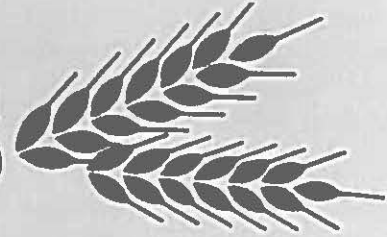


ST. PATRICK'S PARISH

In Focus



www.stpaturbana.org

What Price a Catholic Education? Priceless!

As many parishioners know, St. Patrick's partners with Holy Cross School to offer a parochial educational opportunity for students from kindergarten through eighth grade. The parish also supports education at the high school level through its support of The High School of St. Thomas More.

A number of important considerations enter into parents' very personal decision about which school would be best for their children. If you have not considered parochial school as an option heretofore, you are invited now to explore that possibility.

Catholic Schools Week will be observed during the week of Jan. 30-Feb. 3, and opportunities will be provided during that week for families to visit the parochial schools and learn more about their programs and

curricula. Contact the schools of interest for further information. And for information about parochial education, including registration procedures, contact St. Patrick's parish office (367-2665).

* * *

The following excerpt from an article written by Janis Schweizer appears in the current Holy Cross parish newsletter. In it she witnesses to the values her family places on a Catholic education. It is used here with permission.



For many of you, school registration will be a new experience because your firstborn will soon begin kindergarten. For my family, this marks the

close of our children's experience in elementary school because our youngest child will graduate from Holy Cross in May.

As parents, we know our decisions about

the school our children attend have become critically important. The times have changed, and it is imperative that we be active participants in

Continued on next page

Choir of "Harmony, Hope, and Healing" visits St. Patrick's

To begin Year Two of Disciples in Mission, a special event is offered on Feb. 25-26 that will

appeal to people of all ages. The parish will host "Harmony, Hope and Healing," a group of women from the Chicago area who are victims of domestic violence,

homelessness, and hopelessness. They have come together to form The Choir of Hope. The choir brings harmony, healing, and



hope to their lives as they sing and witness to the power of Christ's love for them. As one woman said, "I learned that I am a beautiful person." And another: "I learned 'unity, and we all are unified as one' when we sing."

At 7 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 25, the group will give a concert in the parish center, featuring intergenerational song as well as

choral pieces and the witness of these remarkable women. All parishioners are urged to come to this concert and to bring a friend. To help fulfill the goal of Year Two, you might invite along someone from another faith denomination, someone who is away from the Church, or someone with no church affiliation. After the concert those present will enjoy some treats and time to mingle and chat one-on-one.

The Choir of Hope will also enrich our worship with their singing at the 5 p.m., 9 a.m., and 10:30 a.m. liturgies on the weekend of Feb 25-26.

Catholic Education From Page 1

our children's education.

Admittedly, when my husband and I first considered Holy Cross School, our primary concern was academics. The fact that our children would receive Catholic instruction was considered, but we knew there was a Sunday program available as well. Even though the quality of our children's academic education was very important to us, it was equally important that our children spend their school days in a positive and nurturing environment.

After eleven years, how do we feel? Well, our children have received an excellent education. They have been taught the basics, of course. The academic curriculum at Holy Cross is rigorous, yet flexible. The faculty and staff are dedicated to ensuring that each child is able to meet his or her full potential.

Our children have also learned many intangible lessons. They learned compassion and tolerance. They learned how to comfort others and when to be joyful and share in another's happiness. They learned about providing service and charity to others. They learned to distinguish right from wrong. They learned that forgiveness is a gift they will receive

and that it must be given often as well. They have experienced sorrow and loss, and they have witnessed quiet determination in the face of serious illness and injury. They have seen amazingly strong examples of faith in the goodness of God even when God's plans seem very different from our own. They have learned to respect life and to take responsibility for themselves. In other words, they have learned what it means to be a Catholic Christian, both in name and in action.

As parents we have learned also. We learned that school is a *huge* part of a family's life. Almost everything we plan and every activity that is scheduled is directly affected by what is happening at the school. Our immediate family was extended by all the people who became involved in our children's lives. This extended family proved a valuable resource, based as it was on positive relationships. We learned that the atmosphere where our children spend the majority of their time greatly impacts how they will grow into adulthood. Spending time in a positive, nurturing, caring, and Christian atmosphere helps to build a positive, nurturing, caring, and Christian person.

