# First Friday Club of Chicago

# Come Join Us! And Bite into Something

More than Lunch

www.firstfridayclubchicago.org

**FALL 2015** Archbishop Blasé Cupich May 2015 Lunch -Main Lounge of The Union League Club



First Friday
Club of
Chicago

August, 2015

Richard Beddome President

Dear Members and Friends of the First Friday Club of Chicago,

We hope you were able to join us as we concluded our 29th year with Archbishop Cupich May 2015. His insights and stories challenged and inspired us to do more with our gifts and blessings. Although it is great to reflect on the successes of the past the question is, "What can we look forward to in the upcoming 2015-2016 season?"

We have a great line-up of speakers ready to engage you in the issues of the day for the 30th season of First Friday Club of Chicago luncheons.

Leading off our schedule on Friday, October 2nd is well known Television Newsman and Author **David Gregory** (NBC's Meet the Press). His topic may surprise you. Please don't miss it. Also, mark your calendars for Friday, November 6th, when we welcome Cook County Sheriff **Tom Dart.** His speech could not be more relevant and topical. Concluding our calendar year on Friday, December 4th is our own could not be more relevant and Chaplain Father **John Cusick**. That's just a taste of what we have to offer you and there's much more to come in 2016.

If you have been a long-time member of the First Friday Club community, I thank you for your past and continued support. The Club doesn't exist without you. I am also asking you to join, as renewing members or as a first-time member. Your membership is what keeps the club strong and vibrant. Your support allows us to bring you some of the most interesting and relevant thinkers, commentators, theologians, business leaders, and politicians from the Chicago area and from around the nation.

If you are currently a Member, please consider moving up to a higher level. I ask you to upgrade your membership by becoming a Patron, Supporter, Benefactor or Sponsor. Your First Friday Club would not be able to provide the quality of programs or speakers without your continued support. If you have any suggestions to help improve the luncheons or have an idea for a future speaker, please let us hear from you.

Finally, let me ask you to do me a favor. Most of our members started out as a luncheon guest. Many of these guests found something fulfilling in our luncheons and decided to become valued members. Will you consider asking a colleague, friend or acquaintance to join you at your table each month? Thanks.

I look forward to seeing you and your guests on Friday, October 2nd.

Sincerely

Richard Beddome

President

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# A Conversation with the Founder and Chaplain of the First Friday Club of Chicago, Fr. John Cusick

by First Friday Club Board Member and Past President Dr. Charlie Menghini



Fr. John C. Cusick, Chaplain

**CM:** The First Friday Club of Chicago begins its 30th year this October. Where did you come up with the idea to begin the First Friday Club?

JC: Father Nelson Callahan who was chaplain of the First Friday Club of Cleveland invited me to come and speak. Their First Friday club met on the Thursday before the first Friday. This tradition for First Friday devotions began in ancient Catholic history, so the Cleveland club held their gatherings on the Thursday before the First Friday as a reminder to go to Mass and Communion and perform your nine first Fridays.

I was privileged to have been asked to speak, and at that time I had an idea that I would be moving downtown to begin my work with the young adult ministry for the diocese and living at Old St. Pat's with Jack Wall. Then it hit me that we should do this in Chicago, as it could be a great forum for adult education.

I was ordained in 1970 and through the 70's there were a lot of parishes doing adult formation; adult education, evening speaker series, etc. But they began to diminish rapidly. So I said, "Why don't we gather people from where they work and not just where they live?" I was also noticing a trend that people were working longer hours and not necessarily consistent hours. Many people didn't want to come out after a long workday, and with the increasing number of single parents, well, they needed to be home

with their kids because they have been at work all day – or in many cases both parents were working all day. So we just cranked up the First Friday Club of Chicago. We gathered some people together, spent a number of months shaping and forming it, Bill Raleigh was elected first president of the First Friday Club and we were off and running in June of 1986 with Cardinal Bernardin as our first speaker and it has been going ever since.

