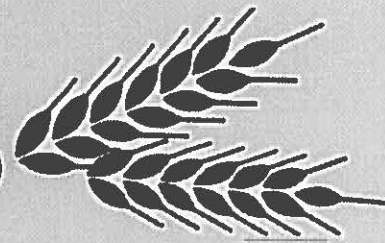


ST. PATRICK'S PARISH

In Focus



Dialogue into the Millennium — The Simple Care of a Hopeful Heart

The last of the Millennium dialogues is planned for Thursday, Feb. 1. The featured speaker is Robert J. Wicks, professor and chair of the graduate program in pastoral counseling at Loyola College in Maryland.

For his chosen theme, "the simple care of a hopeful heart," Dr. Wicks will draw upon his work as a therapist/mentor to professional healers and helpers. His presentation will dwell on maintaining a healthy perspective, the importance of unlearning, elements in self-nurturance, appreciating the "enemies" of balance and compassion, the role of reflection, and the types of friends necessary for a rich, supportive, interpersonal network.

Dr. Wicks's major areas of expertise are the prevention of secondary stress disorders and the integration of psychology and spirituality. In 1993 he worked with the English-speaking international community in Cambodia to prepare them to help the Khmer people rebuild their nation following years of terror. The next year he was responsible for the psychological debriefing of relief workers evacuated from Rwanda during their bloody civil war.

Among his more than 30 books published for both a scholarly audience and the general public are *Touching the Holy*, *Seeds of Sensitivity*, *After 50*, and *Living a Gentle, Passionate Life*.

Rev. Ann Burger, parish associate at First Presbyterian Church of Urbana, will be the respondent.

The evening's dialogue will begin at 7:30 p.m. in St. Patrick's parish hall and will conclude with a reception. Everyone is warmly invited to this, the last lecture in the series conceived of and shaped by Sr. Marie Golla with the specific aim of fostering community, improving interfaith communication, increas-

ing the application of intelligence and enthusiasm to the solution of social problems, familiarizing local audiences with trends in thinking among recognized contemporaries, and inspiring a courageous and thoughtful people.

Come and see for yourself whether the Dialogue into the Millennium has achieved that goal. ■



Dine with CREW Feb. 3

The high school CREW (Christ Renews Everyone's World) invites you to dine with them on Saturday, Feb. 3, at 6:00 p.m.

The group would like to tell you about their July Mission trip to Colorado, where they will be doing work similar to the work they did in Washington, D.C., last summer—painting, fixing up homes in underprivileged areas—but in a far more rural location this year. They plan to give a brief presentation, with slides, about both Mission trips.

Who? Everyone's invited!

What? Spaghetti Supper (includes salad, bread, and desert)

When? Saturday, Feb. 3, 6:00 p.m.

Where? St. Patrick's parish center, main hall

Why? Good food, good company, good cause (CREW Mission)!

How much? Adult, \$4.00; child, \$2.00; family, \$12

Plan to come, enjoy dinner, and support a worthy cause!



Share St. Patrick's with a Friend

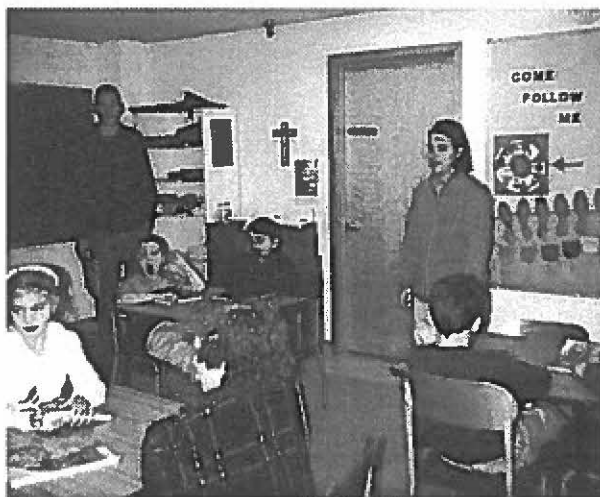


Congratulations, Lori!

Lori Tomlianovich, who teaches third-graders in St. Patrick's 9:00 a.m. Sunday religious education program, was recently selected as the 2000 New Professional of the Year by the Illinois Therapeutic Recreation Society.

