

ST. PATRICK'S PARISH

In Focus



Cliff Maduzia in training for the diaconate

As many already know, Cliff Maduzia has been accepted for the seventh class of permanent deacons in the Diocese of Peoria. Cliff and his wife, Dorothy, began attending classes in August and will continue with classroom instruction one weekend each month for the next four years as part of the formation process.

The diaconate is one of the three Orders of the Sacrament of Holy Orders. "Diaconate" comes from the Greek and means "to serve." Deacons, together with bishops and priests, serve the People of God. St. Patrick's Parish can be proud that another of its own members has been accepted for this important ministry.

In my experience, those accepted for the diaconate are already performing a kind of diaconate service in many different ways. And so it is with Cliff. He is very active in St. Patrick's Parish and spends many hours



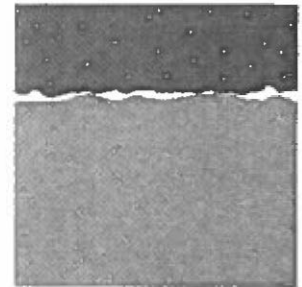
Deacon Dan Murphy with Cliff Maduzia

devoted to social justice matters and evangelization in our community.

On behalf of the parish, I congratulate Cliff as a deacon candidate and personally welcome him into our diaconate family. Please keep Cliff, Dorothy, and their children in your prayers during the next four years of the formation process as Cliff prepares for ordination.

—Deacon Dan Murphy

Advent: Something is on the horizon



The season of Advent means there is something on the horizon the likes of which we've never seen before.

It is not possible to keep it from coming, because it will. That's just how Advent works. What is possible is not to see it, to miss it, to turn just as it brushes past. And we begin to grasp what it was we missed, like Moses in the cleft of the rock, watching God's hindquarters fade in the distance.

So stay. Sit. Linger. Tarry. Ponder. Wait. Behold. Wonder.

There will be time enough for running. For rushing. For worrying. For pushing.

For now, stay. Wait.

Something is on the horizon.

"What do you ask of God's Church?"

For several months a group of Inquirers have met at St. Patrick's to learn about the Roman Catholic faith. On Sunday, Dec. 6, they will come to the church together to be received into the Order of Catechumens. They will be asked "What do you ask of God's Church?" and they will answer simply, "Faith."

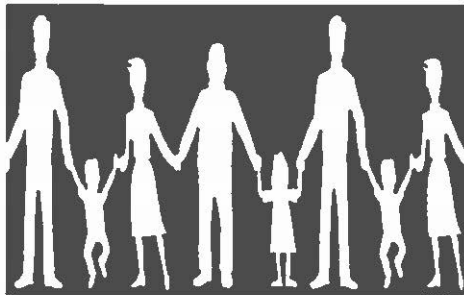
Faith grows gradually in each of us, sometimes in fits and starts, sometimes with plateaus. The Inquirers have already been gifted with at

least the beginning of faith, so their answer does not mean that they want something that they have none of. It means that they want the help of the Christian community to grow in faith until they are ready to become full members of the Church. They want to continue on their journey of faith along with us.

These men and women will be blessed and then accepted into the Order of Catechumens. Their names

will be recorded as a sign that they are now part of our community of faith.

Make the catechumens welcome whenever you have a chance to do so. Invite them to parish activities and keep them in your prayers, asking God to give them the gift of growth in faith. With our love and care and with God's help, many of them will be ready to be received into full membership in the Church during the Easter Vigil.



Welcome to new parishioners: Annabelle Betenia, Noelle Borders and Mike May, Colleen and Peter Bushell, Lyle and Patricia Fettig, Janet and Jerald Payonk, Cindy and Paul Rajlich, James and Lauretta Taylor

Farewell to parishioners who have left C-U: John and Ruth Apperson, John and Margaret Crosson, Bonnie Kelley, Sheila Lyons.

We welcome the following recently baptized into our faith community: Jacob Michael Reynolds, Mason Peter Bushell, Sarah Elaine Lowry.

Congratulations to these couples, married at St. Patrick's: Todd Andrew Brown and Patti Mae Good, Richard R. Hansen and Rebecca Jane Roeper.

Please pray for deceased parishioners: Kathleen Mikolaitis, Rosalia Rund.

ST. PATRICK'S PARISH

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 and staff. By-lines are generally omitted.

Editorial board: Mary Lee Brady, 344-3752 (marylbrady@msn.com); Artha Chamberlain, 344-6645; Mary Lou Menches, 344-1125 or 244-4701 (mmenches@uiuc.edu); Frank Modica, 367-4133 (modicafr@knight.cml.k12.il.us); Cathy Salika, 367-7861 (csalika@uiuc.edu); Katharine Schrader, 344-5995; Peggy Whelan, 367-3668 (m-whelan@uiuc.edu).

