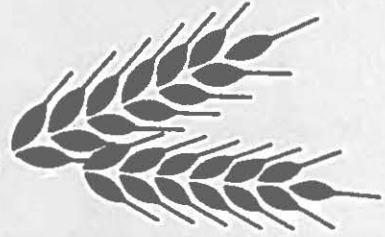


ST. PATRICK'S PARISH

In Focus



www.stpaturbana.org

Advent Can Transform Us

What sort of Advent will we make for ourselves this year from the scripture texts, the songs, and the prayers



of Advent? We need to ponder them not only one at a time but as they echo against one another.

Whatever we find, whatever we hear, we do it first and foremost as Church; we aren't

doing this alone. Isaiah is being read so the Church may listen and consider and take to heart. Advent is a way to name who we are and what we are to be. So we give ourselves to listening to its scriptures, singing its songs, praying its prayers.

On the first Sunday we hear that Jesus Christ will keep us firm — and to the end. That same day Isaiah cries "Oh, that you would rend the heavens — tear open the heavens! — and

come down!" And on the next Sunday the second reading talks about "the day of the Lord" that will come like a thief, and when that day arrives, "the earth and everything done on it will be found out." The next Sunday, together with the Thessalonians we hear that we are in spirit, soul, and body — all three together — to be without blame, to be holy, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Continued on Page 4

Christ has no body but yours

*Christ has no body now but yours.
No hands, no feet on earth but yours.
Yours are the eyes through which
he looks with compassion
on this world.*

*Yours are the feet with which he
walks to do good.*

*Yours are the hands with which he
blesses all the world.*

*Yours are the hands,
yours are the feet,
yours are the eyes;
you are his body."*

St. Teresa of Avila

Dedicated St. Patrick's parishioners live out these words of St. Teresa of Avila by bringing the Holy Eucharist to those who are homebound, in nursing or retirement facilities, or at Carle Hospital. It is a joyful experience to be the instrument through which Christ makes himself present in the Eucharist for those who are no longer able to join us around our "family table" on Sunday morning. Any of the parishioners involved in this healing ministry

will tell you that they receive much more than they give and consider being able to do it a great blessing. As this ministry grows, it has become obvious that there are simply not enough of them to do all that needs to be done.

Have you ever thought about this ministry but been hesitant to volunteer? Here is what parishioner Sandy Anderson has to say about her experience:

"The first time I read in the church bulletin that volunteers were needed at the Champaign County Nursing Home for Mass, I immediately dismissed the idea that I could help. I had the time but it would be too difficult for me to work with so many sick people. As the weeks passed I kept thinking that maybe there was a possibility I could help. After many discussions with my husband, he suggested I try it, pointing out that I was under no obligation

and yet it was very possible it would all work out for me. As it turned out, he was absolutely right. The volunteers welcomed me with open arms and the residents of the nursing home quickly become my friends. I hope I

have helped the residents in some small way because they have given me far more than I could ever give them."

Will you pray to discern if Our Lord is calling you to be his body, his hands, his feet for those in need? Can you help once a month to bring his

precious body, the greatest gift, to those who cannot join in our regular worship? It is a commitment of but a few hours once a month — not much in terms of time, but immeasurable in terms of reward.

If you think this is something you are being called to this ministry, or if you would like to know more about it, please call Sr. Charlene at the parish office (367-2665).



Parish Council news

At their November meeting Council members shared their impressions of the parish's several ways of observing The Year of the Eucharist, overall very positive, particularly with regard to the teaching Masses and the Pasta and Presence event.

The CREW report noted that about 45 teens attend the religious education classes, that the sale of evergreens brought in about \$1000, and that the Mission Advisory Board (staff and parents) will soon decide on the location and dates of the 2006 Mission trip.

The Second Century Advisory Committee expects to be able to conduct the parish needs assessment survey in January, posting the survey on the parish's Web site (www.stpaturbana.org) for parishioner responses and making paper copies available to those who prefer that method of response.

In discussing the Social Action Committee's February proposal that St. Patrick's (1) support the living wage movement in Champaign County, (2) affirm the living wage standard for full-time employees of the

parish, and (3) affirm this standard in negotiating vendor contracts valued at more than \$10,000, Council members agreed to act on the proposal at their

January meeting. Frances Drone-Silvers and Jim Mayer will draft language for the action item.

Members also discussed a possible reorganization of the current Council/committee/

staff structure and lines of communication, with the goal of facilitating and empowering action.

Committee news: The *Building and Grounds Committee* reported that the purchase of a canopy over the ramp on the east side of the church has been postponed because of cost and lack of assurance that it would adequately serve the purpose intended. New flooring will be installed in parish center entrance areas, kitchen, restrooms, and corridors. And a tool shed will be purchased from the Parkland College building program, although its location on parish property has yet to be determined.

The *Communications Committee* has purchased a digital camera to

facilitate incorporating photos into the parish newsletter.

