

ST. PATRICK'S PARISH

# In Focus



## An agape for Mitch—and for us, too



Mitch Langendorf's ready smile greeted all comers.

St. Patrick's knows what an agape is: we experienced it on Saturday, Jan. 18. The Greek word agape (ah-gah-pay) was used to describe the communal suppers, forerunners of the Mass, at which the early Christians enjoyed a potluck supper, celebrated the Eucharist, and experienced a great outpouring of Christian love for one another. On Jan. 18 parishioners and friends from the local community came together for a meal and to donate to a good cause. All who came felt a great outpouring of love for Mitch Langendorf, a young man paralyzed from the chest down in a diving accident last year. That's what an agape is all about.

How did this very special event get started? Well, Jerry and Suzie McArthur had a simple idea: How about having something like a fish fry for Mitch? If they could serve 300-400 people, they

might be able to raise as much as \$3000. Hmm, fish fries are coming up, let's do chili instead. It wouldn't take much work, just family and friends to help set up, serve, and clean; then make sure the announcement is in the church bulletin. Jerry found three friends at work, Terry Clennon, Mark Hurt, and Rich Pankau, to cook the chili. Do they know how to cook chili? You bet: all three participate in chili cookouts around the state. Then Jerry found individuals and businesses willing to donate the chili ingredients and other supplies.

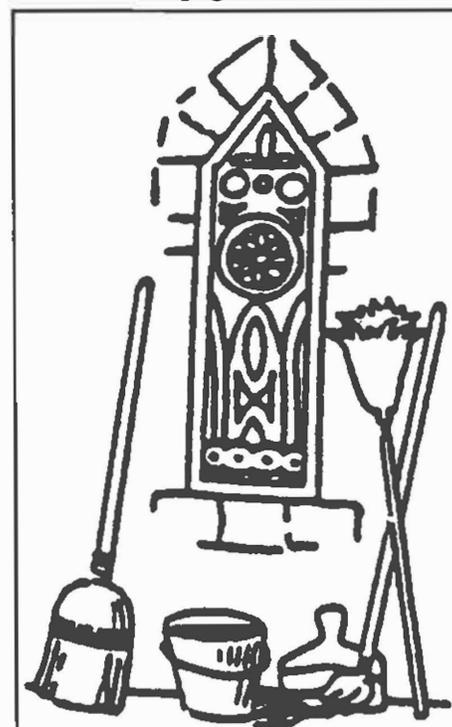
Tom Kacich's *News-Gazette* column on the fundraiser knocked the ball out of the park. It was no longer a small parish event. No one asked Tom to write the column; he's been after the Langendorfs to write about Mitch ever since the accident. His column and his timing were perfect.

Enter Sr. Marie Golla, who sensed that the event could draw a much larger crowd than was expected at the time. Sr. Marie helped organize a smooth-running machine of support teams who took care of decorating, soliciting desserts, cutting and serving desserts, bussing tables, making and posting flyers in C-U, getting notices into church bulletins, notifying the media, having tickets made, and soliciting prizes. As auction items flowed in, Barbara Peckham was asked to handle the bidding. Barbara did a masterful job that added to the excitement of the event.

As Jerry and Suzie watched their little idea snowball that night, they became concerned about having enough chili. About ten family members and friends were recruited to make large batches of mild chili for the children. They remained concerned until the last customer was served from the last batch of chili, diluted to stretch to the very end that Saturday night!

There was some difference of opinion about what to charge for the tickets, but Jerry stuck to his guns. It should be the same price, \$5, as the fish fries, therefore affordable for all families. Jerry estimates that about 1500 people were served, for a total proceeds of \$19,000. "It makes you feel good," Jerry said, "that so many people stepped

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### Come clean!

Everyone is invited to join in cleaning St. Patrick's church on Saturday, Mar. 15, from 9 a.m. to noon.

If you can dust, brush, polish, or shine, come to help prepare our church for the weeks of Easter.

# The ladies say "Thanks to all of you!"

The organizers and guests of the recent Ladies Knight Out extend thanks to all who helped make this event a success yet again. Thanks to Dave and John Palmisano, Chuck and Tom Shaw, Richard Keane and the St. Patrick's Parish Volunteer Waiter Corps, and emcee John Valenziano.

