

in focus

708 West Main Street

Urbana, Illinois 61801

Vol. 4, No. 3

"I Am The Bread Of Life"

Jesus said, "I am the bread of life." The Eucharist is paramount in the life of a Christian. Have you ever thought about what it might be like to be deprived of the Eucharist? When we are unable to attend church, homebound or hospitalized, the Eucharist becomes even more important.

At St. Patrick's Parish a number of people have been called to Eucharistic ministry; they have come to realize the need of others and have responded to it. Every Sunday, Wednesday, and Friday Christ is carried to the sick at Carle Hospital, and on Tuesdays to shut-ins at home and in nursing homes.

Eucharistic ministry to shut-ins is a special calling. It touches many lives--of the patients and their families as well as of those who minister to them. The joy reflected on the faces of people who may not have been to church for a long time when they receive the Lord in the Eucharist is very rewarding. Many times the minister is moved to thank God for life and to realize the redemptive value of suffering.



Eucharistic minister Ruth Plymire

God Calls Twice

Vocation of situation? It is really God's "calling" twice--initially, to a spouse to join Him forever; then, in a variety of ways, to the survivor. It is a very unorthodox vocation, one which is forced upon the person, accompanied by grief and confusion and lacking any method or place of training, void of any requirements as to age, education, or specific ability. Although it is a full-time situation, it can be simultaneous with any other vocation.

The response to this "calling" is also unique--anger, rejection, questioning, and the like--but finally He is heard and the opportunity to do His will becomes apparent in many ways. The actual implementation is as varied as the people involved. This vocation is not a structured one, but rather one of searching the heart and the mind in order to begin a changed way of life. It is a true calling; one needs only to listen well and to believe in Him in order to answer.

Gardening Is A Partnership

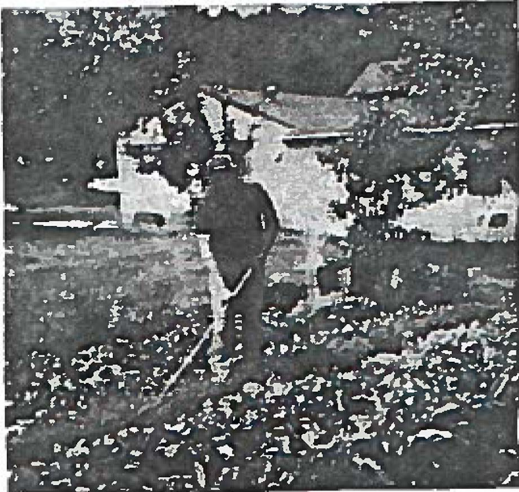
Gardening can be more than growing food for the table, a hobby, or an opportunity to enjoy the sunshine and fresh air of the outdoors. Gardening can be an encounter with God.

God is the creator of the earth and all things on it, but creation was not a one-time event. Creation is continuous. Parents become partners with God in creating human life. Gardeners become partners with God in creating plant life.

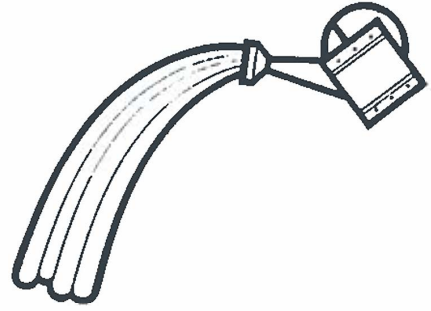
A loving gardener carefully prepares the soil, plants seeds that spring to life, and nurtures the young plants to maturity. Gardening becomes a labor of love when the gardener places food from the garden on the family table or shares produce with the needy.

Caring parishioners can get involved in this "gardening partnership" in several ways. Plant a garden and experience the creation of plant life. Help organize a table of plenty where gardeners bring vegetables grown at home to share with others. With a small group of friends, plant a garden and earmark the produce for the St. Vincent de Paul Society or for the Catholic Worker House.

It's gardening time, don't delay--your Partner is waiting!



An early start suggests a bountiful harvest to come for Leon Mayer.



What Do The Single Folk Do?

In "Camelot" the King sang, "What do the simple folk do?" An equally puzzling question in today's family-oriented society is, "What do the single folk do?"

The single person in the Christian community must diligently search for role models in the history of the Church. Churches and children are christened after Monica, the mother of Augustine; Theresa of Avila, a Carmelite nun; Benedict, a monk; and Ignatius, the soldier-priest. Joan of Arc and John the Baptist also come to mind, but Joan was burned at the stake and John lost his head.