The *Liturgy Committee* has proposed introducing music in the celebration of 7:00 a.m. holy day Masses, in a way that would not prevent parishioners from getting to work on time. The committee also proposed resuming the practice of anointing the sick at weekend liturgies at least twice a year, noting that this sacrament has not been offered to the parish at large since the special healing Mass that was celebrated during the noon hour on a weekday as part of the parish Centennial in Dec. 2002.

The *Social Action Committee* reported an invitation from St. Mary's to co-sponsor a 6-month social justice study there. They have also received information about a parish partnership program for the Katrina-affected area. The committee will provide Fair Trade coffee at the Guild's Christmas Expo in December and sponsor a Martin Luther King remembrance in January.

* * *

All parishioners are welcome to attend these open parish meetings. For those interested in a more complete report, the minutes of the most recent Council meeting are posted in the church vestibule and on the bulletin board in the office wing of the parish center.



in our parish library

On Dec. 10 we remember the death of Thomas Merton, one of the most influential American Catholic authors of the twentieth century. His autobiography, *The Seven Storey Mountain* (921 MER), sold over a million copies and has been translated into 15 languages. Born in France, Merton converted to Catholicism while at Columbia University and entered the Abbey of Gethsemani, a community of Trappist monks, on Dec. 10, 1941. During his years at Gethsemani, Brother Merton began to think and

write about social issues, such as race and peace, and became a supporter of the non-violent civil rights movement. He also began to re-emphasize the value of the contemplative life, and his works inspired a generation of Christian contemplatives.

Many of Merton's works are available in our parish library, including: *Praying the Psalms* (223 MEP), *Contemplative Prayer* (242 MER), *Life and Holiness* (248 MER), *Seeds of Contemplation* (248 MER), and others. If you'd like to read more about

Thomas Merton himself, consider *Living with Wisdom: a life of Thomas Merton*, by Jim Forest (921 MER).

* * *

If you need help locating books or materials in the library or want to know whether the library has something on a subject of special interest, you may contact Frances Drone-Silvers (francesds@yahoo.com or 398-1458), library coordinator. She will be pleased to help.

The Year of the Eucharist 2004-05

Parish closed The Year of the Eucharist in style

Pasta & Presence was a resounding success on Saturday night, Nov. 5. Over 300 people participated in the parish's intergenerational dinner and presentation by Msgr. Bill Watson, pastor of St. Thomas (Peoria Heights) on Eucharistic spirituality. About 50 children participated in the children's program, led by Tina and Russ Sherman and Ann Burchenough, and another 6 were in babysitting.

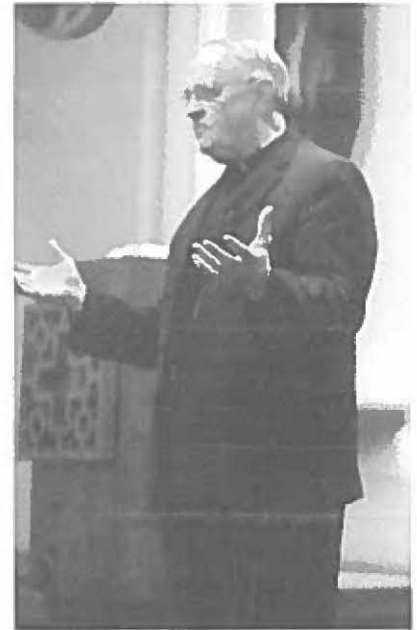
Many thanks to teens from St. Thomas More and their parents, who provided babysitting during the presentations. After dinner, songs with lots of movement were led by Jim and Gracie Mayer, and polka music during dessert was played by Jim Davito on accordion, Terry Jobin on guitar, and Susan Reese on trombone.

Volunteers from the Disciples in Mission Team, Parish Council, Staff,

parish committees, Knights of Columbus, Bible study groups, base communities, WATCH, CREW, and many individuals planned, decorated, cooked a delicious spaghetti dinner, baked mouth-watering desserts, served as waiters, helped with the children's program, and cleaned up at the end of the evening. Thanks to all who helped to make this an enjoyable evening, especially to all who participated in the dinner and presentation.

If you were unable to attend, you might ask to check out the video or the DVD of the presentation; just call Mary Long at the parish office (531-7008 or 367-2665).

Another event is planned for next spring, so stay tuned!



Fr. Bill Watson addressed a church crowded with parishioners on the topic of Eucharistic spirituality.



Dave Palmisano (left) and Dick Justice find that watched pots do boil, eventually...



During Fr. Watson's presentation in the church, young parishioners enjoyed their own get-together under watchful eyes

Second-graders prepare for First Reconciliation

In November our thoughts have been drawn to thankfulness for the many gifts God has given us, and so it is appropriate that our parish youngsters celebrate the special gift of God's forgiveness by making their First Reconciliation on Nov. 29, following the Thanksgiving weekend.



On every Tuesday in November our second-graders and their families met separately and together in coming to a greater understanding and appreciation of this gift, which culminates in a celebration of the sacrament of reconciliation itself.