Special thanks to the dishwashing and kitchen crew: Jim Long, Ed Clancy, Terry Langendorf, Steve Harshbarger, Jim Risatti, and all those others who helped wash the 650 dishes, 650 eating implements, and probably another 200 pots, pans, serving implements, etc. Washing, rinsing, drying, and putting away about 1500 items in just an hour must have set a record of some kind!

Commercial sponsors included Town and Country Caterers and Matt Fejes, Central Illinois Produce, Domino's

Pizza, Jim Mayer and the Monticello Theatre Players, Terry and Gary Bosley, Michael and the Archangels, Rick Orr Florist. Thanks too to the door prize sponsors: Starcrest Cleaners, John Palmisano, Timpone's Restaurant, Silvercreek Restaurant, Jumer's Restaurant, Sweet Betsy's Restaurant, St. Louis Bread Co., Mountain Jack's, and The Hideaway Lounge.

The ladies, of course, enjoyed a great meal and had a wonderful time—with no washing up to do!





Welcome to new parishioners:  
Madeleine Evans, Cornelia Perrone.

Farewell to parishioners who have moved from C-U:

Jacqueline and Paul Colussi, Deb and Joe DiPietro, Dan and Isophenia Gleason, Herb and Marina Slinger, Cheryl and Rodger Sprague, Lynda Willis.

We welcome the following recently baptized into our faith community:

John Bookes Evans, Priya William Zukosky, Caitlin Storm Elliott.



## When does Lent end nowadays? And are Sundays a part of Lent?

The season of Lent officially begins on Ash Wednesday and concludes before the evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday. Ash Wednesday, a day of fast and abstinence, sets the tone for Lent through the call to turn away from sin and to be faithful to the gospel.

We tend to think of Lent as a somber time, but for the Fathers of the Church and for monastics like Benedict, Lent is a joyful season. Lent is a time for Christians to live more fully the life they were supposed to be living all the time—and to live it with joy! The post-Vatican II Church returns us to this experience of Lent, characterizing the season as "joyful preparation" for

the paschal feast.

Over centuries the forty days of Lent became identified with Jesus' desert fasting. A fasting of "about forty days" was commonly observed almost everywhere in the Christian world by the middle of the fourth century. Because Sunday, the Lord's Day, can never be a fast day, Wednesday before the First Sunday of Lent became Lent's beginning. This provides a Lenten season of exactly forty days for those who are counting!

Questions about Catholic practice or Catholic teaching may be sent to the Communications Committee in care of the parish office.

## Parish Council News

Because the Council's February meeting was held as this issue went to press, news of the meeting will be covered in the next issue of *In Focus*.



## In Focus

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.

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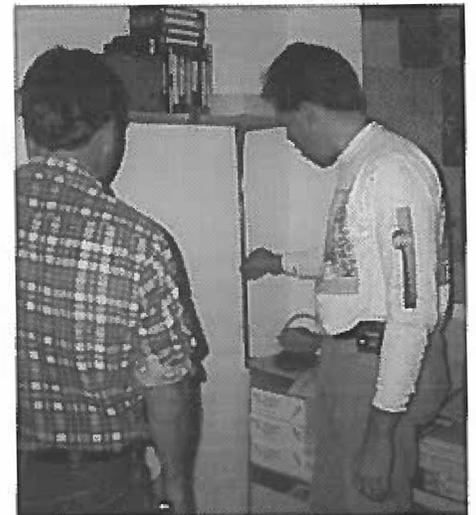
Associates: Joan Apperson, Carol Bosley, Mary Fonner, Julie Herman, Barbara Higgins, Dorothy Maduzia, Lori and Tom McDonough, Cristy Nowak, Marty Perry, Carole Rebeiz, Lucille Salika.

Articles and information for this issue were contributed by: Mary Lee Brady, Sr. Charlene Cesario, Judy Conover, Jean Daly, Mary Fonner, Janet House, Miriam Lancaster, Dorothy Maduzia, Lori McDonough, Mary Lou Menches, Lenore Nagele, Carole Rebeiz, Leslie Risatti, Cathy Salika, Chris Stohr, Irma Wait, Linda Webber, Peggy Whelan. This issue was pagged by Joan Apperson.

