

St. Patrick Parish IN FOCUS

www.stpaturbana.org

October 2025

The Common Good

What gifts has God given you? Maybe you have some special talent or skills ... or maybe not. Maybe you feel that you're just an ordinary person with no special gifts. But God's generosity is so abundant that there may be gifts you haven't considered. Everyone has gifts, even the oldest and youngest among us,



even the most profoundly disabled person; everyone has gifts that God has given them for their own use and for the benefit of others.

You don't think so? How about the gift of life? How about the gift of relationships? Just being alive and around other people opens up a million gifts. Everyone has the ability to be loved. Unless they're in a coma, everyone has the ability to love.

Some encounters with others happen in a flash. You never know how your smile or greeting will touch the

life of someone else. Some relationships grow over the years. They may help us learn who we are and they may give us the opportunity to reach out to others. The most permanent and stable relationship of all is our relationship with God, who is with us and loves us always. We are very gifted!



Not everyone experiences these gifts all the time. If you are ill or depressed, you may question whether life is a gift. If you are lonely or in an abusive relationship, you may wonder if relationships are such a good thing. And yet they are. God has made us to live and to share our lives with others. He

has given us gifts to share with others. St. Paul says that the gifts God has given us show the action of the Spirit and that they are given to us for the common good (1 Corinthians 12:7). We have them for ourselves, but also for others.



Q: What is Priesthood Sunday? When is it observed?

A: Your question is timely because Sunday,

September 28, is the day set aside for it this year. It is a day to reflect upon and affirm the role of the priesthood in the life of the Church, to honor our priests.

Priesthood Sunday gives us a chance to slow down and say something we might not say often enough: thank you.

It's a day when we recognize the quiet strength of our priests. They show up in moments big and small – at hospital bedsides, behind the altar, bringing our infants into God's adopted family, sharing our joys and our griefs, even just being present with tired parishioners who need to talk. Their presence offers calm, comfort, and something steady in a fast-moving world.

What makes this day special isn't any big event or loud celebration. It's the small things – the handwritten notes, warm smiles after Mass, maybe a story shared over coffee. These gestures remind priests that their work matters deeply.

At its heart, Priesthood Sunday is about relationships. It's about trust, faith, and people taking time to show how much that bond means.

* * *

In your loving kindness, Father, bless our priests, Father Anthony and Father John, and uphold them always in their caring service to the people of this parish.

Music ministry news for fall

St. Patrick Church has a wonderful history of celebrating beautiful liturgies, giving glory and praise to God, especially through song. There are many opportunities for beginners through advanced musicians to volunteer in assisting your parish through the gift of music. Please prayerfully consider your own musical gifts and how God is calling you to use those gifts to serve your parish family.

Singers and instrumentalists have a variety of opportunities for service.



James Rossi and the 10:00 Mass choir at a rehearsal.

Additional cantors are always welcome and have flexibility in scheduling choices.

Choir members for the 10:00 a.m. Mass practice on Wednesday evenings from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. and arrive for Mass at 9:15 for warm-ups and final practice.

The Contemporary group is composed of a combination of singers and instrumentalists and generally practices and sings twice a month.

Funeral Schola choir members are on call as funerals take place, and notice may be short. Most funerals take place on weekday mornings, with practice before the Mass.

The Congolese Choir is a part of the music ministry, and all choir members are welcome to sing with them. They generally sing in French and a variety of African languages.

No auditions are required for any of the choirs, but potential new can-

tors meet with the music director, James Rossi.

Instrumentalists of all varieties are welcomed, and opportunities include playing for special holiday Masses, playing with the contemporary choir, joining the handbell choir, and occasionally subbing for other musicians. Instruments are used for both traditional and contemporary music, and scheduling is flexible. The entire range of strings, percussion, woodwinds, and brass are welcome!

Some new opportunities are also available this fall. Youth aged four

through twelve are invited to join the Christmas choir as both singers and instrumentalists. One two-hour rehearsal will be scheduled to prepare.