At the service, each family accompanies their

child to the Reconciliation Room to make his or her confession. Parents and siblings also have the opportunity to receive the sacrament of reconciliation.

After the service, all will gather in the parish hall for a small reception to celebrate this special family event in parish life.

What better way to enter upon the Advent season!

Advent from Page 1

All this talk about “the end” seems to say that there will be a period put to the sentence of human life on earth. So be ready. “Watch,” Jesus tells us. Be watchful and be alert! Every Sunday we say “as we wait in joyful hope”—Advent sharpens our waiting and deepens our hope.

The end that Advent announces is not in the future; it is now. When we hear from Isaiah that “we have all withered like leaves,” we are reminded of leaves with all their softness gone, brittle, scratching along the ground—and “our guilt carries us away like the wind ... you have hidden your face from us.” Isn’t that now?

When the scriptures say that “the elements will be dissolved by fire,” did that ever mean to describe cosmic warming? Or does it mean to say that right now how we conduct ourselves matters, what we do to one another matters, how dear we hold one another and all of creation matters?

Here is another truth of Advent. It is not about life inside the doors of the church, about preparation for the feast we will keep in four weeks. Advent is in the big world as the Gospel is in the big world. Hear Isaiah say “Bring glad tidings to the poor; heal the broken-hearted, proclaim liberty to captives and release to prisoners.” Where do we think we’ll find the poor, the broken-

hearted, the captives, the prisoners? The prophet sums it up in the image of a bride and groom all dressed up in justice—this is the wedding that the world needs and longs for.

It should startle us that Advent speaks so persistently not about pie in the sky when we die but about upending what we have come to take as simply the way things are. But Advent gives us two images to help us: Mary, and a tree.

On Dec. 12 all of the Americas keep the feast of our Lady of Guadalupe, when Mary, looking like one of the conquered people, talked not to the bishop, not to the rich and powerful, but to Juan Diego, a simple, dirt-poor peasant. On that day we hear the words of the Magnificat from Mary’s lips: “The mighty arm of God scatters the proud in their conceit, pulls tyrants from their thrones, and raises up the humble. The Lord fills the starving and lets the rich go hungry.” It is dyed-in-the-wool Advent; not the fire next time, but the fire of justice now.

The last Gospel of Advent tells of

Mary, but we have to look beyond the sweet images to find instead the Advent image of this woman. She sees as clear as day that those who wait upon the Lord do so by making justice and judgment now, tearing down prison walls and sharing what the earth has given and human hands have made. That was her song; that’s why we hear of her on the road talking to Juan Diego.

In the final days of Advent many of us will be busy with trees, placing on them lights and strands of food and bright objects and treasures from our past. Let it be done in this Advent spirit: Let us raise the tree as a

proclamation that we intend this world to be a place of beauty and bounty for everyone. The tree echoes Genesis: here we would make a paradise, would go beyond the day-by-day grinding down of so many poor and oppressed and ailing people, even of the earth itself. And so the Christmas tree also echoes Calvary; the tree on which Jesus died becomes a tree of life for all the world.

Advent can transform us—if we will it.



Our Lady of Guadalupe



Q: I know that many of the readings in Advent are taken from the prophet Isaiah. What do we know about this prophet?

A: Isaiah (whose name means “Yahweh is salvation”) was probably born around 760 B.C. Scholars think he was of noble birth and well educated because his writings include insights from the Israelite tradition. He was married (Is. 8:3) and had at least two sons (Is. 7:3, 8:3), and his career spanned over 50 years under Kings Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. He lived and wrote at the same time as Hosea, Amos, and Micah.

Isaiah is referred to in the books of Kings and Chronicles but is not writ-

ten about outside the Bible. He was an outspoken leader in the name of the Holy One of Israel and offered guidance to Judah in its then-current moral decay and corruption. He spoke out against faithlessness, corruption, and greed. His prophetic vision showed a holy and powerful God who punishes his enemies but loves, protects, and forgives his people Israel, if only they will remain faithful. Isaiah’s prophecy reminds Israel of the promise of the Messiah and the glorious kingdom to come.

Scholars believe that Isaiah preached until about 690 B.C. and that he established a “school” that continued his message. That different authors wrote sections of this important book does not diminish the

value of the writing but serves to remind us that the inspired word of God is far more important than the messenger.

* * *

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



Deadline for submission of information, articles and news items for the next issue of *In Focus* is December 4.

Expo 2005: "Your table is ready!"

St. Patrick's Guild is busy assembling creative centerpieces for your holiday table for this year's Christmas Expo on Sunday, Dec. 4, from 8:30 a.m. to noon.