On Oct. 26, Make-A-Difference Day, a group of St. Patrick's parishioners ranging in age from 5 to 63 years, met at the Urbana Crisis Center to "make a difference in Jesus' name."

They spent the morning building shelves, cleaning, and playing with the children. Materials for the project were provided by Armstrong Lumber (Urbana).

Ginny Dewar, executive director of the Crisis Center, expressed the thanks of all the center's staff: "Thank you for the gift of your time and effort ... and for keeping the children of our community in your hearts. You are special members of our team!"



Deadline for submission of information, articles, and news items for the next issue of *In Focus* is March 9.

*Merciful God,*  
you called us forth from the dust of the earth;  
you claimed us for Christ in the waters of baptism.  
Bless our journey through the desert of Lent  
to the font of rebirth.  
May our fasting be hunger for justice;  
our alms, a making of peace;  
our prayer, the chant of humble and grateful hearts.

All that we do and pray is in the name of Jesus,  
for in his cross you proclaim your love  
for ever and ever.

*Catholic Household  
Blessings and Prayers*



## Janet House writes from Pohnpei

*The end of the semester was pretty tense here at PATS, since about one week of classes was taken away from us because of retreats and a teachers' workshop. I was quite upset that we lost that time to teach the students.*

*Our two-week vacation was greatly welcome and needed. I spent it reading, resting, celebrating, retreating, playing, and gardening. The Jesuit Volunteers from Chuuk came to Pohnpei for our mid-year retreat. We spent the time in Kolonia, and we all got a lot out of it. The best thing I got out of that retreat was to hear that other volunteers are faced with the same types of problems. It was good to hear different perspectives, and re-focus on the motivations for being here in Micronesia and on the core values of living simply, keeping faith, and especially community and social justice.*

*After our retreat, on New Year's Eve, we visited the gorgeous double waterfalls in the Kitti municipality of Pohnpei, and then showed the Chuuk volunteers around PATS. The group went on to see the ruins of Nan Madol, a huge tourist attraction on Pohnpei. Instead of going to Nan Madol, I got ready and went to a Christmas and New Year's party at my host family's house. We watched a movie, ate together, and opened presents. My host mother gave me a towel, soap, and candy, which are common and ever-useful gifts on Pohnpei. I gave my host family a photo album with pictures of them inside. Unfortunately I didn't get to see their reaction. I was sleepy by the midnight hour, so I stayed until the New Year and then left shortly after that.*

*We just had our PATS staff retreat this past Friday and Saturday. Not many people enjoyed it, but I got some things out of it and really enjoyed hearing the faith and growth stories of the Micronesians.*

*Last night we discovered a shrew in our house. Joe, one of the JVs here, caught it and hit it with a machete for us. I finished it off and took it outside. I hope I don't get to see any more in our house. Ants, cockroaches, and geckos are one thing, but mice, rats, and shrews are another.*

*Tomorrow we will begin the second semester, and I ask that you join me in praying that it goes well, and that the boys will learn and grow and accept the challenges that are presented to them. I also ask you to pray for me and the other teachers and administrators that we may not get discouraged and that we may continue to challenge the students and encourage them to become better Christians as well as better students. Personally, I want to motivate the students in a more positive manner this semester.*

*Take care, and God bless.  
Janet*

*Letters may be sent to Janet House  
c/o PATS, P. O. Box 39,  
Pohnpei, FM 96941*

## Quick fixin's from the kitchen of . . . Irma Wait



### Beef Stroganoff (Low fat/low cholesterol)

3/4 lb round steak, 3/4 inch thick  
1 can Healthy Request Cream of  
Mushroom Soup  
1 14.5 oz can beef broth

1/2 c water  
1 medium onion, sliced  
3 c no-yolk noodles  
1/2 c plain yogurt

Slice beef into very thin strips. Cook noodles in water, drain, and set aside. Meanwhile, cook beef in nonstick skillet until browned, stirring often; set aside.

Combine soup, broth, water, and onion; stir in noodles. Cook over low heat for 10 minutes, stirring often. Add yogurt and beef, heat through. Serves 4.

## Holy Cross School Newsline

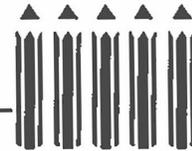
Kindergarten Round-Up was held on Feb. 4. Parents were told about the two half-day kindergarten classes, morning and afternoon, currently offered at Holy Cross School, where limited facilities do not permit housing full-day kindergarten class.