Lori is the youth program coordinator at Champaign-Urbana Special Recreation, a cooperative program between the Champaign and Urbana park districts. The program provides and extends services to people with disabilities.

She won the statewide honor for her commitment to people with disabilities and significant contributions to the profession of therapeutic recreation. ■



Lori Tomlianovich, with aide Jason Retz, meets with St. Patrick's 9 o'clock third-graders—a challenging task even for a "New Professional of the Year"!

Ladies Knight Out? Feb. 10!

The annual Ladies Knight Out, sponsored by the Urbana Knights of Columbus, is set for Saturday, Feb. 10, in St. Patrick's parish hall.

Frank Modica is in charge, and has everything well in hand, including menu, volunteers, and entertainment.

The menu will feature a choice of ribeye steak or chicken breast at \$12.50 per person, and will include salad, beverage, and dessert. Also planned is the usual outstanding entertainment, prizes, and (need it be said?) lots of fun.

Last year's Ladies Knight Out attracted 160 ladies from St. Patrick's and their friends. This year? Well, more like 180—so get your reservations in, ladies! ■

Last year's Ladies Knight Out: good food, good company, good service, good entertainment. You won't want to miss it this year!



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: Joyce Baird, Mary Lee Brady, 344-3752 (bradymarylbrady@aol.com); Artha Chamberlain, 344-6645; Carolyn McElrath, 278-2126; Mary Lou Menches, 344-1125 or 244-4701 (mmenches@uiuc.edu); Frank Modica, 367-4133 (modicafr@knight.cmi.k12.il.us); Cathy Salika, 367-7861 (csalika@uiuc.edu); Peggy Whelan, 367-3668.

Associates: Carol Bosley, Morene Christman, Mary Fonner, Lori and Tom McDonough, Marty Perry, Joan Poletti, Carole Rebeiz, Lucille Salika, Tom Schlueter.

Articles and information for this issue were contributed by J. Mark Baker, Carol Bosley, Judy Conover, Frances Drone-Silvers, Meg Grady, Leon Mayer, Lori McDonough, Carolyn McElrath, Mary Lou Menches, Fr. George Remm, Carol Retz, Leslie Risatti, Zoila Risatti, Cindy Shaw, Elizabeth Talbot, Peggy Whelan. This issue was paged by Tom Schlueter.



Thanks, Leon and Bob!

Leon Mayer and Bob Haessly, long-time members of the Social Action Committee, are stepping down. Leon will retire from the committee; Bob plans to stay on as an associate member.

Both Leon and Bob have been successful in networking and expanding contacts with other organizations in the community, such as Matthew House and Crisis Nursery. Through these opportunities, various services have been provided for the homeless, abused, and needy. In addition, they made great strides in involving parishioners in Make-a-Difference Day and in Operation Rice Bowl.

The Social Action Committee—and the entire St. Patrick's community—thank you both for all your years of service!

Children Make Joyful Music unto the Lord!

On most Sundays if you are in the parish center between 10:15 and 11:00 a.m., you surely have noticed the joyful music exploding from the multipurpose room.

What you hear are the young children and their parents offering themselves and their praise to God during the Children's Liturgy. This liturgy is geared primarily toward 3- to 10-year-olds, although all present appear to enjoy it. The readings and homily are aimed at the children, and the Eucharistic Prayer (for use at Masses with children) is punctuated by many acclamations with song and gesture.



Laumann, Yvonne Vitosky, Brandon Field, Joe Rasmussen, Richard Bronson, and Paula Partin—and of course by all the children and adults present.



The liturgy is planned by Carol Retz, Children's Program Coordinator, with our priest-presiders, Fr. George Remm and Fr. Gene Kane. Chris Freidhof assists.

Lively music is offered by Jim Mayer, Pat Mayer, Bernie



Host families help with greeting all comers, ushering, reading the Prayers of the Faithful, and serving as gift bearers.

Special guests appear occasionally to share their talents. John the Baptist (Jason Retz) made an appearance during Advent, the three Magi brought their gifts for the infant Jesus, and Chris Freidhof's guest puppets frequently share their zany wisdom, delighting grown-ups and youngsters alike. Yes, they "make joyful music unto the Lord!" ■



Natural Family Planning vs. Artificial Conception

Why is the Catholic Church opposed to "the pill"? After all, these are modern times, and things are different than they used to be. We lead far busier lives, and not everyone has time or is ready for the responsibility of having and rearing children. And everyone knows that modern contraception methods are far more reliable than the Church-supported "rhythm" method.