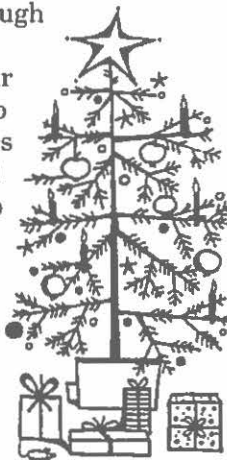
This is a new twist on the Silent Auction segment of the Christmas Expo. Unusual themes will be enjoyed by successful bidders (will one of them be you?): "Welcome the Troops," "Breakfast with Santa," "Elegant Champagne Brunch," "Ladies Tea," "A Christmas Picnic," "Just Like Gramma's House," "Hot Chocolate and Cookies for Two"—and of course many, many more!

The gift table will be well stocked, gift baskets wrapped to perfection. The sweets table will feature pretty containers filled with delectable treats and the ever-popular "choose your own" homemade cookies—a dozen for \$4 will boast a host of different recipes prepared just for you.

CREW teens will "make it a wrap" for your purchases, and the Social Action Committee will staff a special table as well.

Keep the Expo in mind for your holiday shopping, and support the Guild at the same time. All proceeds from the sale will go directly back to St. Patrick's through funding of parish projects. This year the Guild hopes to help parish nurses achieve their goal of purchasing two defibrillators, one to be kept in the church and the other in the parish center.

Make this year's Christmas table the most beautiful you've ever set!



Christmas shop with a conscience!

Are you looking for a way to help your world while you shop for Christmas? Did you know that eating chocolate and drinking coffee can help third-world farmers? Catholic Relief Services offers Fair Trade coffee and Divine chocolate for sale through its website. A couple of local sources of Free Trade products are Ten Thousand Villages, which offers coffees, teas, hot chocolate mix, and dried fruits under the name Equal Exchange, and the McKinley food co-op.

CRS supports overseas farmers by promoting Fair Trade—an alternative system of interna-

tional trade that is rooted in the principles of human dignity, economic justice, and global solidarity. By ensuring that farmers earn a fair price for their coffee, Fair Trade helps struggling small-scale farmers to put food on the table even as world coffee prices reach historic lows. By ensuring that these farmers get access to credit and technical assistance, Fair Trade helps them to survive in a

competitive international market. And by building long-term relationships with low-income coffee farmers who grow the coffee you drink, Fair Trade helps make meaningful connections between producers overseas and socially conscious consumers like you

here in the United States. So when you purchase Fair Trade coffee, you are not just buying great coffee, you are helping to build a better world, one cup at a time!

Divine is world-class chocolate in more ways than one. It is one of the world's best-tasting brands of chocolate, and it is also the world's first

farmer-owned Fair Trade chocolate company! Divine's cocoa comes exclusively from the Kuapa Kokoo cooperative in Ghana, whose farmers harvest the cocoa beans by hand and own a third of the company. Great chocolate for you, economic justice for cocoa farmers overseas.

To learn more, or to purchase Fair Trade chocolate or coffee, visit <http://www.crsfairtrade.org>.



St. Patrick's Seniors Group announces Christmas luncheon

On Wednesday, Dec. 7, the Seniors Group will gather for a holiday potluck lunch. (*Remember, reminder cards will not be sent—better put the date on your calendars now!*)

Seniors are asked to bring a potluck dish to share, a Christmas card, a non-perishable food item for the St. Vincent de Paul Society's food pantry, a wrapped white elephant gift for Bingo, and \$2 per person to help defray costs.

Questions? Call Norma Gremer (384-1068) or Alice McLaughlin (621-7145).

In January, a letter with the dates for the four 2006 events and an updated list of Seniors Group members (91!) will be sent to each member family.

Reserve Dec. 11 for parish Christmas party

The parish hall will be full of good food, good smells, good fun, and cheerful voices on Sunday, Dec. 11, starting at noon. St.

Patrick's Social Committee is hosting a potluck Christmas party, with dominos and card games for the adults and craft activities for the children.

It's rumored that St. Nick himself may stop by, despite his busy schedule of appearances elsewhere and preparations for his all-nighter on Christmas Eve.

Please bring a dish to share, maybe one of your family's traditional Christmas foods. What a wonderful opportunity, too, for sharing foods that reflect the many lands and cultures represented in our parish family!

A-H: main dish

I-R: vegetable or salad

S-Z: dessert

No tickets to buy. No RSVP needed. Just come and enjoy the fun!



Catholic Teen Connection: Haunts, scares, and screams STM makes headlines

On Oct. 16, 14 teens from St. Patrick's CREW youth group, chaperoned by 3 adults, participated in the kickoff event for the Catholic Teen Connection. This regional gathering is held four times a year at different host parishes in an effort to bring together teens from the area in fellowship, fun—and food.

This year's first event began with a lively Teen Mass at St. Mary's Church, Pesotum. Then all headed down the road to the Koberlein Farm for an ice-breaker game and a dinner of hot dogs, baked beans, chips, and homemade desserts around a bonfire.

Afterward, while teens relaxed, one of the area priests led them in a thought-provoking Gospel reflection.

Following a snack of s'mores around the bonfire, all 108 teens went on a haunted hayrack ride. Each ride provided 20 minutes of haunts, scares, and screams.

