

in focus

708 West Main Street

Urbana, Illinois

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Gary Laumann Moves Toward His Future



Gary Laumann, Director of Religious Education (DRE) at St. Patrick's for seven years, will soon be leaving this position to take up new responsibilities. He comments, "St. Patrick's is a loving, growing, dynamic community. I feel as though I've helped to call that forth, and now it's time for me to move on."

Gary came to St. Patrick's in August 1978. As a volunteer member of the staff he helped to organize the Young Adults group in September. The following February he was instrumental in establishing DSW, a support group for the divorced, separated, and widowed. In July 1979 he was hired as DRE.

For Gary, these years have been filled with major accomplishments and memorable experiences. The development of a complete system of religious education and family life ministry, he says, "allows the parish to address the needs of people in many different age groups." Young Adults and DSW are strong and vital programs in this system, even after several years. Both have developed leadership from within, which Gary asserts helps to ensure their continued vitality.

Gary speaks with pride about the parish's commitment to a program that develops social, spiritual, and service awareness in junior- and senior-high youth. He also cites the parish's recognition of family life ministry as a very positive attempt to meet the changing needs of people as they move along their life cycle.

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When it comes to memorable experiences, Gary recalls the times he has celebrated the sacrament of confirmation with young people whom he has watched move through junior- and senior-high programs. "I remember experiencing the power of the liturgy for them on the day of their confirmation."

Gary says he will always remember the many people, some of them hurting, who came to the parish and the programs seeking support and friendship. Nurtured by the care and concern they found at St. Patrick's, they were enabled to support and minister to others.

As for future plans, Gary Laumann and Bernie McCann are to be married at St. Patrick's on June 21. They ask that there be no presents--only presence: "Everyone who has shared with us, learned with us, been a friend to us is invited."

Bernie will continue her work with children who are handicapped and/or have learning disabilities. Gary will work in education part-time while he completes a doctoral program in Counseling Psychology.

What has this time at St. Patrick's meant to Gary? *"It's been a real gift, a place where I could use my talents and ideas with a group of people who were interested and supportive."* He continues: *"I've felt the fullness of the Spirit in the community through liturgy, small-group experiences, sacramental programs. A number of times I've felt the presence of the Risen Lord."*

Gary says he feels a bit like Saint Paul, who once wrote to the community at Philippi, where he had lived and ministered, "I never think of you without being thankful." Well, Gary, that's how we feel about you, too. Good luck--we'll miss you!



Carolyn McElrath Chosen As Director Of Religious Education

Carolyn McElrath has been hired as St. Patrick's Director of Religious Education for the coming year. She will take up her full-time responsibilities on July 1.

Following the resignation of Gary Laumann from this position, a search committee was formed to seek and screen qualified candidates. The committee's enthusiastic recommendation of Carolyn McElrath was ratified by the Parish Council in April and passed on to the pastor.

Carolyn has coordinated adult religious education for the parish for two years. She will continue to serve in this capacity as she assumes her responsibilities as DRE.

Her experience and knowledge of St. Patrick's complement her academic and catechetical training. Carolyn has a Master's degree in anthropology and is now completing a Master's degree in religious education. She has earned coordinator certification through the program conducted by our diocesan Office of Catholic Education.

Carolyn and her husband, Dale, have lived in the parish since 1981. She has served as lector and eucharistic minister and has served on several parish and diocesan committees.

In accepting the position, Carolyn

Mary Did, Mothers Do

The angel said to her: "Rejoice, O highly favored daughter! The Lord is with you.... Do not fear, Mary. You have found favor with God. You shall conceive and bear a son and give him the name Jesus."... Mary said: "I am the servant of the Lord. Let it be done to me as you say." (Luke 1:28,30-31,38)

Today the obstetrician says, "Congratulations! You're pregnant!" The awareness of new life is confirmed; mothering begins.

The birthing room has replaced the stable, and downy blankets the swaddling clothes. Yet the single mother, the first-time mother, and the mother of five-now-six today experience the wonder and joy of giving birth as Mary did.