True? Well, you just might be surprised.

On Monday, Feb. 5, Todd Agliodoro, from the diocesan Office of Family Life in Peoria, will give a presentation on "Natural Family Planning: Fact vs. Myth." Agliodoro will speak not only from a theological perspective, but also on the reliability and safety of natural family planning compared to that of "the pill." His presentation, which begins at 7:00 p.m., will be followed by a question-and-answer period.

If you have doubts or questions about natural family planning, you owe it to yourself to come, listen, ask.



in our parish library

Have you been asked to be a godparent? What does it mean? What do you have to do? If you'd like to know more about what's involved, or some tips on how to be a better godparent, try these books:

The Gift of Godparents: For Those Chosen with Love and Trust to Be Godparents, by Tom Sheridan (248.8 SHE) "To be a godparent is to invest in the future and to look far ahead," according to this author. He explains the Baptism ceremony, suggests what your role as godparent can mean in the life of the

child (or adult), and gives very practical advice about how to be a godparent throughout the person's life.

Finding and Forming Sponsors and Godparents, edited by James A. Wilde (248.8 WIL) Although this book focuses on sponsors for adults coming into the Church (such as through the RCIA), it contains several sections on godparents. The book gives some historical background (sponsors and godparents go back in history to about 6 years after the death and

resurrection of Christ, according to the Acts of the Apostles). It points up the importance of stories, the need for friends and companions on our spiritual journey, and the various levels of spiritual maturity.

If you have trouble locating books or other materials in the library, or want to know whether the library has something on a subject of interest to you, please call Frances Drone-Silvers (398-1458), parish library coordinator. She will be pleased to help. ■

Seek. You Shall Find!

To many of us, it seems that the Spirit of Christmas quietly leaves once the twinkling lights are turned off, repacked in their boxes, and taken up to the attic. Being a hopeful people, we trust that when those boxes are taken down from the attic and reopened a year from now, that Spirit is certain to return to our hearts and into our homes. Until then, however, we resign ourselves to waiting.

This year, instead of waiting, why not challenge ourselves to keeping the celebration of Christ's birth alive throughout the year?

During Advent, students in the St. Patrick's religious education program were asked, "Where do you find Jesus in your celebration of Christmas?" Answers given were spirit-filled, yet need not be limited to the Christmas season. We can use the astuteness of God's children to extend our celebration of Christmas this year.

Where do you find Jesus in your celebration of Christmas?

I find Jesus at my cousin's. (Mike, 11)

Look for him at the family reunion in July, when those distant cousins pull up in their 4-wheeler.

My family finds Jesus when we

sing. (Zita, 8)

Try to find him in the person singing slightly off-key but sitting directly behind you at Mass.

You can find Jesus in Mass, the Gospel, and when you are praying. (Christina, 8)

It's easier to find him at Mass if we go to Mass; in the Bible if we read the Bible; while praying if we pray.

I find Jesus in my heart. (Erich, 9, and Tim, 10)

He's there.

When I give presents, I find Jesus. (Kaleigh, 7)

In May, when we give yet another graduation present, remember what Kaleigh says.

In all the customs, such as going to Mass and saying grace before meals. (David, 13)

Discover him in the daily routine.

In grace, before our dinner, and at night, when there is not very much noise and I can pray. (Steve, 12)

Know he is in the noise ... and in the quiet.

I find him everywhere. (Julia, 12)

Look for him at Blockbuster when picking up a video; at the supermarket when picking up a gallon of milk; at Friday's when picking up the tab.

I find Jesus many places—in

Sunday school, in the Bible, in the stars, in the clouds, on TV, at Aunt Margie's. (Mark, 6)

That's it! Mark, you said it all!

Seek each day. You will find, each and every day! ■



God of surprises, just as you came as a baby two thousand years ago, you still come in unexpected ways. Help us recognize you in the faces of strangers and loved ones. Help us welcome others as we would welcome you.



Abolish the Death Penalty!

