

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 last 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 last Sunday the Church invited 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-

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

Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7; Acts 10:34-38, Matthew 3:13-17.

Questions for Adults: What marked the beginning of your adult life? What do you believe is the purpose God has for you at this time in your life?

For Children: What do you know about your baptism? See what you can find out from your parents.

ADORATION CHAPEL: Make a New Year resolution to spend an hour with the Lord! Open hours: Sun., 2pm, 5pm; Mon., 2am; Wed., 7am (until 3/31/11); Thurs., 2am; Fri., 4pm. Call Anne, 649-2049.

WORD OF LIFE: The affirmation of God brings with it the supreme affirmation and protections of the dignity of each and every man and woman: “Do you not know that you are God’s temple?...God’s temple is holy, and you are that temple” (1 Cor 3:16-17). Here we find joined together the truth and dignity of God and the truth and dignity of man. *Pope Benedict XVI, homily at Mass at Church of Sagrada Familia, Nov.7, 1020*

(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.

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

Confirmation classes will resume on Jan.2 in the 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 in Dec. were rescheduled for Feb.2011. Candidate Sponsor session in English will be Sat., Feb.5, and session in Spanish will be Sat., Feb.19. Both sessions will meet 3:30-4:45 p.m.

For Confirmation info, you can also 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.

Middle Youth Group is BACK!! Now that the hall is ready, 7th & 8th graders from Holy Cross School and RE will be taking over the hall two Mondays a month! Join us for our highly anticipated 1st meeting on Mon., Jan.3, 7-8:15pm in the youth room (downstairs room by kitchen). What a wonderful way to break in the new year! Parents, we are looking for adult helpers, Contact Sandy asap if you would like to help with our first event on the 3rd!

Holy Cross High Schoolers ... "Regular" youth group meets Jan.5, Jan.19, & Jan.26, from 7:00-8:30pm. We meet in our renovated youth room (located where former youth room was, room next to the kitchen). 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!

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN CORNER

"Our Family, Our Future"

UPDATE:

Total Pledged: \$2,092,202

Total Received: \$1,690,948

THANK YOU SO MUCH for quickly responding to assist families for Christmas. Your kind donations of cash and gift cards allowed us to adopt eight families this year. They were so very grateful. **We also thank everyone for providing items for the 32 nursing home residents at Indian Meadows.** They were thrilled to receive their bright Christmas bags of goodies. May you have a blessed New Year and continue to assist those less fortunate.

The monthly meeting of the **ACT Bereavement Support group** will meet this Fri., Jan.7, following the 9:00 Mass. We will be meeting in the Fr.Lickteig Hall. If there are any questions, please call Kay Spaniol, 226-8745.

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, Greg Lamping, Ed Nease, Al Riling, Lindsay Ripley, Theresa Ryan, Bob Schmidt, Laurie Seger, and Ginny Shepard, Andrea Tumbleson, and Zaylee Foley Zahabi..

REST IN PEACE: Prayers are requested for **Joe Edmonds** of Holy Cross; and **Margaret Spaniol**, mother of John Spaniol.

Mass Intentions For The Week



Monday	9:00 a.m.	Eunice & Frank Addington
Tuesday	6:30 a.m.	Rosa Pham
	6:00 p.m.	Margaret Moses (Spanish)
Wednesday	9:00 a.m..	Nancy Hittner
Thursday	6:30 a.m.	Rheinhold Mike Falbe
	9:00 a.m.	Mary Staley (All School)
Friday	9:00 a.m.	Joseph Orrick
Saturday	7:30 a.m.	Larry Lawrence
	5:00 p.m.	Patricia Kreutzer
Sunday	7:30 a.m.	Spec.Int.-Ladies of Mother Teresa Circle
	9:00 a.m.	People of the Parish
	11:00 a.m.	Thomas Jaskot
	2:00 p.m.	Chuck Seger (Spanish)

With the start of youth group, our need for snacks and drinks returns. Thanks to all of our special donors who have provided us with snacks and drinks for our meetings at the school. We are glad to return to our youth room soon and so we can again take donations of snack items for our meetings. ALSO, we will be looking for clean couches in good condition for our meeting space. Please contact Sandy if you can fill one of these requests.

BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP will meet Tues., Jan.4, 9:30am in Room 1 at church. For more info call Mary Jo, 649-9257.

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

Personal Reflection for Renewal: Start the new year right by reflecting on the living, loving God in your life and experience His direction all year long. Join others who desire to enrich their lives in a practical, one-day prayer workshop presented by the Ignatian Spirituality Center of Kansas City. Begin to practice personal reflection, a foundation stone of Ignatian prayer. The workshop is Sat., Jan.29, 8:30am-2pm at the Finucane Center on the Rockhurst University campus. Cost is \$40 and scholarships are available. Reservations are required and deadline is Jan.24. To make your reservation, email info@ignatiancenterkc.org or call 816-523-5115 x 212 and leave a message.