Social Action Committee participates in press conference

On Dec. 15, 2005, St. Patrick's Social Action Committee and eight other local church groups held a press conference at McKinley Presbyterian Church. They sought a statement of intent from Congress that the United States does not intend to occupy Iraq permanently, and that it supports independent Iraqi governance.

Sharon Monday-Dorsey from the Social Action Committee read excerpts from statements on Iraq by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. In 2003, before the war started, the

bishops stated that "resort to war would not meet the strict conditions in Catholic teaching for the use of military force." Since the war began, the bishops have stated their rejection of indeterminate occupation and their support of independent governance. They have also emphasized security, economic reconstruction, humanitarian relief, and human rights. The full statements, which would not fit in an entire issue of *In Focus*, are at www.usccb.org in the section "Church Documents."

The 1960s slogan "Think globally, act locally" still carries weight today. Congratulations to the Social Action Committee for speaking out!



Q: Blessing of throats—do we still do that?

A: In a word, yes.
To elaborate: Some sacramentals have

become very closely associated with the Church year, occurring on the same day each year. One such popular sacramental ritual is the blessing of throats on the feast of St. Blaise, Feb. 3.

This bishop saint suffered martyrdom early in the fourth century. Legend has it that he was a physician before becoming a bishop and while imprisoned during a resurgence of Roman persecutions, he miraculously cured a young boy who was choking on a fish bone in his throat. St. Blaise became very popular during the Middle Ages, being invoked as a helper in times of sickness related to the throat. (Antibiotics hadn't been invented yet.)

The tradition of blessing the throats of parishioners with two crossed candles has been observed for centuries. At St. Patrick's this blessing will be offered during the 7:00 a.m. Mass and at 7:00 p.m. in the church. The ritual prayer is: "Through the intercession of Saint Blaise, bishop and martyr, may the Lord deliver you from every ailment of the throat and from every other evil, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

* * *

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 February 12.

Disciples in Mission continues: Lent 2006

*I have come to set the earth on fire,
and how I wish it were already blazing!*

Luke 12:49

At the beginning of Lent 2005 St. Patrick's embarked on a parish-wide experience of renewal with a program called Disciples in Mission. We were given the opportunity to grow in love of the Lord both personally and as a parish, and to demonstrate that love to those around us. Our goal was to bring about in all Catholics such an enthusiasm for their faith that, in living their faith in Jesus, they freely share it with others.



Where We've Been

To achieve the goal for Year One, we gathered at weekend liturgies and heard the Word of God with open hearts and minds. We prayed the Disciples in Mission prayer together at Mass, in committees, in small groups, and alone. We came together in small groups with old friends and new, to study the Sunday scriptures together, to talk about our personal experiences of faith, and to pray.

After Lent about 80 parishioners met for a Parish Evening of Reflection on how the Disciples in Mission experience had touched us during the past weeks and to discern how we might grow together as a parish to bring the Good News to one another and those we meet each day. The participants answered questions about their personal faith and the faith life of the St. Patrick's community. Individually and together the ideas that sprang from this exercise were discussed, synthesized, and refined. Those present ended the evening with prayer and song and sent one another forth with a personal blessing.

The Disciples in Mission parish leadership team met to study and pray about these responses and to plan for Year Two. Those who attended the Parish Evening of Reflection expressed a desire to grow in an appreciation for the Eucharist, renew their understanding of the Catholic faith, and build up our faith community. In response to these desires the "Pasta and Presence" event was held in November. Over 300 people gathered on a Saturday evening for a delicious pasta dinner, served by smiling waiters and waitresses of all ages. Diners were serenaded by parish musicians and had the opportunity to take part in some silly songs that had folks rolling in the aisles.

The adults then gathered in the church to listen to Msgr. William Watson as he opened our hearts to the beauty of Eucharistic spirituality. The children had their own program on the Eucharist, led by able adult catechists, so that all generations could be included in this parish event. "Pasta and Presence" was only the first of many parish-wide intergenerational events that will be held to draw our community of faith together.

Where We're Going

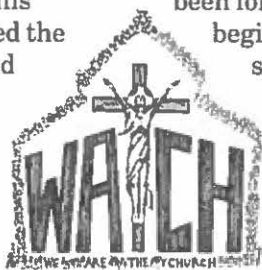
As Lent 2006 approaches, we will focus on Goal II of Disciples in Mission: To invite all people in the United States, whatever their social or cultural background, to hear the message of salvation in Jesus Christ so they may come to join us in the fullness of the Catholic Faith.

