

ST. PATRICK'S PARISH

In Focus


www.stpaturbana.org

Why "Merry Christmas"?

The Christmas gospel from Luke for the Mass at Midnight is one probably all of us would want to hear on Christmas. It tells a familiar story, stresses that this child is born into the royal house of David, and we can imagine ourselves coming along with the shepherds to pay homage. Our well-known Christmas carols help us to imagine ourselves singing God's glory along with the angels. It is filled with all the imagery that feeds what

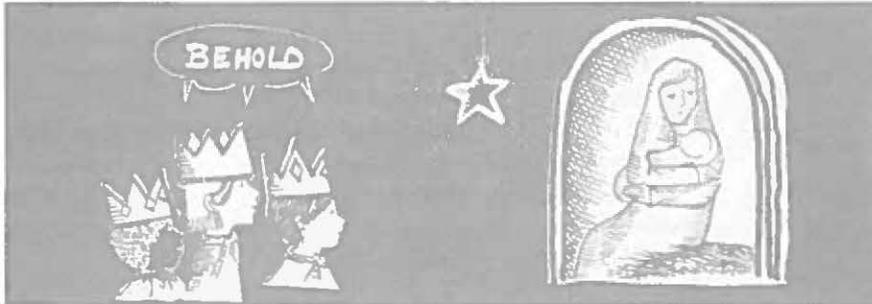
each of us hopes for out of Christmas: good feelings, warmth and security, nearness of family and friends, a sense that everything in our world is right. But is this what the gospel is portraying, and does it really connect to the average family's Christmas celebration?

Mary and Joseph set out from Galilee to Bethlehem, a distance of about 90 miles; imagine what it must have been like to ride that donkey for that long while nine months pregnant. Luke passes rather quickly over the fact that there was no room for

weather for long periods of time.

So why do we wish one another "Merry Christmas"? Surely not because Jesus was born into a perfect world or because we live in a perfect world or even in perfect families today. But because of Jesus, *all* of us

can celebrate a Christmas that is joyful and blessed. The Savior of the world was born during the night of the year when darkness seems overlong. Jesus comes for the people in dark places, and if



we know anything, we know that there are many people who are experiencing life in places where seemingly impenetrable darkness prevails, especially this year. The real, lasting, and deep joy of Christmas, however, is that the Light shines there. This is why we can say to one another "Merry Christmas!"

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Las Posadas a novena of hospitality

Beginning on Dec. 16, during the last and most intense days of Advent, many families observe the custom of *Las Posadas* ("Lodgings"), common to peoples from the Philippines, Mexico, and other Latin American countries.

For nine days before Christmas groups of neighbors and friends gather each evening to remember and to reenact, Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem. The group makes its way through the neighborhood singing,



perhaps accompanied by a guitar, maracas, a harp, or shepherd's pipes. Sometimes they carry small figures of Mary and Joseph, or a boy and girl may be dressed as the pilgrim couple. Candles light their way.

The procession stops at several of their homes to ask for shelter, but from inside a loud, rude voice tells them to go away, there is no room for them there. They respond that Mary is about to give birth to the

king of heaven — and finally a door is flung open and all are welcomed inside. The nativity figures are placed on a small altar or table, and traditional songs are sung and prayers said.

On Christmas Eve, the last night of *Las Posadas*, all go together to Midnight Mass. Then the Christmas celebration begins, with parties and singing every day until Epiphany.

Las Posadas helps everyone remember that Jesus came as a poor and humble child, and that in extending hospitality to the stranger we open our hearts to Christ.

How do we understand “evangelization”?



When most Catholics hear the word *evangelization*, they shudder. It's not a word we feel comfortable with. Yet

this word comes from the Greek *evangelion*, which means “gospel” or “good news.” When the angels proclaimed to the shepherds “good news of great joy,” they were the first evangelists of the Incarnate Word.

To live the calling of our baptism, we also must be evangelists—we must be willing to proclaim the good news. But what does evangelization mean for Catholics? There are two stories that can help us understand what evangelization is all about. One is a story from the Gospel of John; the other is a story of my personal experience.

In John 4, the story of Jesus with the woman at the well, Jesus promises the woman: “those who drink of the water that I will give them will

never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.” The water Jesus offers to the Samaritan is the water of baptism, the life of Christ itself, the Holy Spirit that Christ pours out on those who are his own.

This water is the good news, which fills those who drink full of life and peace. In other words, if we participate fully in the good news ourselves, it will flow out of us and we will become a spring of living water to all those around us, whether at church, at our jobs or school, at play with our family or friends, or alone in personal prayer.

How might this look in any given Catholic's life? Well, I came to Catholicism as an adult because of the living witness of my husband, Matt. From the time we met, during my first year of college, I was amazed at his faith-filled life. He never talked about religion, but he was willing and able to reevaluate how he lived so as to act more rightly every day, to break bad habits and instill good ones, to learn from others, and most importantly to respect every living

person and show them love. At eighteen. Once I asked him how he could do all this, and he answered very simply. “Well, every week I receive the Eucharist at Mass, and it strengthens me to make it through the week.” A year later, I was in the RCIA. I accepted the Real Presence—after all, I had his life as evidence—and had a great devotion to and desire for the Eucharist.

Matt's evangelization, I think, was a beautiful Catholic form. He didn't preach or try to convert anyone; he merely lived his own life in continual conversion by the good news of Christ and showed the spiritual nourishment he drank in the Eucharist to those around him, if they asked for it.

If we drink our fill of the water of life that Christ offers, and trust in the Holy Spirit that breathes over all creation, I am confident that we too will proclaim the good news of our own lives. Called to be evangelists, we should pray that we will first be converted and brought to hope in the gospel message. Then we will be able to do as St. Francis advised: “Preach the Gospel always. If necessary, use words.”