The commandment "Thou shalt not kill," handed down by God to Moses, has served throughout history as a guide for human interpersonal behavior. It is an important aspect of Catholic social teaching, which holds that all human life is sacred because it is created by God, in God's own image and likeness. Each person is of infinite worth and receives God's unconditional love and forgiveness.

The taking of another's life, whether by an individual or by a government, is the ultimate expression of violence. In a civilized society, appreciation for the infinite worth of each member of society should serve as a basis for protecting human life, from that of unborn children to that of the elderly and dying.

These same values and principles also apply in regard to capital punishment.

Opposition to the death penalty as punishment for crime has been growing. Over 2 million people from 128 countries have signed anti-capital punishment petitions. The United Nations Human Rights Commission in 1999 passed a resolution urging a world-wide moratorium on the death penalty, and 80 nations responded. The United States is the only Western industrial nation still supporting it, with 38 states authorizing capital punishment.

In a recent Jubilee Year statement, Pope John Paul II called for the death penalty to be "abolished completely," referring to it as part of "the culture of death." The American bishops have asked for its abolition: "Our society should reject the death penalty and see methods of dealing with violent crime that are more consistent with the Gospel vision of respect for life and Christ's message of healing love."

Cardinal Roger Mahoney wrote, in 1992: "For the Church to be consistently and credibly pro-life, it must also stand in opposition to capital punishment." Auxiliary Bishop Roger Kaffler (Joliet, Illinois) urged the state's Knights of Columbus to take up the cause against capital punishment (May 2000). The President of the Philippines imposed a moratorium on all executions until January 2001 in response to urgings from the Catholic bishops of the Philippines. President Clinton recently granted a stay of execution to one of 20 men on death row in the federal prison system.

If capital punishment retards crime, Texas should be the safest place in the world—38 people have been executed there in the year 2000 alone. A recent study by *The New York Times*, however, found that the murder rate in states that had the death penalty is no lower than in states that do not.

Nationwide, since the Supreme Court reinstated the death penalty in 1976, nearly 700 have been executed; 89 others awaiting execution managed to prove that they were wrongly convicted. From 1930 to 1995, 4291 people have been executed; meanwhile,

over 3600 others are on death row. Yet the cost of carrying out the death penalty is 5 times the cost of a life-without-parole sentence.

Innocent people are convicted, sentenced to death, and executed—a fact that led to

Governor Ryan's moratorium on the death penalty in Illinois. A high percentage of those

executed are from minority groups (of those 20 men in death row in the federal prison system, 17 are minorities), some are mentally retarded, and some are women and children. Jesus Christ was the most famous victim of an unjust death penalty, yet he did not cry out for revenge; he forgave.

It is difficult if not impossible to teach that murder is morally wrong in all its forms when we give our state and federal governments a license to kill, even on our behalf.

Next month: What we can do. ■



Pray for Vocations

Young people today want careers that will make a difference, that will have a positive impact on the world in which they live. Pray today that more and more young people will choose to make a difference by following the call to be a priest, sister, brother, permanent deacon, or lay minister.

Lord Jesus, when you were presented in the Temple, Simeon and Anna announced your saving mission. Bless in a special way those who have consecrated themselves to you and the Church by their vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. May their mission in the world proclaim the Good News and inspire many others to follow in their footsteps.

Welcome to new parishioners
Sherry and Trevor Boyd, Harriett Cuppernell, Nicole and Robert Kneer, Deborah Lee, Diane Rigdon.



Farewell to these parishioners, who have moved from C-U:
Mary Bovine, Maribel Rizon.

Welcome to Leland Vice, Jakob Sidney, Samuel Joseph Arend, Josefina Mary Zukosky Alameda, baptized into our faith community.



Share St. Patrick's with a Friend



Thank You, St. Patrick's!

The Social Action Committee receives many requests for financial assistance from community agencies and programs. Although the committee's budget is small, assistance is provided as possible. These contributions are greatly appreciated; the thank-you letters are filled with gratefulness. The committee shares excerpts from these grateful hearts below:

From the Catholic Worker House —

"Our hearts swim when we realize all the lost dreams this will rescue. It is the kindness and compassion of loyal friends like you which allows us to offer assistance in countless and often surprising ways to homeless and hungry people."