As with Year One, we will pray together, listen to homilies directed toward this goal, and meet in small groups weekly to study the Sunday scripture and feel its living presence in our lives. Some may wish to stay with the group they were in during Year One, others may prefer to join a new group. You may sign up with a group during the first three weekends in February; the Disciples in Mission team will try to facilitate these requests.

As we begin Year Two of Disciples in Mission, let's all work to set the world ablaze with the good news: God loves us immensely, and offers us salvation through knowing and loving his son Jesus.

Farewell to WATCH

WATCH has graced St. Patrick's Parish for six years now. This renewal program has touched the lives of many individuals and our entire parish in special ways. But after six years the number of participants has declined, so the WATCH Board has prayerfully decided that the WATCH Weekend program



should come to an end.

On Sunday, Jan. 29, please come celebrate the blessing WATCH has been for our parish. The celebration begins at 3 p.m. with a time of sharing and reflection. Mass is at 4 p.m., and dinner is at 5 p.m. Dinner is free, but please R.S.V.P. to Mary Long (531-7008 or 367-2665) so that enough food is ordered. Everyone is welcome!

February "Specials"

- Feb. 2:** Retreat for ministers of pastoral care
- Feb. 3:** Blessing of throats
- Feb. 5:** K of C Super Bowl Break fast
- Feb. 11:** K of C Ladies Knight Out
- Feb. 25:** "Harmony, Hope, and Healing"
- Feb. 28:** Education Appreciation Dinner

Hell—It's more than a cussword

Not much has been written on the subject of hell in the last few decades. Yet it might be edifying to recall what the Church has unwaveringly taught. Though the idea of hell may be less popular today than in times past, those who deny it necessarily suggest they know more than the following authorities.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states: "The teaching of the Church affirms the existence of hell and its eternity. Immediately after death the souls of

those who die in a state of mortal sin descend into hell, where they suffer the punishments of hell, 'eternal fire.' The chief punishment of hell is eternal separation from God" (CC1035).

Further, "Mortal sin is a radical possibility of human freedom, as is love itself. It results in the loss of charity and the privation of sanctifying grace, that is, of the state of grace. If it is not redeemed by repentance and God's

forgiveness, it causes exclusion from Christ's kingdom and the eternal death of hell, for our freedom has the power to make choices for ever, with no turning back" (CC1861).

Fr. Kenneth Baker, S.J., in *Fundamentals of Catholicism*, writes: "Hell is no joke. ... Hell is the place and state of eternal punishment for the fallen angels and human beings who die deliberately estranged from the love of God. The existence of hell as the everlasting abode of the devils and those human beings

is a defined dogma of the Catholic Church. Anyone who denies this truth simply refuses to accept the clear words and parables of Jesus about this reality as true" (pp. 370ff).

St. Faustina Kowalska, canonized in 2000, was favored with a private revelation in which Jesus showed his desire to temper justice with divine mercy. He nevertheless revealed to St. Faustina a vivid vision of hell,

which is worth reading in its entirety. Her account concludes, "I noticed one thing; most of the souls there are those who disbelieved there is a hell."

In *The Imitation of Christ*, Thomas à Kempis writes: "Persons shall be punished most for those sins in which they have offended most" and "One hour of pain there will be more grievous than a hundred years of rigorous penance here." Cold comfort indeed to us who fear even a few minutes in the dentist's chair!

Finally, scripture itself refers to hell over 30 times, from the centuries before Christ through Jesus' own teachings to the apostolic writings. In reflecting on them we may be moved to repentance and reconciliation. John the Baptist urges us to repent: "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce good fruit as evidence of your repentance." And Jesus repeatedly observes, "If you love me, keep my commandments." He also says, "He who denies me on earth, I will deny him before my Father." Faced with such intractable statements, we are well advised to "repent and sin no more!"



Frankly, no—they're not just a rough draft.



in our parish library

Perhaps one of your goals for the New Year is to explore different ways of praying. The Catholic faith has a rich variety of prayer traditions. Devotions are one type of prayer that, if you are a post-Vatican II Catholic, you may be unfamiliar with. If you are interested in exploring some of the many Catholic devotions, such as to the Sacred Heart or the Infant of Prague or St. Joseph, these books will give you more information and specific prayers.

