongue was fully formed & I practiced a raspberry! I hear noises from outside. I have fingernails & fingerprints. I was 10" long if I could stand up straight. **By Week 22** I liked to suck my thumb & listen to Mom read to me. My brain was growing really fast & I weighed nearly a pound. **By Week 23** My eyes were formed, but the iris didn't have color. I was over 1 lb. & 1 ft. long. **By Week 24** I'm developing muscle, bone mass, and

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(continued from previous column) organs. My lungs developed so well, I'm officially viable, I could live outside the womb. Each parent contributed 15,000 genes that determined not only what the baby looks like but how it interprets tastes, athletic abilities, allergies, health, and much more. **By Week 25** Many brain cells were growing in my head every day! Soon I'll have billions of brain cells. I grasp things. My spine is beginning to form to protect my spinal cord. I'm covered by a white cheesy substance that protects my skin. **By Week 26** my taste buds were forming, I could taste sweet things. I had eyelashes & eyebrows, fully formed fingerprints, and toenails & fingernails growing. **By Week 27** I've had trouble with my balance but it was getting better.. I weighed 2 pounds. **By Week 28** I was about 14 inches tall and growing really fast. If I were born now, I'd have an 85% chance of survival because my lungs have been getting stronger. **By Week 29** I've doubled my size over last 4 weeks and don't have much room. Muscle tone getting better and body filling out with baby fat. Nice fine hair growing on head. I recognize my mom's voice. **By Week 30** My wrinkles were slowly disappearing as I gained more and more weight. My body was catching up to my big head. I can move my eyes and hear my mom. I can't wait to see her. **By Week 32** I weighed 3 lbs. And gaining about a half pound each week. I am in fetal position because really cramped now. I can see but won't have 20/20 vision until I'm 7-9 years old, hopefully. Mom is pretty uncomfortable. **By Week 33** I weigh 3 pounds and hope to weigh 7 pounds at birth. My brain is growing very fast. I'm starting to have regular sleep, awake time, and dream. I'm using my four senses of vision, hearing, taste and touch. **By Week 34** I'm almost 17 inches long and started to move head down because 96% of babies are born that way. Like to look around but can't see much. I scratched myself with my long fingernails. **By Week 35** my immune system is beefing up so I will be ready to fight infections and illnesses right after birth. I have lots of amniotic fluid padding. My skull is pliable & soft, ready for delivery. **By Week 36** I weigh 5 1/2 lbs. and putting on baby fat to keep warm after birth, lungs almost complete, and uterine wall getting thinner. **By Week 37** I absorb a gallon of amniotic fluid/day, and receiving valuable antibodies from mom to fight off infections. Fat is deposited in my cheeks and muscles that help me suck help fill my face. I am about 6 lbs., over 20 " in length, and plump & round. **By Week 38** I am now considered full-term but continue to gain and grow. Lungs are days from completion. I practice breathing with amniotic fluid and I easily grasp things. **By Week 39** I weigh 5-9 lbs. Average size baby is 7 lbs. It's hard to move in such crowded womb..Umbilical cord doesn't have any nerve endings, is about 20" long and 1/2" thick.

HERE IN WEEK 40 Celebrate! Don't be surprised at how Chris looks after birth. Chris' head may be misshapen and skin may be discolored with patchy rashes. Chris has more than seventy different reflexes at birth which are necessary for survival. Chris, like all babies, is made in the image and likeness of God. Even though childbirth is frightening, it helps to keep positive support people around you.