From the Matthew House —

"Thank you for the contribution to assist with the work of the Matthew House. At this time we have over 200 children waiting to be helped by the Matthew House. There is such a need right here in our community, where children suffer greatly from hunger, poverty, and violence. We are grateful for your gift."

From the East Central Illinois Refugee Mutual Assistance Center —

"We appreciate your support of the refugee and immigrant community as many of the services we provide depend upon the help of our friends within the community. We have had a Russian couple arrive within the last week, and we know others hope to arrive soon. We never know for sure until they are almost here. Please convey our thanks to St. Patrick's congregation."

From the empty tomb —

"Thank you for 'welcoming Baby Jesus' by helping provide for those in need whom Jesus loves. May God bless you now and in all the days to come!"



From the Crisis Nursery —

"Your gift keeps crisis child care available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and provides weekly parent education or support groups. Over 50% of our support comes from charitable giving such as yours."

From the TIMES Center —

"Thank you for your true spirit of giving and support of the homeless individuals and families in our community."

From the Center for Women in Transition —

"We have much to be grateful for this holiday season: 60% of our residents succeeded in acquiring permanent housing ... but still there is much work to be done as the need far outweighs the beds. For each available bed space at the Center, five more people are waiting. Step by step, the Center is moving closer toward meeting its goals of providing a stronger educational component and expanding its capacity to assist more women and children." ■

Quick Fixin's from the Kitchen of... Zoila Risatti

Apricot Banana Bread

- 1/3 c butter or margarine, softened
- 2/3 c sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 c mashed ripe banana (2-3 medium)
- 1/4 c buttermilk
- 1-1/4 c all-purpose flour
- 1 t baking powder
- 1/2 t baking soda
- 1/2 t salt
- 1 c 100% bran cereal (not flakes)
- 3/4 c chopped dried apricots (approx. 6 oz)
- 1/2 c chopped walnuts



In a mixing bowl cream butter and sugar. Add eggs; mix well. Combine bananas and buttermilk. Combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt; add to creamed mixture alternately with banana mixture. Stir in bran, apricots, and nuts. Pour into a greased 9 x 5 x 3 inch loaf pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 55-60 minutes, or until bread tests done. Cool 10 minutes in pan before removing to wire rack.

Help Needed to Provide Meals on Wheels

St. Patrick's Parish is responsible for delivering meals on three routes from Monday through Friday, Feb. 12-16. Each route



needs a driver and a "runner." The latter serves as navigator and brings the meals to the homes of people eagerly awaiting them. Meals are picked up at the Illini Union at 10:30 a.m., and routes are usually completed by 12:30 p.m.

If you can help one or more days, please call Elizabeth Talbot (351-6039). This is not an arduous task but a much appreciated one. Shut-ins are grateful for the hot meal and a warm smile.



Deadline for submission of information, articles, and news items for the next issue of **In Focus** is February 11.

Teens Take Christ's Light to the World

An article in the *St. Anthony Messenger Press Youth Update* several years ago entitled "Bless Me, Father, I'm Not Sure I want to Be Here" pointed up the decline in participation in the sacrament of reconciliation over the last couple of decades and encouraged young people to seek God's forgiveness through this marvelous sacrament.



St. Patrick's youth have responded enthusiastically to the invitation to participate in this sacrament of God's mercy and love. During Lent, or just before Lent, St. Patrick's offers a Teen Reconciliation Service for high-school and junior-high students of the parish. Well over a hundred students participate in the service each year. This year's is scheduled for Sunday, Feb. 11, from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Funeral Schola's Gift to the Bereaved

A small group of choristers gathers for rehearsal twice a month in preparation for their role at funeral liturgies. The Funeral Schola assists congregational singing of hymns, the psalm response, the Gospel Acclamation, and elements of the Eucharistic Prayer. They may also sing during the preparation of the gifts and during Communion. And they sing the "Song of Farewell" before the casket is taken from the church.

Their gift of song enhances the liturgy for grieving family members and friends, many of whom may be unfamiliar with the liturgy itself or the hymns selected for the liturgy.

One teen, preparing for Confirmation last year, remarked, "It's just great to really know that God has forgiven me, and to be able to let all that junk in my life go and forgive myself too."

The reconciliation service usually begins with a penitential rite ("Kyrie eleison..."), followed by a Scripture reading, a slide meditation accompanied by music, a Gospel reading, and a homily. After a guided examination of conscience for young people, the teens are invited to make their individual confessions to a priest (several priests are generally available for confessions).

