

St. Patrick Parish IN FOCUS

www.stpaturbana.org

April 2024

Dying and Rising

When we ponder the dying and rising of Jesus, we see the tremendous love that God has for us. Jesus came to live among us because he wants to be part of our lives in the most direct way possible. He came so that we could experience his

love and model our ways of living on his ways. He came knowing that he would sometimes meet indifference, sometimes even cruelty. He came

respecting the freedom that he gave us, to love him or reject him. And his rising from the dead shows that God will never, never, be overcome by indifference, or cruelty, or rejection. He will always love us, and there will always be a way for us to grow closer to him.

Some of us will die surrounded by people who love us, tend to our physical needs, pray for us, and support us in faith. Some of us will die alone and unnoticed. Some will even die in violence, fear, and cruelty. But we can look to Jesus and know that God's love can never be defeated, can never be drowned out, can never be lost. Jesus will always be close at hand. This



doesn't necessarily mean that we will see him or hear his voice, but he is with us nonetheless.

These truths are mirrored throughout our lives, not only at the end. Many smaller losses that we encounter show us what the love of God can look like and teach us to trust in his help.

Some losses are mostly beyond our control. The death of someone we love and rely on, the loss of security from losing a job, the loss of abilities due to illness or age, the loss of consolation in prayer, the loss of peace in our family or community. All these losses are largely unavoidable, and we meet them over and over during our lives. God doesn't always protect us from them, but he is there with us. If we seek God's help, it will be there. If we seek his forgiveness for anything we have done to make the problem worse, he will forgive. If we seek his guidance, he will be there. This doesn't always mean that we will experience his closeness, forgiveness, or guidance. It doesn't always mean that the grief and pain will go away. But he will be with us, and he will bring goodness out of the situation.

See **Dying** on p. 5

Is the Spirit calling you to serve in Pastoral Care?

To someone homebound, residing in an assisted-living facility, or hospitalized and unable to come to church, receiving the Eucharist and maintaining connections with the parish community brings both joy and consolation. St. Patrick's Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (EMHCs) are trained in compassionate pastoral care. This corporal work of mercy is a very rewarding experience for both our EMHCs and our pastoral communicant family.



Here are thoughts from three of our Pastoral EMHCs:

From Beth and Judi, Pastoral EMHCs for the homebound and senior residences: We are humbled each time we offer the Eucharist to each of our homebound and senior

See **Pastoral Care** on p. 5

Students' takeaway from the March for Life

A group of about 50 students and chaperones from the High School of St. Thomas More made the



5-day pilgrimage to Washington D.C. in January for the annual March for Life. They slept on gym floors, took cold showers, and braved the snowy conditions. It was a powerful trip filled with joy and hope for all.

Following are some thoughts from students on the trip:



From Elaina S: I heard lots of talks from people who have been impacted by abortion. I was so grateful to the people who shared their stories, because the March for Life really made me think more deeply about the whole abortion issue. These brave speakers inspired me to realize that women are so much stronger than abortion tells them they are. What a pregnant woman needs to hear is not “You can’t do this; you need to have an abortion” but “You can do this. and I will walk with you.” On

this March for Life trip, I began to be pro-life, not because that’s how I grew up, but because I really believe that abortion is not the right choice for anyone involved.

From Hope P: The day of the March was nothing short of incredible. Seeing the thousands upon thousands of people gathered in our nation’s capital to protest a grave injustice was life-changing. I have always known that there are other pro-lifers out there, but seeing such an overwhelming number of them in one place gave me so much joy and hope!

From Brooke M: One of the biggest “God moments” for me was the wreath-laying ceremony. We had the privilege of laying a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown, and it was incredible to be a part of it. Seeing that our country has soldiers constantly protecting the tomb gives me hope for the future, when we will be protecting *all* humans, even in the womb.

From Gabe Y: I have found that it is easy in our culture to feel alone by standing strong in many of our beliefs, but this trip has helped reinforce the fact that I do *not* stand alone. This trip has reminded me that we must be compassionate. I also know that being compassionate does not mean changing what I know to be true in order to fit in, which generally appears to be the easier option. I have always been pro-life. This trip has strengthened my resolve to be a witness to the pro-life movement and to support both mothers and the unborn.