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Articles and information for this issue were contributed by Sr. Charlene Cesario, Betty Christian, Morene Christman, Judy Conover, Frances Drone-Silvers, Marnie Fuesting, Julie Herman, Fr. Gene Kane, Lori McDonough, Mary Lou Menches, Frank Modica, Dan Murphy, Susan Nagele, Lu Pillar, Fr. George Remm, Leslie Risatti, Cathy Salika, Barbara Wysocki. This issue was paged by Linda Jackson.

Have brunch with Santa!

On Sunday, Dec. 13, St. Patrick's will have a very special guest for brunch, none other than Santa Claus himself. The event begins at noon, with festivities continuing until about 2 p.m.



Fun with Santa includes brunch, favors to take home, and a personal photo with St. Nicholas himself.

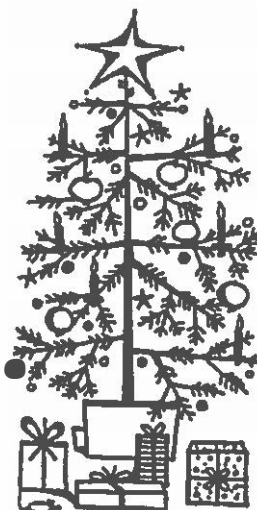
The menu includes a fruit cup, breakfast casserole, cookies, and drink. A donation of \$5 per child is \$5 and \$3 per adult (maximum of \$15 per family) is requested.

Seats are limited, so tickets must be purchased in advance! (There will be no tickets sold at the door.) You can obtain tickets from Nov. 22 through Dec. 6 at Coffee Shop or through Dec. 9 at the parish office.

The Great Christmas Giveaway

St. Patrick's religious education program is sponsoring a Christmas outreach project, working with Catholic Social Services to provide holiday gifts for area foster children.

If you would like to participate in this project, take a name from the bulletin-board display in the parish hall. All gifts must be wrapped, labeled, and delivered to the parish center by Dec. 17 in order to be distributed to the children at their Christmas party on Dec. 19.



Guild invites all on North Pole Expedition



St. Patrick's Guild presents the second annual North Pole Expedition on Friday, Dec. 4, in the parish hall. Everyone is invited.

At 6 p.m., auction items will be previewed. These include a handmade sleigh, a creche, a Father Christmas wall hanging, and several afghans.

The preview will be followed at 6:30 p.m. with Christmas caroling and the auction itself at 7 p.m.

Ornaments and baked goods will be offered for sale throughout the evening. A refreshment table will be open all evening as well.

Baked goods or items for the auction may be left at the parish office (open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.).

"We hope to see everyone there!" says Leslie Risatti, speaking on behalf of all the Guild members. So mark your calendars: Friday, Dec. 4, from 6 p.m.!

Help Wanted!

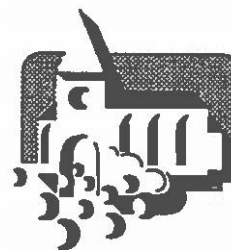
Communications Committee seeks volunteers to page *In Focus*.

If you can use paging software (PageMaker or QuarkXpress) and can spare a few hours 3-4 times a year, call Mary Lee Brady (344-3752) or Mary Lou Menches (344-1125).

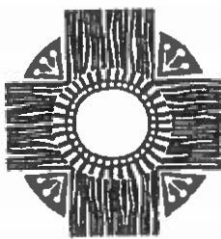
Ads submitted by parish groups are limited to 30 words (give or take a few), including the name of the sponsoring group and the name and telephone number of a contact person.



Deadline for submission of information, articles, and news items for the next issue of *In Focus* is December 6.



Week One: Darkness



The Advent journey begins in darkness.

We require darkness for birth and growth: the seed in the ground, the seed in the womb, the seed in our souls. In the dark lie possibilities for intimacy, for rest, for healing.

Although we may find journeying in the dark fearsome or confusing, it teaches us to rely on senses other than sight. In the process we learn that darkness bears the capacity for good. Our work is to find what that darkness asks of us.

In these Advent days of darkness and waiting, it may indeed seem that God's face is hidden from our sight. But the sacred presence is there, breathing in the shadows. This is when we learn to trust senses other than sight. This is when we learn to seek the face of God beneath our fingertips.

Pastoral Care Day of Reflection Dec. 5

Eucharistic ministers to the homebound, the hospitalized, and nursing-home residents are graced with the opportunity to bring the body and blood of Jesus Christ to those they visit. Others may represent the body of Christ, the faith community, as they pray with shutins, share news of the parish and other parishioners with them, by their presence give comfort and reassurance that these are not forgotten.

In these and other ways ministers of pastoral care live out their commitment to "be examples of Christian living in faith and conduct" and "strive to grow in holiness through this sacrament of unity and love."

A Pastoral Care Day of Reflection has been planned for those who participate in any way in this ministry to shutins. Ms. Barbara Logan, director

Communal Penance our call to reconciliation

One of the major breakthroughs in the revised Rite of Penance is the restoration to public consciousness of the social dimension of sin. Reconciliation with God goes hand in hand with reconciliation with our sisters and brothers who form the Church.