The next Catholic Teen Connection will take place at St. Thomas More High School on Sunday, Dec. 11, from 3:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. The event will take the form of a Mexican fiesta in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe, whose feast is celebrated Dec. 12.

The High School of St. Thomas More received notification from the Catholic High School Honor Roll that it has been named one of the Top 50 Catholic High Schools in the United States. Inaugurated in 2004 by the Acton Institute in Grand Rapids (Mich.), the organization recognizes schools that demonstrate outstanding commitment and achievement in the areas of academic excel-



lence, Catholic identity, and civic education. For a high school only 6 years old, this honor is a testament to the dedication of faculty, parents, students, staff, and many friends.

Speaking of academic excellence, congratulations to the following St. Patrick's parishioners at STM who will be receiving Academic Letters:

Grade 10: Kirsten Faught, Caroline Jones, Catherine Keane, Christian Kurtz, Theresa Laumann, Nathaniel Perry, Avery Schael, and Natalie Timpone

Grade 11: Vincent Christman, Robert Kimmey, and Anna Mayer

Grade 12: Sam Altaner, Kelsey Lee, and Matt Maduzia

Nathaniel Perry was also recently named as one of the school's Student Ambassadors for the year 2005-6. The application process included written responses about the school and a personal interview with Mrs. Strohl, who is in charge of development at STM. The Student Ambassadors assist in recruitment by visiting the feeder schools and conducting school tours during recruitment open houses. During the school year they assist at fund-raising events such as the February school gala.



Holy Cross happenings

A New Baby: The newest arrival to Holy Cross came on Wed., Oct. 26, at 10:48 p.m. at Carle Hospital. Mrs. Kelly Yohnka (seventh-grade teacher) had Owen Luke Yohnka, weighing 7 pounds, one ounce and 20 inches long—a perfect little bundle. Mother and baby are doing just fine.

All Saints Day: Fourth-graders spent October researching various saints. Each student chose a saint, wrote a paper about that saint, and dressed in the clothing of the chosen saint. They were then a part of the procession into Mass and were intro-

duced by Mrs. Costello. It was a beautiful celebration of All Saints Day.

Food for Families: The school participated in the Food for Families annual drive. From Oct. 29 to Nov. 12, students brought in canned goods of all kinds to help the Eastern Illinois Food bank.

Advent: Each class at Holy Cross will be participating in an Advent project. Generally the classes decide together on a service project for the season of Advent. It is a wonderful time to see children involved in doing for others in the spirit of Christ.



Mark your calendars

Nov. 23:	Grandparents Day Mass, noon dismissal
Nov. 24-25:	Thanksgiving holiday
Nov. 28-30:	Kris Kringle Shop
Dec. 1:	PTC Meeting, 7 p.m.
Dec. 2:	Mid-quarter grades sent home; all-school Mass, noon dismissal
Dec. 5:	Vision/Hearing screening
Dec. 6:	8th-graders explore STM
Dec. 7:	Box top collection
Dec. 8:	8:30 a.m. Mass, Immaculate Conception; 7 p.m. Christmas concert, K-8, at STM
Dec. 10:	Market Day
Dec. 13:	Monthly packet sent home
Dec. 16:	All-school Mass; 5th-graders to nursing homes
Dec. 17-Jan 2:	Christmas break
Jan. 3:	School resumes, 7:55 a.m.

Are you a member of the \$10-a-Month Club?

St. Patrick's has always had a soft spot in its heart for the St. Jude Catholic Worker House. The House came into being in 1980 through the efforts of Fr. George Dorsey, then co-pastor here, who arranged for rent-free, temporary use of a vacant house



Ellen McDowell organizes fund-raising campaigns from her home to help homeless people.

on University Ave., with the help of graduate students from the University of Illinois. Taking its inspiration from the Catholic Worker Movement, founded in 1933 in New York City by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin, the work of the House was, and continues to be, hospitality. Volunteer Ellen McDowell describes this hospitality thus: "It gives shelter to the homeless of all creeds and races in addition to providing a daily noon meal for anyone who is hungry and without resources. It serves as a temporary home for people to sort out next steps and to receive the support they need to rebuild their lives."

Recognizing the intrinsic value of this support, St. Patrick's volunteers helped (and over the years have continued to help) the St. Vincent de Paul Society provide gallons and gallons of

soup each and every week to feed the hungry who gather at this House of Hospitality.

Money was always tight, and the house seemed constantly in need of repairs. Finally word came that the property was needed by Mercy Hospital for its expansion. In 1989, when the St. Jude Catholic Worker House was scratching about for extra funds to cover daily operating expenses while trying to finance the purchase of a house after losing access to the one they'd occupied since 1980, St. Patrick's initiated the \$10-a-Month Club as a way for people to help who could give a little every month but maybe not a lot all at once. The idea caught on throughout the C-U community, with many supporters sending in their little bits regularly to help out with the not-inconsiderable operating expenses. In a recent CWH

newsletter Ellen McDowell called on Club members to remember their pledge to send in their monthly contributions.