**CM:** So why did you ask Cardinal Bernardin to the first speaker?

**JC:** What I was trying to do was to give it some "spiritual blessing;" that this organization is legitimate. I knew we needed someone who was an all-star, so to invite the Cardinal and Archbishop of Chicago to speak at the inaugural luncheon of a new organization sort of defined what it is. And it seemed to work out.

**CM:** Over the years, speakers such as Cardinal Bernardin, Fr. Andrew Greeley, Cardinal Francis George and most recently Archbishop Cupich have had incredibly large audiences. Why is that?

**JC:** I think people are responding to a need and responding to popularity. The thing is that Catholicism in Chicago is a big deal. This is a very Catholic town. That is not meant to put our foot on the forehead of any other religion,

but that is just the given. I remember when Cardinal George mentioned when he went to receive the pallium, which is a sign of office, when he was the Archbishop of Portland, Oregon he could barely find anybody to go (to Rome) with him. When the same event came up after he arrived in Chicago, he had 200 people and five television stations follow



Chris Kennedy

# **A Conversation with the Founder** *Continued*

him to the Vatican. So Catholicism in Chicago is a big deal. But we have others who have drawn extremely well, but often times they are your high profile people. I thought Chris Kennedy drew a big crowd and gave a tremendous talk on taking care of the hunger problems in Chicago and the list goes on and on. We have been very, very lucky. Mayor Daley, he always drew very well.

But I always think, very ironically, that if we want to talk about numbers, the speakers where we have not had the largest numbers in attendance may have given the better talks. I still remember John David Mooney, an internationally acclaimed artist, talking about art and spirituality, and

Rich Gannotta,
President of Northwestern Hospital.
He just gave an amazing talk and people walked out marveling at it.
The list goes on and on of people (speakers) who didn't have the highest profile that gave amazing presentations.



Former FFCC speaker, artist, and friend John David Mooney with FFCC former President and current board member Catherine Brokenshire.

**CM:** After I became acquainted with you and the First Friday Club, I learned that Terry Anderson, the American Journalist who had been held captive in Lebanon spoke. Do you remember it?

**JC:** I can recall the whole thing. In fact, there is a quote (*see inset box*) from his talk that I have used around the country in my talks to parish missions.

Originally, Father Marty Jenco, another hostage, agreed to talk to the First Friday Club. He came down with pancreatic cancer and he was fading rapidly. So he called me one day and said, "John, I just can't do it. I don't have the strength anymore. Would you mind if I got Terry Anderson?" And I said, "Marty, mind? Dear God!"

Anderson was held for over seven years in Lebanon and during his time as a hostage had regained his Catholic faith through Fr. Jenco, while they were chained together on a wall. When finally released, Terry was asked who he

# A Practical Strategy of Our Christian Faith

"I said, when I came home, I am a Christian. I am required to forgive. It's part of the contract - very clear. And I am determined to do that. It is not just my duty. It is very practical.

I have a wonderful life. I have a family around me that loves me. I enjoy every day. I do things that I think are worthwhile and interesting. If I still hated them, if I was still angry at what happened, it wouldn't harm them a single bit. But it would certainly throw away my second life. And that would be a very silly thing to do. I'm not going to do that.

My wife said some time ago, wise woman that she is, 'if we held on to the hate, then we couldn't have the love that we do.' And I think that's very true. It is not easy. It is not a simple thing. There isn't much in that book (Bible) that's simple and easy, is there? But we work on it everyday. And we do it.

And we will not hate.

And we will not be bitter.

And we will not be angry.

We won't forget. Those things happened. They are in our heads. They won't go away. But among all the bad things that happened, there are some good things, too, out of that seven years. We know ourselves about as well as we can. We know so much about each other.



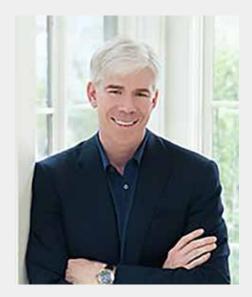
Terry Anderson

Madeleine and I have tested our love and our faith about as far as it can be tested. And it is stronger. Those are the things we can take and keep and hold onto and use. And the other stuff, the bad stuff, it's there. But we don't have to hold on to it. We can let it go. We have to."