The school celebrated Random Acts of Kindness Week (Feb. 10-14). Students were invited to write their random acts

of kindness on slips of paper, which were posted on the board in the school cafeteria.

Seventh- and eighth-grade Confirmandi Retreat Days were held at St. Boniface (Seymour). Confirmation at Holy Cross Church is scheduled for Mar. 2.

As part of the school's Arts Enrichment Program, dancer Christine



Rich will perform on Friday, Feb. 28. The 1997 PTC Chocolate Drive will take place Mar. 3-19. Money raised during the sale benefits the children's education and environment at Holy Cross School.

## Meager Meals: Less can be more

Do you have difficulty getting into the spirit of Lent? Could you use a "communal nudge"? If we look back far enough to the origins of the Lenten observance, back to, say, the fourth century, we find that it was public and communal, not a private affair.

During Lent this year, children and teens in St. Patrick's religious education classes will plan and serve Meager Meals on Wednesday nights. Meager? Well, simple; maybe soup or macaroni and cheese. The meals are intended to be a reminder to us of our many brothers and sisters in the world who are nearly always hungry.

On Feb. 26 and Mar. 5, 12, and 19, the Meager Meals will be served from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. in the main hall of the parish center. They are open to the entire parish. Guidelines for a simple prayer service will be provided for groups of friends or families to do together, on their own.

All who partake of the Meager Meals will be asked to make a free-will donation of what might have been spent on a more fulsome meal at home. Proceeds will be divided between the Urbana St. Vincent de Paul Society and the American bishops' Operation Rice Bowl to feed the hungry.



## in our parish library

### Passion for Life: Fragments of the Face of God

By Joan Chittister

What qualities will be necessary to live a life of integrity, of holiness in the twenty-first century? What models of those values, if any, have been raised up to show us the way to God in a world that is more preoccupied with the material than the spiritual, more self-centered than selfless, more concerned with the mundane than with the divine, more parochial than cosmic?

The models chosen for this book have been selected on the grounds that they have something special to say to us now, in this particular age.

The models, or icons, presented are male and female, Christian and non-Christian, married and unmarried, religious and lay, pragmatists and artists, named saint by a process or proclaimed saint by the people who lived in the shadow of their lives. Like us they are not without flaws, but so luminous in their virtues as to be a light for the ages.

They are reachable figures, who have lived well through situations similar to our own as proof that we too, in all of our smallness, can stretch ourselves to the limits of the best in us. We call them saints, but maybe, the author asserts, we should call them heroes or stars or icons. For in them are reflected the many facets of the face of God.

Some of the heroes selected for our emulation are Eve ("The Image of God"), Gandhi ("The Force of Non-Force"), Benedict and Scholastica ("Images of Hope"), Rumi ("Icon of Wisdom"), John XXIII ("A Glimpse of the Heart of God"), Martin Luther King ("The Icon of Light in Darkness"), Dorothy Day ("Icon of the Streets"), Amos ("The Icon of Compassion"), Mother Jones ("God's Righteous Anger"), Baal Shem Tov ("Face of a Holy World"), Oscar Romero ("Icon of Ordinariness"), Thomas Merton ("Icon of the Voice of God"), Catherine of Siena ("Woman of Courage"), Joan of Arc ("A Voice of Conscience").

In presenting these icons to us Chittister reveals their special gifts and encourages us to identify with them and to follow their example. "There is no doubt about it," she writes. "The twenty-first century will be a difficult and a dangerous one. Old answers will not propel us through it. Old politics will not do it. Old economics certainly will not do it. Old church cannot do it.

"This book says that the image of those who have themselves bridged equally wide fissures of the past can give us the sight, the hope, the courage that it will take to face population increase, institutionalized greed, and theological decadence with aplomb. This desert is our desert. This time is our time. This challenge is our challenge. This sin is our sin. It is we who hold the future in our hands.

"We need to stand together, to link arms with the Great Ones of the past in order to find within ourselves the Great Heart it will take to shape the future. ... Then, together, may we find a passion for life and ourselves become, for the next generation, fragments of the face of God."