Ellen, who has written several articles about Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker movement for *In Focus*, has for many years served as fundraiser for the House. She was recently honored as one of the "2005 True GRIT Heroes" in

the November issue of GRIT magazine based on the stories of her success in raising \$225,000 to buy and remodel an older home in Champaign in 1989, followed by an equally successful drive to buy and remodel a second house, now used as an annex. The first debt was paid off in an incredibly short time, just a year and a half. The second debt was paid off with equal dispatch.

"I found I was an effective fundraiser because I was truly enthusiastic about the work," Ellen says. "I was an art major in college and had no training in money management"—but just look at what she has accomplished! In addition to fund-raising, Ellen coordinates volunteers, shops for food, and helps guests cut through red tape to get the services they need. Although she tried to "retire" not long ago, she still has a busy hand in fund-raising.

If you haven't joined the \$10-a-Month Club yet, you definitely don't want to be the last to join up! Just send in your first month's donation to the St. Jude Catholic Worker House with a note pledging to follow it up with \$10 every month. If you are a Club member but haven't yet sent in your monthly pledge, today just might be a good day to do that—

you never know, Ellen may need something to do!



Ellen welcomes Marita Collins to her first day as a volunteer preparing food for the 50-90 homeless people who come for a free meal daily.

Prepare the way...

Participation in a communal reconciliation service can be a wonderful way to prepare for Christmas. The service offers scripture and song for reflection, with a guided examination of conscience and expression of sorrow for sin, followed by individual confession for those who wish to be reconciled with God, with others, and

(sometimes most of all) with themselves.

Area churches cooperate in making the sacrament of reconciliation widely available for communal celebration, with several priests from three parishes gathering at each in turn for the service, which begins at 7:00 p.m.:
Monday, Dec. 19, at Holy Cross

Tuesday, Dec. 20, at St. Patrick's
Wednesday, Dec. 21, at St. Matthew's



Charles de Foucauld, desert hermit

Charles de Foucauld was born in 1858 into a titled French family whose sons traditionally fought in the elite regiments of the French military. He spent (or misspent) his youth by immersing himself in a life of excess, having lost his faith during adolescence. However, he continued to have nagging questions about his faith.

After making a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, he discovered "the humble and hidden existence of the divine workman of Nazareth, and it became his aim to live the same kind of life. He prayed and meditated, spending long hours before the tabernacle, eventually deciding to

become a priest to bring the Eucharist to places it had never been before.

This Charles did. He set out to live in the desert of North Africa and ended up in a Tuareg Muslim community, where he built a hermitage. He learned the Tuareg dialect and became a friend to all around him. His goal was to be recognized as a good man so that people would know that his religion was good and that the one Charles served was far more "good" than he was. However, under the influence of the Senussi Muslim

confraternity, sporadic attacks became frequent in the area where he lived. On the evening of Dec. 1, 1916, some Tuaregs surprised and captured him. They sacked the hermitage, and Charles was killed when the young man set to guard him panicked.

Charles had sought to develop a new model of contemplative religious life, a community of Little Brothers who would live among the poor in a spirit of service and solidarity. He spent many years conceiving and preparing the way for followers who never arrived, and he might well have died with little sense of accomplishment had his spirituality not trained him to look beyond outward appearances. In 1933, how-

ever, long after his death, Rene Voillaume and four companions left France for the Sahara, where they became the core of the Little Brothers of Jesus. Several years later they were joined by the Little Sisters of Jesus. Both fraternities gradually spread throughout the world, their small communities taking up life among the poor and outcast, eventually in many obscure corners of the globe.

Charles de Foucauld is remembered as a model of "desert spirituality" in our time. Rather than a retreat from

humanity, he believed the experience of being alone with God makes us truly available to encounter and love our neighbor as ourselves. His only cloister, and that of those who followed him after his death, was the world of the poor. This desert hermit, once a wealthy and self-indulgent young man, was beatified on Nov. 13, 2005.

Charles is also remembered for what has become known as the "Prayer of Abandon." It is taken from a meditation that he placed on the lips of a dying Jesus; he thought it should be a prayer for every moment of our life:

Father, I abandon myself into your hands; do with me what you will. Whatever you may do, I thank you. I am ready for all, I accept all. Let only your will be done in me as in all your creatures—I ask no more than this, O Lord. Into your hands I commend my soul; I offer it to you, O Lord, with all the love of my heart, for I love you, my God, and so need to give myself—to surrender myself into your hands, without reserve and with boundless confidence, for you are my Father.



Quick fixin's from the kitchen of . . .

Nawal Youakim

Baked Garlic Chicken

- 2 whole chicken breasts
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 t allspice
- pinch of pepper
- 1-1/2 T olive oil (or 1 T mayonnaise)
- 1 t coriander
- 1/2 T salt

Mix olive oil, garlic, coriander, allspice, salt, and pepper in a small bowl. Cut each chicken breast in half, and marinate in mix for 5-10 minutes. Bake at 400 degrees for 1 hour.



