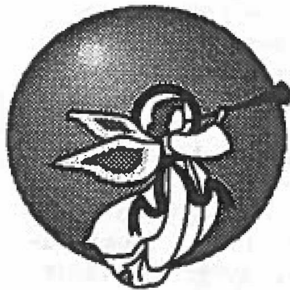


S T P A T R I C K ' S P A R I S H

In Focus



"The Coming" Has Come!



"Advent" means "the coming." As the opening season of a new Church year, it means the coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ: his coming as our Savior in time, to share with us his life and love, and his coming at the end of time to welcome us into eternal life.

Advent, in our Church calendar, begins next Sunday, Dec. 1.

Advent is a time to share the wonderful tradition of our Catholic faith. The riches of that tradition are a very great treasure that we ourselves have to appreciate before we can share it with others or hand it on to our children.

Our parish experience of RENEW has loosened up some of us and helped us to share with others. The Advent wreath, the Jesse tree, and Reconciliation are some of the Advent customs that help us to reflect upon the wealth of our tradition.

There are a lot of great things going on during Advent, things like family fun and get-togethers, the feast of Mary's Immaculate Conception, fresh snow reminding us of winter fun and of Mary's beauty (which the great English poet William Wordsworth described as "our tainted nature's solitary boast"), the warmth of a fireplace or a bonfire at the skating pond, the warmth of God's love shown by his promise to send Jesus to be our brother.

Advent is a good time for family sacramental absolution, either at the times set for individual Reconciliation in our church or at the communal Reconciliation services at our church and other local parishes on Dec. 16, 17, and 18.

A family might pray together this little Advent litany during the hectic days before Christmas:

Lord Jesus, you are the light of the world.

Response: Come, Lord Jesus.

You are light in our darkness. R.

Son of God, save us from our sins. R.

Bring hope into the lives of all people. R.

Give your peace to all nations. R.

Be the joy of all who love you. R.

Bless us as we gather here in your name. R.

Lord Jesus, stay with us. R.

Let us pray:

May Christ give us his peace and joy,
and let us share them with others.

All praise and glory are his for ever.

Amen!

Our Children Give Thanks

"I am thankful for my parents, my pet turtle, my friends, and I am really thankful for God," wrote Diane Plewa, a third-grader in St. Patrick's Wednesday evening religious education program.

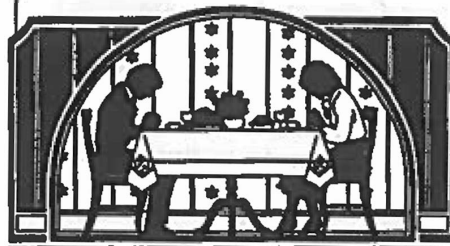
For this Thanksgiving weekend issue, *In Focus* asked a third- and a fourth-grade class "What are you thankful for?" The most frequent answer was "my family" or "my parents" or simply "my mom and dad."

The way to these young people's hearts is definitely through their stomachs: more than half of them are thankful for food. Others are thankful for life. Nick Pavia sums them up: "I am thankful for my family, food, and life."

With the topic of homelessness in the news, three youngsters expressed thankfulness for home or for shelter. Friends are also high on these lists, as well as pet dogs, cats, hamsters, and gerbils.

Larry McMahon listed all of the above, plus "a yard, a car, education, electricity, money, and entertainment." Several students were thankful for their teachers or for education. Nikki Parker's list included "Nature, Jesus, my

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RENEW: An Ending That Is Also a Beginning

Helene Kacich, parish coordinator of RENEW, reminds us that although the renewal program that



has engaged St. Patrick's for the last two and a half years may be coming to a close, the process of renewal continues.

"When two or more Christians

share our faith, we are assured that Christ is in our midst and that the life of God and the gifts of His Spirit are at work in us. Through the RENEW small group meetings we are in a very vital way opening ourselves to the Spirit's working in us and through us." The truth of this statement from the RENEW Overview book was apparent, as you will see, in the many responses I received from the RENEW small group participants when I asked them to name some way they were benefited by the RENEW program.

The majority of their comments dealt with sharing faith and/or making new or deeper friendships within these small groups. I'd like to share some of their comments with you as we conclude our parish's final RENEW season.