See **March for Life** on p. 5



Q: Lately I seem to get a handful of letters every day pleading for donations for a worthy cause, and many of them enclose a “gift” that often is something that might cost a pretty penny. Am I obligated to send money for these gifts even though I haven’t asked for them?

A: No, of course not. You needn’t send any money for their worthy cause either – the “gift” is just intended to encourage you to make a donation.

But when tempted to feel aggravated or regretting the use of donations to cover the cost of letters and enclosures, you just might take a moment to thank God for the fact that there are so many groups trying to care for people in need. You could also try to determine which ones are operating with a reasonably low overhead, using donations for their worthy cause rather than for other purposes. You can get this information from a variety of sources, one of which is <https://www.guidestar.org/>.

Parish Council News



At the Council’s February meeting Carl Nelson reported that photos of about 600 parishioners had been taken during the two-week photo sessions.

Anyone who missed these sessions may still submit photos for inclusion in the parish photo directory. Parish ministry groups will also have to submit their own photos. These should be submitted to Mary Tate (mary.tate.stpaturbana.org).

In a discussion of *The Four Ways Forward*, led by Fr. Anthony, members agreed that of the four methods of evangelization described, hospitality is our parish’s current strength, with parishioners who can train others in hospitality. One step forward: members to check in with ministry groups. It was also suggested that Council members meditate on hospitality at a future meeting.

Catching up:

Bishop Louis Tylka selected the book *The Four Ways Forward: Becoming an Apostolic Parish in a Post-Christian World*, by Susan Windley-Daoust, to be given to all diocesan priests to encourage evangelization.

In August 2023, Fr. Anthony gave copies of the book to members of the Parish Council. The author basically argues that the world is becoming less

Christian and suggests four ways for parishes to respond. In November Fr. Anthony asked Council members to submit questions about the book’s four basic methods: healing, hospitality, small groups, and organization.

Council members began discussing the book at their January meeting.

A little bit of New Orleans!

This year St. Patrick’s had the Lenten equivalent of a total eclipse: Ash Wednesday fell on St. Valentine’s Day! Something special seemed to be called for, so on the day before Ash Wednesday, commonly called Fat Tuesday, a Mardi Gras/St. Valentine Luncheon followed the 12:10 Mass.



Many hands made the event a success. Our staff members prepared St. Brigid Hall with theme-inspired decorations. There was an amazing assortment of food



provided by staff and parishioners: freshly made beignets, homemade chicken soup, seafood gumbo, vegetable trays, assorted breads, salad, red velvet cake parfaits, Valentine cookies, chocolate-cinnamon banana bread, and probably even more. Beautifully garnished mock cocktails further helped to transport everyone mentally to a Fat Tuesday celebration in New Orleans.

About 28 parishioners enjoyed the food and atmosphere while getting to know each other a little better. The “After-Mass Luncheons” may resume soon after Easter – keep your eyes and ears open!

Honoring Our Past – Building Our Future: **BOOK OF GRATITUDE**

We know that all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. (Romans 8:28)

In 1901, forty-two families came together to establish Saint Patrick Catholic Church at the corner of Main Street and Busey Avenue in Urbana. Through their faith, hope, and love they created a rock-solid foundation for our parish. One hundred years later, following the parish centennial, the people of St. Patrick turned their eyes toward the parish's second century and decided that it was their turn to build for the future. Their focus was on how the parish could best meet the spiritual needs of the community. One central priority emerged – the need to expand and enhance the parish's worship space, preserving the sacredness of our existing church.

The *Honoring Our Past – Building Our Future* Book of Gratitude (now on display in the gathering space) tells the story of how the St. Patrick faith community answered the call to better serve the spiritual needs of parishioners by investing in the major church renovation and expansion that was completed in 2015.

It was thirteen years ago, in February 2011, that the parish launched the *Honoring Our Past – Building Our Future* campaign to raise funds for the church expansion. Four years later, construction began on March 2, 2015 and within nine months the building project was completed. On December 9, 2015, parishioners joyfully gathered together in their beautifully redesigned worship space to celebrate the Rededication of Saint Patrick Catholic Church.

The total cost for St. Patrick's church expansion was \$6.0 million – \$5.8 million in construction costs, plus \$200,000 in campaign related expenses. Over a ten-year period, through the *Honoring Our Past - Building Our Future* campaign, the parish successfully raised \$6 million. In September 2021, the parish marked the completion of the campaign and the paying off of the building debt.