Especially in communal penance services, the ritual proclaims in word and action that as a community we acknowledge that no one is free from sin, that we are all called to a continual change of heart, and that we are all in need of God's merciful and healing love.

Although each person may acknowledge particular sinful actions, there is also a renewed sense that we all have a share in what might be called the sinfulness of society. When the structures and the values of a society support or even foster material evil, such as oppression, homelessness, or racism, sin is present in the society as a whole. Our cooperation with injustice may be active or passive or even unwitting, and it becomes our task to uncover the sinfulness of which we may be unaware.



Communal celebrations of the mystery of penance and of God's forgiving love reemphasize the ancient truth that no one should feel alone in his or her experience of sin, neither should anyone feel separated from the forgiving love that God offers to each one who contritely approaches Divine Mercy.

This year the local Church gathers for communal reconciliation on Dec. 14 (Monday) at Holy Cross, on Dec. 15 (Tuesday) at St. Patrick's, and on Dec. 16 (Wednesday) at St. Matthew's. The service, the same each evening, begins at 7:30 p.m., with priests from the three parishes participating in each.

Brush up on your "re-membering" skills

If you have a family member or friend who is an inactive Catholic, you may find these tips helpful:

- Be nonjudgmental, affirming, accepting, patient.
- Let them see your own faith working in your life.
- Share some of your own doubts and struggles with them.
- Love them unconditionally.
- Don't push or force them into coming back.
- Don't argue about their reasons for not going to church.
- Don't place limits on Jesus's gift of salvation for all of us.
- Let your discussions be inviting instead of confrontational.

of the diocesan Office of Divine Worship, will address the topic "Blessed are they who will dine in the kingdom of God," inviting participants to a deeper intimacy with the risen Christ present in the Eucharist.

The Day of Reflection is one way for our pastor, Fr. Remm, our pastoral associate, Sr. Charlene, and the pastoral care coordinators to express gratitude for your ministry and to assist in your ongoing formation in this ministry, which means so much to so many.

When? 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Dec. 5

Where? St. Patrick's parish center, multipurpose room

Reservations? Yes; RSVP to the parish office, 367-2665, by Dec. 1

Lunch? Box lunch, \$5.00, or bring a sack lunch



in our parish library

My grandfather passed away today

My grandfather passed away today, and I'd like to share with you how I was helped to deal with this.



I have always felt that those who die are really better off than we are. So although I feel sorrow because I miss someone who has died, I'm happy for that person. I haven't had to deal with this kind of loss very often. When I was told that my grandfather died, I didn't cry at first. I guess people might think I'm callous because I'm not crying; I guess I'll just have to deal with that.

Tonight, as I was thinking about my grandfather, I suddenly felt a small surge of energy going right through me; I thought of my grandfather living on through me because he and I are of the same "blood." This feeling lasted only a fraction of a second. But I realize that it isn't being of the same blood at all that does it—we were and we are connected because of God.

When I was growing up, I learned to see God in nature. Lately, and especially now, I see better that God is in all things. Like Brother Lawrence, I do try to remember God's presence and remind myself to live with God at all times and in all things, but I am a poor example. Tonight, though, it hit home very strongly. We are all a part of that Great Spirit that lives and moves in all things. My grandfather and I are together, one, living in God.

—Kevin

When we share our faith stories, we are changed; those listening to us are changed as well. 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. Names will be withheld on request.

Would you like to make Christmas more meaningful? Perhaps focusing on Advent will help you to celebrate the Christmas Season in a new way. Here are some books from the parish library that can give you some ideas (you can find these on top of the bookcase to the left of the door as you enter the library):

An Advent Sourcebook, ed. by T. J. O'Gorman. For parents and teachers; includes prayers, meditations for the days and weeks of Advent, and contains reflections on the Immaculate Conception and St. Nicholas. (264 Ogo)

Advent Begins at Home: Family Prayers and Activities for Advent and Christmas, compiled by D. Polek and R. Anderhub. Prayers for the Advent wreath, feast days, family celebrations, ideas for calendars, bulletin boards, mobiles, posters, gifts, games, and more. (264 Pol)

Advent Prayer and Scripture Meditation, by I. Powers. Day-by-day reflections for quiet time. (264 Pow)

Day by day through Advent, by D. Lowery. Suggested scripture readings, reflection, prayer, and practice: "Today I will...." (264 Low)

The Jesse Tree: A Cutout Book, by M. Konrad. Make your own tree by copying and coloring the pages from this book. Includes the history, meanings of the symbols, and blessing prayers. (263 Kon)

Arise Jerusalem: A Family Advent Handbook. Contents are geared to a variety of ages. Numerous family sharing and discussion sections, a reflection on the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary, and suggestions for Epiphany. (263 Pau)

You Can Choose Christmas, by C. Reid. A thoughtful reflection for adults on making Christmas more meaningful. (263.91 Rei)

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The parish library also has a collection of books for children. If you'd like to help your children think about the spiritual meaning of the Christmas Season, try some of these (currently located on top of the bookcase on the south wall of the library):

The Strange Young Man in the Desert (John the Baptist)

Saints-in-Waiting: Saints of the Season for Children, Advent and Christmastide

Mary's Story

Anna and the Christ Child

The Little Shepherd and the First Christmas

A Song for Joseph: A Christmas Story for Children

The Baby Born in a Stable

A Newbery Christmas:

Fourteen Stories of Christmas by Newbery-Award Winning Authors

The Secret of the Star: The Story of the Wise Men

The Innkeeper's Daughter

Books may be checked out for a month. Please write your name, the current date, and your telephone number on the card inside the book. Leave the card in the library.