Kim Belcher

Parish to take up new evangelization program

In February St. Patrick's Parish will undertake a new ministry that will involve the entire parish. **Disciples in Mission (DM)** is a lectionary-based three-year renewal program for the seasons of Lent, beginning with Lent 2005. During Lent the parish will focus together on the themes of DM, from the homilies during Mass and weekly bulletin inserts to the opportunity to join facilitated small groups using study materials that explore the themes in depth. There are also family booklets for use in the home.

Disciples in Mission is based on the three evangelization goals set forth by the U.S. Catholic Bishops:

1. The call to holiness and personal spiritual renewal;
2. The call to welcome and invite;
3. The call to transform the world in Christ.

In the Easter season at a Parish Reflection Day parishioners will gather to discuss how we can live our faith more fully and share it freely with others.



Note: With parish-wide emphasis on Disciples in Mission, there will be no Lenten retreat.

Everyone is encouraged to participate in this new program. How can you do that? Pray that DM will lead us to grow in holiness and hospitality as a parish. Join a small group during the sign-up Sundays in January (there will be small groups for teens too). Involve the whole family, drawing upon suggested activities in the booklet. Plan to attend the Parish Reflection Day after Easter. It is hoped that everyone in the parish

will be involved at some level in this new evangelization effort.

Planning is already underway by a Leadership Team that includes, in addition to Mary Long, Sr. Charlene Cesario, and Fr. Joe Hogan, the following parishioners: Doug and Cathy Wolfersberger, Nancy Olson, Garrett Hunter, Terry and Kathy Jobin, Dick and Pat Justice, Jim and Dottie Davito, Judy Huelsbusch, Jeff and Erin Wolf Chambers, and Kim Belcher. More information will be given in the weekly bulletin and at Mass to help you know how you can be part of this new program. If you have questions, please contact Mary Y. Long (367-2665) at the parish center.



Deadline for submission of information, articles and news items for the next issue of *In Focus* is January 16.

STM accepting applications for next school year

If you're curious about The High School of St. Thomas More, perhaps thinking about the possibility of enrolling one of your children there, you'll want to take advantage of some opportunities open to you. STM, now accepting applications for the 2005-6 school year, has a Web site (www.hs-stm.org/) loaded with information

about curriculum, faculty, and activities.

In addition, St. Patrick's is hosting an informational meeting for prospective students and their families on Tuesday, Jan. 25, 6:00-7:00 p.m. in the multipurpose room of the parish center. Principal Tim Millage, Director of Guidance Robin Bedwell, and

Director of Institutional Advancement Mark Randall will be present to answer your questions about the school or the application process.

If you have questions about this informational meeting, please call the parish office (367-2665) or the school (352-7210).

How we can help inactive Catholics come back

For many years St. Patrick's, through a program called Re-Membering Church, has ministered to Catholics who have not been active in practicing their faith, offering support and assistance to anyone interested in re-connecting with a Catholic community.

It can be hard to identify and reach out to those Catholics, except through the assistance of family members and friends. And so the Re-Membering Church team of St. Patrick's asks for your help. Tell those you know that there is a way for them to be heard and to return if they choose.

If you prefer that invitation to come from someone else, share with us the names of those you know to be inactive but seem open to sharing the reasons for their separation from their Church and to finding a way to be reconciled. *(A clip-out coupon is provided below.)* We pledge to contact them in confidence with an invitation to share their story of hurt, anger, or apathy and to extend the support they may need to take the important first steps back.

Here are some things you should know about this process:

- The Re-Membering Church team at St. Patrick's is a very small group of parishioners who have undergone training in ministering to inactive Catholics.
- Most people who have left the Church, whatever their reasons, still consider themselves Catholic and identify themselves as such when asked. Most, after a period of time away from their faith community, find themselves at a loss for the companionship and the richness of the sacramental life they experienced in the Church. Many are simply waiting for someone to help them return.
- For those seeking a way back, the team offers an opportunity for them to share their stories, a compassionate hearing, and where helpful, information to fill out their understandings of Church teaching or doctrine or practice.
- Those who accept this invitation are asked to make a commitment to 5-6 meetings with the team. They may meet with an individual team member if they prefer.

The Re-Membering Church team plans to offer a series of such meetings on Thursdays during Lent, starting on Feb. 10. Additional sessions can be arranged, if desired.

The easiest way to get in touch with the team is by calling the parish office (367-2665); the parish secretary will refer you to one of us. If you prefer, you may call any of us directly: Barbara Wysocki (367-5014), Mary Lou Menches (344-1125), Leo Wood (239-2587), or Judy Corbett (398-2322).



St. Patrick's Re-Membering Church Team

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To the Re-Membering Church Team:

Here is the name of someone I believe is an inactive Catholic:

I will invite this person to the Feb. 10 meeting.

I prefer that you contact this person. His/her phone number: _____

Optional: My name is _____

(It would be helpful to us to be able to reference you name in making this contact.)

Please drop this off at the parish office or mail it to St. Patrick's, attn: Re-Membering Church Team



Holy Cross happenings

Congratulations to the first quarter Honor Roll students: Luke Cottingham, Grace Mayer, Caitlin Schutz, Andy Wszalek, Hannah Noonan, Matthew Tate, Cora Freidhof, Claire Drone-Silvers, Matthew Melander, Sam Noonan, and Laura Welle. Way to go! Keep studying!

Fifth- and sixth-grade service project: All of the fifth- and sixth-graders visit nursing homes in the area as a monthly or bi-monthly service project. One fifth grade has "special friends" at Carle Arbours in Savoy, while the other fifth grade visits Circle of Friends, an adult daycare in Champaign. Sixth-graders visit residents at Champaign County Nursing Home every other month. The children are excited about these visits, and of course the residents love talking with them.