Mr. Terry Anderson Former American Hostage in Lebanon for 71/2 years January 5, 1996 Presentation to the First Friday Club of Chicago

# Our 30th Season Begins October 2, 2015

# "How is Your Faith: An Unlikely Spiritual Journey" David Gregory, NBC newsman and Meet the Press moderator



**David Gregory** 

Join former NBC newsman and Meet the Press moderator David Gregory as he discusses his probing various religious traditions to better understand his own faith and answer life's most important questions: who do we want to be and what do we believe? While David was covering the White House, he had the unusual experience of being asked by President George W. Bush "How's your faith?" David's answer was just emerging. Raised by a Catholic mother and a Jewish dad, he had a strong sense of Jewish cultural and ethnic identity, but no real belief—until his marriage to a Protestant woman of strong faith inspired him to explore his spirituality for himself and his growing family.

David's journey has taken him inside Christian mega-churches and into the heart of Orthodox Judaism. He's gone deep into Bible study and asked tough questions of America's most thoughtful religious leaders, including evangelical preacher Joel Osteen and Cardinal Timothy Dolan, the Catholic Archbishop of New York. It has brought him back to his childhood, where belief in God might have helped him through his mother's struggle with alcoholism, and through

a difficult period of public scrutiny and his departure from NBC News, which saw his faith tested like never before.

David approaches his faith with the curiosity and dedication you would expect from a journalist accustomed to holding politicians and Presidents accountable. But he also comes as a seeker, one just discovering why spiritual journeys are always worthwhile.

David Gregory's appearance is being made possible by the Author's Group of the Union League Club of Chicago. Attendees at the luncheon will be both Union League Club and First Friday Club members. With this arrangement, seating will be limited and preference will be given to FFCC members who have paid their dues for the 2015-2016 season. Non-member and guest reservations will be placed on a waiting list and they will be notified should space be available.

# Friday, November 6, 2015

# "Sheriff or Therapist? The Man Who Runs America's Largest Mental Healthcare Provider" *Thomas J. Dart*, Sheriff Cook County

As Cook County Sheriff, Tom Dart brings an aggressive and innovative approach to law enforcement. Dart has a long history of protecting the most vulnerable members of our society.

Recognizing the desperate need for reform in corrections, correction facilities, and in the mental healthcare system, Dart has become an outspoken advocate for the mentally ill population housed in Chicago's Cook County Jail. Dart will speak about his efforts to help inmates with mental disorders in light of steep budget cuts.

Time magazine, in 2009, named Sherriff Dart one of the 100 Most Influential People in the World in honor of groundbreaking efforts.



Thomas J Dart

# **New Member Interview**

by Terrill L. Stumpf, PhD, MDiv and Board Member of First Friday Club of Chicago



**David Dault,** Executive Director, Chicago Sunday Evening Club and Member of First Friday Club of Chicago

David Dault has been attending the First Friday Club of Chicago since 2013. What drew him in? David was attracted to the aim of FFCC, that of making connection between one's work, faith, values, and issues that impact our lives on a daily basis. He enjoys the variety of perspectives that our monthly speakers bring to the forefront. He said, "You know, some speakers have an impactful message and convey that with great passion. Not all speakers hit the mark." What keeps him coming back? David thrives on getting to know the participants at his table, sharing stories, hearing issues, and the connections that develop community. David made the decision to support FFCC's work and programs by becoming a member, attending the luncheons on a regular basis, and periodically serving as a table captain. "I am so thankful for the First Friday Club-the community and inspiration I gain from the speakers. Thank you for the work you do."

David moved to Chicago in 2013 from Memphis, TN where he was on the faculty at the Christian Brothers University in the Department of Religion. One of CSEC successful accomplishments is the recent CSEC documentary which premiered on PBS in May 2015, "Violence in Chicago: Responding with Faith." It confronted violence across Chicago and presented what faith communities are doing and also illustrated what faith communities can do to make a difference for good in Chicago

You can become a Table Captain by Contacting the Administrator at 312-466-9610

# First Friday Club of Chicago Mission

The mission of the First Friday Club of Chicago is to provide a forum for men and women to make connections between work, faith, values and issues that affect their daily lives.