Sharing Faith

- Renewed excitement about my faith.
- Reinvolved in religion.
- Motivation to be the best me I can be.
- More positive about my faith and the Catholic Church now than I have been in a very long time.
- Felt really a part of the body of Christ.
- A boost to my faith.
- Helped me to get through daily life.
- Learned new things about the Catholic faith.

- Shared concerns of my faith but more importantly learned from others.
- Better perspective in learning to trust in God's will.
- Personal time to share and know Christ's love through others.
- Appreciation of the faith of others and an experience of being accepted for myself.
- Was the first time I really shared stories of faith outside my family. I'm not afraid to share outside my small group now.
- RENEW has offered me time to share aspects of my faith with other Catholics; we really have so little opportunity for this.
- Great that we are dialoguing on faith more, something not part of my experience in growing up as a Catholic.
- Opportunity for me to proactively practice my faith and experience St. Pat's as a faith community.
- Caused me to examine my faith and found it lacking in certain areas. Even though I haven't always changed, at least I have thought about doing some things differently, and that in itself has caused me to feel refreshed.

Stronger Sense of Community

- Appreciate and love old friends in a new way.
- Now have a support network.
- Stronger sense of community at Mass.
- Best way as a new parishioner to get to know people in the parish.
- Received a greater experience of St. Pat's as parish family.
- Sense of belonging.
- Golden opportunity to get in touch with a new faith community at a new parish.
- Awareness of the marvelous diversity of God's people.

Although RENEW small groups were not bible-study groups, participation did lead to a greater understanding of the bible for many—even though some of the short letters of Paul were hard to find! A few participants even

bought a new bible.

Patience and listening skills were also developed. And some groups grew very creative with the themes and their get-togethers! The following, written by friends in the group facilitated by Tom Shaw, is one I just have to share:

*There once was a group called RENEW
Where gathered a reluctant few;
But with Tom's fearless leading,
The discussions, and reading,
We gained friendship and insight
that grew!*

We have all heard "The Lord's Call" in our lives. The Lord invites us to make a "Response to the Lord's Call" with the "Empowerment of the Holy Spirit." We are called to become disciples and followers of Jesus Christ and to nourish our "Discipleship" through the Eucharist. It is through "Evangelization" that, as an inviting and caring community, we are challenged to share with others our faith and the Good News of the Lord.

The RENEW program is indeed coming to an end, but renewal as a process does not end here. We are at yet another beginning. It is the hope of the RENEW Core Committee that members of many of the small groups will continue coming together. To facilitate those groups and to foster the formation of others, a "dialogue" on base communities is planned for the weekend of Jan. 25-26.

I cannot end without thanking the many people who served as facilitators for the RENEW small groups. And although each group had a designated facilitator, many others shared in the responsibility for planning the meetings, hosting meetings in their homes, or otherwise providing leadership. I thank you all. And I encourage each and every small-group participant to continue in some form of faith sharing at St. Patrick's, perhaps in your small group or as a member of a combined or new group, or in a parish program.

Christmas Traditions Alive and Well in Poland

St. Patrick's parish is made up of people from many countries and cultures, some less well known than others. It is with great pleasure that In Focus shares these reflections about Christmas in Poland, written by Irena Wroblewska and illustrated by her husband, Andrzej.

Christmas, the time of joy and reconciliation, is the most celebrated holiday in Poland, a country where almost 95% of the citizens are Roman Catholic. The traditions of this feast have been preserved with faith and love over many centuries.

The most significant is the Christmas Eve supper, called Wigilia, a special meatless meal gathering the whole family together. The table is specially arranged, covered with a white cloth under which hay is spread as a remembrance of the place where the child Jesus was born. Usually one place at the table is set for an unexpected guest who may knock at the door that night.

When the first star appears, the meal begins with the breaking and sharing of the "oplatek," a large wafer stamped with scenes of the Nativity, which has been blessed by a priest. First the parents break the wafer and share it with the rest of

the family, wishing happiness and exchanging messages of love.

The supper traditionally consists of twelve dishes, symbolizing the twelve apostles. It includes the favorite barsch, a clear beet soup with "pierozhki," a kind of ravioli filled with mushrooms; a clear mushroom soup with pasta; a carp, fried or boiled, with a gray gravy with raisins; cabbage with mushrooms; and a compote of dried fruits. Wigilia concludes with poppy-seed cake and gingerbread cookies.