The New Testament records the marriage feast of Cana and the calling of the apostles to priesthood. St. Paul mentions deacons and deaconesses in the context of family responsibilities. The giving and receiving of the sacraments of priesthood and marriage and the profession of vows by members of religious orders are community celebrations. But for the single, what do we read?

Paul, in his first letter to the Corinthians, addressed the question of the single folk when he wrote, "Let everyone lead the life which the Lord assigned to him and to which God called him." He invited them to "remain unmarried like me."

Adult single Christians consciously and privately embrace the single life. They are committed to be clean of heart and poor in spirit and to seek after justice. The single folk, like the unnamed followers of Christ in the New Testament and through the centuries, witness daily in the marketplace. They quietly answer Jesus' invitation, "Come, follow Me."



At LaSalette retreat. L-R, Beck, Ries, David Zola, Doug Bloome, Lisa Ries and Mark Hummel.

Faith Community Grows: Welcome, Confirmands!

Thirty-two members of St. Patrick's Parish community have taken another significant step in their church life. They have confirmed the baptismal promises made on their behalf by parents and godparents and have accepted the responsibilities that stem from this confirmation.

As a culmination of their scriptural learnings and group study sessions, these new adult members of St. Patrick's Parish have volunteered assistance in many areas of ministry: *Children:* Sunday morning nursery, religious education; *Music:* folk choir, traditional choirs; *Liturgy:* Children's liturgy, Eucharistic ministry, lector, server, Worship and Prayer Committee; *Community Service:* Telecare, Social Action Committee, St. Vincent de Paul Society, Catholic Worker House; *Social Events:* Social Committee; *Outreach:* visiting shut-ins; *Other Areas:* Communications Committee, Building and Grounds Committee, Education Committee.

Watch for them, welcome them, congratulate them on their "coming of age" in our community!

Mary Ellen Barnes
Melanie Marie Basham
Michael Berns
Douglas A. Bloome
Sharon Brenner
Rob Brown
Sara L. DeBlasio
Beth Dollins
Louis Fincham
Alex Francis
Mark D. Hummel
Matt Langendorf
Monica B. Macedo
Carol McCabe
Joanne M. Miller
Teresa Osmond

Emily Peters
Steve Pillar
Shan D. Prendergast
Ronald Paul Ralston
Elizabeth A. Ries
Rebecca S. Ries
Jeff Roedl
Anne Rowan
Steve Rutledge
Kurt Saban
Sarah Tavis
Jim Vattano
Matt Vevera
Lisa Wolfe
Sari Zernich
Theresa T. Zwettler



SILENT GOD

This is my prayer—
 That, though I may not see,
 I be aware
 Of the Silent God
 Who stands by me.
 That, though I may not feel,
 I be aware
 Of the Mighty Love
 Which doggedly follows me.
 That, though I may not respond,
 I be aware
 That God—my Silent, Mighty God,
 Waits each day and through each night
 For me,
 For me—alone.

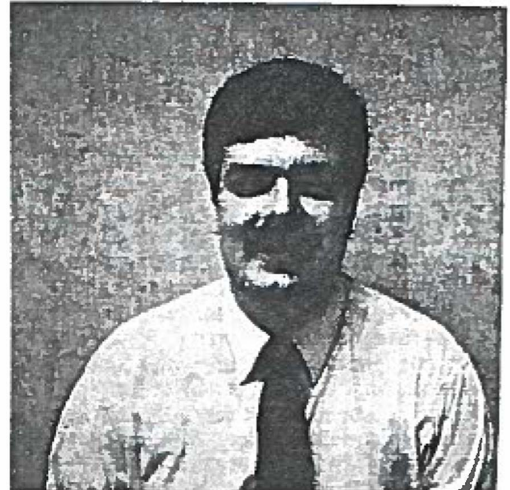
Edwina Gateley, V.M.M.



Meet The New Council Members



Rita Weisiger has worked long and diligently with the St. Vincent de Paul Society, the Eastern Illinois Food Bank, the Catholic Worker House, and Second Harvest. She believes that the parish should act out its mission through a ministry of charity and social justice.



Morris Sloops has been an active member of the Building and Grounds Committee. This experience has given him insights into parish programs and financial needs. Through his involvement with the CRHP, catechumen, and Engaged Couples programs, Morris has come to appreciate the need of laypersons for opportunities for spiritual growth.

Have You Said "Yes"?

The baptismal call is the important vocation of all Christians. This is the call to follow Jesus Christ in Christian community. It is a call to holiness, which can be lived in the single state, the married state, the religious life, and the priesthood.