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Board Members (above): Chuck Murphy, Richard Beddome, Nicholas Gibson, Paul Gillespie, Catherine Brokenshire, Fr. John Cusick, Rose Ann Anschuetz, Judy Josephs and Mary Jo Graf. Not pictured: Rick Danaher, Charlie Menghini and Terry Stumpf



President Richard Beddome, Past President Paul Gillespie and Administrator Wanda Menghini

# A Conversation with the Founder Continued

wanted to greet his airplane when he arrived in Ramstein, and he said, "I want my priest, Fr. Jenco." Terry came and gave a tremendous presentation. I picked him up at the airport and we got him a room at the Palmer House where he could change and smoke all the cigarettes he needed. He gave an incredible talk and I took him back to the airport. He influenced a whole lot of people on the power of forgiveness. We were very lucky to be graced by his presence and message.

**CM:** Who are some of other speakers who had a real wow factor?

JC: Scott Turow. He had written a book the year before titled *Ordinary Heroes* and the book, a novel, was really about his father who was a physician and his father's work in World War II. So when he came to talk I asked him if he would talk about ordinary heroes in his own life. What I was looking for was the human story and not the novel.



Scott Turow

He chose his grandfather who basically, was an enormous influence in his life, maybe even greater than his own father, but that might be true for all of us. He wowed me and left me with the powerful impact of the significance and influence of human relationships in our lives. I didn't know what to expect and it was amazing.

**CM:** At the end of each speech, why do you get up and head to the back of the room?

**JC:** I am always back there for two reasons. Number one is to say "thanks" because I truly appreciate that the people there have given us an hour and a half of their day and I am thankful for that. I believe hospitality and gratitude are significant virtues in any business we do.

The second thing is to listen to feedback. I listen for one-liners. I like the spontaneous feedback we get on speakers and topics or suggestions for the future. It all happens in the shake of a hand or a passing glance as people head to the elevator.

**CM:** What inspires you?

**JC:** I have always believed what you see is not necessarily what you get. I always believed there is something more. I believe that is the spiritual journey of life. Recently,

Pope Francis wrote an Encyclical Letter. Media started to ask public officials and public office holders about it. The thoughts were that religion was there to help us be a better person. But that was only half the loaf. The other half is how do we as a better person make a contribution to building a better world? I have always been caught up in that. What can I do personally, and how can I call people, because of the platform I have as a Catholic priest, to also live for other people? I think that is absolutely significant. So, I am inspired by that.

I'm a kid of the 60's, I was in my second year of college when John Kennedy was killed. I was enormously impacted by his presidency. I was enormously impacted a few years later when the Catholic Church was involved in the second Vatican council. It was a call to bring the church into the world and not wall up the church from the world. And that has been the sense of mission I have incorporated in my life ever since.

**CM:** What does a speaker need to bring in order to be asked to speak to the First Friday Club?

**JC:** It has to somehow respond to the purpose of the club. A person to come up to the microphone and essentially say what they do, who they are, and speak about their faith and values and the daily experiences of life that are going on today. That is the only litmus test. There are names of great people mentioned, but we are not running the Civic Club of Chicago we are running the First Friday Club of



Fr. John C. Cusick

continued on next page

# A Conversation with the Founder Continued

Chicago. Our speakers have to be grounded in some way, even in secular language, with the faith and values of the time. I think that is very, very important. Sometimes you have difficulty finding that in what they have to say, but I don't think it is that far below the surface.

**CM:** Do you remember the speaker who let it be known at the table before he was going to speak that he was giving the same speech that he had given a few times prior?

**JC:** Yes, I do. It was a canned speech. But during lunch he and I had a conversation about the club and at the last minute decided to wing it and he gave a powerful talk. It was powerful for us to hear and it was powerful for him to give.

We don't want somebody who pulls talk two from file drawer A to give the same talk to the First Friday Club that they would to the Architect Society of Chicago. I want (the speaker) to push it down where it is a lot more personal. That is important for me.

