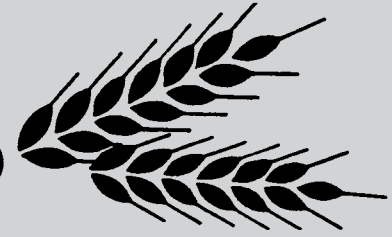


ST. PATRICK'S PARISH

# In Focus



www.stpaturbana.org

## Christmas A Personal Gift

Have you bought or made all your Christmas gifts yet? Have you wrapped your gifts and shipped them? Have you *become* a Christmas gift yet?

All the good things that we do reflect the good things that God has done for us. We give gifts on Christmas, imitating his gift to us on the first Christmas—the gift of himself. His birth was the beginning of a lifelong gift.

He gave us his presence, his companionship. He shared with us his time and the everyday activities of life, and let us do the same for him. He gave us his teaching. He gave us his life, death, and resurrection. He gave us his Spirit.



This is why we give gifts at Christmas. Gifts tied with a bow can be wonderful gestures of love, but how about the gift of yourself? Think of the people you will be with during Christmas. Does someone need extra love? Can you simplify your preparations so that you have more time to spend with others? Is there someone you could spend time with who would otherwise be lonely?

It is so easy to be overly busy at this time of year. Could you involve someone else in your cooking or decorating, and use the time for some real companionship?

Can you give a gift of teaching?

When you light the tree, can you tell someone about the ways that God is light for you? When the world is clean with snow, can you share a story of the way that God has made you clean and given you peace? When you set up a Nativity scene, can you reflect on Jesus, so small, so vulnerable, so humble?

Can you give a difficult gift? If you will be with someone you don't really like, can you give the gift of love and forbearance? If you will be doing something that frazzles you, can you give the gift of patience? If you will be doing something that you don't usually enjoy, can you do it with good will and a smile?

It can take ingenuity to find ways to *be* a Christmas gift, but we already know how. We just have to look at how Jesus did it!

### Gift

It was no small gift to be a faith community,  
to worship, to witness,  
to walk the way of love  
in the name and strength of Jesus.  
And in community,  
when brokenness and sorrow come,  
those in need are surrounded  
with prayer and compassion.  
Our caring goes beyond ourselves,  
and the stranger, in many places,  
is touched  
by the healing love and grace of God.  
In our failures, in our busy forgetting,  
we are forgiven, renewed  
to continue to be the hands and feet of Christ—  
no small task,  
no small gift.

—Roberta Porter, from *Alive Now*





**Q:** My aunt, who is not Catholic, sometimes receives Holy Communion when a Mass is celebrated at the

nursing home where she resides. I thought non-Catholics weren't allowed to receive Communion. What gives?

**A:** It's possible that non-Catholic individuals do "slip by" at Mass to receive Holy Communion along with the Catholics they've joined in procession. After all, our foreheads aren't marked with a sign of belonging—or not belonging—to distinguish between believers and non-believers. There are, however, circumstances when non-Catholics may indeed legitimately receive Holy Communion.

At a Catholic Mass, Orthodox Christians are officially welcome to receive Communion. Polish Na-

tional Catholics and the Assyrians of the East are likewise welcome, and we can receive the sacraments from them if we are gravely ill. So far, that's it—with some exceptions.

Canon Law notes conditions by which a baptized Christian who is not Roman Catholic can receive with us. Such persons must share our Catholic belief in the meaning of the Eucharist, and they must lack normal access to a minister of their own faith tradition. Consider, for instance, the non-Catholic widow of a Catholic at his funeral; a devout lady who is gravely ill and whose minister never visits; prisoners isolated from their church community; or soldiers worshiping at Mass with their comrades on the eve of a dangerous mission. In cases like these, canonical provisions suggest that the desire to receive Communion may sometimes trump

our Catholics-only policy.

But each situation has to be handled individually. This remains a pastoral problem that is under constant study. For now, a diocesan bishop is free to resolve individual cases and to craft general norms that do not conflict with current Church law.

People who express a desire to receive Communion or have an attraction to the Eucharist may in fact be articulating a desire to be received into the life of our community of faith, and their hunger and thirst for the Lord can help lifelong Catholics see just how tremendous a gift we have in the Eucharist.