Warm-a-Kid: Holy Cross Troop 9 Boy Scouts sponsored a clothing drive to collect new and used mittens, gloves, scarves, coats, and hats for needy kids in our community. Drop boxes were available at the school office through Dec. 14. Another example of children reaching out to others in our community.

November: November was a busy month at Holy Cross. Parent-teacher conferences were held in conjunction with the Scholastic Book Fair. The teachers were very appreciative of the books purchased for their classrooms. According to Mrs. Sherri Bolen, librarian, it was a huge success.

Also in November, the fourth-graders did a fantastic job representing their chosen saints at the All Saints Day Mass. A group visited classrooms throughout the day to tell about their saints. Congratulations on the very nice job you did in making your presentations in front of other students!

Grandparents Day: This is a day of tradition, if you will, at Holy Cross School. The day before Thanksgiving, grandparents and special friends of the students are invited to a Mass at 8:15 a.m., followed by brief performances by each class, singing, playing recorders, or the band. Despite the rain and wind and sleet and snow, the day was filled with warmth from many, many grandparents. The children performed well and had a nice time singing—another day of sharing our school with people went beautifully.

Adopt a Family: Several classes took on an Advent project of adopting a family through Catholic Charities. Each class that participated had a designated family, and they purchased items for the family members. So many of us are very blessed; teachers work hard at helping children reach out to others.



Mark your calendars

Jan. 3: School resumes

Jan. 7: Mass at 8:15 a.m.

Jan. 10: Testing for grades 3, 6, 8

Jan. 14: End of the second quarter and the first semester

Jan. 17: No school, Martin Luther King holiday

Jan. 19: Sixth-grade trip to Spurlock Museum

Jan. 21: Report card distribution

Jan. 22: Market day

Jan. 28: Fifth-grade trips to Carle Arbours and Circle of Friends

Jan. 30: Catholic Schools Week

Jan. 31: Mass at 8:15 a.m.

Feb. 2: Open house, National Catholic School Appreciation Day

Feb. 9: All School Mass, Ash Wednesday



Q: Why is it important to be registered in a parish?

A: It seems common these days for people to "shop around" for a parish, trying one after another for a good "fit," and the local Church has generally been very flexible about their territorial boundaries in accommodating them. And in the end they may neglect to register at any one of the parishes, even after they have been attending Mass regularly at the same church for some time.

Belonging to a parish, however, means more than where you go to Mass and putting your envelope in the Sunday collection. Church law defines a parish as a "specific (stable) community of Christian believers," and if that means anything, it is that every parish is a fellowship of believing Catholics who help one another and the rest of the community to live out the Gospel of Christ together. The parish priests, staff, and probably many other people in the parish are trying to serve you and everyone else, liturgically and in other ways. And they need your help.

As a general rule, the pastor is responsible for the care of all the people of his parish: baptizing, marrying, counseling, burying—providing the full sacramental life of the Church. By registering in a parish you make it your "home," with all that this implies; you establish relationships, share in the life of the faith community, and benefit from the sacramental life of the community. As a member of the faith community you also take on some responsibilities, assisting in the necessary works of the Church—its worship, apostolic mission, charities, the care of its ministers, and its care of the poor. In other words, you enjoy all the benefits of belonging and are expected to respond by generously using your God-given talents and abilities for the welfare of all.

For all these reasons it is important, for you and for the other members of the faith community, that you register in a parish!

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

Seniors Group enjoys holiday lunch

Fifty senior parishioners met for a Christmas lunch on Dec. 1. Honorary member Fr. Joe Hogan was also in attendance and blessed parishioners and the foods they had prepared: Irma and Ray Wait brought a huge pot of homemade chicken noodle soup, Bill and Ruth Plymire brought a similarly huge pot of homemade chili, and others brought items to share. For the finishing touch, Lila Hewkin and Vickie Burke (Heritage Center Manor Care) served up sundaes with chocolate fudge, strawberry, and butterscotch toppings, and sprinkles.

Lila described Manor Care services, pointing out that many kinds of care formerly provided by hospitals is now routinely provided by Manor Care and other nursing homes.

In addition to the sundae toppings, Lila and Vickie also brought door prizes, which were won by Rick and Jo Mahannah, Norma Gremer, Sophia Zeigler, and Leo Wood. Seniors exchanged Christmas greeting cards and white elephant gifts, and donations were made to the St. Vincent de Paul Society and St. Jude Catholic Worker House.

The group welcomed new members and guests Lee Yemma (Mary Long's mother, who recently moved to Champaign from Texas), Colleen Brennigan (Cathy Witte's sister), Mary Tavis, and Sharon Fitzgerald.

The planning committee for the holiday luncheon included Bill and Ruth Plymire, Irma and Ray Wait, Leo Wood, Betty Christian, and Walter and Shirley Splittstoesser.

The Seniors Group's next gathering will be Friday, Apr. 1, 2005—watch for forthcoming announcements. Any senior who would like to be on the mailing list is asked to call Shirley Splittstoesser (367-3330).



New members Lee Yemma (left) and Mary Tavis get acquainted.



Lila Hewkin (facing, center) and Vickie Burke (right) serve "sundaes made to order," courtesy of Manor Care.



After dessert, seniors relax over good conversation and coffee.

Knights plan upcoming events

Scheduling of events was the main item of business at the Nov. 21 meeting of the Urbana Council of the Knights of Columbus. After reviewing the outcome of the principal fundraisers during the past year and the upcoming calendar, the Knights announce the following:

Dec. 12: Co-sponsor St. Patrick's Christmas holiday party, complete with pictures of the children with Santa, in conjunction with the Social Committee. A donation of \$100 by the

Knights was made to cover costs.

Jan. 30: Initiation of new members and advancement of current members at St. Thomas School, Philo. Men interested in joining the Knights should contact Grand Knight David Mendoza (377-8986).