**CM:** Once a speaker is invited and accepted, there is a short period of time to establish a level of trust with them. Will you comment on that?

**JC:** We have to let them know they will be in a safe and welcoming environment and to know what the environment is. We need to let them know what the temperature of the pool is before we ask them to jump in.

When we had Ron Magers talking about the question of there being any ethics in the news, he spoke directly to that. Carol Marin did the same thing. You don't expect that from journalists.

When we had Justice Mary Ann McMorrow, the first female Supreme Court Justice in the history of the State of Illinois, the room was filled with a lot of lawyers and judges. She talked about her faith life and her prayer life. People out of the world of law were just stunned. They didn't expect that kind of thing from Mary Ann. I was privileged to know her personally. May she rest in peace. She was a deeply committed, faithful person and that is how she chose the topic, because she knew a little bit about the First Friday Club of Chicago. So those are the things I am looking for in people. I want to know what makes people tick.

I go back to a time when I was invited to give the commencement speech at your college, VanderCook College of Music and I said, "Charlie, I don't know a thing about music." And you said, "That's not why I asked you." And I was told, "I just want you to fire up these kids and tell them to go out there and do something significant with their lives." And that's all I want out of any human being. I have been blessed to know and have been in the company of what the world would say are significant and public people. I don't care about status. I am not a hanger on to that kind of stuff. But what I want to know, if I ever get the chance, is if I can get on the inside to ask, "What is the ethic by which you live? What contribution does your gift and skill that you have honed over the years make to the world?" Those are the things that are important to me.

**CM:** As we look to this, the 30th anniversary of the First Friday Club, let's imagine you meet a stranger who asks you about the First Friday Club. What would be your elevator speech? What would you tell them?

**JC:** Come and see! Then I'd ask them if they know of another place they can go in downtown Chicago where somebody is going to talk about faith and values and how it influences their life, our lives, and the world in which we live. If you can do that, go to it. I just don't see that it is happening and I think there is a deep value in doing so.

That is the essence of the First Friday Club of Chicago. We gather again to accomplish it on October 2, 2015 when we welcome David Gregory, formerly of NBC News and moderator of Meet the Press.

Come and see!



Fr. John Cusick with guests David Kovacs and Patty Marfise-Patt

# 2014-2015: A Look Back at our 29th Season

THANK YOU for making the 29th Season of the First Friday Club of Chicago very special!

Highlights from the past season include:

October Dar

**Dan McGrath, President, Leo High School** kicked off our season declaring, "Our best days are ahead of us!" He spoke of recognizing the unique potential in each person, and as a case in point, brought several outstanding student-scholar-athletes from Leo to the luncheon. With a great sense of compassion, Dan shared the encouraging example of current Leo students who have supported each other against incredible challenges, showing each of us a path to a closer walk with Christ.

**November** 

Nancy Hughes Moyer, President and CEO of Volunteers of America, addressed the topic, "American Military Veterans-From the Privilege of Serving to the Struggle of Surviving," and shared the largely unseen part of the story of life facing our Veterans after they return home. Nancy imparted a sense of awareness, greater understanding, appreciation and empathy for our Veterans.

**December** 

Speaking with a sense of warmth and wonder, **Barbara Mahaney** - Writer, Poet, Storyteller - invited each of us to embrace the present time more deeply. "To be sacramental is to lift even the most ordinary moments into Holiness…Look to Jesus…December is God whispering, "Please. Come. Closer."

**January** 

As 2015 began, our speaker, **Greg Hinz, Political and Government Columnist for Crain's Chicago Business,** named many of the challenges facing city, county, state and national government from underfunded budgets, potential cuts to needed services, increased taxes and a city of "haves" and "have nots" - urging us all the while to pay attention and stay involved.