Handbook of prayers, by James Socias (242 SOC), is a small book of traditional prayers. It begins with a section of tips on "How to be a better Catholic." Many prayers are presented in parallel Latin and English. It con-

tains devotions to the Holy Spirit, to the Blessed Virgin Mary, to St. Joseph, and more. It also includes the parts of the Mass and the Stations of the Cross.

Dictionary of Catholic Devotions, by Michael Walsh (REF 203 WAL), provides the historical background of various devotions as well as many of the confraternities through which lay people express their own particular religious commitment.

Father Peyton's Rosary Prayer Book, by Patrick Peyton (242 FAT), provides a history of the Rosary, the prayers it involves, and reflections on each of its mysteries.

Prayer for Vocations



Lord Jesus, your Mother shares fully in your new life and inspires us to respond to God's call. May young people be graced to follow her example by doing God's will in their lives. Help them to make a difference in the world through serving God and others through a life as a consecrated religious or priest.

SVDP consolidates: Who moved my bread—and soup and cheese?

Imagine bringing in your weekly groceries and having to put some of them in your refrigerator, some in your basement pantry, and some in your freezer down the block and up the steps in the snow. When it's time to pack lunches, you have to run around again to all these places to gather what you need.

For years now, that's how St. Vincent de Paul Society (SVDP) volunteers have put away groceries and packed up food for the hungry! Some suggestions for consolidating these storage and preparation areas have been made over the years, such as Building and Grounds Committee member and SVDP volunteer Don Borg's idea to convert one of the garages for SVDP use.

A new plan now underway will give SVDP a single area for food storage and distribution. The rooms in the south hallway of the parish center, across from the restrooms (currently Parish Nurses' office, preschool religious education classroom, and religious education storage closet) will become pantry and preparation areas. All the groceries and supplies will be stored in one room, and volunteers will bag foods for distribution right where those who come to pick it up enter.

When the renovation is done, SVDP clients will use the parish center's south entrance. The plan includes a window or half-door with a counter for food distribution. Architectural plans, drawn up by Mike Andrejasich, include a center workspace with a sink that will be surrounded by walkways.

The walls will be lined with pantry cabinets and shelves. SVDP volunteers will continue to use the parish kitchen for cooking and making soup for the Catholic Worker House.

Building and Grounds Committee chairperson Gary Wszalek says that members started work on this project



Chuck Shaw (left) almost convinces Chris Stohr that the dust isn't really so bad.



The vent? "Take it out!" Mike Holden wastes no time in doing that.

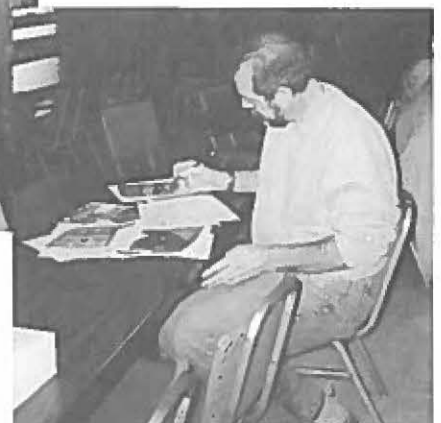


Andy Stumpf is determined to remove every last bit of plasterboard up there.

on Jan. 21. They "skinned" the walls, exposing the plumbing and electrical wires, and filled the dumpster to overflowing with discarded plasterboard. Workers included Mike

Andrejasich, Mark Cousert, Pat Dill, Mike Holden, Randy Pankau, Chuck Shaw, Chris Stohr, Andy Stumpf, and Gary Wszalek.

The finish date is not yet set, as much depends on the time that committee members and volunteering parishioners can devote to the work. If you'd like to lend your time and talent to this project, contact Gary Wszalek (337-7961) or watch the weekly bulletin for announcements of workdays.



Mike Andrejasich reviews the remodeling plans.

Blessed are the peacemakers!

One of the summer issues of *In Focus* will highlight the efforts of parishioners who work for peace and justice. We need your help! Please tell us about parishioners you know who are active in this field. Contact Frances Drone-Silvers (398-1458, francesds@yahoo.com) or Cathy Salika (367-7861, csalika@uillinois.edu), or drop a note in the Communications Committee mailbox at the parish center. Thank you!



Holy Cross Happenings

Holy Cross School Open House: Wednesday, Feb. 1. Come one, come all, to the open house! See what the children are doing and learn the positive aspects of sending your child to Holy Cross.