Feb. 6: Super Bowl breakfast: Omeletes (Mike Hodits) vs. Biscuits and Gravy (Chris Stohr). Pancakes also available. Free-will offering requested.

Feb. 11: Friday Fish Fries begin, concluding on Mar. 18.

The traditional **Ladies Knight Out** has been postponed until later

in the spring due to Lent's early start. And plans for a special observance of the **40th anniversary** of the Urbana Council of the Knights of Columbus are under consideration.



“Good Liturgy”: Presiding at the Liturgy of the Word

This continues the Liturgy Committee's study of the 10-part series that appeared in America Magazine earlier this year.

Fr. John F. Baldwin, SJ, author of the book *Bread of Life, Cup of Salvation: Understanding the Mass* (Sheed & Ward 2003)

authored this article, third in the “Good Liturgy” series. It concentrates on the role of the presider in relation to the assembly in proclaiming the Liturgy of the Word.

The basic principle developed in this article is that the role of the priest-presider is to serve and encourage the prayer of the assembly so that they can give praise to God and grow in their response to the gift of Christ in word and in sacrament.

In a sense, the priest is the quintessential middleman, representing Christ to the assembly (which is the

body of Christ), and representing the body of Christ to God. In approaching this task, the presider's attitude requires both humility and reverence.

At the same time, in the proclamation of the word, God is speaking and Christ himself is present in our midst. The presider, awe-struck by these facts, would thus exercise a kind of “enthusiastic humility,” helping the assembly to appreciate that God's

word is the most fundamental source of our faith.

There are four ways we respond to the proclamation of God's word: the homily, the Creed, the Prayer of the Faithful, and the eucharistic prayer and communion.

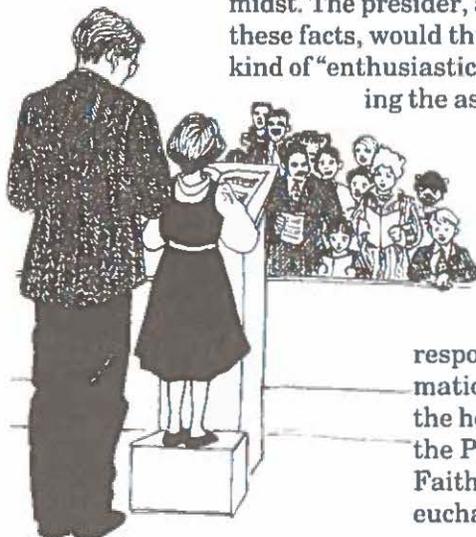
The *homily* is the single most important responsibility of the presider in the Liturgy of the Word. The homily is a way to connect a particular assembly's experience with God's living word. Therefore the homilist

must have a good “feel” for the assembly. Likewise, there is no substitute for being an interesting person—the homilist must be engaged not only in reflection on scripture, theology, and tradition, but also in the culture in which he lives. He must have something significant to say.

The *Creed* is not so much a series of statements giving information about God as expressions of faith and means of praise.

The final element of the Liturgy of the Word is the *Prayer of the Faithful*. The presider introduces the petitions by an invitation to pray and concludes with prayer after the petitions have been read.

Good liturgy is led by the presider, whose role is critical. The entire assembly is in a real sense the celebrant of the liturgy, together with Christ, whose spirit calls it into being. When we emerge from liturgy, we should have lived one more step into our baptism; that is, we should be more mature, autonomous persons who can live in healthy, reconciling relations with others in the larger world.



in our parish library

Is improving your spiritual or prayer life among your New Year's resolutions? These books may give you the guidance or inspiration you need.

Prayer Notes to a Friend, by Edward Hays (248 HAY) The brief chapters in this book are written as short letters to a friend on various aspects of prayer, such as the Bartender's prayer, unanswered prayer, praying when we don't feel like it, prayers of grief. Each entry is short but powerful.

Henri Nouwen: Writings, selected by Robert Jonas (248 NOU) Nouwen is one of the most influential and popular spiritual writers of our time. Jonas has selected several of his writings on friendship, faith, searching, and solidarity with the world and

intimacy with Jesus. This book provides information on Nouwen as a person as well as an introduction to his works.

Walking with God in a Fragile World, edited by James Langford and Leroy Rouner (291 LAN) Compiled after September 11, thirteen theologians and spiritual writers “wrestle with the problems of the human condition in the world today and reflect on what a walk with God might reveal about current situations and future possibilities.”

Catholic Spiritual Classics, by Mitch Finley (204 FIN) A little afraid to delve into some of the spiritual classics? Finley tells how to read the classics, and then provides background and contemporary applications for twelve well-known classics,

such as Augustine's Confessions, writings of Sts. Francis and Claire, The Cloud of Unknowing, The Imitation of Christ, and The Story of a Soul.

Coming in January: The library has been the recipient of numerous donations over the past year. Some are duplicate copies, and some just aren't “right” for the parish library. Look for notices in the weekly bulletin of the upcoming “Library Give-away,” and stop in to add to your own spiritual library.

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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

The first description of the Mass

What do you suppose the Mass was like only a hundred years or so after Christ's last supper with his followers? The following description of the Mass is taken from Apology (I, 65-66), written about 150 A.D. In its most basic form, it is easy to see that, centuries later, our worship remains true to its beginnings.

On the day named after the sun (that is, Sunday) all who live in the city or countryside assemble.

The memoirs of the Apostles or the writings of the Prophets are read for as long as time allows.

When the lector has finished, the presider addresses us and exhorts us to imitate the splendid things we have heard.

Then we all stand and pray . . .