Joan Chittister is a member of the Benedictine Sisters of Erie (Penn.), a widely published author and noted international lecturer. She is recipient of the 1992 U.S. Catholic Award for her work for justice, peace, and equality in church and society.

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥  
 O Lord Jesus,  
 stretch forth your wounded hands  
 in blessing over your people,  
 to heal and to restore,  
 and to draw them to yourself  
 and to one another in love.  
 Amen.

Oh, Señor Jesús,  
 extiende tus manos heridas  
 para bendecir a tu pueblo,  
 para sanar y restaurarlo.  
 Acércalo a ti y concede  
 que se una  
 en mutuo amor.  
 Amen.

Seigneur Jésus,  
 étends tes mains blessées pour répandre  
 ta bénédiction sur ton peuple,  
 pour guérir et restaurer,  
 pour attirer les tiens à toi  
 et les rapprocher les uns  
 des autres dans l'amour.  
 Amen.

Herr Jesus,  
 strecke deine verwundeten Hande aus  
 und segne dein Volk,  
 heile und erneuere es,  
 und zieh alle hin zu dir  
 und zueinander in Liebe.  
 Amen.

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥  
**Thoughts of an RCIA sponsor**

As people embark on their journey of faith in the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults, they help to open our own minds and hearts to the gift we received at Baptism when we were initiated into Roman Catholicism.

It is truly an honor, a challenge, and a blessing to serve as sponsor for one of them. They question, often bringing a fresh approach to scripture, a sacrament, or perhaps a ritual or custom of the Church, prompting us to review or sometimes even to explore a new area of thinking.

Just as we see the world anew through the eyes of little children, so do we "see" our faith come alive with those who are "newborn" to Catholicism. They renew in us this great gift of faith, which we may take for granted. Together, they and we serve as "evangelists" to the very parish community that welcomes them with prayer and recognition. The weeks of preparation culminate in the Easter Vigil, when for the first time we are joined in the celebration of the Eucharist.

We are all blessed in sharing the joy of these very special people!

## Celebrating Lent with children

Children of all ages can participate in feeding the hungry, one of the corporal works of mercy particularly appropriate for the season of Lent.

Very small children can accompany you to the store and help pick out canned and boxed foods to be donated to the local food pantry or to places like the Catholic Worker House that feed the hungry. St. Patrick's, for instance, keeps a basket in the church vestibule for donations of food for the hungry, and the Urbana St. Vincent de Paul Society gratefully gives these donations to the hungry who apply to St. Patrick's for assistance. You and your children might bring food to be put in this basket each Sunday on your way into church for Mass.

If you help out at a local soup kitchen or shelter, encourage your children to come along so they can observe the process firsthand. Older children can help carry in the food and supplies. You might encourage your children to

set aside a portion of their allowance or earnings to purchase food for persons in need and to buy and deliver their donations themselves. More than the giving of money, a youngster's personal involvement provides an important learning advantage. Older children can volunteer at the local soup kitchen, helping prepare the food or setting the dinner table. If there are enough adults on hand, teenagers may also help serve up the meals on a regular basis.

Children can also go through the cupboards at home whenever the parish expresses a need for food, deciding what goodies go into the family's donation sack. You may find that your children unwittingly outdo their parents in generosity by selecting the can of oysters or fancy mushrooms intended for personal pleasure! And don't be surprised if your child includes some candy; even young children understand the needs of other children.



March 24

### Anniversary of the death of Oscar Romero

Oscar Arnulfo Romero, Archbishop of San Salvador, was martyred on Mar. 24, 1980, as he presided at the Eucharistic liturgy in a hospital chapel.

He was born in a small town in a remote part of El Salvador. At the age of thirteen he was apprenticed to a carpenter, but he wanted to be a priest, so he entered the seminary a year later. Because he was bright, Oscar was placed in church jobs that provided training to become a bishop.

When Oscar Romero was appointed archbishop of San Salvador, he was welcomed by the rich ruling families—they were sure that he wouldn't give them any trouble even though they were guilty of violence against the poor.

After a short time Archbishop Romero began speaking out against the overt political repression of the poor. He felt called to be the voice of all the voiceless poor in his country. During his sermons, which were broadcast on the radio to thousands of listeners, he would point out the great sufferings of the poor and call for reform. After three years of constant threats, he was shot to death.