Did Mary wonder what mothering was all about? The evangelist records her response to the angels' songs and the shepherds' visit this way: "Mary treasured all these things and reflected on them in her heart." (Luke 2:19) Today's mothers also treasure and reflect on the joys and concerns intrinsic to mothering. The gospels do not suggest that Jesus gave his mother quick answers or easy solutions.

Mary did not receive a great deal of attention in the gospels. We catch glimpses of her at Bethlehem, at the temple with her infant and later as her son came of age, at the marriage feast in Cana, and at the foot of her son's cross on Golgotha.

Is not mothering thus revealed as a quiet, faith-filled art? The practice of which involves wonder and joy, pondering and pain--and grace?



Social Committee Makes A New Beginning

Fifteen parishioners met with Sister Rosemarie on April 22 to make a new beginning together as members of the Social Committee. With the enthusiastic support of the group, Ann Fejes accepted the role of chairperson for a six-month term.

Free-flowing ideas shared that evening developed into plans for parish social events, with subcommittees organized and chairpersons named. Events include holiday coffees (Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day), a summertime ice-cream social, a square dance--and much, much more.

Members explored ways of welcoming newcomers and helping them to become more easily assimilated into parish life. Plans were made for recognition of new parishioners at coffee shop and distribution of a pamphlet introducing St. Patrick's Parish. A suggestion box will soon appear at coffee shop to encourage the sharing of ideas about social events.

The Social Committee is a standing committee of the Parish Council. Its goal is to foster Christlike unity in our parish community through social interaction, communication, and celebration. Sr. Rosemarie serves as Council liaison with the committee--as well as its chief recruiter and good-will ambassador.

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said: "I look forward to building on existing programs. Catechesis occurs within the context of experienced fellowship and shared worship and leads to service and discipleship. Community guilding and content are important. The faith and community of St. Patrick's make this position an especially appealing way to serve."

Three Join Parish Council

St. Patrick's parishioners, on April 19-20, elected Betty Lou Daly, Wally LaBerge, and Bill McClellan to three-year terms on the Parish Council.

A retired farmer from rural Urbana, *Betty Lou Daly* was "oh, my, surprised" by her election to the Council. "I think it will be a big challenge," she said. "My husband served on the Parish Council several years ago, and he really enjoyed it. I thought I'd give it a try."

In her 34 years as a member of the parish, Betty Lou has served on several committees. She currently serves on the wedding reception catering committee. She looks to the diocesan stewardship campaign as a way of whittling away the parish debt, which she believes is the biggest concern facing the Council.

The fourth time around was a charm for *Wally LaBerge* as he sought election to the Parish Council. "I was disappointed each time before, so I said, 'What the heck, I'll try it again'--and I made it!"

Of the three newly elected members, Wally is the only one with Council experience. Since November 1985 he has filled the vacancy left by Frank Nasca, who resigned. "Serving even those few months has increased my acquaintance with parishioners--maybe that made the difference in this election."

Wally would like to foster a continued close community spirit in the parish through the Parish Council. "I think we are blessed with this now through the leadership of our pastor," he said. "If and when Father Hennessy does leave us, I think he'll know he's leaving something really positive behind."



Betty Lou Daly



Wally LaBerge

In his tenure as co-chair of the Education Committee, *Bill McClellan* has attended several Parish Council meetings, but this is the first time he has run for a seat on the Council.

"It seems to me that now is an exciting time to be a member of the Council," Bill said. "One major task ahead is to receive and respond to recommendations of the Long-Range Planning Committee, looking to the future of St. Patrick's Parish."

In his four years at St. Patrick's, Bill has been involved in a number of programs. He finds serving as a sponsor in the catechumen program his favorite activity. "We walk part of their journey with the catechumens, sharing the spirituality of the group. It is a particularly good experience. I think anyone who has been involved in it cannot help but feel humbled by the experience."