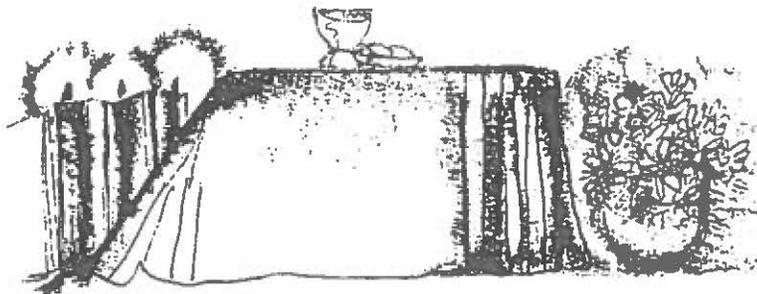
Bread and a cup containing water and wine mixed with water are brought to the one who presides over the assembly.

He takes them, gives praise and glory to the Father of the universe, through the name of the Son and the Holy Spirit, and then makes a long "eucharist" (thanksgiving) for having been judged worthy of these good things.

When he is finished, all the people present give their assent with an "Amen!" ("Amen" in Hebrew means "So be it.")

When the presider has finished the Eucharist and all the people have signified their assent, those whom we call "deacons" distribute to each one present the consecrated bread, wine, and water; and they also carry them to those who are absent.

This food we call "Eucharist."



Help! Help!

The Communications Committee needs two or three more people to take turns editing *In Focus*, the parish newsletter. You would need a computer and e-mail. The editing work usually falls in the week following the second Sunday of the month. You'd pick up typed or handwritten articles from the committee's mailbox in the parish center; others would come to you by e-mail. Your job would be to combine them all into a single file, check for spelling and grammar, apply some style conventions, print out the file,



and distribute copies for parish staff review on Thursday morning. On Friday afternoon or Saturday morning you'd pick up their copies, add to your file any changes they requested, and on Sunday afternoon get the file, with a final printout, to one of the volunteers who page the newsletter.

Editing an issue takes about 6-8 hours, and deadlines are very important. If you enjoy *In Focus*, how about helping to keep it going? If you can take a turn at editing the newsletter, please contact Mary Lou Menches (344-1125, mmenches@uiuc.edu).

Raymond of Penyafort "retired" at 100

Raymond was born at Penyafort in Catalonia, Spain, in 1175. The scope of his accomplishments in his 100 years of life is truly astonishing. By the age of 20 he was teaching philosophy in Barcelona. At 30 he went to Bologna to study canon and civil law. He was ordained a priest and joined the Dominicans at 47, just 8 months after the death of founder St. Dominic.

Raymond once told his confessor that he was sometimes complacent as a teacher. His confessor gave him an unusual penance, to write a collection of cases of conscience for use by confessors and moralists. It was the first work of its kind.

When called to Rome by Pope Gregory IX, he served as the pope's confessor and ordered him to hear and expedite all petitions that he received from the poor. At Gregory's request Raymond collected all the decrees of popes and councils in the previous hundred years so they'd not be lost to history.

At the age of 59, Raymond returned to Spain for the good of his health, although he served the Church there in many capacities. At 63 he was elected to be the third master general of the Dominicans. He visited many of the order's houses, calling his brothers to holiness through prayer, study, and service. He edited the constitutions of the order—including a provision that the master general could be allowed to resign, which he did two years later.

During the remaining 34 years of his life, he worked for the conversion of the Moors. He engaged Thomas Aquinas to write his book *Against the Gentiles*, had Hebrew and Arabic taught at several Dominican houses, and established houses in areas under the control of the Moors. When he "retired" to the Lord at the age of 100, he could have reported that over 10,000 converts had been baptized.

The Church celebrates the life of this remarkable man on Jan. 7.

Serrans work for the Church

As baptized, practicing, and thoughtful Catholics, Serrans surely speculate at times about the future of the Church. For the Church to stay strong and viable, what is needed is an adequate number of good priests, dedicated religious men and women, and a supportive, faithful laity. This should be a concern for all of us; it certainly is for members of Serra International.

Thirty-one years ago Bishop Edward O'Rourke, then prelate of the Diocese of Peoria, recognized the potential benefits of an organization with such aims and established a Serra Club in the C-U area. He appointed Fr. Martell, then pastor of St. Patrick's Parish, Urbana, as chaplain of the new club. Originally intended to be an organization of men only, the Serra Club is now open to both Catholic men and women—and could include you, *if you are interested*.

Meetings of the Serra Club are held on the second and fourth Mondays at 5:30 p.m., presently at the Jolly Roger restaurant in downtown Urbana. Meetings provide programs dealing with Catholic doctrine, service, and social consciousness. Members also discuss business matters and club projects, such as functions for affirmation of priests and religious, dissemination of vocational

information and literature, etc. Prayer for vocations is offered both at the meetings and daily by each member.

The name Serra Club was chosen in the 1930s by a group of men in the state of Washington, who originated the idea of getting together to pray for vocations and at the same time grow in faith as Catholics. They named the club after the Franciscan monk Junipero Serra, who founded the first missions in what is now California. Thousands of Serrans around the world pray for his intercession daily that God's call for religious vocations not be ignored.

Some charter members of the local Serra Club are still active and, together with members who joined later, are anxious to see membership grow in order to increase the impact of the club's efforts.

The Serra Club is interested in you; if you are interested in the Serra Club, please contact one of the following for an invitation to an upcoming meeting as a guest of the club: Jim Moffitt, Ray Timpone, John Smith, John Wyman, Joe Tabias, Leon Mayer, and Sr. Julia Moriarty, sscm. If you prefer, you may leave a note at the parish office for someone to contact you.

Reflections on the School of the Americas peace vigil

By Sharon Monday-Dorsey

On a rainy Friday morning, five volunteers from the St. Jude Catholic Worker House set out before sunrise for Columbus (Georgia) to participate in the fifteenth annual vigil and take direct action to expose and close the School of the Americas, to resist the oppressive policies and systems it represents.