**February** 

**John Bucksbaum, CEO of Bucksbaum Retail Properties** and former Chairman of General Growth Properties, shared a personal story of the impact of the 2008 economic downturn that affected not only his firm and colleagues, but also, at great cost - him and his family. Yet, remaining faithful, he turned to his Rabbi and to God, continuing to give his best effort though the future was uncertain. John encouraged each of us to "get in touch" with someone we might sense is undergoing a difficult time. His message of caring for others and faithfulness in God is timeless - and very important today.

March

On the eve of the 50th Anniversary of the Selma to Montgomery March, **Rev. Dr. Martin Marty** - minister, author, educator and marcher - urged us, as Christians, to be aware of the culture we inhabit, to understand it. Rather than hold ourselves aloof or apart from society, Dr. Marty encouraged us, in the words of the prophet Jeremiah, to "seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare." Today, these words are as true as ever.

April

**Richard Gannotta, DHA, FACHE, President, Northwestern Memorial Hospital** encouraged each of us to live more mindfully, in both our family and our work - by identifying the situation at hand, by focusing on something in our environment at a deeper level of detail and being aware of our breathing-and entering a more effective level of focus. "Don't settle for a life that you're living on autopilot. Mindfully own the moments you live."

May

**Archbishop Blasé J. Cupich,** leader of the Archdiocese of Chicago shared "The State of the Archdiocese." First Friday Club members and guests had a special opportunity to hear the Archbishop as he addressed issues confronting the Archdiocese of Chicago. He encouraged a lively question/answer session responding to questions asked on a very wide variety of topics.

And with the May 1st luncheon, the First Friday Club of Chicago completed 29 seasons of exceptional speakers who have addressed faith, work and issues of the day.

See you on October 2, 2015 for the start of our 30th Season!

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\*Denotes New Members

Membership List as of August 6, 2015.



Archbishop Blasé Cupich with Ethel and Paul Gillespie



President Richard Beddome with Dennis and Karen Johnson

# May We Quote You?

At every first Friday lunch, there is a blue folder in the middle of each table. The folder has a copy of the annual report, the past speaker list, bullet points page about FFCC, membership information, etc. It also has a "May we quote you?" card. Everyone is encouraged to comment to the board of directors about the speakers and the club. These are a few comments made at the May lunch.

"I have been a member from the start so what is there to say but I have enjoyed every single minute of it and plan to continue in the future."

Therese Glatzhofer

"I was able to make only 2 to 3 of the luncheons. My favorite was clearly Archbishop Blasé Cupich. He is a very forceful, honest and dynamic leader. I think the Archdiocese will be well served with him as its head. I hope to be able to attend 4 to 5 luncheons next year."

Theodore Nebel

"I believe that I attended all luncheons except one when I was out of town. The two highlights for me were Archbishop Cupich and Martin Marty." Peggy Sullivan



711 West Monroe Street Chicago, IL 60661-3519

Register Online at: www.firstfridayclubchicago.org

# **Save These Dates for Our 2015-2016 Luncheons**

Friday, October 2, 2015



**David Gregory**NBC newsman and Meet the
Press moderator

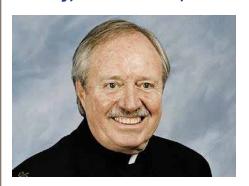
"How is Your Faith: An Unlikely Spiritual Journey" Friday, November 6, 2015



Tom Dart
Sheriff of Cook County, IL

"Sheriff or Therapist?
The Man Who Runs
America's Largest Mental
Healthcare Provider"

Friday, December 4, 2015



Rev. Fr. John Cusick Chaplain and Founder of the First Friday Club of Chicago "A Retrospective:

"A Retrospective: 30 Years of Something More Than Lunch"

# Speakers to be Announced for the Following Dates

Friday, January 8, 2016 (Second Friday)

Friday, February 5, 2016 Friday, March 4, 2016 Friday, April 1, 2016 Friday, May 6, 2016

## COME JOIN US AND BITE INTO SOMETHING MORE THAN LUNCH

Every first Friday of the month, October through May, from noon to 1:15 enjoy lunch at The Union League Club (65 West Jackson Blvd.)



312-466-9610 • ffcc@firstfridayclubchicago.org • www.firstfridayclubchicago.org