Time for quiet prayer follows, and then each student lights a candle as a sign of his or her renewed commitment to take Christ's light to the community, the nation, and the world.

The celebration continues with pizza in the main hall of the parish center.

May Christ's light continue to shine in our young people and light up the world! ■

"I think bereaved families are sometimes surprised to learn that St. Patrick's has such an ensemble. They frequently express their appreciation for the schola's participation. As the music director, I am grateful for their assistance in the singing, because the grieving are sometimes unable to join in," says Dr. J. Mark Baker.

Members of the Funeral Schola rehearse in the church at 9:30 a.m. on second and fourth Wednesdays, and gather for funeral liturgies as circumstances require.

Present members are Pat Barrett, Viola Creighton, Betty Daly, Marie Davis, Ida D'Urso,



Following the Teen Reconciliation Service, high-school students Jason Retz and Patrick Hatch and junior-high students Charles McTaggart and Matt Depew light candles as a sign of their renewed commitment to take Christ's light to the world.

*You await me, silent Friend,
As I try again and again
To rise like a butterfly
On circling
wind,
My song of
Love.
I soar
beyond
My inner
horizon,
until
I meet you,
Ancient Friend,
Godman, Spirit,
And at our meeting I rejoice!*



Suad Handal, Mary Ann Luedtke, Lu Pillar, and Zoila Risatti. They welcome others whose schedules allow them to be available for rehearsals and funerals on weekday mornings. ■

Good Things Happening... February at St. Patrick's

- 1 Lecture Series
- 3 CREW fund-raiser: spaghetti dinner
- 5 Presentation on Natural Family Planning
- 10 Ladies Knight Out
- 11 Teen Reconciliation
- 14 Valentine's Day
- 23 WATCH Retreat Weekend begins
- 28 Ash Wednesday; Lent begins



Share St. Patrick's with a Friend



Parish Council News

At their January meeting, Council members welcomed Jason Retz to his first meeting as Senior High Representative.

A video was shown on the work of the Crisis Nursery, whose focus is to get frightened children out of bad situations and into good ones. They give children a place to have fun, and they give children acceptance and a sense of security. A full-time staff and over 100 volunteers help to provide short-term care, parental support, and educational advocacy, as well as offering rides to work or in search of housing and helping to identify family needs and how these can be met. The Crisis Nursery receives financial support from Covenant Hospital, United Way, the City of Urbana, and Cunningham Township. Individuals can help through monetary or in-kind donations or by volunteering regular assistance or helping with special events.

Fr. Remm is forming a committee to begin the drive for contributions to St. Patrick's Tuition Endowment Fund, which is intended to help finance tuition payments for parishioners enrolling at St. Thomas More High School.

With Bishop Myers's approval, the low bid of \$11,229 for new high-efficiency (Trane) furnaces submitted by Nogle & Black was

accepted by motion of Council members.

Three events were considered so successful that they may be continued or repeated in the future. The Knights of Columbus are looking into continuing the well-attended Dialogue into the Millennium lecture series conceived and organized by Sr. Marie Golla; Pulchratia will consult with participating agencies about repeating the New Year's Eve supper, which drew about 40 guests; and Fr. Remm will find out whether other local churches are interested in participating with St. Patrick's in a New Year's Eve prayer service, an event that serves ecumenism.



The budget process for setting the operating budget for fiscal year 2001-02 is underway with a call to committees for their proposed budgets for the coming year. In February the Council will consider any new programs submitted for approval. One that is expected is for the Senior Citizens

Club, which is asking for \$300.

The Council's ad hoc Election Committee was established to develop a slate of candidates for election to Council. The election will take place on Apr. 21-22. A handout is being prepared to help potential candidates understand what is required of Council members. Anyone who wishes to recommend a parishioner for consideration should contact Dwight Raab (469-7045). Members whose terms expire this spring are Dwain Berggren, Judy Huelsbusch, and Pulchratia Kinney.

CREW's 2001 Mission Project will be working in a trailer park in Grant County, Colorado, Jul. 20-27. Planned fund-raisers include Bingo (Jan. 21), spaghetti dinner (Feb. 3), and Service and Town Auction (Mar. 25). Services to be offered include running errands, yard work, cleaning cars, and baby sitting. Participation in one of these services is required for going on the trip.