In addition, a new opportunity for both youth and adults becomes available very soon, because the parish has purchased a three-octave set of hand chimes. Youth are particularly encouraged to consider playing, rehearsals will take place 15 minutes before and after Masses, and no prior experience is needed to play.

Anyone school age or older who has choral experience, or who reads music, or who has a good ear and is willing to learn, is welcome to serve in any music ministry. Again, there are no formal auditions. For more information, or if you would like to volunteer in the music ministry, please contact James Rossi, Director of Music, at 217-367-2665 (office), 321-505-6725 (cell), or email: james.rossi@stpaturbana.org – or just

Come and play . . . Bunco!

St. Patrick's Women of St. Patrick has been hosting bi-monthly Bunco nights for adults (18+) since March 2025. This new social activity for parishioners has been well received. It is a night to sit back and enjoy fellowship, a nice potluck meal, and a little friendly competition.



Bunco is an easy dice game: players roll the dice to score points and win rounds. It's a game of chance without any strategic decision making. We will teach you how to play.

Join us in Trinity Hall for our next Bunco night on **Saturday, October 18, from 5:00 to 7:15 p.m.** following the 4:00 p.m. Mass.

Please bring an item to share for the potluck. We suggest these categories based on the first letter of your last name: A-H, main dish; I-R, dessert; S-Z, side dish. Please invite friends, even if they aren't members of our parish. All are welcome, and we can't wait to see you!



Deadline for submission of articles and news items for the next issue of *In Focus* (November) is **Sunday, October 5.**

It's almost here!

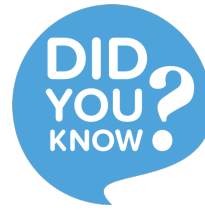
"It" is our fourth International Festival, one of the most joyous and delicious events of the year at St. Patrick. It will be held on Sunday, October 12, after the 10:00 Mass. This is the first time it will be held on Sunday, rather than Saturday night; we hope this will be more convenient for everybody. It will be held in St. Brigid Hall and outside in the fenced-in front yard. Pray for sunshine!

Most of the previous countries on display will again be serving their delicacies. There are three new countries added to the list: South Africa, Venezuela, and South Korea. Many of the country representatives will be wearing native clothing and displaying pictures and indigenous objects. There will also be a table for regional American foods. The children, who work up quite an appetite with their exuberance, enjoy familiar foods.

The title of the festival is "In Communion with the Saints – One Body in Christ." It takes many hands to make it a success: cooks and servers for each country, entertainers to make music and sing and dance, people to set up and take down and clean, greeters and game organizers, and kitchen staff. Check your latest bulletin for where you might fit to help out. You can sign up on lists at the church entrance or text Frank Rosser at 708-595-0176.

If you haven't attended one of our International Festivals, you are missing a merry and delicious experience. Everyone, workers and attendees alike, radiate Christian joy. Even the little children are excitedly scampering around, gleefully showing their parents the prizes they won in the games, some so cute in their native costumes.

We'll meet you there!



What is that small object propped against the base of the Mary statue in the sanctuary? If you guessed it is a holy card, you guessed rightly! The holy card depicts Our Lady of Guadalupe on the front, and a prayer to her in Spanish on the back.



The real problem in prayer is not the absence of God but the absence of us. We are all over the place, entertaining memories, fantasies, anxieties. God is simply there in unending patience, saying to us, "So when are you actually going to arrive? When are you going to sit and listen, to stop roaming about, and be present?"

—Rowan Williams

Pope Saint John XXIII

On October 11 we observe the feast of Pope Saint John XXIII. Born Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli in Italy in 1881, he was ordained a priest at age 22. He then spent a decade as secretary to the bishop of Bergamo. He served as an apostolic visitor in Bulgaria and an apostolic delegate in Turkey and Greece. He was a chaplain in World War I.