Catholic Schools Week: Each year Holy Cross School celebrates Catholic Schools Week. It is a week of excitement and numerous activities at Holy Cross School, and you are invited to be a part of it. The activities are listed below.

"Character, Compassion, Values"
Mon., Jan. 30

- 9:15 a.m.: All Catholic School Mass at the High School of St. Thomas More.
- Mrs. Costello distributes Catholic Schools Week wrist bands to each classroom.
- Each student picks the name(s) of their "Blessed Buddies" to pray for this week.

Tues., Jan. 31

- Prayer service after flag in the

- gym (*Character*)
- Classes make valentines for Holy Cross or St. Patrick's parish shut-ins.
 - At 1:15 p.m. in the gym, Sullivan's Little Theater on the Square presents "The Sword and the Stone" for grades K-8.

Wed., Feb. 1

- Prayer service after flag in the gym (*Compassion*)
- 9 a.m. to noon: Open House
- Classes write letters or make valentines/puzzle books for St. John's School in Gulfport, Mississippi.

Thurs., Feb. 2 (Spirit Day)

- Wear uniform pants/skirts. Those involved in a sport can wear their team's uniform top. Others may wear appropriate purple and gold shirts.
- Prayer service in gym after flag (*Values*)
- 1 p.m.: "Blessed Buddies" meet to share a story and a treat.
- 2 p.m.: Pep Assembly in the gym

Fri., Feb. 3

- 8:15 a.m.: All-school Mass at Holy Cross School
- Blessing of throats
- Second-quarter honor roll
- Donuts and juice, provided by room mothers
- 12:50 p.m.: Talent Show

New Correspondent Needed: Beginning next fall, *In Focus* will need a new volunteer to prepare "Holy Cross Happenings." This is a great way to learn more about Holy Cross School. It's very easy to get the information, and the time commitment is minimal. Please contact Cheryl (355-4566 or cheryl@gix.net).



Mark your calendars

- Jan 30: Mass at St. Thomas More, 9:15 a.m.; kick-off for Catholic Schools Week
- Jan. 31: Kindergarten Roundup, 7 p.m.
- Feb. 1: Open House, 9 a.m.-12 p.m.
- Feb. 1: Box Top Collection
- Feb. 2: PTC Meeting, 7 p.m.
- Feb. 3: All-school Mass
- Feb. 10: 8:15 a.m. Mass
- Feb. 10: Casual Picture Day
- Feb. 15: Fifth-graders to Decatur Conservation Center
- Feb. 16: Mid-quarter notices
- Feb. 17: No school; teacher in-service
- Feb. 20: No school
- Feb. 23: Monthly packet
- Feb. 24: Chocolate Drive kick-off
- Feb. 24: 8:15 a.m. Mass
- Feb. 24: Fifth-graders to Carle Arbours
- Feb. 24: Student Council Dance, 7-9 p.m.
- Mar. 1: Box Top Collection
- Mar. 1: Ash Wednesday; Mass 8:30 a.m.
- Mar. 2: PTC Meeting, 7 p.m.



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.

Editorial board: Mary Lee Brady, 344-3752 (bradymarylbrady@aol.com); Judy Corbett, 398-2322 (jeorb18317@aol.com); Frances Drone-Silvers, 398-1458 (francesds@yahoo.com); Judy Fierke, 352-7670 (j-fierke@insightbb.com); Mary Lou Menches, 344-1125 (mmenches@uiuc.edu); Cathy Salika, 367-7861 (csalika@uillinois.edu); Margaret Stewart, 356-9475 (mkestewart@aol.com); and Peggy Whelan, 367-3668.

Associates: Carol Bosley, Artha Chamberlain, Betty Christian, John Colombo, Joe and Nancy Costa, Mary Fonner, Camille Goudeseune, Dave and Cole Grabow, Cheryl Mitchell, Ellen Noonan, Marty and Nathaniel Perry, Carole Rebeiz, Lucille Salika, John Towns, Jim Urban, and Naneera Vidhayasirinun.

Articles and information for this issue were provided by Chris Angel, Mary Lee Brady, Sr. Charlene Cesario, Jessica Chitwood, Sharon Dorsey, Frances Drone-Silvers, Judy Fierke, Mary Long, Mary Lou Menches, David Mendoza, Cheryl Mitchell, Ellen Noonan, Nancy Olson, Marty and Nathaniel Perry, Dan Richards, Cathy Salika, Janis Schweizer, Tracey Wszalek, Peggy Whelan, and Leo Wood. This issue was edited by Camille Goudeseune 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 third step is listening, and it's harder than it looks.