If you need help finding these or other library materials, please call Frances Drone-Silvers (398-1458).



From Religious Leaders for Community Care— The C-U Good News

The Martin Luther King Community Choir is forming, and participation is open to anyone interested. The first practice was held at Salem Baptist Church on Nov. 21; others are scheduled for the following Saturdays at 2 p.m.: Nov. 28, Dec. 5, 12, and 19; Jan. 9, 16. The choir, under the direction of Todd Taylor, will participate in the Martin Luther King Celebration at Krannert's Great Hall on Jan. 17.

Study Circles on racial reconciliation are being organized and will meet once a week for six weeks starting in January. (Facilitators provided.) Call 351-4455 for information.

A local campaign for a living wage ordinance is underway, recognizing that local workers who are making the minimum wage are still making less than the Federal poverty level for a family of four (an hourly wage of \$7.72, or \$15,000 a year). Inadequate income afflicts people of every ethnic group in C-U. The coalition's goal: "To pass a living wage ordinance that requires businesses that accept contracts and tax relief from local government to pay all their employees a living wage. Local governments would also be required to pay their employees at least the same amount." Other cities that have passed such a law include Baltimore, Chicago, and Los Angeles. For information call Michelle Kaminski (356-2608) or Gene Vanderport (384-2906).

Parish Council News



News from the Council's November meeting will appear in the next issue of *In Focus*.

Our Advent wake-up call

The year is 1597. You are a Lutheran pastor in a town in western Germany. Because of the political and religious tumult that followed the Reformation, you have had to leave your last two posts. Now the plague has arrived in your town, and from the window of your study you watch body after body being carried to the cemetery. As pastor, you are probably exhausted from your ministry to the dying and bereaved. How are you feeling? In just these circumstances Philipp Nicolai wrote:

"Day by day, I wrote out my meditations, I found myself, thank God, wonderfully well, comforted in heart, joyful in spirit, and truly content. I gave my manuscript the title "Mirror of Joys," to leave behind me (if God should call me from this world) as the token of my peaceful, joyful, Christian departure, or (if God should spare me my health) to comfort other sufferers whom he should also visit with this pestilence."

Nicolai's manuscript included two hymns, still sung today: "Wake, O Wake, and Sleep No Longer" and "How Brightly Beams the Morning Star." The first of these will be sung at St. Patrick's during Advent this year.

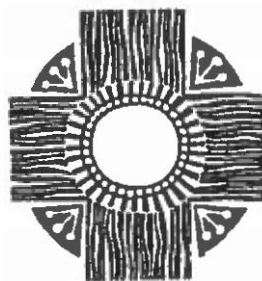


Nicolai wrote both the words (in German) and the music. Most hymn writers have the skill of the poet or the musician, but not both, so this was very unusual. The following translation by Christopher Idle, a contemporary English hymnist, conveys the eager joy of Nicolai's text:

*Wake, O wake, and sleep no longer,
For he who calls you is no stranger:
Awake, God's own Jerusalem!
Hear, the midnight bells are chiming
The signal for the royal coming:
Let voice to voice announce his name!
We feel the footsteps near,
The Bridegroom at the door—
Alleluia!
The lamps will shine
With light divine
As Christ the savior comes to reign!*
—Trans. copyright 1982 Hope Publishing Co.

Is Nicolai writing about Jesus's coming in Bethlehem, or about the coming at the end of time, or about one's entry into heaven after death? Perhaps all three!

Week Two: Desire



Each year, early in the fall, the voices begin clamoring to tell us what we want. We cannot go shopping, read the newspaper, listen to the radio, or watch television without being told what will make our holidays complete. But the voices will never tell us what we really long for, what we desire with heart and soul.

We who have sat in the darkness know how the shadows give way to desire. Without sight, without our heads swimming with the images of what others tell us we want, we can turn our gaze inward and search our souls. What calls to us? What wounds cry out for healing? What longs to be born in us this season? What is the yearning that we have not dared to name? Will our desires draw us closer to God? Do we really believe the Holy One desires us, loves us unconditionally, longs for us?

The one who invited Mary into partnership assures us that we too are desired and desirable. So desired, we are invited to claim our own desires and to name the longings that we carry in this season.