Two of the volunteers had participated in this event in the past; the other three were first-timers. Bits and pieces of our stories unfolded as we traveled the hills and valleys of Illinois, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Georgia. Twelve hours later we arrived and found ourselves in a town with a plethora of strip malls, chain

restaurants, hotels, and tattoo shops.

Early Saturday morning we set up a table about the Catholic Worker movement at the vigil location, about a one-mile stretch of road leading up to the base that is closed off and accessible only to foot traffic during this two-day event. On either side of the road there were 8-foot makeshift metal fences, and barricades inhibited access to the public housing apartments. We were outnumbered by a large cadre of uniformed police officers, stationed by the dozens in the entrance and at about every ten feet on each side of the street. We made our way into the growing throng of people setting up tables of

Continued on page 12

Prayer for Vocations



Loving God, grant that more women and men will be open to the challenge of dedicating their lives to the ministry of building your kingdom. If you desire that one of our family or friends follow you in this way, grant us the wisdom and insight to support and encourage that person to listen to your voice and follow you without delay. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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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Celebrating forgiveness and reconciliation

On Nov. 30 thirty-one youngsters celebrated the Father's loving forgiveness for the first time in receiving the sacrament of Reconciliation. Fr. Joe Hogan, assisted by Fr. Gene Kane, Fr. Donald Henderson, and Fr. Tom Royer, celebrated with them and with their families.

After reflecting on their sins, saying to the Lord "We are sorry, forgive us," the children were presented to a priest for the sacrament by their families. Celebrating thus for the first time were:

Emily Alameda, Ryan Allen, Nicholas Amaya, Gavin Campbell, Mary Frances Campbell, William Campbell, Jr., Allison Cimarusti, Caitlin Elliott; Morgann Graham, Hanna Hyman, Conor Johnson, Jenna Langendorf, Keith Lee, Eduardo Meza, Yadira Meza, Peter Millsap;

Andrew Myers, Lucy O'Brien, Elizabeth Paap, Braxton Parisi, George Pennacchi, Laura Pennacchi, Sally Pennacchi; Brittany Porton, Megan Porter, Matthew Raab, Kenneth Sanchez, Molly Smith, Anne Zola, Luke Zola, and Kevin Zulu.



Caitlin Elliott, Jenna Langendorf (above) and Matthew Raab (left) identify their contributions to the Reconciliation banner, "Celebrating God's Love."

(Below) Kevin Zulu and his family enjoy pizza and other good things after the Reconciliation service.



*Always giving and forgiving
ever blessing, ever blessed,
Well-Spring of the joy of living,
Ocean Depth of happiness,
loving Father, Christ our Brother,
let your light upon us shine.
Teach us how to love each other.
Lift us to the joy divine.*

Henry Van Dyke

Children's Choir sings



Those angelic voices you hear, when you're lucky enough to be at Mass when the Children's Choir sings, belong to (left photo: from the left) Claire Drone-Silvers, Sarah Johnson, Shelby Simmering, Neli Crawford, and Will Justice; also (right photo) Theresa Welle, Annie Rasmussen, and Elias Roussos. (Not pictured: Gabrielle Wszalek, Jamie Simmering, and Zak Kaesberg.) They are shown here warming up for 10:30 Mass with the adult choir on Oct. 31. Listen for them on Christmas Eve!

Second Sunday of Advent a bustling day at St. Patrick's!

A roving photographer found lots going on in the parish center and captured some of the Advent spirit for our readers. Enjoy!



St. Thomas More students (from the left) Jamie Ellis, Nick Schwartz, and Chris Brown offer beautiful statues of Mary for sale to parishioners after Mass.



Jean McDonald and Terry Jobin warm up for the afternoon's Fan the Flames.



Garrett Hunter accompanies his wife, Carri, to the RCIA gathering following the rite of acceptance into the order of catechumens, where Carri received a Bible and a bound copy of the Creed. Garrett and Carri had been married just the day before!



Anna Kasten (standing, center) prepares the assembly at Children's Liturgy for the singing to come.



Waiting for Children's Liturgy to begin, Fr. Joe Hogan and Carol Retz visit with Susan Zola and her son Luke.

More photos from the Second Sunday of Advent

At the Guild's annual Christmas Expo, the parish hall was a busy place!



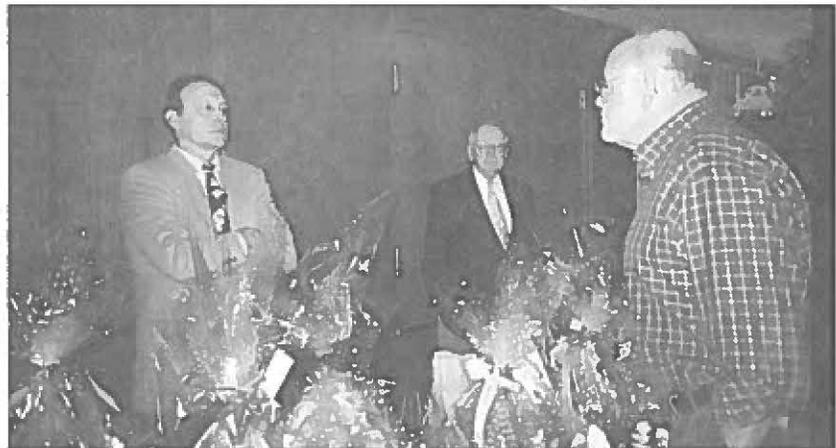
Ceil Weir makes sure purchased items are replaced promptly by others in this attractive display.



Mary Ann Luedtke packs up Christmas goodies for a customer.



Attractive displays enticed many to participate in the silent bidding. Going once, going twice...



Mort Weir (center) listens in as Jim Risatti (left) and John Gremer get serious—about the new football coach?



Customer Pam DeLey (right) seems to be trying to convince her mother, Pat Donze, about the wisdom of purchasing a tin of bakery items. Who's selling what to whom?