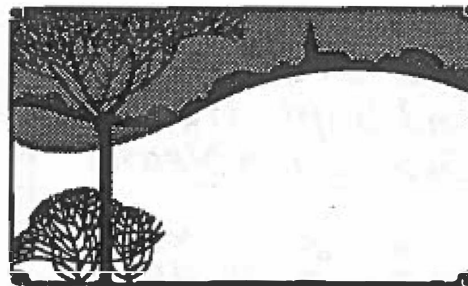
After the supper, everybody gathers around the lighted Christmas tree, where gifts await. A very significant element of the Christmas-tree arrangement is the "shopka" (little shed), with statuettes of the Holy Family, shepherds, and animals: donkey, ox, and sheep. (An ancient tradition holds that on Christmas Eve the beasts can speak.) After opening the gifts, all join in singing Christmas carols and then go to the church to celebrate Midnight Mass (called "Pasterka," or "Shepherds' Mass"), commemorating the birth of Jesus.

Christmas Day is a family day. It is a time to meet with relatives and friends, and a big dinner is served.

The day after Christmas, "the second day of Christmas," is also

celebrated.

In fact, the celebration of Christmas lasts until Jan. 6, the Feast of the Three Kings.



During this time it is the custom even today, in some villages, for children and young people to dress as angels and devils, the Three Kings, King Herod, shepherds, bears, and storks, and go from house to house carrying a star-shaped lantern on a long stick. They sing carols and enact scenes from the Nativity, the Adoration of the Magi, and the like. They are welcomed with Christmas cakes and other delights.

In spite of many rapid changes in the contemporary world, in spite of difficult political and economic circumstances, the traditions of Christmas are strongly alive and much loved in Poland.



Archives Committee Seeks Parish Photos

The parish Archives Committee has been busily gathering, compiling, sorting, and recording information about St. Patrick's Parish, looking toward the parish centennial.

Nancy Steerman, a member of the committee, is gathering photographs for a parish photo album. If you have pictures of parish events that you think may be of interest to the committee, please leave them for her at the parish office, with your name, address, and telephone number. (Nancy would like to be able to return any not selected for the album.) Please identify the parish event and the people pictured, and the year the picture was taken, if you can.



Marian Shrine and Baptistry Dedication Nears

Two years ago St. Patrick's gave the go-ahead for a significant remodeling of the church interior, last renovated in 1978. The current three-part project consists of a Marian shrine, a permanent baptistry, and artwork to highlight and accent the tabernacle housing the Blessed Sacrament.

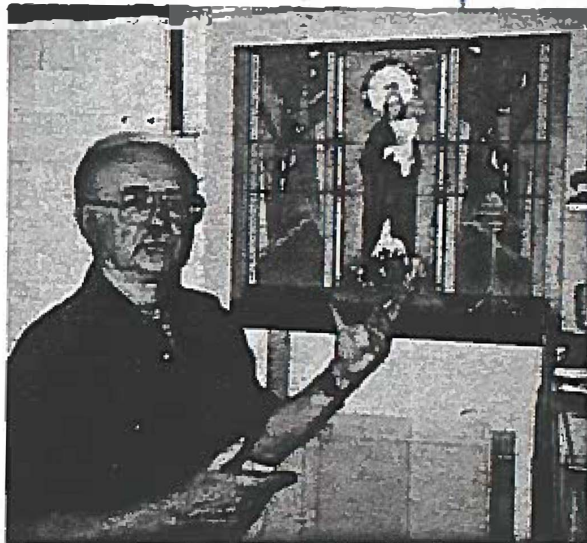
The artistic treatment was conceived and crafted by parishioner Nick Britsky, whose "Rising Christ" graces the church sanctuary.

The dedication is planned for Dec. 8, feast of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, which coincides with the Second Sunday of Advent this year. Parishioners will participate in the dedication and blessing of the three areas in the church at all Masses that weekend.

A procession to the Marian shrine, with an introduction describing some of its features and concluding with a blessing, will move next to the baptistry and then to the tabernacle area.

The ceremony will conclude with a sprinkling of the assembly with holy water drawn from the baptismal font in a parish renewal of baptismal promises.

In word, worship, and song we give thanks for our parish church, our gathering place for worship of our God and our home for the visible symbols and signs of God's presence among us.