Healing the Wounds

The fourth flyer for "Healing the Wounds" (Project Rachel) addresses the spiritual wounds of abortion and how these can be healed. Please read and share this flyer with others, and continue praying daily for the spiritual and psychological healing of women and men wounded by abortion.

Prayer for vocations

I trust in you, Lord, to help me make a good decision. Please guide me in choosing the right vocation for my life. Help me to open my heart and mind to you, and give me the strength to fulfill your wish for me.

Mary's Immaculate Conception

On Dec. 8 the Church honors Mary, who was conceived without sin, unique in God's creation, because she was to be the mother of God in the person of Jesus.

At St. Patrick's we celebrate this remarkable grace with Mass offered on Dec. 7 (Monday) at 5:15 p.m. and on Dec. 8 (Tuesday) at 7 a.m., 12:10 p.m., and 5:15 p.m.

From Dr. Susan Nagele

The following is excerpted from a letter dated Sept. 27 and received Oct. 17.

This has been a very busy week. On Tuesday our cook decided to return to her husband in Narus and just stopped working. I found this out at 11 a.m. when the food I'd given her to cook for lunch was still sitting in the kitchen. Since it was my week to supervise the cooking, I had to do it! Believe me, cooking is a full-time job here. Tim has really been very helpful; Flora less so—she does things to suit her needs. However, we did get an oven and so yesterday we were able to bake bread for the first time since I returned. That also takes a lot of work because the oven is fueled with firewood, but it really is nice to have some bread!

It has been extremely hot and dry. Our dining room registers 100 degrees at midday, and at night we have to pour water on the cement floors to cool them down. Sometimes I wet down a kanga and lay it over me in bed. The kitchen must be 120 degrees with that stove going, and at the end of the day I'm exhausted. The last two nights I've slept 12 hours each, and I still feel tired when I get up. Tomorrow I will turn the cooking duty over to Flora, but I think I'll offer to help her more than she helped me. It's too much for one person.

Also, tomorrow we're expecting Fr. Leo to come with two guests from Maryknoll: Lisa Nolan, our area coordinator, and Marty Roers, a lay missionary working in Kenya. He might be interested in coming to Sudan to do some catechetical training with Leo and Tim. He's a fine person who will finish 3-1/2 years in Kenya next June. Say a prayer that the Lord might call him to come to work with us.

Since I've been back, I've had a patient with very advanced breast cancer. She's probably about my age, but she looks much older. Her left breast is about five times the size of the right and full of a huge bad-



smelling mass. There are signs that it's spread to her liver and bones, so about all we can offer is pain treatment and dressings. She's a sweet little woman, and we're teaching her 12-year-old daughter to do the dressing. For me it is a privilege; she really has no one to show her any compassion. Her family tells her that she is going to die, so what's the use. It is times like these when I know why I'm a missionary and not just a doctor working for an NGO. Sometimes I think about Jean [Susan's sister] and wonder if I'm doing as good a job of nursing as she would. I doubt it, but I'm probably not a bad alternative!

Since returning to Sudan I feel like I have a lot more energy to get on with life and put other things behind me. I've seriously started in on language learning, and although it's slow, I can probably do it.

Peace and love,
Susan

You can write to Susan at DOT c/o NCA, Box 52802, Nairobi, Kenya. Donations may be made by check payable to MMAF and mailed to MMAF, Attn: Promotions, Box 307, Maryknoll, NY 10545-307; put "for the mission account of Susan Nagele" in the memo section of the check.



It's not over 'til it's over

Would the cast of a play leave before the final curtain? The orchestra before the finale? The team before the final buzzer? At Mass, we are all of us the cast, the orchestra, the team.

The end of Mass comes quickly: After the silent prayer that follows communion, there is a prayer and maybe a hymn. Some announcements follow, then a blessing and dismissal, perhaps a final song. Is it really asking too much of one another to see it through to the very end?

Yes, the little ones are antsy; many of us are, at this point. A few minutes more won't hurt, and neither will cries and squirming.

And yes, staying means rubbing elbows with everyone, people jamming the aisles and bunching at the doors, a procession of cars slowly moving out of the parking lot. But isn't this one way we recognize that we are becoming what we have shared: the body of Christ, risen from the dead, going out into the world to give to others what has been given to us?

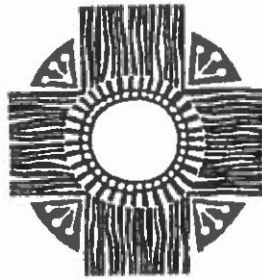


It's a simple act of kindness, finishing the liturgy before leaving.

If we slow down just enough to finish our liturgy, maybe we'll come to finish well other things in life too. When we learn to relish and not rush the ends of things (the last minutes of a movie, the final words of a conversation), what we are truly learning is to relish and not rush the end of our days—a final act of gratitude that gives God praise.

Excerpted from *Liturgy 90*, Nov./Dec. 98.
Used with permission.