The people of El Salvador treasure his memory because they know he died for the sake of his people. On the anniversary of his death let us remember the poor all over the world and pray for peace with justice everywhere.

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forward to help in so many ways."

Did you see all those desserts? Where did they come from? Cesaria Lanca:er headed the group that telephoned all of St. Patrick's organizations, committees, Bible studies, etc., asking their leaders to solicit dessert donations from their members. Then the unsolicited donations came pouring in, from parishioners, from friends and co-workers of the event's organizers and Mitch's family, some bringing as many as half a dozen pies or cakes or several dozen cookies. Cesaria felt that, despite serving so many people, there were more and more desserts as the phenomenal event progressed.

What about Mitch's reaction? It was one of awe and amazement, a real mental boost. An insight into Mitch's spirit was confided by his aunt, Kathy McKenzie; ever since the accident "the family would go to see Mitch when they were 'down,'" and he would lift them up. Kathy noted that, since we hear about so much bad in the world, the family was touched to see so much goodness and generosity, to see our community pulling together.

Mitch's dad, Terry, says that the family was overwhelmed by the fundraiser. His mom, Chris, wants to

### *For the grieving, joy amid sorrow*

No matter who we are or how we live our lives, eventually we all suffer loss. Sometimes the death of someone close to us follows a long illness, at other times death is sudden, unexpected. What unites Christians during this process called grief is that we can turn to Christ for support and comfort. How many of us have personally known someone who faced death calmly, welcoming the opportunity to "go home"? Though not public figures, those we love demonstrate Christ's love by their response to death and dying. Through our witness, we are given a glimpse of Christ in our midst.

On Good Friday a few years ago, a five-year-old was told by his mother that his grandmother had passed away. He responded: "Why are you crying? She will rise with Jesus on (Easter) Sunday." Allow yourself to express the joy of having known the one who died and to acknowledge your sorrow.

thank each and every worker who helped make it possible, including the people who came from long distances, such as Peoria, Charleston, and Tuscola. Aunt Connie Shaw was amazed that we could serve so many people and that the people were so patient in that unbelievably long line. Friends Steve and Barbara Beckett had lots of fun doing "something positive for Mitch, such a nice young man. Friends Gene and Linda Mueller said, "The amount

of people and amount of caring was overwhelming and warmed the heart."

Funds raised will go toward items such as Mitch's electric wheelchair, lifts for the van, for the bed, and for the shower. Mitch would like to thank everybody, those who worked so hard and those who gave.

Thank you, Mitch, for bringing our parish together in an agape. May the spirit continue. God bless us one and all.

### *I received an unexpected gift*

I was new to the community. She was new to the country. We were a perfect match.

Mary came late to Bible study. Two small children in tow, she seemed uncertain what these American women did on a sunny September morning. She brought her French Bible along with a desire to pray with Christian women. I too brought my Bible, coupled with a yearning for a group of women to fill the friend-shaped void created by our family's move.

Her warm brown face and soft brown eyes reflected the same seeking uncertainty I was feeling. During our study she mentioned that she wanted to learn English better. I quickly volunteered to tutor her. It would help her as well as fill a gap in my own life.

Later that week I visited Mary's small apartment, taking a notebook and a small novel. My plan was for us to read aloud together, and then I would help her with written English. But it seems God had other plans. Even though her English was halting, we communicated as lonely women adjusting to life in a new community. She described her family left behind in Rwanda, and she showed me photographs. She pointed to two large blue metal trunks that carried everything she, her husband, and children packed to begin life in a new country. I told her about how much I missed my friends and life in my old home.

"Mary," I said, "let's forget the English lessons and work on being friends." We did.

She accompanied me to the farmers market, and later we made applesauce. I babysat her daughter while she worked. We drank tea together and chatted on the telephone. She encouraged me when I felt discouraged, and she and her family came for dinner. We explored the new town together, visited the library, and went out for breakfast.

When fighting broke out in her homeland, Rwanda was not for me just another hot spot on the international scene, it was Mary's home. The faces I saw on the nightly news reminded me of my friend's face and the faces of her children. For months we prayed together as she hungered for news from her country and her family. I ached at her pain and fear; I listened to her and worked with our church to get help for her family. That's what friends do.