After World War II, he was papal nuncio in Paris and later patriarch of Venice. He was elected pope in 1958. His pontificate is often referred to as a turning point within the Church. During his time, he worked toward modernizing the Church through the Second Vatican Council, which he opened in 1962. He also worked for the reunification of Christian churches.

During his papacy, Pope Saint John XXIII issued eight encyclicals, most notably *Pacem in Terris* and *Mater et Magistra*. *Pacem in Terris*, his final encyclical, was the first

papal encyclical to be addressed to “all men of good will,” rather than to bishops or to Catholics only. In it he wrote “Man has the right to live. He has the right to bodily integ-



rity and to the means necessary for the proper development of life, particularly food, clothing, shelter, medical care, rest, and, finally, the necessary social services. In consequence, he has the right to be looked after in the event of ill health; disability stemming from his work; widowhood; old age; enforced unemployment;

or whenever through no fault of his own he is deprived of the means of livelihood.”

He was beatified in 2000 by Pope John Paul II, and was canonized in 2014 by Pope Francis. He is the patron saint of papal delegates, the Second Vatican Council, and Christian unity. He is often known as Good Pope John. As we celebrate his feast day, we might pray to be peacemakers.

Celebrating the Jubilee of Migrants

The Jubilee of Migrants will take place on October 4-5, 2025, coinciding with the celebration of the 111th World Day of Migrants and Refugees. Many people will make pilgrimages to Rome, where they will take part in two days of encounters, activities, and prayers, as well as Holy Mass with Pope Leo XIV in St. Peter's Square and a festival of “Migrants and Missionaries of Hope among all Peoples.”

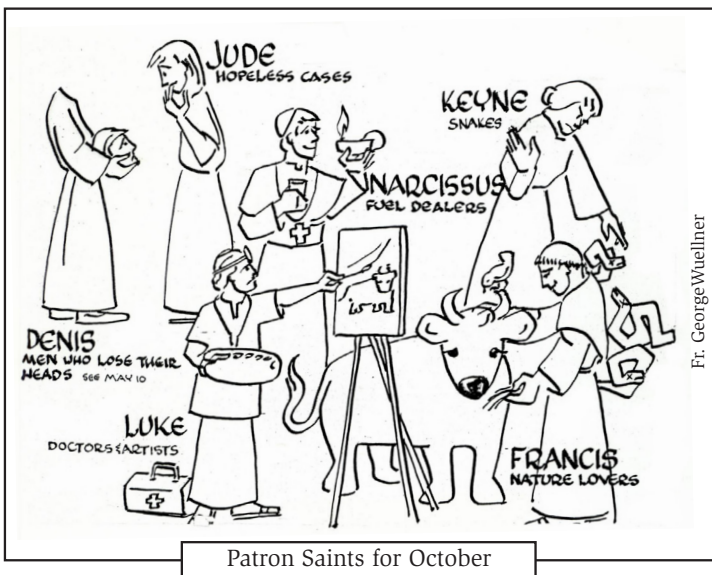
Those of us who cannot make a pilgrimage to Rome can participate by making pilgrimages closer to home, reading Pope Leo's message, “Migrants, missionaries of hope” (www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiv/en/messages/migration/documents/20250725-world-migrants-day-2025.html), listening to stories of refugees in our community, and praying for migrants and refugees. The USCCB has a packet of resources to help (www.usccb.org/resources/jubilee-migrants-usccb-resource-packet-english).

Vocation Prayer

Loving Father, you know my heart. Help me to know the path I am to walk. I seek your vision, your wisdom, your guidance for my journey in a life of service. I trust you, Father, to find ways to help me understand what path I am to walk, if only you are with me on my journey. With your help, I will follow.

The most important thing you can say about God's love is that God loves us not because of anything we've done to earn that love, but because God, in total freedom, decided to love us.

—Henri Nouwen



Patron Saints for October

Respect Life Sunday

by Megan Logsdon

October 5 is Respect Life Sunday. St. Patrick's parishioner and pro-life advocate Megan Logsdon offered her thoughts on what it means to be pro-life and how you can show your support:

Being pro-life means much more than caring for the baby's life before birth.