Week Three: Preparing a space

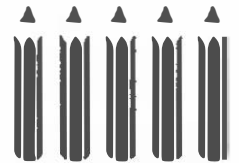


In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus says of John the Baptist, "This is the one about whom it is written, 'See, I am sending a messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you'" (11:10). In another Advent reading Isaiah proclaims, "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God" (40:3). While both Matthew and Isaiah draw our attention to the horizon from which the Holy One will appear, they also draw our gaze to the path itself.

This season beckons us to ask, what am I preparing for? What is the way that is being prepared within the wilderness of my life? What does it mean for my own life to become a path of welcome for the Holy One? How do I give myself time to notice the ways that the path unfolds before and within me?

If we become so consumed by getting Christmas right, we risk missing the surprising ways that God prepares *us* in this season. As we open to God's guiding in these Advent days, we may discover that the space being prepared for the coming birth lies with our own selves.

Holy Cross newsline



Announcements: Holy Cross students collected over 400 tubes of toothpaste for Make-a-Difference Day! A great job!

Grandparents shared lunch and a special Mass with their grandchildren on Nov. 24.

Report cards were issued Nov. 6. Parent-teacher conferences were held Nov. 12-13.

An all-school Mass was celebrated on Nov. 20.

An ecumenical Thanksgiving service was held on Nov. 24, followed by a reception.

Thanksgiving vacation began Nov. 24; students will return Nov. 30.

Construction update: Bishop Myers blessed and dedicated the newly constructed addition Oct. 31. Demolition of the annex building began Nov. 7.

Prayers: Sr. Kathleen had surgery on her parathyroid gland in Rochester, Minn., returning on Nov. 14. Keep her in your prayers.

Continue to pray for Ms. Beiser. Her condition is improving, and she is almost finished with her course of radiation treatments.

Pray for Holy Cross second-graders as they begin their First Reconciliation preparation.

Fund raisers: A Book Fair was held Nov. 12, and a fall Bake Sale was held Nov. 22 in the parish center.

A Holiday Boutique featuring crafts and sweets is planned for Dec. 5-6 (5-8 p.m. Saturday, 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Sunday) at 405 W. Clark.

Congratulations: Fourth-graders were pictured in the *News-Gazette* as they celebrated All Saints Day. They made their own costumes and reported on their chosen saints.

Northern Illinois Water Corp. has granted Holy Cross a Champaign Chamber of Commerce Project Grant, which will be used for a new cafeteria table. Thanks, NIWC! (Several more tables are needed.)

St. John Damascene, a beacon of light for difficult times

John was born in Damascus, Syria. His father was a government official under both the Byzantine emperor and the Muslim rulers of Damascus. John received an excellent classical education and, since he was fluent in both Arabic and Greek, he too worked in the Muslim court until the caliph's hostility toward Christianity caused him to resign his position, about the year 700.

He became a monk at Mar Sabas Monastery near Jerusalem, where he taught and preached many of his enlightening sermons. It was at about this time that a controversy shook the churches of the East, with some people believing that venerating icons—painted or mosaic pictures of Jesus, the saints, and scenes from the Bible—was the same as worshiping idols.

John wrote brilliant essays explaining that sacred images were not the same as idols, that instead of worshiping these images Christians found that looking at icons helped them to enter into the mysteries depicted. But when the Byzantine emperor ordered the destruction of icons in the Christian churches, John's writings drew the ire of the emperor and the hatred of the iconoclast party.

He has left us with many writings, including his principal dogmatic work, *The Source of Knowledge*, which was a "summa theologica," a refutation of heresy, an exposition of the Orthodox faith, and a study of contemporary religious issues. His writings on Mary constitute a true theology of the Mother of God, and his sermons on the saints, liturgical feasts, and the Gospels not only reveal vast learning but also give us information about local customs and contemporary happenings.

He also wrote beautiful poetry and songs, some of which are still sung in our churches: "Let all mortal flesh keep silence" and the Easter carol "Come, you faithful, raise the strain" are two that may be familiar to St. Patrick's parishioners.

John was declared a Doctor of the Church in 1980. He is especially remembered on Dec. 4, his feastday.

St. John inspires all of us to use our knowledge of God to spread the Good News and help enlighten our corner of the world. That way, we too can be a beacon of light in difficult times.



Q: You are always saying that we need to learn to pray, not just say prayers. What do you mean?

A: In the history of the Church, and for centuries before, there have been four basic forms of prayer. Advent is a good time to try them.

1. **PRAYER (ORATIO):** What we daily "say" or "recite"; calling out "help!" The special intentions. We offer. . . Our prayer book, praise, thanks, contrition, petition, faith's call to friendship. Our Father. . . "seek, ask, knock". . . exhortation.

2. **MEDITATION (MEDITATIO):** Put yourself into the scene with Christ. Be there; hear Him, see Him, respond to Him. Live Game. Interaction. Wonder at what is done. . . rejoice. Commiserate with the Lord. The Rosary (one way). . . Personally react from within.