By now, some might take for granted the significant changes and improvements that were made through the church expansion project: the increased seating capacity (from 300 to 600); the new, accessible choir area and new digital organ system; the new family room in the church, for parents with young children; the new Gathering Space connecting the church and parish center; the new entry plaza; the new lower level with meeting and event space; and overall, improved accessibility. And remarkably, with all these changes, we were able to preserve the sacredness, beauty, and architectural style of the original church.

Parishioners and friends enthusiastically joined together in prayer and sacrificial giving to make all of this possible. Nearly 900 donors contributed to the *Honoring Our Past – Building Our Future* campaign. And many parishioners generously offered their time and talent by serving on a multitude of committees. Their leadership and service were instrumental to the success of both the capital campaign and the building project.

The Book of Gratitude honors all those who shared their time, talent, and treasure to make the dream of an expanded church a reality. It includes the names of

parishioners and friends who made gifts to the campaign and also the names of those who served on leadership committees and in other volunteer groups.

Through a deep-seated belief in their Catholic faith, personal sacrifice, and hard work, the first St. Patrick parishioners built a church that has been a spiritual home for many generations. Inspired by this rock-solid foundation, the St. Patrick parishioners of today have carried forward that same vision for generations to come.



Since the Book of Gratitude went on display last December, a number of parishioners have expressed interest in getting their own edition of this commemorative book. For those who would like to purchase a copy of the book, order forms are available in the Gathering Space and the Parish Office. The cost of the book is \$25. **The deadline for orders is June 1, 2024.**

Dying

from p. 1

Some of our losses are more voluntary. Sometimes this feels like “dying to self.” We might choose to speak the truth when it involves risk to a valued friendship or our reputation. We might choose not to speak or act in anger when someone has hurt us. We might choose to help someone, maybe even someone we don’t like very much, even though doing so costs us time, energy, money, or the respect of others. We might face up to a difficult situation with another person. God will always be with us, with his help, with his forgiveness, with his guidance. This doesn’t mean that every situation will be resolved the way we expect, but he will be with us, and he will bring goodness out of the situation.

As we become accustomed to seeking and relying on God’s closeness and aid in smaller, sometimes voluntary losses, we grow in our trust in God. As we deal with more difficult situations, we learn to trust even when God seems far away and his help isn’t apparent to us. And then we can look to the dying and rising of Jesus. We will see in it the promise of God’s closeness and the unshakeable depth of God’s love. We will see its pattern in our own lives.

Pastoral Care

from p. 1

resident communicants. They have given us so much joy – yet we are the ones who should be the support. We also pray for residents in nursing homes that we don’t serve. We hope there is someone special for each of them.

From Linda, Pastoral EMHC for Carle Hospital patients: We visit all patients who indicate that they are of the Catholic faith. We see patients in various stages of illness, injuries, or having just had a baby. Some would like to receive Communion, and sometimes visiting family members or friends want to receive Communion as well. Those who cannot receive Communion may ask us to pray with them or talk with them for a few minutes. Some are just scared and happy that we have come to see them. Some feel alone, and we help to remind them that Jesus is with all of us and hears us always – he is within our hearts and we just need to talk to him. Our presence, prayers, and giving of the Blessed Sacrament help to put them at ease, even if it is only for a short period of time.

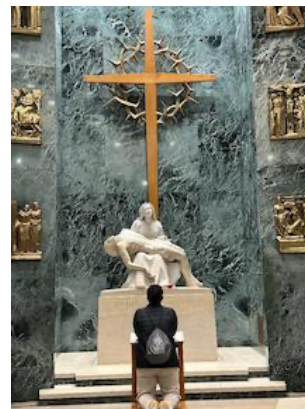
I chose Carle Hospital Eucharistic Ministry for a few reasons. My mother was a patient at Carle many times during the last part of her life. An EMHC came many times to give her the Blessed Sacrament. A priest was called so that she was able to receive the Last Rights three times, not only in the hospital but in her home as well. All of this strengthened her to go on longer. This meant a lot to my mother and to our family. I wanted to help others as she was helped. Also, there continues to be a shortage of EMHCs to make pastoral visits to our Catholic family, and I want to help.