When I was moving to this new town, I wondered who would become my friends. I envisioned variations on already dear friends: just like me, middle-aged, white, American mothers. Mary was an unexpected gift. Even though language and culture could have been a barrier, they never were. Friendship and love are barrier-proof.

Name withheld on request.

*When we share our faith stories, we are changed; and those listening to us are changed as well. InFocus welcomes faith stories that tell of God's working in our lives. Send yours to the Communications Committee, c/o St. Patrick's, or drop it off at the parish office. Be sure to include your name and a telephone number where you may be reached. Names will be withheld on request.*



## Evangelization and Initiation: Ministries of Transformation

by Thomas H. Morris

Evangelization and initiation are two distinct ministries of the church, yet it is difficult to speak of one without the other. In one of the most significant developments in the church since Vatican II, both have experienced a renewal in the Catholic community.

One of the elemental insights of the Council was a clearer articulation of the church's identity today. When the church is seen as first and foremost the People of God and the Body of Christ, a renewed understanding of baptismal identity emerges as well. Every ministry of the church flows from our baptismal covenant. What, then, does it mean to be a baptized disciple of Jesus Christ in the Catholic Christian church?

The answer can be found in conciliar and post-conciliar documents: evangelization and initiation are the responsibility of all the baptized (see *Lumen Gentium* and *Ad Gentes*; and *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*). What often was considered the work of pastoral leaders is placed squarely in the midst of all the baptized. To embrace Christian discipleship is to assume the responsibilities of evangelization and initiation.

The *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* addresses evangelization both explicitly and implicitly. Explicitly, the rite speaks of the formal evangelization that leads to first faith (see *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, n. 4). In this regard, the rite understands evangelization as the first hearing of the gospel. Note that the text of the initiation ritual was published in 1972, prior to Paul VI's 1975 encyclical on evangelization, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*.

Implicitly, however, the *RCIA* fully embraces throughout the vision of evan-

gelization articulated by Paul VI and John Paul II (see, for example, *Redemptoris Missio*). This vision highlights the broad scope of evangelization—focus on conversion, transformation of all dimensions of life, and inclusion of all the faithful in the mission of evangelization.

The primary message of the initiation ritual is conversion. Initiation is not about membership any more than evangelization is about proselytizing. Initiation is about discipleship, and the language of discipleship is that of conversion; every aspect of human life is opened to God's transforming love. Thus, the entire initiation process is driven by the demands of conversion and the response of faith.

Conversion is God's work. We, the baptized, have a responsibility to create an environment in which catechumens can begin to recognize and respond to the gracious presence of God. This environment of care and hospitality provides them with opportunities to link their life story with the larger story of God's gracious activity in history (Hebrew and Christian scriptures, traditions, etc.). This connection between personal story and God-story is the ongoing task of evangelization for the transformation of the world community. Just as the initiation process forms disciples, the evangelization process deepens that conversion by inviting us again and again to allow the God-story to establish a claim on our life.

Initiation is one direct fruit of the work of evangelization. In fact, we cannot have initiation unless there is robust evangelization that invites people to explore the life of Christian faith. Evangelization is an invitation to

"come and see" what life as a disciple of Jesus is like. Initiation provides the necessary tools to live this life (catechesis based on the word of God, community, liturgy, and apostolic work). Ongoing evangelization enables the baptized member of the community to link his or her life with Christian faith.

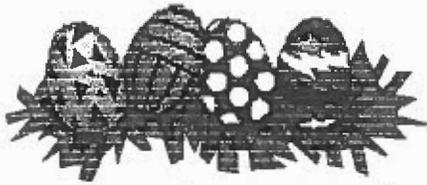
Such links deepen the conversion experience, leading some to witness through service. Often the lifestyle of a particular baptized member attracts someone to the parish community. A dialog opens when the baptized member begins to talk about faith in Jesus Christ. Such conversations lead to further exploration and the invitation is extended again. If one says "yes" to that invitation, he or she begins the initiation process and the church is reborn anew.

Evangelization and initiation: complementary and vital ministries of transformation.