3. **SPIRITUAL READING (LECTIO DIVINA):** Read and respond. Read, pray in response. Open your heart to what touches your heart. Ponder as you would a love letter. Muse on what the Spirit moves you to say, to feel. A scripture prayer. Psalms, "spiritual reading."

4. **CONTEMPLATION:** Mary's passive receptivity. Waiting in communion; being with Him without conversation, letting Him come to and be with you, love you, care for you in trust. This is the end form that all prayer leads to. The Rosary (another way). The Spirit's work. Intimacy with the Divine Presence within.

We normally go from one to another form of prayer, as in human relationships, depending upon mood, circumstances, fatigue, morning, nighttime.

The key word is BE. Invest self; breathing life into prayer.

—G. K.

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

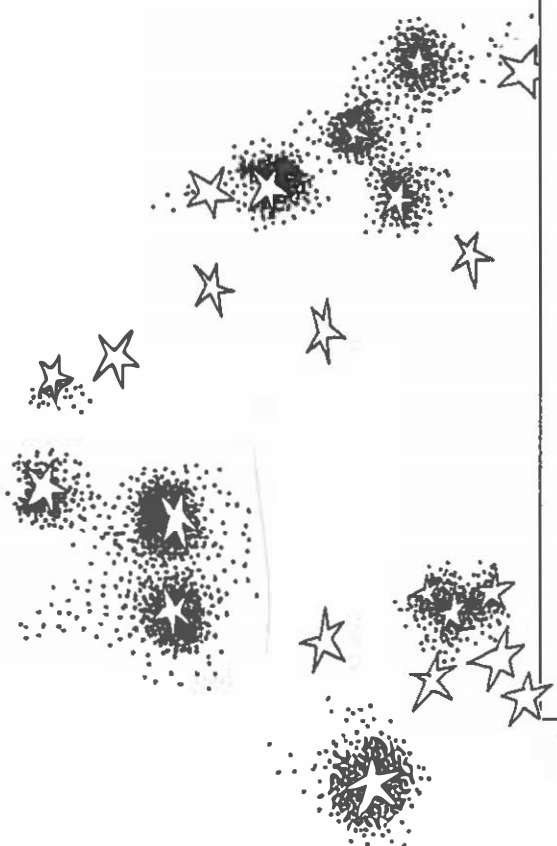


Quick fixin's from the kitchen of . . . Betty Christian

Christmas Salad

- 1 can cherry pie filling
- 1 small can crushed pineapple, drained
- 1 medium carton whipped topping
- 1 can Eagle Brand Condensed Milk
- 1 1/2 c miniature marshmallows
- 1 small pkg nuts

Mix all ingredients together, and chill for at least one hour.



These four gave the gift of life

In our modern, safe, and very comfortable American culture martyrdom, dying for one's beliefs, seems very distant from our experiences. Yet the history of the Church from its very beginning to the present recounts many tales of brave men and women who have made the ultimate sacrifice, paying for their beliefs with their lives.

Dec. 2 marks the eighteenth anniversary of the abduction, rape, and murder in El Salvador of three American nuns and one Catholic lay worker. These four women, Maura Clarke, Ita Ford, Dorothy Kazel, and Jean Donovan, had chosen to work with the poor of El Salvador. They were killed during the course of a brutal civil war between the government and leftist rebels.

Clergy and church workers were often targeted by right-wing death squads because advocacy for the rights of the poor was viewed as subversive by some elements of the government and the military. Archbishop Oscar Romero, an outspoken advocate for peace and social justice in his country, was assassinated several

months before the murder of the four American women. Many thousands of civilians were also abducted, tortured, and killed by government death squads.

Earlier this year several men who had been sentenced to long prison terms for the murders of the four women were paroled after serving only seven years of their sentences. They said that they had received orders from higher authorities to kill the American women.

Until a few months before they died, the women felt safe because of their American citizenship. With Archbishop Romero's death, however, they realized that their lives were in danger. But they also knew that poor people depended on them, so they continued to deliver food, lead Bible study and health classes, and assist others who searched for loved ones who had been arrested by the police. Knowing how much they were needed, the four chose to stay and work, whatever the cost. They gave their lives.

Week Four: Hope



A seed in the ground. A flame in the darkness. A hand outstretched. A child in the womb. Hope starts small and overtakes us, stretching the borders of what we have known.

One "yes" to an angel, and Mary becomes a revolutionary. Mary pours out a song, a cry of hope that echoes the one raised by Hannah after giving birth to Samuel. The powerful brought down from their thrones! The lowly raised up! The hungry filled with good things! The rich sent away empty!

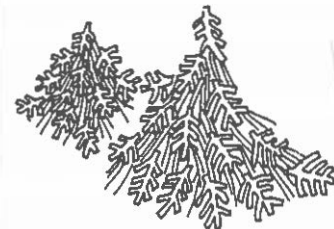
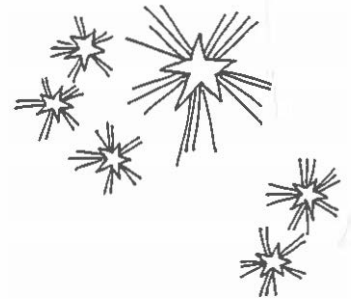
Hope starts small, even as a seed in the womb, but it beckons us to step out with the belief that the action we take will not only bear fruit but that in taking it, we have already made a difference in the world.