A Witness to the Power of Prayer Reflections on "Take and Receive"

I've been a full participant in Sr. Charlene's sessions based on "Take and Receive," a five-book series offering support and direction for solitary prayer as well as a framework for use in group prayer.

I accepted Sr. Charlene's invitation with an open mind. It didn't take long for me to realize that this was no ordinary group. It was not a faith-sharing or prayer group. It was not a bible-study group (although we used scripture). It was not Christ Renews His Parish by a different name. It was not a RENEW group, where I shared my spirituality with my sisters and brothers and nurtured the group's growth through encouragement and support.

Using the series, Sr. Charlene guided us through the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius. The experience satisfied my searching soul. These *Spiritual Exercises* afforded me the stillness and guidance I needed to develop an ever-deepening intimacy with my Lord, allowing him to guide my every moment.

We draw strength from exercise. St. Ignatius Loyola believed in this kind of strength through the transforming power he received from his practice of contemplative prayer. His prayerful exercises completely turned his life around.

The "Take and Receive" series helped me realize that I could communicate with my Lord in a very deep and meaningful way through contemplative prayer at home, at any given moment during the comings and goings of my busy day. Consequently, rather than make a well-meaning effort to visit the Lord, I invited him TO MOVE IN WITH ME and to follow me around all day; to share, to laugh, to make decisions together. It's been wonderful!

I encourage anyone who has not yet experienced contemplative prayer to try it. It is not too late to register for the "Take and Receive" five-part series, which gets underway again in December. Beginning dates:

Dec. 2, 10-11:30 a.m., Dec. 5, 7-8:30 p.m.
Just call the parish office, 367-2665, to register.

by Nancy Steerman

Reflecting on a Holy Shrine

A place is made holy by virtue of an event that occurs on the site. A place may also be made holy by blessing and by acts of worship that ensue there. Finally, a place may be deemed holy because a holy object or one commanding reverence is located there.

As Catholics we honor Mary, mother of Jesus, with the title Mother of God and seek her intercession on our behalf. She holds a central place in our devotions. During the remodeling of our church interior, the statue of Mary was removed for repair and repainting. Its temporary absence from its accustomed place caused some consternation among parishioners, a powerful testimony to her place among us as mother of Jesus, our brother, hence our mother too.

Restored to a place of honor once again in our church, the statue, presented originally for the 1903 dedication of St. Patrick's church, will continue to remind us of our holy mother, Mary, and her loving care for all God's children.

The Marian shrine establishes for us a holy place, a reminder of God's mystery, grace, and love.

Ensign Robert Brown Reports

Parishioner Rob Brown, commissioned in the U.S. Navy last spring, has been on assignment in the Mideast aboard the destroyer *U.S. Deyo*, combing the Gulf water in search of submarines. Because of the sensitive nature of the mission, information about it cannot be shared even with his family.

Excerpts from Rob's letters home, shared here by his parents, Tom and Rose Brown, give substance to the saying "Join the Navy and see the world"!

Ensign Brown writes: "The *U.S. Deyo* left Athens, Greece, on a Friday, arriving in the eastern Mediterranean between Turkey, Syria, and Cypress. I did a lot of sightseeing in Athens, visiting the Acropolis, a large hill covered with the remains of stone pillars, walls, and buildings. Debris everywhere. There are many interesting shops, and I've taken dozens of pictures. We're heading for Naples for about a month of repairs."

Later, Rob wrote from Naples describing a one-day tour of Rome. "How I wished I had time to see more. Highlight was the Vatican and St. Peter's Basilica. Breathtaking! I also toured the Roman Forum, the Coliseum, and many historical places."

During the month of repairs, while serving as Officer of the Deck, Rob ran into a visitor: Brian Erikson, his Urbana cousin. "I gave him a tour of the ship. Later, he took me to the military base where he works and showed me his room in the Bachelor Enlisted Quarters. ... What a small world; to go overseas and meet a relative by chance! It reminded me of the tale Dad once told of meeting his older brother on a Pacific island during W.W. II."

When Rob's ship returns to Charleston, S.C., on Dec. 23, he will be granted two weeks' leave. He plans to spend it "back home in Urbana."

St. Patrick's Social Committee Is Back (and Busy!)

Newly activated, the Social Committee is planning a number of activities for the holiday season.