Being pro-life involves advocating for those who cannot speak for themselves, regardless of age, race, developmental stage, or mode of conception. With the

advancements in our understanding of fetal development, it is surprising that there are still advocates for the "right" to terminate a pregnancy at any stage.

Addressing women's health is crucial, and it is important to engage in open discussions about how best to support women. However, the issue of abortion invariably involves another life. This does not mean that one life is more significant than the other, but it highlights the complexity of the situation.

It is often overlooked how a woman may be affected both mentally and physically by the decision to abort. Studies indicate that women who have undergone abortions may experience various psychological and emotional effects. Additionally, while some claim that pro-life laws will not adequately address cases such as ectopic pregnancies or miscarriages, pro-life legislation generally includes provisions to ensure that women receive necessary medical care in such situations.

It is important to note that pregnancies resulting from incest or rape are exceedingly rare. These cases represent a small fraction of all abortions and should not overshadow



the broader ethical and moral considerations involved in the abortion debate.

Advocating for the pro-life position means valuing all stages of life and striving for a compassionate and informed approach to both women's health and fetal development. At St. Patrick, we are currently planning

the Annual Ecumenical Pro-Life Prayer Vigil, which occurs on the January 22nd anniversary of Roe v Wade. We meet on the second Monday of each month

through January, from 6 to 8 p.m., at the Mahomet Public Library.

Another way to support the pro-life movement is to join the Pro-Life Discussion Group every third Monday at 3:30 p.m. at Holy Cross. We would be pleased if you can join us, even if you just come with questions.

This year, September 24 – November 2 marks 40 Days for Life. October 5 is Respect Life Sunday; on that day please join with others across North America in the Life Chain at Hessel Park from 2 to 3:30 p.m. More details can be found at <https://lifechain.org>.

St. Patrick's Respect Life program was established to study, pray, and plan activities in our parish that foster reverence for the whole of life, from conception to natural death. As a group, we do all we can, including helping mothers and families before and after the birth of a baby. Please join us if you would like to help or learn more about our group.

For questions, or if you'd like more information on how you can get involved in the pro-life movement, contact Megan Logsdon (m.logsdon@hotmail.com or 217-637-3481).

Baptisms at St. Patrick's

We welcome the following recently baptized into our faith community:

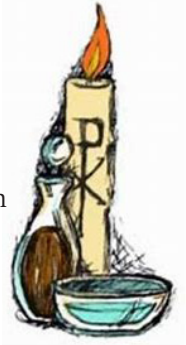
Ifechukwu Sonia Omeh, baptized August 17, whose parents are Joseph and Perpetua Omeh.

Brael Mpanda Nkunku, Brayanna Am Mpanda, and Arianna Mpanda, baptized August 17, whose parents are Oliver Mpanda and Leticia Nkunku Ndenki.

Gracie Divine Kori-Tcheding baptized August 17, whose parents are Anicet Kori and Natalie Rosine Nkenlifack Kori.

Winnie Thi Cao baptized August 24, whose parents are Hiep Xuan Cao and Nhung Thi Nguyen.

Baptism is the sacrament by which we become adopted sons and daughters of God. Preparation classes are offered at St. Patrick's at 7:00 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month, or by appointment. Parents, godparents, and all are welcome.



Do not fear: I am with you; do not be anxious: I am your God. I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.

—Isaiah 41:10

Our greatest danger is not our sins, but our indifference. We must be in love with God. It is not so much to change what we are doing, but our intention, our motive.

—Dorothy Day

Scripture reading, our staff and our shield

The community of St Patrick's has a few Bible study groups. One of them is the young adult Bible study group, which meets every Saturday after the 4 o'clock Mass.