We are so used to seeing and hearing a story on television that it can be hard simply to listen. It's hard enough to follow the plot of a contemporary soap

opera, let alone the stories of ancient Israel and the first Christians. But just as Jesus opened the ears of the man who could not hear, so too does he

open our ears to hear God speaking to us today in the ancient and holy words of scripture.

When a close friend tells you something you don't quite understand at first, you pay close attention. You listen hard, with your mind and heart as well your ears. In scripture the One who loves us beyond all telling is speaking to us. The proclaiming of scripture and the preaching of the homily at Mass is not someone delivering a report. It is a living dialogue between God and the Church—between God and us. And when God

speaks, things happen.

So strive to listen. Position yourself so that you can concentrate. Try to close your book and truly listen.

When we have a lively dialogue, we look into each other's eyes and listen deeply. We should do the same with the reader and the homilist.

Not every homily will be engaging



to everyone; some may even be pretty bad. (If the preaching is consistently boring, uninspiring, or over our heads, though, we need to speak up, to make some positive suggestions to help the homilist.) Remember that, even so, God is trying to tell us something. Listen for that and try to disregard the rest. Don't worry about understanding every word; let the scripture and homily wash over you and pay attention to the parts that stick. A word of gratitude to the homilist for a homily that proved

especially meaningful is always in order!

Some like to read and pray over the assigned scriptures a day or two before Mass (the citations are in the previous week's bulletin). When Sunday arrives, then, listening to the readings is as invigorating as singing a familiar hymn. Or try this:

throughout the week return again and again to the scriptures that were read at Mass. If nothing else, try to remember the verse from the responsorial psalm and use it as your prayer during the week.

While the scriptures are proclaimed and the homilist preaches, don't distract yourself by picking lint from your clothing or busying yourself with reading or planning the rest of your day. Listen for God's voice. If you listen hard, you'll hear it. After all, God promises: seek and you shall find!

The fourth step in getting the most out of the Mass, Philippart says, is to "be a beggar." Watch for it in the next issue of *In Focus*.

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Fra Angelico mixed paints with prayer

Familiar to Catholic memory from Christmas cards of the past is a scene of the Annunciation painted with delicacy and charm by the fifteenth-century Dominican friar known as Fra Angelico. "Angelico" was a sort of nickname given to Fra Giovanni da Fiesole, which reflected the spiritual quality of his life and work.



Little is known of his history. He was born near Florence about 1390 or 1395 and died in Rome in 1455. An art historian quoted in a recent issue of *America Magazine* adds: "He was most gentle and temperate and lived chastely. ... It is also said that he would never take up his brushes without a prayer. Whenever he painted a crucifixion,

the tears would stream down his face."

In his paintings, angels and Mother and Child are fair and blond. These days, popular appeal may favor more realistically dark-haired and dark-skinned portrayals of the Child and his Mother, yet the "angelic friar" remains unequalled in painting a world of the spirit.

In 2002 Pope John Paul II granted approval for the use of Fra Angelico's traditional title, Blessed, without intending it as a step to canonization. The Church remembers this gifted friar on Feb. 18.

Prayers in observance of the World Day of the Sick

Our Lady appeared to St. Bernadette at Lourdes for the first time on Feb. 11, 1858. In 1992 Pope John Paul II named Feb. 11 the World Day of the Sick, to emphasize the importance of both those who suffer illness and those who care for them.

Prayer of those who are sick

Lord Jesus, you came into the world to heal our infirmities and to endure our sufferings. You went about healing all and bringing comfort to those in pain and need. We come before you now in this time of illness, asking that you may be the source of our strength in body, courage in spirit, and patience in pain. May we join ourselves more closely to you on the cross and in your suffering, that through them we may draw our patience and hope. Assist us and restore us to health so that united more closely to your family, the Church, we may give praise and honor to your name. Amen.

Prayer for care givers

Lord, I thank you for those who try to make others well and care for those in suffering and pain. Give them wisdom in curing and gentle patience in caring. For all they have done, grant them the reward you promised those attending the sick: "Come, blessed of my Father, here is the kingdom made ready for you." Amen.