Bill McClellan

Bishop O'Rourke Appeals For Help

The Diocese of Peoria, following the lead of 75 percent of the Catholic dioceses in the U.S., has embarked on an annual stewardship program to raise funds needed to support diocesan outreach programs and member parishes.

Under the leadership of Bishop O'Rourke the clergy, religious, and lay men and women of our diocese reach out to guide, care for, and serve the Christ-in-us through such means as Catholic Social Services; the Family Life, Education, and Christian Worship offices; and numerous other commissions, offices, boards, and services.

In addition to his role as leader, the bishop is responsible for the spiritual and educational development of seminarians who will one day minister in local communities. He is also called on to meet the needs of retired and infirm diocesan priests. And he responds to the parishes which turn (as St. Patrick's has turned) to him for assistance.



As members of St. Patrick's Church, as members of the faith community we call the Diocese of Peoria, we share the call to serve as well as to be served. We have experienced the loving care of the Christ-in-us through diocesan ministries; what we generously give in return to the bishop's call to stewardship may be an expression of our loving desire to serve through others in ways that we ourselves are unable to serve.

* * * * *

The diocesan stewardship campaign at St. Patrick's was co-chaired by Paul Hughes and Barbara Peckham. They were assisted by associate chairpersons Peter Bloome, Allen Booth, George Fahey, Mike Grady, Elaine Hershberger, Wally LaBerge, Leon Mayer, Ray Moenich, Shirley and Walter Splittstoesser, and Bill Weisiger.

The campaign involved over 250 members of the parish in a pyramidal structure that distributed the work among volunteers operating in small teams. The goal of the drive was to reach or even to exceed the quota of \$26,000 set for St. Patrick's through a personal appeal to each member of the parish. The outcome will be reported when all pledges have been tallied.



“Taste And See . . .”

On April 12-13, the Third Sunday of Easter, 41 children of St. Patrick's faith community for the very first time approached the table of the Lord to "taste and see how good the Lord is." After months of preparation, of listening and reflecting and praying with their teachers and parents, they joined their families and friends in the "communion of the faithful." With eagerness, with excitement, with wonder touched with a sense of importance, they took into their hands and their hearts the Christ-bread blessed and broken for love of us all:

in focus is a publication of St. Patrick's Parish, 708 W. Main St., Urbana, Illinois.

Editorial staff: Communications Committee, with articles contributed by staff and other members of the parish community.

Glory to God in the highest (they sang)
*Jasmine Barcelona, Donny Beckett,
 Eric Bialeschki...*

and peace to his people on earth.

*Maciej Boni,
 Joseph Brenner, Jessica Cruzan...*
 Taste and see the goodness of the Lord,
*Justin David, Emily Delanty,
 Sarah Dial...*

the goodness of the Lord.

*Kevin Ducey,
 Elizabeth Dwyer, Kate Fejes...*

When we eat this bread

*Jacqueline Follain, Thomas Follain,
 Jeremy Gaskins...*

and drink from this cup,

*Kelly Ann Gnagey,
 Blake Good, Joshua Healey...*

we proclaim your death, Lord Jesus,
*Jessica Jennings, Matthew Kacich,
 Cheralyn Kesler...*

until you come in glory.

*Lisa Leming,
 Hope Michelson, Gian-Paolo Musumeci...*

To be your bread now, be your wine now,
Erin Mutty, Ronin Niemerg,

Sarah Paulsen...

Lord, come and change us,

*Matthew Pierson,
 Adam Pijanowski, Joanne Richardson...*
 to be a sign of your love.

*Matthew Riddle, Shannon Ryan,
 Amanda Salisbury...*

Blessed and broken, poured and flowing,
Scott Shannon,

Samuel Sloan, Samantha Sutton...
 gift that you gave us,

*Jennifer Tempest, Cheryl Trotter,
 Amy Weber...*

to be your body once again.

Meghan Wool, Mary Youakim.

Amen! Amen! Amen! Amen!