\* \* \*

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

## Parish Council News

There is still time for St. Patrick's parishioners to make a pledge to the Annual Diocesan Appeal (ADA), and thereby prevent the parish from dealing with a shortfall, Father Joseph Hogan told members of the St. Patrick's Parish Council during his financial report at their Nov. 19 meeting.

St. Patrick's pledges are currently \$30,000 less than required of our parish for the ADA, the annual fundraiser for ministries of the Diocese of Peoria. The parish will be responsible for making up any difference. To help make up the shortfall, ADA envelopes and cards will be placed in the back of the church.

In other business:

- Parish Council member Shelly Benson gave an update on the Communications Task Force. A tentative timeline for the revamped parish communication

tools include rolling out the new eight-page bulletin and the redesigned In Focus (a two-page "preview" once a month in the bulletin, with the complete issue available on the parish Web site, and in print at the doors of the church and in the parish center) perhaps as soon as January. The new Web site is expected around June.

- The executive committee of the Parish Council recommended that the Time and Talent Weekend continue to be scheduled in early September. Some

council members had heard complaints that the survey, as well as the ministries' various trainings, orientations, and commissioning ceremonies, take place at one of the busiest times of the year. Each Parish Council member will ask their ministry teams to look into this potential problem and consider whether it is possible to do

some things at different times of the year instead of handling all of them in early fall.

- Council members will also be asked to share with their ministries a list of ideas that came out of this fall's Gathering of Ministries. The ministries will be asked to prioritize the list of ideas, determine which can be done and which are pipe dreams, and suggest how the Parish Council might help implement these ideas.

Marty Sierra-Perry, the Council member representing the Peace and Justice ministries, announced that a dinner is planned for both volunteers and visitors of the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry, tentatively scheduled for early spring 2010.

\* \* \*

*The next meeting will begin at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 21, in the parish center following a 6:30 p.m. gathering in the church for prayer. All parishioners are welcome to attend these open meetings.*



## First Reconciliation a family affair

On the rainy Tuesday evening of November 24, you would have found the Broda abode unusually quiet and empty. We were down at St. Patrick's. Like other families with second graders enrolled in the religious education program, our child was participating in the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time.

Father Hogan presided over a brief service in a church much darker and quieter than during weekend Mass. The 38 children assembled for the occasion couldn't miss that this was a serious occasion deserving their attention. They responded by waiting patiently—and perhaps a little anxiously—for their turns.

Four priests, including Fr. Hogan and Fr. Tran, heard confessions. Two confessionals were set up on either side of the altar, and both rooms in the back of the church were used. Quiet meditative music muffled the conversations between penitent and priest, making each confession just a bit more private.

Our children were called by name, and families accompanied them to the confessional. After of-

fering a prayer for the family, the priest heard our child's first confession. All family members could also make confessions afterward. Finally, children were invited to the parish center where they received certificates and a small gift in remembrance. Cookies and lemonade were available for all. Even the last family to arrive—this year we were the lucky ones—was able to enjoy a treat.



We had prepared for this moment by attending a Reconciliation Retreat on the afternoon of Nov. 15.

Parents and children were separated at registration and sent to programs tailored specifically for each. We parents heard from Fr. Hogan and Carolyn McElrath, while Suzanne D'Andria led the children's program.

Highlights for me were Fr. Hogan stressing the importance of the family and community and how individual sin weakens them both. He also explained the reasons for the sacrament, beyond just confessing directly to God. Carolyn's question—What is original sin? How do you get it?—served notice that we

were going to have to Think. She offered a look at the nature of sin, current and historical approaches to it, and the history behind things like papal infallibility.

My daughter shared that the children talked about how they had to really understand what they were saying, and to be serious. She also told me that they were reminded not to make a fuss if they had to wait, because someone had to be last. They made and colored paper dolls. When the dolls did bad things, the kids ripped a bit off the doll, but when the doll apologized, wholeness was restored by gluing the missing pieces in place.

At the end of the day, parents and children came together for a joint program. Everyone wrote down things they were sorry for on a sheet of paper. Each child's name was called, and together child and parent went to a center table where a bright candle burned. The papers were ripped up and thrown away, and each child received her own candle lit from the main candle. Seeing all the small flames burning reminded us of how, though individuals, we are all part of the same community.