Presenting the Lord, "a light to the nations"

On Feb. 2, the fortieth day after Christmas, the Church celebrates a feast called The Presentation of the Lord or, more simply, Candlemas. In the time of Jesus, on the fortieth day after the birth of their first son the parents would bring their child to the temple to receive a blessing. The parents would also offer a thanksgiving sacrifice to God.

So, of course, Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the temple. St. Luke's gospel tells the story (2:22-40). The Holy Family was met by two prophets, Simeon and Anna, who spoke about Jesus as the Messiah. Their words must have helped Mary and Joseph in the years ahead. The gospel goes on to say that the prophets spoke to others who were looking for the Messiah.

Simeon's words about Jesus were, "A light to reveal you to the nations and the glory of your people Israel." The theme of light helps to explain why this feast is also called Candlemas. We celebrate it by blessing the candles that will be used during the liturgy and in our homes. Here is the prayer of blessing:

God our Father, source of all light,
today you revealed to Simeon
your Light of revelation to the nations.
Bless these candles and make them holy.
May we who carry them to praise your glory
walk in the path of goodness
and come to the light that shines forever.
Grant this through Christ our Lord.



Ministers of Care make a mini-retreat

The Ministers of Care at St. Patrick's work with the homebound, residents of nursing homes, and those staying in hospitals. They administer the Eucharist, gather the faithful for Mass, and simply visit the sick and infirm.

On Thursday, Feb. 2, these caregivers get a chance to be cared for themselves. Vera Duncanson, Pasto-

ral Minister at Provena Covenant Medical Center for almost two decades and a member of St. Patrick's, will facilitate two mini-retreats that day in the parish center's multipurpose room. The retreat will include reflection, storytelling, and of course prayer.

The first retreat runs from 10 a.m. to noon. If you can't make it during



Welcome to new parishioners

Kathleen Charleston, Coree and Vic Clark, Sheila Kite, Melissa Tanouye, and Alison Weingartner.

Farewell to these parishioners, who have moved from C-U: Barbara Bailey, Julie Bauer, Don Borg, Larry DiGiorlamo, Margaret Grosch, Garron Lukas, Dana Milan, Lino Pardo, Patrick Pioletti, Delena Rhodes, Mark Sons, Renee Thomas, and Robert Waller.

Congratulations to Robert Paul Hogan and Margaret Jane Kearns, married at St. Patrick's.

Welcome to the following, recently baptized into our faith community: Joseph Cummings Solava and Caleb Richard Twohey.

Please pray for deceased parishioners Faith, Hope, and Charity Altaner, Antes Vabic, Aileen A. Davis, and Tom Conlee.

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.

business hours, the second one runs from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Mark your calendar!

Seniors Group anticipated Christmas with potluck

On Dec. 7 members of St. Patrick's Seniors Group gathered for their Christmas potluck and party. In addition to their delectable home-cooked foods, the 37 who came brought white elephant gifts to serve as Bingo prizes and nonperishable food items for the St. Vincent de Paul food pantry.

Long-time members welcomed newcomer Ramon Daguro, who was also one of the prize winners. The list of winners, although probably incomplete given the number of times "Bingo!" was heard, included Bob

Leach, Betty Esser, Rose Brown, Tom Brown, Lee Yemma, Norma Kite, Maria Barger, Norma Kroes, Verne Kroes, June Giuffre, Betty Woodark, Nancy Haessly, Artha Chamberlain, Lenore Nagele, Tom Nagele, and Oscar Kocher. A good and worthy company!

Are you a Senior? You are if you think you are! Watch the bulletin for notice of the next Seniors gathering, and plan to come for a good time enjoying friends and making new ones.

Volunteer Opportunities

Adopt a granny—or grandpa. Your visit of an hour, at a time of your choice, can ease a week's loneliness for a nursing home resident. *Council of Congregations: Peggy Whelan, 367-3668*

Are you good at construction work? Your help with making structural modifications to the parish center at the south entrance of the main hall will create a new food pantry for food storage and distribution by the SVDP. *Building and Grounds: Gary Wszalek, 337-7961*

New Holy Cross correspondent needed: Beginning next fall, In Focus will need a new volunteer to prepare "Holy Cross Happenings." It's very easy to get the information, and the time commitment is minimal. *Communications: Cheryl Mitchell, 355-4566 or cheryl@gix.net*



Parish groups are invited to submit entries for this column to the Communications Committee or by calling Peggy Whelan (367-3668). Provide your name and telephone number or e-mail address and the name of your group.