Pastoral EMHCs may choose to make Communion visits to the homebound, those living in nursing residences, Carle Hospital patients, or any combination. Pastoral EMHCs are scheduled to serve once or twice each month. If the Spirit is calling *you* to serve in this beautiful ministry, please email or text Diane Wilhelm (wilhelmd@earthlink.net, or 630-292-3028).

March for Life

from p. 2

The biggest takeaway for everyone was to remember that



we are not alone in our belief, that we’re not to feel bad about our belief, and that we have the power to be a witness for the cause no matter how we are treated.

Thanks to all of you who donated to our 2024 trip to D.C. – it really has made a difference! Our work to make abortion unthinkable continues at the



high school. We are currently praying at the Equity Clinic every Sunday at 3:00 p.m. during the Forty Days for Life campaign, offering weekly sacrifices as a group, and we will be attending the Springfield March for Life in April.

Highlighting parishioners' talents

St. Patrick's Arts and Environment team takes on the task of adding decorations throughout the church to enhance our worship services. We create banners and displays that reflect the themes of the liturgical seasons.



Clay display of the Last Supper by Becky Billman

Recently, we've been using some works of art created by members of our faith community. You may have noticed the original paintings we've displayed during Lent. We've also featured an original clay display of the Last Supper during the Easter Season. Keep your eyes open for the stained-glass crosses and a framed embroidered rendering of the Our Father prayer. We are proud of and very thankful to our talented artists, who have let us display their works.



Painting by Kinsey Fitzgerald

Current team members include Susan Reese, Marilyn Pollard, Tina Colombo, Becky Billman, Paula Sturdyvin, Marissa Altaner (student), and Judy Altaner. We also receive much help from our husbands in hanging banners and such. New members – including high school students – are always welcome!

St. Patrick offered a study of “Beautiful Eucharist”

The *Beautiful Eucharist* study got off to a joyful start on Thursday, February 15. The Women of St. Patrick donated the books and study guides to the parish. This inspirational little book contains twelve short chapters describing the authors' experiences while learning to love the Eucharist. The editor is Matthew Kelly, who wrote the Introduction and the Conclusion. Among the other twelve authors are Father Mike Schmitz, Bishop Andrew Cozzens, and Bishop Fulton J. Sheen.

There were about fifty attendees divided between the afternoon and evening sessions. At the first afternoon session Mary Long and Mary Tate had to quiet down the excited conversations in St. Brigid Hall so that Father Anthony could lead us in an opening prayer. We had about fifteen minutes of readings and prayers before we broke into small groups to discuss the Study Guide questions, three chapters each week. The questions focused on personal reactions to each chapter, such as, what did you find new or interesting in this chapter. There was no lack of responses – who wouldn't like to talk about their experiences?

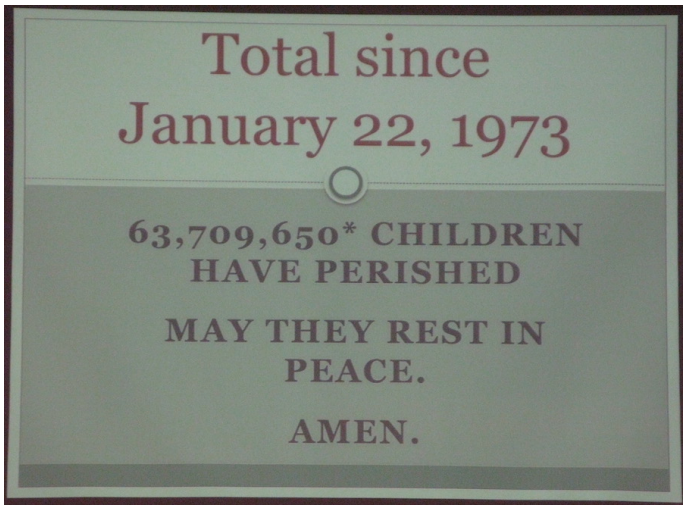
Many of the participants in the afternoon session found it convenient and motivating to go to the 12:10 Mass before the 1:00 meeting. Because they had skipped lunch, members volunteered to bring delicious sweet and savory snacks to serve as our lunch before the meeting began. Usually there were leftovers to indulge in before we left.

After an hour of discussion, we returned to St. Brigid Hall, where participants were asked to share from their small group's discussion. Each session concluded with the Eucharistic Revival Prayer.