First on the agenda is LUNCH WITH SANTA, on Sunday, Dec. 15, in the parish center, starting at noon. The children of the parish and their friends are invited to enjoy lunch, games, and a visit with Santa. Photographs with Santa will be available at a reasonable price (to be announced). Tickets are \$4 each and will be sold at coffee shop on Dec. 1 and Dec. 8. Attendance will be limited to approximately 125. Committee member Jill Rear is organizing the event.

The annual NEW YEAR'S EVE DANCE on Tuesday, Dec. 31, will begin at 9:00 p.m. in the parish hall. Music will be provided by a D.J., featuring selections from the Sixties and the Seventies. A sandwich

buffet and nonalcoholic drinks will be provided. Please watch the parish bulletin for more details.

Committee members are also considering the initiation of MONTHLY POTLUCKS. The potlucks would be held on Sunday evenings, with a special function immediately following. Such functions might include square dancing or featured speakers. Parish groups might "adopt" a scheduled potluck as a means of furthering a specific goal or mission.

Tentative plans for 1992 also include a SEDER SUPPER during Lent.

Anyone who would like to help with Lunch with Santa or the New Year's Eve Dance should call Wayne Davis (359-6322, evenings). Wayne would also be happy to hear comments on the proposed activities or ideas about other parish functions for consideration by the committee.



December 8...

Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary



*Father,
the image of the Virgin is found in the Church.
Mary had a faith that your Spirit prepared
and a love that never knew sin,
for you kept her sinless from the first moment of her conception.
Trace in our actions the lines of her love,
in our hearts the readiness of faith.
Prepare once again a world for your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.*

Amen.

*Opening prayer,
Mass of the Immaculate Conception*

Encountering Jesus in the Eucharist

Every Sunday when we pray the eucharistic prayer we hear: "Take this, all of you, and drink from it: this is the cup of my blood." And a few moments later we are invited: "Happy are those who are called to his supper."

More than 20 years ago the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy of Vatican II urged that a beginning be made: On some occasions communion should be received in the fullness of the sign, both the bread and the cup.

In his pastoral letter on the liturgy, Joseph Cardinal Bernardin echoed the Vatican's General Instruction of the Roman Missal: "It is most desirable that the faithful ... share in the chalice. Then, even through signs, communion will stand out more clearly as a sharing in the sacrifice actually being offered. ... Holy communion has a more complete form as a sign when it is received under both kinds. For in this manner of reception a fuller light shines on the sign of the eucharistic banquet."

Nothing is changed here from the Church's teaching that under the form of bread or under the form of wine Christ, whole and entire, is received. Although we are invited to receive communion under both forms, everyone retains the option not to do so.

But we are human. We remember what Paul wrote to the Corinthians: "Every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes." We do things in human ways. What could be more so than this eating and this drinking? In bread, "the staff of life," we find strength and nourishment. In wine, "fruit of the vine and work of human hands," we find delight and festivity and God's promise of salvation.

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Kids, continued from page 1
community, church, books, clothing, human language, sacraments, holidays, and music."

Fourth-grader Kathleen Tounshendeaux has the last word: "I am thankful for church because it teaches me about Good."

In Focus wishes to thank third-graders Dawn Morano, Michael Kinkaid, and Tom Tounshendeaux, and fourth-graders Leslie Heller, Rachel Holloway, Allen Pfaff, and Alan Howard, whose comments were not quoted but provided the basis for this article, and their catechists, Tricia Crowley (third grade) and Amy Fahey (fourth grade).



St. Patrick's In Focus is published on the last weekend of the month in Urbana, Illinois. News items and information may be submitted by mid-month for the next issue. Written materials must include the name and telephone number of the writer.

Please leave news items in the Communications Committee mail bin in the parish center, or call a committee member. All submissions are subject to review and/or editing by the committee. By-lines are generally omitted.

Editorial board: Tom McDunough, 367-3171; Mary Lou Menches, 344-1125 or 244-4701; Bridget Peters, 337-7663; Gary Riskowski, 344-4394; Katherine Schrader, 344-5995; Merdy Smith, 367-6159; Peggy Whelan, 367-3668.

Associates: Harriet Davis, Amy Fahey, Donna Price, Carole Rebeiz.