Quick fixin's from the kitchen of...

Jessica Chitwood

Cake Mix Cookies

- 1 box cake mix (with pudding in the mix)
- 1/2 c oil
- 2 eggs



Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Mix all ingredients. With your hands make half-inch balls and place them on an ungreased cookie sheet. Bake 8-10 minutes or until edges are golden.

Annual Super Bowl Breakfast

What's the most delicious way to enjoy Super Bowl Sunday? Breakfast with the Knights of Columbus! On Feb. 5 they will serve breakfast in the parish center (where you'd usually find coffee and donuts) after the 7:30 a.m. and 9 a.m. Masses, until 11 a.m. The price is a free-will donation. Proceeds go to student scholarships and community projects.

This year Mike Hodits coaches the Omelet team. His players include tender ham, melted cheese, and delicious peppers and mushrooms. On the other end of the gridiron, Chris Stohr coaches the redoubtable Biscuits and Gravy team, featuring savory sausage, fluffy biscuits, and flavorful gravy. Support your team by choosing your favorite menu, including juice and coffee. Scores will be posted throughout the morning.

Ladies Knight Out with "The Catholic Boys"

On Saturday, Feb. 11 the Knights of Columbus will entertain the women of St. Patrick's in the parish hall. They will prepare and serve a delicious dinner of appetizers, steak or chicken, and cheesecake. After-dinner entertainment is by the same group of Knights—"The Catholic Boys"—who have wowed the ladies in the past.

Tickets are \$15. Get yours now, because they sell out quickly: only 150 reservations are available.



Happy Valentine's Day to all our readers!



St Patrick's Parish

Urbana, IL

February 2006



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			9am Moms UIP 11:30am,4:30, 7pm Bible Study 5:15pm Children's Choir 6:30pm Rel Ed St Joseph 7pm RCIA 7pm Choir	7pm Building & Grounds 10-12pm, 6:30-8:30pm Pastoral Care Retreat 7pm Choir 7pm Bible Study	Blessing of Throats 7am & 7pm 10:45am Mass CCNH	
			1	2	3	4
8:30-11am Super Bowl Breakfast 9am RCIA 9:15am Rel Ed 10:30am Children's Liturgy 6:30pm Leaders Bible Study	7pm Centering Prayer 1:30, 7pm Bible Study 7pm Pro-Life	12pm Bible Study 7pm Baptism Prep 9:30am Mass Canterbury Ridge 7:30pm Council Exec. Com.	9am Moms UIP 9:30am Schola 11:30am,4:30, 7pm Bible Study 5:15pm Children's Choir 6:30pm Rel Ed St Joseph 7pm RCIA 7pm Choir 7pm Social Action	7pm Choir 7pm Bible Study	10:30am Mass Care Center 10:45am CCNH Communion Service	6pm Ladies Knight Out
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
9am RCIA 9:15am Rel Ed 10:30am Children's Liturgy 4pm Catholic Teen Connection 6:30pm Leaders Bible Study 6:30pm Rel Ed	7pm Centering Prayer 1:30, 7pm Bible Study	Valentine's Day 5:30pm Financial Affairs 12pm Bible Study	9am Moms UIP 11:30am,4:30, 7pm Bible Study 5:15pm Children's Choir 6:30pm Rel Ed St Joseph 7pm RCIA 7pm Choir	7pm Parish Council 7pm Choir 7pm Bible Study	10:45am Mass CCNH 10:30am Mass Clark-Lindsey	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
9am RCIA 9:15am Rel Ed 10:15am K of C 6:30pm Confirmation Prep 6:30pm Rel Ed 6:30pm Leaders Bible Study	7pm Centering Prayer 1:30, 7pm Bible Study	7pm Liturgy 12pm Bible Study	9am Moms UIP 9:30am Schola 11:30am,4:30, 7pm Bible Study 5:15pm Children's Choir 7pm RCIA 7pm Choir	7pm Communications 7pm Choir 7pm Bible Study	10:45am Mass CCNH	7pm Social: Harmony, Hope, Healing
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
9am RCIA 6:30pm Leaders Bible Study	7pm Centering Prayer 1:30, 7pm Bible Study	12pm Bible Study 6pm Education Appreciation Dinner				
26	27	28				