The next Council meeting will begin at 7 p.m. on Feb. 15. All parishioners are welcome to attend these open parish meetings. For those interested in a more complete report of Parish Council deliberations, the minutes of Council meetings are posted in the church vestibule and on the bulletin board in the office wing of the parish center. ■

Message from Our Sister Parish

The Social Action Committee has received the following letter from Fr. Jakob Abdennour, pastor of our Sister Parish in Beit-Jala, Israel, and wishes to share it with you.

Dear Father Remm and the Social Action Committee:

We gratefully acknowledge having received the generous donation of 350 U.S. dollars from St. Patrick's Social Action Committee to support the work of your Sister Parish in Israel.

You mentioned in your last letter "this difficult time." Effectively, for sure, you have heard and seen on your TV about the recent Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which we are living since 70 days and the *daily bloodshed* on both sides, as well as the destruction of houses in Beit-Jala itself. For security reasons, Israel is closing her borders, no tourism, consequently thou-

sands of workers are jobless. We are praying that this crisis will not last a third month, otherwise it's *famine* in the Holy Land, and in Beit-Jala as well.

Consequently we have begun to distribute food for the families whose father has lost his job because of the closure of the areas, the tourism, and the hotels....

This letter will reach you around Christmas Festivities. Be sure that you shall be in my prayers during the Midnight Mass in the Holy Grotto of Bethlehem.

Sincerely yours,
Father Jakob Abdennour
P.P. Beit-Jala P.O.B. 188 via Israel ■



How Long Since Your Last Retreat?

A retreat from hectic workdays and busy weekends running errands, cooking, cleaning, repairing, and shopping? A retreat to relaxation, quiet prayer, faith-sharing, reflective reading? How hard can it be to decide it's time for a retreat!

There are many kinds of retreats, of course. One can travel to a retreat center and join with a group who participate in a series of talks interspersed by pools of quiet for reading, reflection, prayer, taking stock, seeing where change in one's life seems called for. One can make arrangements for a private retreat at a retreat center, where one engages in one-on-one sessions with someone who listens carefully in discerning need and responds in a way that helps in finding one's way with God.

A retreat can be a one-day affair, such as the Lenten Retreat at St.

Patrick's that draws 75-100 parishioners each year. Or one can go off for a two- or three-day retreat, such as some of the men of St. Patrick's do who travel to the retreat center in St. Louis. Some retreats are set up to last for a week or longer. And then there are the retreats offered at St. Patrick's twice a year under the name of WATCH.

What is a WATCH retreat? It is a renewal weekend focused on the sacraments, spiritual growth, one's relationship with God and with the Christian family. Times are set aside for talks, many of which are given by laymen and women, small-group discussion, reflection, prayer, private time. Mealtimes and activities provide needed relaxation and opportunities for making new friends or deepening established friendships.

The WATCH retreat takes place on parish grounds, with sessions

in the parish center and the church. It begins on Friday evening and concludes Sunday afternoon.

Participants return home each evening, reassembling at 8 a.m. the following morning; they attend 10:30 Sunday Mass with other parishioners. Meals are provided. Because the retreat is offered as a co-ed experience, couples are encouraged to come together.

The next WATCH retreat is Feb. 23-25. Leaflets in the church vestibule and in the parish center provide more information and a registration form, or you can call the parish office (367-2665) to register or to ask your questions.

WATCH is ... a time for you to experience God's love for you. ■



I've been asked by some friends to be godparent for their baby. Can you tell me what is expected of a godparent?



The principal duty of godparents before the baptism of an infant is to be properly instructed in the meaning of the sacrament and the obligations that are attached to it. Ideally, godparents should attend the prebaptismal instructions along with the parents, but if this isn't possible, the necessary instruction can be included in the course of the homily during the celebration of the baptism or at another time.

During the celebration of infant baptism, the chief duty of godparents is simply to be present and profess the faith of the Church. By their presence they represent both the expanded spiritual family of the infant and the maternal role of the Church.