Articles and information for this issue were contributed by Helen Barrymore, Rose Brown, Peggy Darragh, Wayne Davis, Helene Kacich, Fr. Paul Kinder, Mary Lou Menches, Carole Rebeiz, Nancy Stearnon, Andrzej and Irena Wroblewski.

**Deadline for submission of information,
articles, and news items for the January
issue of In Focus is December 10.**



Quick Fixin's from the Kitchen of... a Jewish friend and neighbor of St. Patrick's

Potato Pancakes for Hanukkah

4 large raw potatoes
1 onion
2 eggs
1 T flour
salt
pepper
salad oil
applesauce

Grate potatoes and onion. Put all ingredients (except salad oil and applesauce) into a medium bowl and mix with a fork. Preheat electric skillet or frying pan, spreading salad oil over the bottom.



Pour batter by scant 1/4 cups into the skillet to make 3 or 4 pancakes at a time. With pancake turner flatten mounds into 4-inch circles. Cook until browned and crisp on the underside (about 5 minutes). Turn and cook until other side is browned and crisp. Drain on paper towels, then place on a warm platter. Keep warm until all batter is used. Serve with applesauce.



December 1991



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 8a Library 9a, 11a, 6:30p Religious Ed. 9a RCIA 10:15a Child Lit	2 10a Love 7p Education Comm mtg 7:15p GROW 7:30p Liturgy Comm mtg	3 1:45p CCNH, Rosary 6:45p Beginning Experience 7p First Reconciliation 7p Spiritual Journey	4 Religious Ed: 6p Urbana 6:30p St. Joe 6:30p RCIA 7p Pro-Life 7p SVDP	5 1:30p Discussion Group 7p Child Lit Choir 7p Love	6 10:45a CCNH, Mass 5:15p Mass for Immaculate Con- ception	7 8a Mass for Immaculate Con- ception 5p Mass for 2nd Sunday of Advent
8 Dedication of Bap- tistery & Marian Shrine at Masses 8a Hospitality tbl 9a, 11a, 6:30p Religious Ed. 9a RCIA 10:15a Child Lit	9 10a Love 7:15p GROW	10 1:45p CCNH, Rosary 7p Financial Affairs mtg 7:30p Parish Council Exec Com 7p Spiritual Journey	11 12:45p MM Bandage Rolling Religious Ed: 6p Urbana 6:30p St. Joe 6:30p RCIA 7p SVDP 7:15p Bldg & Grd	12 1:30p Discussion Group 7p Baptism Prep 7p Child Lit Choir 7p Love	13 10:30a Fontana NH, Mass 10:45a CCNH, Mass	14 8a Mass - Finale for RENEW, with brunch
15 8a Library 9a, 11a, 6:30p Religious Ed. 9a RCIA 10:15a Child Lit 1p Social Comm Lunch with Santa and Mrs. Claus	16 10a Love 7p Cursillo 7:15p GROW 7:30p Social Ac- tion Comm mtg 7:30p Communal Reconciliation, St. Matthew's	17 1:45p CCNH, Rosary 6:45p Beginning Experience 7p First Reconciliation 7p Spiritl Jny 7:30p Communal Reconciliation, St. Patrick's	18 Religious Ed: 6p Urbana 6:30p St. Joe 7p SVDP 7:30p Communal Reconciliation, Holy Cross	19 1:30p Discussion Group 7p Child Lit Choir 7p Love 7:30p Parish Council	20 10:30a Urbana NH, Mass 10:45a CCNH, Mass	21 1:45p CCNH, Rosary
22 4 - 6p Individual Reconciliation	23 7 - 8p Individual Reconciliation 7p Child Lit Choir 7:15p GROW	24 CHRISTMAS EVE 1:45p CCNH, Rosary Evening Masses: 4p, 6:30p and 10:30p	25 CHRISTMAS Christmas Masses: 7:30a, 10:30a and 12p (NOTE: no 9a.m.)	26 1:30p Discussion Group 7:30p KC	27 10:30a Americana NH, Mass 10:45a CCNH, Mass	28
29	30 7:15p GROW	31 NEW YEAR'S EVE 1:45a CCNH, Rosary 5:15p Mass	Amer/C: Americana, Champaign Amer/U: Americana, Urbana CCNH: Champaign County Nursing Home KC: Knights of Columbus MM: Medical Missions SVDP: St. Vincent de Paul TNT: Twenties 'n Thirties			