Most of the participants in the afternoon study group said they looked forward to coming together to share their reflections on *Beautiful Eucharist*. Many said they missed the Bible study groups that were active at St. Patrick before the pandemic and wondered whether these might one day be resumed. All seemed to be looking for something real and inspiring to hold onto during these turbulent and changing times.

Let him easter in us,
be a dayspring to the dimness in us.
—Gerard Manley Hopkins

A contingent of St. Patrick’s parishioners attended the Champaign-Urbana Community Ecumenical Memorial Prayer Vigil on February 26.



Catholic Young Professionals enjoy monthly potluck

On March 2, the Champaign Urbana Catholic Professionals had their monthly potluck at St. Patrick’s Brigid Hall. Over 24 young adults gathered to share corned beef and cabbage, roasted potatoes, fresh soda bread, and so much more! After some great food and even better conversations, many played board games to grow in comradery. The night culminated, as it often does, with Night Prayer from the Divine Office.

CUCYP is dedicated to building a strong Catholic community in the Champaign-Urbana area. Monthly events include a potluck on the first Saturday of the month, which cycles between the local parishes, and a Holy Hour, where young adults can come together to worship and adore the Lord in the Eucharist. The group also runs many smaller events including bible studies, breviary nights, book clubs, and even dances.

If you, or anyone you may know, are interested in knowing more about CUCYP, please contact us (cucatholicyoungprofessionals@gmail.com).

Vocation Prayer

“When I stand before God at the end of my life, I would hope that I’d not have a single bit of talent left and could say, “I used everything you gave me.” —Erma Bombeck *

Loving Father, I thank you for the gifts I have received from you, gifts I know are meant to be shared, not jealously guarded as if given for myself alone. Help me to see how best to use these gifts in my life’s journey with you, whether in ordained or consecrated life, married or single, alone or in community. I listen eagerly for your word of guidance, look for the path you want me to follow. I place my hand in yours, asking only that I may walk this path with you.

The three days of Easter are ending. The weeks that follow, from now to Pentecost, will continue our Easter celebration. Not only in these days, but every day, faith tells us our lives are being changed. We are becoming like Jesus, little Christs, moment by moment, Eucharist by Eucharist, day by day.
—Emilie Griffin

Quick fixin's from the kitchen of . . . Land O Lakes

Back by popular demand. We thought you might like something a bit different for dessert on Easter, so we looked for lamb cake recipes that didn't require a mold -- and we found this! Your children might enjoy turning cupcakes into lambs. (Note: It makes 24 cupcakes.)

Easter Lamb Cupcakes

Cupcakes:

1 pkg (15-16 oz) white cake mix
1 c milk
1/2 c butter
3 large eggs
2 T orange juice
2 t orange zest

Frosting:

1 1/2 c butter, softened
2 c powdered sugar
2 t vanilla
2 jars (7 oz) marshmallow crème

Decorations:

1 pkg (10 oz) miniature marshmallows
Gumdrops, licorice pieces,
M&Ms . . .

In a large bowl combine cake mix, milk, butter, eggs, orange juice, and orange zest, and mix thoroughly. Divide batter evenly among paper cupcake liners and bake at 350° for 18-22 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool 5 minutes in pan, then move to cooling rack and cool completely.

Frosting: In a medium bowl combine butter, powdered sugar,

and vanilla, and mix until creamy. Add marshmallow crème and continue mixing until well combined. When cupcakes are completely cool, frost them, creating a mound of frosting in the center of each.

Create lamb faces by flattening black gumdrops to 1/4-inch thickness, using the palm of your hand, and poke holes in them for nostrils. Attach one lamb face on the front third of each cupcake and add candy eyes using frosting to adhere. Press miniature marshmallows onto cupcakes. Use licorice pieces for tails, gumdrop or licorice pieces for tails and ears. Let your imagination be your guide!



If you have a recipe you'd like to share, please send it to Mary Lou Menches (mmenches@illinois.edu, 344-1125). The only requirement is that it be quick and easy to prepare!

We are an Easter people!

—St. Augustine



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Please send news items to infocusstpats@gmail.com. You may also send them to any Communications Committee member (see below). All submissions are subject to review and/or editing by the committee and staff. Bylines are generally omitted.

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The deadline for submitting articles and news items for the next (**May**) issue is **Sunday, April 7.**