Group Bible study provides a unique opportunity to go through scripture in a systematic way, and to look at scripture from the point of view of other brothers and sisters, which can help enrich our own. This also helps us learn to live as a community, sharing in each other's joys and burdens and strengthening one another. Most importantly, it provides us with the tools to understand ourselves and the world, and to understand divine realities. It enables us to walk steadily in our pilgrim journey by shielding us from the untruths and temptations we meet on our way.

We see this in the example of Jesus and his temptations in the desert. For most of us, sin and temptation are viewed only from the perspective of the Ten Commandments, particularly the moral commandments. When an act does

not seem to go directly against these commandments, we do not judge it to be sinful. In reality, however, temptations are more subtle than we realize. It is clear that, in the case of



worshiping the devil, Jesus would have broken the first commandment. However, it is difficult to point to a commandment Jesus would have broken if he had turned the stones into bread or jumped from the high mountain. Yet Jesus is able to navigate these temptations because of his knowledge of scripture.

For most of us, knowing that Christ is God makes it difficult to appreciate his humanity, to appreciate that, like us, he had to learn scripture and to grow in knowledge

and wisdom. He is able to navigate temptation because he knows scripture well.

We can look to Adam to understand that from seemingly benign actions come dramatic consequences, including the death of his son Abel. Over time, a flood is needed to restore balance. We can also reflect on our modern life and appreciate that the path can lead to destruction, such as for those who end up suffering from harmful addictions.

These devastations often begin with small, simple, well-intended, benign actions. We face temptations that we are unable to identify as such in our moment of need and desperation. They can lead us down a rabbit hole from which only the grace of Christ can rescue us. Big sins always originate from small, benign, seemingly harmless temptations. To be able to perceive and overcome temptation, we need to learn scripture.

As we journey, we might join a Bible study group, hold a Bible study in our family, or even start a new Bible study group with like-minded friends.

Out of fear I went off and buried your talent in the ground. (Matt. 25:14–30)

Young children loved to watch The Magic School Bus, an animated TV show featuring Ms. Frizzle, undoubtedly the coolest teacher ever, and her students. The Magic School Bus went to places no ordinary bus (or students) could: inside a volcano, out into space, under the ocean, inside the human body. Ms. Frizzle's charge to her students was always "Take chances! Make mistakes! Get messy!"

Perhaps that should be our motto too, because if we are afraid to use our gifts, then we bury not only our own best selves, but also God's Spirit in us. This familiar parable reminds us that someday we will be called to account for what we've done — and what we've failed to do.

What gifts has God blessed you with? How can you share them?

Parish Council News

Much of the August given over to reviewing and Talent weekend (all the time you read this). the plan to staff a T&T tional Festival.

They then discussed St. Patrick Parish's (1901-2026). Tom Kacich have joined co-chairs Pam Donze De Ley and Barb Wysocki to form a small ad hoc committee. In discussion with Fr. Anthony, the committee will focus on the spiritual reasons of how and why our parish has grown (from the 72 original founders to over 1200 parishioners today).

Interviews will be sought with parishioners of different cultures, ages, and new as well as longtime members of the parish. Questions might seek feedback on why they came to St. Patrick when they did, what they particularly like about the parish and its programs that they hope will be retained, what their hopes are for the future of the parish, and the like.

It was agreed that Bishop Tylka should receive an invitation to this celebration, giving him adequate time to work it into his schedule. Members also agreed on having a table at the International Festival to gather suggestions from parishioners for our celebration.

Hoping to increase communication with ministry groups, Council members considered the possibility of having ministries represented at Council meetings or resuming the practice of visiting ministry meetings, but concluded that implementation would be difficult because of fewer members and shorter Council meetings. Instead, they will review the responses to the April survey that asked "If your parish group were given infinite time, talent, and treasure, how would you use them to serve people through the parish?" These might suggest a few groups to be invited to one or more Council meetings.

Are you interested in the Parish Council? You can always attend a meeting to find out what it's all about, and perhaps ask president Kathryn Guy a question or two after the meeting. Parishioners are always welcome at these open parish meetings.