Save the Date!

Men's Renewal Weekend:
March 19th-20th

Women's Renewal Weekend:
April 2nd-3rd

"A clean heart create for me, God; renew in me a steadfast spirit" Psalm 51:12

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

Pope John Paul 11 said fostering vocations is everyone's job. On the weekend of Jan.15-16 our parish will have the Call by Name program. This affords all of us the opportunity to identify those in our parish who we feel possess the characteristics necessary to become a Priest of consecrated Religious. Please be thinking of members who possess the qualities of commitment to God and church, concern for others, and a desire to serve. We pray that you will take part in Call by Name.

School News

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 oficina
 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.

Hoy domingo 2 de Enero, 2011, celebramos **La Epifanía del Señor.**

La Sagrada Familia es el modelo perfecto de nuestros tiempos. En tiempos 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, 1/4, 6:00 p.m.: Margaret Moses
 Domingo, 1/9, 2:00 p.m.: Chuck Seger

BAUTIZOS EN ENERO: Serán el sábado 15, 11:00am. y el domingo 16 de Enero, 2:00p.m..

CLASES PRE-BAUTISMALES: Debido a que el primer sábado de Enero cae un día de fiesta, **este mes las clases han sido cambiadas para el segundo sábado, 8 de Enero, 2011, 10:00a.m.-12:00p.m.** Las clases se darán en el salón del sótano de la iglesia. Padres y padrinos deberán inscribirse antes de venir a la clase. Lleguen 15 minutos antes para firmar un registro. **NO** habrá cuidado de niños. Si no están inscritos todavía, favor de llamar a la oficina de la iglesia, durante horas en español, 381-2755.

LECTURAS Y PREGUNTAS PARA COMPARTIR LA FE EL PRÓXIMO DOMINGO **Enero 9, 2011 - El Bautismo del Señor:**

Isaías 42:1-4, 6-7; Hechos 10:34-38; Mateo 3:13-17.

Preguntas semanales de Adultos para Compartir la Fe: ¿Qué marcó el principio de su vida adulto? ¿Qué creen ustedes sea el propósito que Dios tiene para ustedes en este tiempo de sus vidas?

Preguntas para los Niños: ¿Qué saben ustedes sobre sus bautizos? Pregúntenle a sus padres.

EDUCACIÓN RELIGIOSA: La 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.

VOCACIONES: El Papa Juan Pablo II dijo, “Las vocaciones religiosas son responsabilidad de todos nosotros”. En Enero 15 y 16, nuestra parroquia tendrá el programa “**LLAMADO POR SU NOMBRE**”. Esta es una oportunidad para que cada uno de nosotros “identifique” personas con las características necesarias para ser un buen Sacerdote, o vida consagrada y religiosa para servir a Dios y su Iglesia. Oramos porque ustedes tomen parte en este importante programa.

RETIRO DE QUINCEAÑERA: Este importante Retiro para todas las futuras Quinceañeras será celebrado el próximo Enero 22 y 23, 2011, de 8:30a.m.-4:40p.m., en las Oficinas del Ministerio Hispano, 2215 Parallel Ave., KCKS 66104. El costo es \$20/por niña, por los dos días. Para más información y para inscribirse, favor de llamar al 913/281-6644, ó a la oficina de la iglesia, 913/381-2755, durante las horas en español-

RETIRO DE CONVALIDACIÓN: Este Retiro es para parejas interesadas en casarse por la iglesia. Este Retiro dura 2 días, el 26 y 27 de Febrero, 2011, de 8:30a.m.-4:30p.m. Será en las Oficinas del Ministerio Hispano, 2216 Parallel Ave., KCKS 66104. Costo \$40/por pareja. **NO habrá cuidado de niños.** Para inscribirse, llamen al 913/281-6644.

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.

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.

SCHOOL OF FAITH presents *Free* First Thursdays, Johnson County's own Catholic Night Out, Jan.6th, 7-8pm: **God's Plan for a Balanced Life:** Get a jump start on the New Year! Embrace your call to holiness. Develop a spiritual routine. Challenge your body and your mind. *One Night each month, Sept.-May, One Hot Topic, One Central location, No Registration, No Admission, Free-Will Offering, All Are Welcome!* **Holy Spirit Church, 11300 W. 103rd, Overland Park, KS 66214** Questions? Call School of Faith, 913-310-0014.

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.

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 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.

"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.

WHAT'S NEW FOR CHRIS: We at Holy Cross followed 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.