God invites us, like Mary, to step out with sometimes inexplicable faith, trusting that we will find sustenance. The hope of God contains the promise that we will be fed, even if we never see the fruit of our hope-filled actions.

Thankfulness comes from the heart

Thank you, God,
for today with all it brings.
For tomorrow, should there be one.
For the warming of the sun
on my growing-old bones.
For the freshening wind
that scours my yard
of fallen leaves.
For the scent of autumn.
For the first frost
and the last mosquito,
a portent of things to come.
For the first snow
that covers the bare soil
of this year's garden.
For warm blankets and warm pets
in the chill of the night.
For embraces and smiles
that warm the heart.
For kind words and kind thoughts
that warm the spirit.
For brother and sister,
family and friends,
companions on my journey.

For priest and confessor
and saints and sinners.
For today's prophets who cry out
your message of salvation.
For sickness and health.
For your Food for my journey,
the Staff of Life.
For birds of the air and
fishes of the deep
and beasts of the field.
For Brother Sun and Sister Moon
and the stars in the heavens,
for all of your Creation.
For infants and children,
for teenagers too,
and for the ancients among us.
For hunger and thirst
for Justice.
For life and all it brings.
For you, my Lord and Creator,
my Sweet One,
my loving Father,
my God, my All!





December, 1998

St. Patrick's Parish, Urbana



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>X 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 December 6, 1998.</p>		9:30am Moms Group 7:00pm Financial Affairs 7:00pm First Reconciliation Celebration	5:00pm SVDP 5:15pm Children's Choir 6:00pm Rel Ed, Parish Center 6:30pm Rel Ed, St. Joe Grade School 7:00pm Choir 7:00pm RCIA 7:30pm Personal Com	6:45-7:45am Men's Bible Study 11:30am Centering Prayer 6:00pm Church History 7:00pm Choir 7:30pm Bldg & Grounds	10:45am Mass Champaign County Nursing Home 6:30pm Guild North Pole Auction and Sale	6:00pm Pastoral Care Day of Reflection
		1	2	3	4	5
9:00am RCIA 9:00am & 11:00am Children's Religious Ed 10:15am Children's Liturgy 5:00pm Solemn Vespers for Advent 6:30pm-8:00pm Jr-Sr High	5:15 Mass Immaculate Conception 7:00pm Centering Prayer 7:00pm Education 7:00pm Pro-Life	Immaculate Conception Masses: 7:00am 12:10pm 5:15pm 7:30pm Executive Com, Council	9:00am Schola 5:00pm SVDP 5:15pm Children's Choir 6:00pm Rel Ed, Parish Center 6:30pm Rel Ed, St. Joe Grade School 7:00pm Choir 7:00pm RCIA	6:00pm Church History 6:45-7:45am Men's Bible Study 11:30am Centering Prayer 7:00pm Baptism Prep 7:00pm Choir 7:00pm KofC	10:30am Mass Care Center 10:45 Mass Champaign County Nursing Home	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
9:00am RCIA 9:00am & 11:00am Children's Religious Ed 10:15am Children's Liturgy Noon - 2:00pm Brunch with Santa 6:30pm-8:00pm Jr-Sr High	7:00pm Centering Prayer 7:30pm Communal Reconciliation, Holy Cross	9:30am Moms Group 7:30pm Communal Reconciliation, St. Patrick's	5:00pm SVDP 6:00pm Rel Ed, Parish Center 6:30pm Rel Ed, St. Joe Grade School 5:15pm Children's Choir 7:00pm Choir 7:30pm Communal Reconciliation, St. Matthews	6:00pm Church History 6:45-7:45am Men's Bible Study 11:30am-12:00 Centering Prayer 7:00pm Choir 7:00pm Parish Council	10:30am Mass Clark Lindsey 10:45 Mass Champaign County Nursing Home	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
9:00am RCIA 9:00am & 11:00am Children's Religious Ed 10:15am Children's Liturgy 6:30pm-8:00pm Jr-Sr High	7:00pm Centering Prayer	7:00-8:00pm Individual Confession	4:00pm-5:00pm Individual Confession 5:15pm Children's Choir 7:00pm Choir	Christmas Eve Masses: 4:00pm Children's 6:30pm Family Mass and 10:30pm	Christmas Day Masses: 7:30am 10:30am 12:00 noon	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	9:30am Archives 7:00pm Centering Prayer	7:00pm Homily Prep	5:00pm SVDP 7:00pm RCIA	New Year's Eve 5:15 Mass for Holy Day, Mary, Mother of God	SVDP- St. Vincent DePaul Rel Ed- Religious Education Kof C- Knights of Columbus	
27	28	29	30	31		