Council meeting was plans for the Time ready carried out by Members confirmed table at the Interna-

the celebration of 125th anniversary and Sr. Karen Carlson

Common Good

from page 1

How about your everyday skills? Can you make a bed? Take out the garbage? Rake leaves? Cook a meal? Walk to the store? Drive a car? Read? Spend time with someone? Listen? Sometimes we think about talents in relationship to school or career, but these everyday skills are gifts that we should recognize and be grateful for. When we share these everyday gifts by doing household chores, helping a neighbor, pitching in around the parish, or serving in our community, we are contributing to the common good.

What other gifts do you have? Do you like organizing things? Do you enjoy music? Do you care about the health of our planet? Do you want to help victims of poverty or injustice? Notice that these gifts are about our interests and desires, rather than skills. Nonetheless, God has given them to us, for our own use and to assist others. They help give focus to the way we use our skills. These gifts are always needed for the common good of our parish life and our community life.

So think about the gifts that God has given you, and be grateful for them. Think about how you can put them to use in your family, here at St. Patrick's, and in our larger community, and give thanks for the opportunities. Think about the people you share them with, and be grateful for them too. God has indeed given us many gifts for ourselves and for the common good!

* * *

P.S. We hope you enjoy our monthly In Focus newsletter. We need your gifts too! We need someone who can read the draft of the newsletter and select photos and graphics from our files and the internet. We need two more people who can take files of the edited text and the graphics, lay them out in an attractive way, and produce a pdf for publication. Can you help?

Help Needed!

In Focus has been going strong for 43 years now, and we can do this because of the many people who pitch in. We have three special needs right now:

LAYOUT Two or three times a year, scheduled in advance, you'd receive files of edited text, photos, and graphics. You'd have three days to do the layout and create a pdf using whatever publishing software you're already familiar with.

WRITERS Every couple of months, you'd receive a topic, knowledgeable contact people, and Web resources. You'd have about 10 days to write 400-600 words on a topic.

PHOTO EDITOR Photos give vibrancy to *In Focus*, but it takes time to select them each month. You'd read the draft of *In Focus* and select photos to help tell the story of our parish life.

Can you help? Contact Cathy Salika at csalika@illinois.edu.

Prayer for Migrant Families

Good and gracious God,
we thank you for the gift of families.
We are grateful for all the joy and love they bring into
our lives, and we ask that you provide special
protection for all families, particularly those who face
hardships as they move in search of a better life.
Show mercy to those who travel in danger and lead
them to a place of safety and peace.
Comfort those who are alone and afraid because
their families have been torn apart by violence
and injustice.
As we reflect upon the difficult journey that the Holy
Family faced as refugees in Egypt, help us to
remember the suffering of all migrant families.
Through the intercession of Mary our Mother, and St.
Joseph the Worker, her spouse, we pray that all
migrants may be reunited with their loved ones and
find the meaningful work they seek.
Open our hearts so that we may provide hospitality
for all who come in search of refuge.
Give us the courage to welcome every stranger
as Christ in our midst.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one
God forever and ever.
Amen.

—The United States Conference of
Catholic Bishops



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Quick fixin's from the kitchen of . . . **Joanne Hutchcraft**

Potato and Pork Chop Casserole

2-3 butterflied pork chops
3-4 medium potatoes, peeled and sliced
1 medium onion, sliced
1/4-1/2 c frozen peas
Salt and pepper to taste
1 can cream of mushroom soup
1 soup can of milk



Brown chops and set aside. Use margarine to grease inside of Pyrex
dish. Layer the following in the dish: sliced potatoes, sliced onion, and
peas. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Place browned pork chops on top.
Mix soup and milk, and pour over all. Bake, uncovered, at 350 degrees for
1 1/4 hours.

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Do you have a favorite quick and easy recipe to share? Maybe some-
thing your family and friends really enjoy? Please send it to Mary Lou
Menches (mmenches@illinois.edu) — our readers are always looking for
that great addition to a meal!