The lifelong role of godparents is specified more by family or local custom than by the Church. The Church asks only that godparents help the baptized to lead a Christian life in harmony with baptism and to fulfill faithfully the obligations connected with it. The ritual adds that godparents should be ready to help the parents so that the godchild will come to profess the faith and live up to it. Traditionally godparents have been understood as those who would see to the Christian upbringing of the godchild if it should happen that the parents become unable to fulfill this responsibility.

Of course, the Church expects that you have the intention of performing the role of godparent, that is, that you intend to assume an ongoing spiritual relationship with the baptized person and not function merely as a passive witness. You must be at least 16 years old, a Catholic in good standing who has received the sacraments of confirmation and eucharist, and not the parent of the infant to be baptized.

That's it, really. Simple enough, but as with any other potentially permanent relationship, deserving of thoughtful consideration and preparation. ■

Searching, Searching, Searching...

The search for a volunteer editor for *In Focus* continues.

If you can (1) participate in the Communications Committee's monthly planning sessions, (2) assemble writings submitted on paper, on disk, and via e-mail into a single file for the volunteer who pages the issue, and (3) select appropriate illustrations from available resources—then please don't hold back.

Mary Lou Menches (344-1125) will be happy to answer questions or work with you to get you started. Call now to volunteer!





St. Patrick's Parish, Urbana

February 2001



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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 of In Focus is February 11.				6:45am Men's Bible Study 7:00pm Bible Study 7:00pm Bldg & Grds 7:30pm Lecture Series 7:00pm Over 21 7:00pm Choir	10:45am Mass CCNH	CREW Spaghetti Dinner 6-9
				1	2	3
9:00am RCIA 9:00&11:00am Children's RE 10:15am Children's Liturgy 12:00pm Teen Liturgy 6:30pm Bible Study Leaders 6:30-8:00pm Crew Reconciliation Prep	7:00pm Centering Prayer 7:00pm Finding God in Daily Work 7:00pm Education 7:00pm Pro-life 7:00pm WATCH	7:00pm Bible Study 7:30pm Parish Council Exec Com & Development	9:00am Mon's Group 5:00 SVDP 6:00pm Religious Ed, Parish Center 6:30pm RE, St Joe 7:00pm Choir 7:00pm RCIA	7:00pm Bible Study 7:00pm Baptism Prep 7:00pm Choir 7:00pm Over 21 Club	10:30am Mass Urbana Nursing Home 10:45am Mass Champaign County Nursing Home	Ladies Knight Out FGDW Retreat
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9:00am RCIA 9:00&11:00am Children's RE 10:15am Children's Liturgy 4:30pm Teen Choir 6:30-8:00pm Teen Reconciliation 6:30pm Bible Study Leaders	7:00pm Centering Prayer 7:00pm Social Action 7:00pm WATCH	7:00pm Bible Study 7:00pm Financial Affairs	9:00am Mon's Group 5:00 SVDP 6:00pm Religious Ed, Parish Center 6:30pm RE, St Joe 7:00pm Choir 7:00pm RCIA	6:45am Men's Bible Study 7:00pm Bible Study 7:00pm Over 21 7:00pm Choir 7:00pm Parish Council	10:30am Mass Clark Lindsey 10:45am Mass Champaign County Nursing Home	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
9:00am RCIA 9:00&11:00am Children's RE 10:15am Children's Liturgy 10:15 Knight of Columbus 6:30pm Bible Study Leaders	7:00pm Centering Prayer 7:00pm Finding God in Daily Work 7:00pm WATCH	7:00pm Bible Study 7:00pm Liturgy	9:00am Mon's Group 5:00 SVDP 6:00pm Religious Ed, Parish Center 6:30pm RE, St Joe 7:00pm Bereavement Ann 7:00pm Choir 7:00pm RCIA	6:45am Men's Bible Study 7:00pm Bible Study 7:00pm Over 21 7:00pm Choir	10:30am Mass Manor Care 10:45am Mass Champaign County Nursing Home	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">WATCH Weekend</div>
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
9:00am RCIA 4:30pm Teen Choir Practice CREW Social Activity WATCH Weekend	9:30am Archives 7:00pm Centering Prayer 7:00pm Finding God in Daily Work	7:00pm Homily Prep	9:00am Mon's Group 5:00 SVDP ASH Wednesday	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> SVDP= St. Vincent De Paul RE= Religious Education </div>		
25	26	27	28			