Perhaps we need to reflect on the meaning of Baptism, which is "new life in the risen Christ" for all who believe. Baptism brings freedom from sin and the light of grace. It is acceptance into a living faith community, where we are assured of continuing support to help us live as Christians. Lastly, the Holy Spirit empowers us to carry on Jesus' mission of spreading the Word of God, which can be accomplished by a total response to our baptismal call.

In the April 28 issue of *Catholic Post* Sister Audrey Cleary, OSB, makes the following profound statement:

"Deeper appreciation of our common baptismal call to love and to serve has sharpened the Church's awareness that religious life is not better, higher, or more perfect than any other Christian lifestyle.

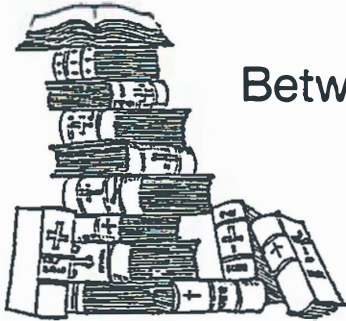
"Those vowed to celibate life in community have simply said 'yes' to God's summons to become holy in this calling. You have not chosen me; I have chosen you. We are well aware it is God's initiative which gathers us, it is God's grace which sustains our fidelity, and it is God's love which makes our work and prayer possible and fruitful."



Audry Brown has had experience as a council member in another parish. She has also been a religious-education teacher and a leader in the Council of Catholic Women. She is keenly interested in the study of theology, Scripture, and social issues. Audry hopes to encourage more parishioners to participate in adult education.



Jerry Barrett has been actively involved in the Christ Renews His Parish program, the Lay Ministry Leadership Program, and several social programs of the parish. A strong supporter of adult religious education and other kinds of faith-sharing programs, Jerry would like to see more parishioners actively involved.



Between The Bookends:

Good Reading In St. Patrick's Parish Library

The following books present several views of parish, in each of which the reader may find resemblances to the St. Patrick's Parish of today and a vision of the St. Patrick's Parish of tomorrow. All are available in the parish library.

The Christian Parish: Whispers of the Risen Christ, by William J. Bausch

Anyone who would like to glimpse the St. Patrick's Parish of the future should pick up this inspiring and readable book. Drawing on his meditations on parish life and his experience at St. Mary's Parish in Colt's Neck, N.J., Bausch shares his vision of a parish where members minister to one another. They care for each other when sick, they wake their dead in the parish church until the funeral Mass, they pass the teaching of the sacraments from parent to parent, they send parishioners to the missions, both near and far. The vision he shares is not his own, but that of the Father-Son-Spirit God who calls us all, as parish, to LIFE.

The Prophetic Parish: A Center for Peace and Justice, by Dennis J. Geaney

In this book a parish challenges its members to change the world and offers comfort as they deal with the challenges that Jesus holds out to them. It is a parish that has written the beatitudes into its charter and uses them as a measure of fidelity to the demands of Jesus. Geaney's model of parish life can provide insight as St. Patrick's Parish struggles to incorporate beatitude living into parish life. There are many questions to be answered as the parish moves in this direction; the author provides illumination for the journey!

Adventures of a Collegial Parish, by Robert D. Fuller

This is a well-written book about a parish where shared responsibility is the norm; where neighborhood communities are viable groupings in the larger parish; where adult education is a parish priority; where an atmosphere has been created in which more questions are asked than answers given. The author provides ideas and insights for anyone seeking to discover a new view of parish life, its problems, and its possibilities. His model of parish is similar to St. Patrick's, with a stronger focus on adult education and a slightly different view of parish councils.

Successful Parishes: How They Meet the Challenge of Change, by Thomas P. Sweetser

Drawing on his experience with the Chicago Parish Evaluation Project (which he directs), Sweetser develops composite pictures of types of parishes: the city parish, the young suburban parish, and the well-established parish. In these fictionalized story profiles, which are both lifelike and lively, he describes the unique problems of each parish, together with the steps each took to turn a liability (e.g., warring racial groups or a school closing) into an advantage. Chapters are devoted to base communities, parish planning, and adult spirituality, developing in depth the issues touched on in the case studies of types of parishes.

The Parish in Community and Ministry, by Evelyn Eaton Whitehead

In this book diversified views of parish are shared by many of the spirit-filled people writing about faith and parish life in the 1980s: Bishop Albert Ottenweller, Paula Ripple, John Shea, Gerard Egan, Daniel Coughlin, Philip Murnion, and Evelyn Whitehead.



Save Those Sheets!

St. Patrick's Medical Missions, which has met regularly for years under the auspices of St. Patrick's Guild, endeavors to help the Catholic Medical Mission Board (New York) by making bandages from old sheets, saving soap, collecting old shirts to be made into hospital gowns, and gathering hospital supplies.