CREW teens were on the alert for buyers with their CREW t-shirts and cookbooks, and were prepared to gift wrap Christmas presents for lucky customers. From the left: Anna Mayer, Bonnie Kimball, Jared Kimball, Lily Szujewski, and Emily Westervelt.

*Reflections on School of the Americas
from Page 8*

information on the peace and justice groups they represented.

On the other side of the barricades, in the public housing unit, the Missouri Catholic Worker House had rented an apartment for a week in order to set up a soup kitchen. Lana Jacobs, 56, was at the helm. She and her husband, Steve, operate a shelter for mentally ill homeless men in Columbia (Missouri). I walked the mile around the barricade so I could join Lana and other volunteers in making soup from produce that was brought in by anonymous donors. (Throughout the vigil, meals were prepared for 1000-2000 protesters, or for anyone else who came by.) One of those I met was Terrance, a teen who lives in an apartment complex. Throughout the day I found him near the soup kitchen, hanging out with some students from Illinois State University and participating in a parade of puppets made for the event.

An array of musicians and speakers from peace and human rights, religious, labor, and veterans groups, and persons victimized in Latin America by SOA graduates, made up the day's program. The crowd swelled into the thousands, and our table became a place of connection for current and former Catholic Worker volunteers from all over the country. University students came up to tell us about courses they are taking about peacemaking and the connection with the Catholic Worker.

People from the housing unit brought us chairs from their apartment to make us more comfortable or to ask us to support their local PTA projects. By the end of the day we had interacted with hundreds of people committed to the vision of being a loving community.

One of the police officers stationed near us joined in the spirit of friendship and hospitality, allowing us to pass through the barricade so we could have something to eat from the soup kitchen or at the barbeque booths that several of the residents

son's grave that she would speak the truth of the situation and work to bring the troops home from what she called an unjust war.

On Sunday morning the vigil and nonviolent direct action began with a Buddhist drumming ceremony and a Mayan blessing. Speakers such as Sr. Helen Prejean, Ruby Sales from SpiritHouse, Fr. John Dear, actor Martin Sheen, and the founder of the movement, Fr. Roy Bourgeois, spoke on why we were gathered in this place—to stand for peace instead of war, compassion instead of brutality, and to act in solidarity with our Latin American sisters and brothers and all those around the world who have been oppressed and who have been victims of torture, disappearance, murder, and massacre at the hands of graduates of the School of the Americas and other military training institutions based in the United States.

We spoke of our commitment to follow the tradition of nonviolence during the vigil, beginning by honoring the hundreds of thousands of victims who have suffered and died by the violence perpetrated

*We pray you, Master,
be our help and protection.*

*Save the afflicted among us,
have mercy on the lowly.*

*Raise up the fallen,
show yourself to those in need.*

*Heal the sick, and bring back
those who have strayed.*

*Fill the hungry,
give freedom to our prisoners.*

*Raise up the weak,
console the fainthearted.*

*Let all peoples acknowledge
that you alone are God,
and Jesus Christ is your Child,
that we are your people,
the sheep to whom you give pasture.*

Clement of Rome (circa 95-96 A.D.)



had set up for the day.

That evening we ate at a local Mexican restaurant, where we met a group from Pennsylvania. One of the women, Celeste Zappala, is from a group called "Military Families Speak Out." This organization represents over 1700 military families whose family members have been killed or injured in the war or are in direct action in Iraq and Afghanistan. Celeste lost her son, a National Guardsman, two months after he was stationed in Iraq. She told us she vowed at the time she knelt over her

by graduates of SOA. As we read the litany of abuse and suffering, the crowd of an estimated 15,000 responded by raising white crosses imprinted with the names of victims with the words "No mas, no more, we must stop the dirty wars." It was a time for tears and sorrow and repentance for the pain inflicted on our brothers and sisters around the world.

During this a helicopter circled above, surveying the crowd, and the road was lined with police officers. I

Continued on next page

Fr. Joe guest speaker for teens

On Dec. 5 Fr. Joe addressed 55 teens of the parish during their religious education class night. He began with a quote from St. Paul about the "race" to be like Christ. Sorted into small groups, each with an adult catechist as leader, the teens then played a rousing version of Catholic Fear Factor. A member of each team came forward, randomly drew a food item from a bag, and consumed it as quickly as possible so that the next team member could come forward. You may think teens excel at eating on the go, but try eating a handful of Hot Tamales or a snack bag of chips as fast as you can in front of your friends! One teen said, "It was different. It was a lot of food, but a lot of fun too!"

Fr. Joe then went on to discuss the Ten Commandments of teenage life, and the teens participated in small-group discussion about each of them. One participant remarked that she "noticed how everyone was paying attention and seemed really interested," that it gave her "a new perspective on how to live everyday life by the teachings of the Church."

Fr. Joe will return for another evening with the teens on Apr. 3.

St. Patrick's Guild plans recruiting luncheon

If you thought their energies were consumed by the Christmas Expo, you just have to acknowledge their hardiness or ability to make a quick recovery—members of St. Patrick's Guild are hosting a salad luncheon at noon on Jan. 27. The luncheon is intended for all members—and for as many other men and women in the parish who are interested in joining this very active group.

The Guild provides many services for St. Patrick's Parish and funds for many items the parish's operating budget does not allow for. The funds come from fundraisers familiar to parishioners, most notably from the annual Cellar-to-Garret Sale and of course the recent Christmas Expo, among others.

All attending the luncheon are asked to bring a salad to share. Make it a date!



Welcome to new parishioners Grant and Jessica Callahan, Lee Long, Monique Mann, Jason Rodriguez, and Barbara Schleicher.

Farewell to these parishioners, who have moved from C-U: John Connolly, Lisa Lavie, and Jennifer Plunk.