Prayer for Vocations

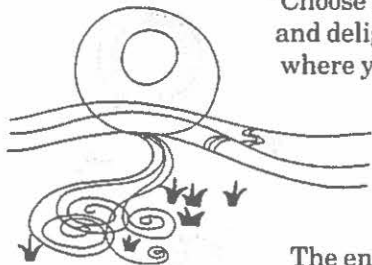


Holy and provident Father, you are the Lord of the vineyard and the harvest, and you give each a just reward for their work. In your design of love you call men and women to work with you for the salvation of the world.

Guide the flock to which you have promised possession of the kingdom. Send new workers into your harvest, and set in the hearts of priests and religious faithfulness to your plan of salvation, perseverance in their vocation, and holiness of

The hermit as a spiritual model

The June 20 issue of *Newsweek* magazine featured an article on contemporary hermits in America. In particular, the example is given of a woman in her early 60s who had retired from the world to a cabin in Minnesota, where she lives a self-sufficient frugal life, gardening and chopping wood. She practices a daily cycle of prayer consisting of the Divine Office, the Angelus, and Lectio Divina (sacred reading).



The word *hermit* comes from the Greek "ere mites," that is, dweller in the desert. In some sense the anonymous life in a city or town can be a sort of desert; it is commonplace to remark on how isolated we are in the midst of teeming populations. The model of the ancient hermit, however, may be of use in elevating and deepening our Christian existence in today's world.

We know from Scripture that Christ withdrew into the desert to pray. St. John Vianney, the Curé d'Ars, remarked: "It is in solitude that God speaks to us." A chapter on solitude in the Benedictine handbook states: "Many of the separated or divorced who believe their former marriages to have been valid, the spouses of the seriously ill, the people who hoped to marry but never found the right person—all these may be driven to find God in painful aloneness." It might be said that to be alone is to be lonely, to be alone with God is solitude.

What exactly is the hermit model of spirituality? An excellent book on the subject is *A Way of Desert Spirituality*, by Fr. Eugene Romano. Father Romano was called to the hermit life many years ago and has organized a colony of hermits in Chester, N.J., under the approval of the local bishop. This book details the group's plan of life as they pray, meditate, and serve as a retreat center.

The Christian solitary lives in the authentic tradition of the third-cen-

tury Desert Fathers. The hermit needs only God's grace and the sacraments to deny himself or herself and follow Christ. In *The Imitation of Christ* Thomas à Kempis advises: "Choose a hidden place for yourself and delight to retire there alone, where you need not talk with anyone, but instead pour out your heart to God in prayer. In this way you will have a clear conscience and a contrite heart."

The entire aim of the hermit is to live wholly in Christ. Is this not the aim of every Christian? Living in Christ, we take Christ into the highways and byways of this world in service of others, caring for them as he did—a reflection that may serve us well this Advent as we prepare ourselves and the world around us for the coming of Christ.



Welcome to new parishioners
 Roberta Clark, Nancy and Thomas Knuth, Michelle Nahas, Colleen Roseman, Leonard Salika, Christina and Russell Sherman, and Mary and Richard Walczak.

Farewell to these parishioners, who have moved from C-U: Brent and Tina Fleming, Sandra Levin, and Nicole Pioletti.

Congratulations to Matthew Boucek and Sara Groom, married at St. Patrick's.

Welcome to the following, recently baptized into our faith community: Emma Elizabeth Rydell, Ian Michael Peters, and George Conlee.

Please pray for deceased parishioners Thomas McAuliff and Chuck Giuffre.

Also remember in your prayers the very many seriously and chronically ill members of our parish, whom the "Privacy Act" prevents us from naming here.

Christmas Day Masses

Local area churches traditionally offer an expanded Mass schedule for the Vigil of Christmas, and this year is no exception. In some cases this year, however, there is an abbreviated schedule of Masses offered on Sunday morning, Christmas Day. As a help to our readers, here are the **Christmas Day** Mass schedules:

St. Patrick's: 10:30 a.m.

Holy Cross: 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.

St. Matthew's: 8:00, 9:30 and 11:30 a.m.

St. Mary's: 10:00 a.m.

ST. PATRICK'S PARISH

In Focus

St. Patrick's Parish 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 mailbox 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.

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Articles and information for this issue were provided by Carol Bosley, Mary Lee Brady, Suzanne D'Andria, Frances Drone-Silvers, Cathy Howey, Tracey Johnson, Peggy Loftus, Mary Long, Mary Lou Menches, Cheryl Mitchell, Ellen Noonan, Nancy Olson, Marty and Nathaniel Perry, Dan Richards, Leslie Risatti, Cathy Salika, Shirley Splittstoesser, Peggy Whelan, and Nawal Youakim. Photos courtesy of Lucille Salika, Mary Long, and Shirley Splittstoesser. This issue was edited by Mary Lou Menches and paged by John Colombo.