The ways to meet the missions' needs, however, are as many as there are kinds and numbers of people involved. The Medical Missions group has collected cancelled stamps and religious articles for the southwest missions in the United States, provided layettes, and sent articles of clothing and even soap to missions in need.

Parish aid to the missions not only helps but brings a personal sense of satisfaction to each participant. Several residents at the Champaign County Nursing Home have become interested and now also gather to roll bandages for the missions.

To keep the Medical Missions group going, both people and supplies are needed: sheets (white or pastel, plain or figured, not less than 65% cotton) and shirts--but also the people to tear sheets into strips and sew them into ten-foot lengths, and people to make shirts into hospital gowns.

The group meets on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month (unless otherwise noted) in the multipurpose room of the parish center. Present members are: Florence Chevalier, Alice Schrader, Frances Hudson, Martha Miebach, Ruth Siewart, Luella Wavering, Frances Weir, and Lilis Finical. They welcome regular or occasional helpers! Articles may be marked for Medical Missions and left in the church vestibule.

Partnership

Ten Skills Needed for a Marriage

1. Give honest praise.
2. Praise early and often.
3. Make yourself available.
4. No guilt trips!
5. Help the other to say "no."
6. Develop the empathy habit, or get inside the other's skin.
7. Respond to calls for help.
8. Say your mate is worth it by actions.
9. Don't compete, cooperate.
10. Accept the "unacceptable" feelings.

--from *Making a Marriage*, by
Kevin and Marilyn Ryan

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DRE Reflects On Highlights Of 1984-85

This title, Highlights of 1984-85, got me to thinking about such titles as Gold-diggers of 1933, etc. Although the business here is a little different, I do often feel like a Florenz Ziegfeld--a producer and director of "St. Patrick's Review, 1984-85." Working as the Director of Religious Education is like producing a series of "shows" all year long here at St. Patrick's!

Given that, the biggest highlight of 1984-85 is the continual generosity of people all over this parish volunteering to help each other grow in faith. The following is a listing of numbers of people who have volunteered this year:

Children's programs: Urbana, 28;
St. Joseph, 6; sacramental, 6.

Junior-high programs: Urbana, 7;
St. Joseph, 1.

Senior-high programs: Urbana, 10;
St. Joseph, 3.

Adult-education programs: Urbana, 6;
St. Joseph, 2.

Others: Confirmation sponsors, 25;
catechumenate sponsors, 15; young-adult
ministry, 1; Pre-Marital Inventory team, 24;
Mothers' Dialogue Group, 1; Divorced/Sep-
arated/Widowed team, 7; baptismal prepara-
tion team, 2; Valuing Your Sexuality team,
8.

Yes, 152 people have been volunteering their time and talent for the support of family and sharing of faith at St. Patrick's. This is our greatest highlight!

Other exciting events have been:

- The formation of a Family Life Ministry team that meets monthly to discern the needs of family life in our parish and to support one another in carrying out their program ministries.
- The holding of our first Valuing Your Sexuality weekend for 6th-, 7th-, and 8th-graders and their parents. This program involved parents, received good support from the Holy Cross administration, and was greatly enjoyed by the kids and the volunteer staff.

- The Sunday evening study sessions on Church history. Carolyn McElrath has rated this one of her highlights as Adult Religious Education Coordinator because of the discussion and the initiative of class members who bring in articles and topics for study and discussion.
 - The expansion of the D/S/W team, which has taken most of the responsibility for the planning and implementation of this very special ministry. The St. Patrick's D/S/W group is open to anyone of any faith. It is the oldest existing support group for divorced and separated people in Champaign-Urbana and is recognized and given referrals from all segments of this community.
 - The jumbo-sized 65-person Confirmation retreat at LaSalette Retreat Center. The group of teens and adults was so big that extra sleeping spaces had to be squeezed into the main retreat building. I'm especially grateful to Cathy Stierman and the 25 adults who gave their time and care this spring to help prepare 40 young people for entry into our adult Christian community at St. Patrick's.
 - The First Communion preparation class for children and their parents. Karen Kimmey did a thorough and creative job of setting up learning centers and lesson-completion booklets for each week. The parents developed many new adult friendships and a deeper appreciation of their own "roots of faith."
- There is much more to be said, of course --special thanks to all our coordinators for their long hours on the job, to our parents for their loving help and support, and to our children for their surprises and spirit--but, indeed, these are only the highlights of 1984-85!

With joy,

Gary Laumann
Director of Religious Education