Reflections on School of the Americas from Page 12

noticed a butterfly flying nearby; it landed on the tear-stained cheek of a teenager standing near me and then flew into the arms of an elderly nun, who gently cradled it until it once again took flight above our heads.

The final action of the morning was to process to the gates of Fr. Benning with our crosses. The names and ages of the victims of torture and murder from graduates of the School of the Americas were read off, one by one, and we responded, "Presente," "I am here." Many of us crossed the white line in an act of civil disobedience and laid our crosses on the metal fence erected to keep people off the grounds of the military base; others sat praying at the gate, and fifteen people climbed over the fence or crossed onto the base and were arrested. They face potential jail time of 3-6 months or longer.

In the fifteen years since the vigil began, when Fr. Roy climbed a tree at Ft. Benning and played a recording of Archbishop Oscar Romero's homily calling on the military of El Salvador to stop the repression and killing of their brothers and sisters, more than 85 collective years of jail time have been served by 170 people of conscience.

We left the vigil after we had deposited our crosses at the gates of Ft. Benning. We took with us a vision and a commitment to work to bring about a culture of peace, justice, and respect for the earth, where people will live together free from oppression and where the words of the prophet will be fulfilled: "He shall judge between the nations and impose terms on many peoples. They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. One nation shall not raise the sword against another nor shall they train for war again."

* * * * *

For more information on the SOA peace vigil, visit the Web site www.soawatch.org. For a video on the SOA, call Sharon Monday-Dorsey (344-3016).

Quick fixin's from the kitchen of . . .

Elaine Theobald

Coffee Cake

- 2 T butter
- 1 egg
- 1-1/2 c flour
- 1/4 t salt
- 1/2 c sugar
- 3/4 c milk
- 2 t baking powder



Mix above ingredients together. Put in a greased 8 x 8 inch pan. Sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon, and bake 30 minutes at 350 degrees.



January 2005

St. Patrick's Parish

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY



1
Mary, Mother of God
9:00 am Mass

<p>2 9:00am & 11:00am Religious Ed 10:15am Children's Liturgy 5:30pm CREW Mission 6:30pm Leader's Bible Study 6:30pm Jr/Sr High Religious Ed</p>	<p>3 7:00pm Centering Prayer 7:00pm Education Com 7:00pm Pro-Life Com</p>	<p>4 9:30am Mass-Canterbury Ridge 7:00pm Financial Affairs 7:00pm CYA 7:00pm WWSG</p>	<p>5 9:30am Mom's Group 5:15pm SVDP 6:00pm Rel Ed, St. Pat's 6:30pm Rel Ed, St. Joe 7:00pm RCIA</p>	<p>6 6:45am Men's Bible Study 7:00pm Building & Grounds 7:00pm Baptism Prep 7:00pm Communications Com</p>	<p>7 10:45am Mass-Champaign Cty NH</p>	<p>8</p>
<p>9 9:00am & 11:00am Religious Ed 9:00am RCIA 10:15am Children's Liturgy 2:00pm Fan the Flames 6:30pm Leader's Bible Study 6:30pm Jr/Sr High Religious Ed</p>	<p>10 7:00pm Centering Prayer 7:00pm FGDW</p>	<p>11 7:00pm CYA 7:00pm Parish Council Exec Com</p>	<p>12 9:30am Mom's Group 9:30am Schola 5:15pm SVDP 5:15pm Children's Choir 6:00pm Rel Ed, St. Pat's 6:30pm Rel Ed, St. Joe 7:00pm RCIA 7:00pm Choir 7:00pm Mental Health Ugn</p>	<p>13 6:45am Men's Bible Study 7:00pm Choir</p>	<p>14 10:30am Mass-Care Center 10:45am Mass-Champaign Cty NH</p>	<p>15</p>
<p>16 9:00am & 11:00am Religious Ed 9:00am RCIA 10:15am Children's Liturgy 10:15am Knights of Columbus 6:30pm Leader's Bible Study 6:30pm Jr/Sr High Religious Ed</p>	<p>17 7:00pm Centering Prayer 7:00pm FGDW</p>	<p>18 6:30pm Liturgy Com 7:00pm CYA 7:00pm WWSG</p>	<p>19 9:30am Mom's Group 5:15pm SVDP 5:15pm Children's Choir 6:00pm Rel Ed, St. Pat's 6:30pm Rel Ed, St. Joe 7:00pm RCIA 7:00pm Choir</p>	<p>20 6:45am Men's Bible Study 7:00pm Choir 7:00pm Parish Council</p>	<p>21 10:30am Mass-Clark-Lindsey 10:45am Mass-Champaign Cty NH</p>	<p>22 6:00-6:30pm Pro-Life Vigil 7:30pm Ecumenical Prayer Svc</p>
<p>23 9:00am RCIA 6:45pm Leader's Bible Study</p>	<p>24 7:00pm Centering Prayer 7:00pm FGDW</p>	<p>25 6:00pm St. Thomas More HS Info Mtg 7:00pm CYA</p>	<p>26 9:30am Mom's Group 9:30am Funeral Schola 5:15pm SVDP 5:15pm Children's Choir 7:00pm RCIA 7:00pm Choir</p>	<p>27 6:45am Men's Bible Study 11:30am Guild Luncheon 7:00pm Choir 7:00pm Communications Com</p>	<p>28 10:30am Mass-Manor Care 10:45am Mass-Champaign Cty NH</p>	<p>29 FGDW Retreat</p>
<p>30 9:00am RCIA 4:00pm Catholic Teen Connection 6:45pm Leader's Bible Study</p>	<p>31 7:00pm Centering Prayer</p>	<p>Because the calendar is prepared in advance, be sure to check the parish bulletin to confirm dates and times of listed events.</p> <p>Deadline for the next issue of <i>In Focus</i> is Jan. 16.</p>				