Are you getting the most out of Mass?

David Philippart, in “Seven Habits of Highly Effective Mass-Goers,” lists seven steps that let the Mass do its work on us. The first of these is to “enter into mystery.”

Adopted by God in Baptism, we are brothers and sisters of each other. No other bond, not age or race or ethnicity or sexual orientation or political affiliation or economic status or educational background — not even biological relationship — is stronger than the bond of the water of Baptism that draws us together. This water is thicker than blood. This does not mean that we all have to be best friends, but we have to act like we are more than just a bunch of strangers in the same room at the same time doing the same thing.

Philippart suggests that we try this: Be aware of others as you get out of your car or walk toward your church. Make eye contact. Smile, nod, say hello. Remember that after he rose from the dead, Christ appeared to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus as a stranger, and even Mary Magdalene mistook him for the gardener.

Consider arriving early so you can spend some time in quiet reflection or prayer before Mass begins. The Eucharist reserved in the tabernacle came from a prior celebration of the Mass, so praying in the presence of Christ in this way can help us enter more deeply into the Mass when it begins.

Bless yourself with holy water to remember who you are, a baptized person, and why you are here, because you are a baptized person. If you see the gifts of bread and wine set out, stop for a minute to look at them. Place alongside the bread all that you accomplished in the past week: the work you did, the test you took, the simple acts of kindness you performed. Also place there the things the parish did this past week to educate children, care for the sick, feed the hungry, stand up for the oppressed.

When you look at the carafe of wine, put into it all the struggles that you undertook in the past week: to understand others better, to love others more. Put into it too all the things the parish struggles with: the attempts to be a more inclusive, more vibrant, more faithful community. These, then, are the things we will offer to God under the signs of bread and wine.

Take a seat up front and move to the center. Save the seats by the doors or on the aisles for those who arrive later or for those who will be ministering during the Mass, walking a baby, or sitting next to someone in a wheelchair.

Bow to the altar before taking your place. Don't just nod your head; bend deeply, gracefully from the waist. Recognize Christ in this sign: a dining table where God eats with us and heaven comes to earth like a feast comes to those who are starving. When you bow to the altar, you bow to Christ. Or genuflect to the tabernacle, where Christ remains present in the consecrated bread from an earlier Mass.

After acknowledging Christ's presence in the sign of the altar or in the tabernacle, acknowledge Christ present in those sitting around you. Say hello, or offer a smile or a nod. You may like to kneel and pray after taking your seat; when you sit, prepare your donation and find the readings for the Sunday. If you picked up the bulletin, don't read it now.

You are now “entering into mystery,” the *Mysterium Fidei*, the Mystery of Faith that is the Mass.

The second step, Philippart says, is to “sing for your supper.” Watch for it in the next issue of *In Focus*!





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St. Patricks Parish Urbana, IL

December 2005

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				6:45am Men's Bible Study 7pm Baptism Prep 7pm Choir 7pm Building & Grounds	10:45 Mass CCNH	
1	2	3				
8:30-12pm Guild EXPO 9am RCIA 9:15am Rel Ed 10:30am Children's Liturgy 5:30pm CREW Christmas Party 6:30pm Rel Ed	7pm Pro-life 7pm Centering Prayer	9:30am Mass Canterbury Ridge 5:30pm Financial Affairs	9am Moms UIP 12pm Seniors Luncheon 5:15pm Holy Day Mass 5:15pm SVDP 6:30pm Rel Ed St. J 7pm Choir 7pm RCIA	Immaculate Conception Masses: 7am 12:10, 5:15pm 6:45am Men's Bible Study 	10:30am Mass Care Center 10:45am CCNH Communion Service	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
8:30am-12pm Blood Sugar & Pressure Check 1-3pm Christmas Potluck 9:15am Rel Ed 10:30am Children's Liturgy 3:30pm Catholic Teen Connection at HS-STM	7pm Centering Prayer	7:30pm Parish Council Exec. Com.	9am Moms UIP 5:15pm SVDP 5:15pm Children's Choir 6:30pm Rel Ed St. Joseph 7pm RCIA 7pm Social Action 7pm Choir 9:30am Schola	6:45am Men's Bible Study 7pm Choir	10:30am Mass Clark-Lindsey 10:45 Mass CCNH	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
10:15am K of C	7pm Communal Penance (Holy Cross) 7pm Centering Prayer	7pm Communal Penance (St. Patrick's)	7pm Communal Penance (St. Matthew's) 9am Moms UIP 5:15pm SVDP 5:15pm Children's Choir 7pm Choir	6:45am Men's Bible Study 7pm Parish Council 7pm Choir		Christmas Eve Masses: 4, 6:30, 10:30pm
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Christmas Mass: 10:30am 	Offices Closed 7pm Centering Prayer		9am Moms UIP 5:15pm SVDP	6:45am Men's Bible Study	10:45 Mass CCNH	
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