### About the author

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# March, 1997

## St. Patrick's Parish, Urbana

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 <p>Because the In Focus calendar is prepared in advance of scheduled events and meetings, please check the weekly bulletin to confirm dates and times for specific listings. Deadline for the next issue is March 9, 1997.</p>						
9:00am RCIA 9:00am & 11:00am Children's Rel Ed 10:15am Children's Liturgy 6:30pm Jr&SrHigh Rel Ed 6:30pm Bible Study 2	9:30am Archives 11:00am Rosary, CCNH 6:30pm Bible Study 7:00pm Centering Prayer 7:00pm Evan 7:00pm Pro-Life 3	1:00pm GROW 7:30pm Personnel 4	5:00pm SVDP 5:00-6:30pm Meager Meal 5:15pm Children's Choir 6:00pm Rel Ed, URB 6:30pm Rel Ed, St. Joe 6:45pm Men's Bible Study 7:00pm RCIA 7:00pm Choir 5	9:30pm Mom's Group 1:00pm Disc 7:00pm Choir 6	10:45 Mass CCNH 5:15pm Stations 5:30pm Fish Fry 7	 <b>St. Patrick's Dinner Dance</b> 8
9:00am RCIA 9:00am & 11:00am Children's Rel Ed 10:15am Children's Liturgy 5:00pm Bells 6:30pm Jr&SrHigh Rel Ed 6:30pm Bible Study 9	11:00am Rosary, CCNH 6:30pm Bible Study 7:00pm Centering Prayer 7:00pm Social Action 10	1:00pm GROW 7:00pm Executive Com Parish Council 7:00pm Financial Affairs 7:00pm First Communion Prep. 11	9:30am Schola 12:40pm Guild 5:00pm SVDP 5:00-6:30pm Meager Meal 5:15pm Children's Choir 6:00pm Rel Ed, URB 6:30pm Rel Ed, St. Joe 6:45pm Evening Prayer 6:45pm Men's Bible Study 7:00pm RCIA 7:00pm Choir 12	1:00pm Disc 6:30pm Building & Grounds 7:00pm Baptism Prep 7:00pm Choir 13	10:30 Mass Care Center 10:45 Mass CCNH 5:15pm Stations 5:30pm Fish Fry 14	<b>Church Clean up Service Project</b> 15
9:00am RCIA 9:00am & 11:00am Children's Rel Ed 10:15am Children's Liturgy 5:00pm Bells 6:30pm Jr&SrHigh Rel Ed 6:30pm Bible Study 16	11:00am Rosary, CCNH 6:30pm Bible Study 7:00pm Centering Prayer 7:00pm Evan 7:30pm Communal Penance, Holy Cross 17	1:00pm GROW 7:30pm Communal Penance, St. Patrick's 18	5:00pm SVDP 5:00-6:30pm Meager Meal 5:15pm Children's Choir 6:00pm Rel Ed, URB 6:30pm Rel Ed, St. Joe 6:45pm Men's Bible Study 6:45pm Evening Prayer 7:00pm Choir 7:30pm Communal Penance, St. Matthew 19	9:30pm Mom's Group 1:00pm Disc 7:00pm Choir 7:00pm Parish Council 20	10:30am Mass Clark-Lindsey 10:45 am Mass CCNH 5:15pm Stations 5:30pm Fish Fry 21	22
<b>PALM SUNDAY</b> 9:00am RCIA 10:15 Children's Choir 10:15am Children's Liturgy 6:30pm Bible Study 23	11:00am Rosary, CCNH 6:30pm Bible Study 7:00pm Centering Prayer 24	1:00pm GROW 4:00pm-5:00pm Individual Confession 25	5:00pm SVDP 9:30am Schola 6:45pm Men's Bible Study 6:45pm Evening Prayer 7:00pm Choir 7:00pm-8:00pm Individual Confessions 26	7:00am Morning Prayer 1:00pm Disc 5:45pm First Comm Sedcr 7:30pm Liturgy <b>HOLY THURSDAY</b> 27	7:00pm Morning Prayer 3:00pm Stations of the Cross 7:30pm Liturgy <b>GOOD FRIDAY</b>  28	<b>8:00am Morning Prayer 7:30pm Easter Vigil HOLY SATURDAY</b> 29
 30	11:00am Rosary, CCNH 6:30pm Bible Study 7:00pm Centering Prayer <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b> 31	<b>CCNH - Champaign County Nursing Home Rel Ed - Religious Education SVDP - St. Vincent DePaul Society</b>				