—Sandy Broda

### *St. Patrick's children who participated in First Reconciliation at St. Patrick's and Holy Cross*

Joey Acton  
Mary Agor  
Ethan Ashbrook  
August Beck  
Sarah Benson  
Katelyn Berry  
Adam Bramowicz  
Zoe Broda  
Garrett Campbell  
Fin Dallas  
Sofia Diaz Stack  
Nicolina DiGirolamo  
Sofia Dowling  
Austin Ford

Josie Freedman  
Kennis Freedman  
Abigail Goad  
Tahlia Gonzalez  
Emily Hardimon  
Mariano Herrera  
Ethan Hinrichs  
Rachel Loftus  
Aliyah McDaniel  
Ellery McKean  
Allison Monk  
Betty Nguyen  
Clemens Overman  
Jeremiah Pettigrew

Hannah Rajlich  
Kenny Sanchez  
Morgan Saunders  
Jenna Schaefer  
Sophia Schmitz  
Justin Smith  
Mackenzie Stahlschmidt  
Molly Sweeney  
Tristan Tapia  
Sophia Urban  
Oliver Walsh  
Connor Whittington  
Zoe Witruk



## in our parish library

January normally brings themes of starting over and renewal. For some, that may mean renewal after a loss or difficult decision. Here are several recently donated books that provide consultation for such moments.

*Cries of the Heart: Praying Our Losses*, by Wayne Simsic. This book is for those who are currently grieving and for those who are confronting past losses. Its prayers provide words that you may need when your heart is preoccupied with the pain of loss. Call Number: 613 SIM 1994.

*Finding Your Way after Your Spouse Dies*, by Marta Felber. Drawing on her training as a therapist and her experiences in self-healing after the death of her husband, Felber has written as if she were a friend sitting with you over a cup of tea. It consists of two-page reflections, advice, a daily prayer, and related Scripture on a series of topics that roughly reflects the grieving process. Call Number: 646.7 FEL 2000.

*From Fragmentation to Wholeness* (6 cassettes, DVD, and book), by Rev. Vincent Youngbert. Its six tapes are entitled Prologue, Self Acceptance, Fulfillment, The Enabling Power, Reconciliation, and Future Church. Shelved on the bottom shelf in the Reference section. Call Number: DVD YOU.

*Inner Healing for Broken Vessels: Seven Steps to a Woman's Way of Healing*, by Linda Hollies. These steps to inner healing were learned through much pain and struggle by the author as she journeyed from childhood wounds to wholeness. Each chapter weaves the story of a present-day woman's struggle with that of a woman from the Bible. Includes questions and

suggestions for growth. Call Number: 248.8 HOL 1992.

*Twelve Gifts for Healing*, by Charlene Costanzo. This is an illustrated self-help book. In addition to describing the journey of a sick young woman and the spiritual guide who helps her find the "healing place" within herself, it offers mantras and soothing words and pictures to encourage someone going through troubled times. Call Number: 158.1

*When Love Gets Tough: The Nursing Home Decision*, by Doug Manning. The author outlines the decision process of making a nursing home placement, how to understand the emotions and guilt that may accompany this move, and how to develop a healthy relationship with the loved one after the move. He also discusses family meetings, legal and financial issues, and working with the facility. Call Number: 259.4 MAN 1983.

*With God's Oldest Friends: Pastoral Visiting in the Nursing Home*, by Henry C. Simmons and Mark A. Peters. This ecumenical book shows how to plan an effective nursing home visit, relate to the staff, administer sacraments, and handle personal fears and reactions. Call Number: 259.4 SIM 1996.

\* \* \*

If you would like to donate books on the parish library's wish list, please contact Lori Mestre (365-9004), library team coordinator. If you need help locating materials in the library, Lori or one of the other team members will be happy to help. The parish library is open weekdays during office hours and on the fourth and fifth Sundays of the month from 8:30 to 10:45 a.m.

## A work-at-home blessing: Prayer Shawls

The Prayer Shawl ministry will not meet for regular monthly work sessions after Jan. 1. Many women are working on shawls in their own homes. We strongly encourage the work to continue, as the ministry blesses both maker and recipient. We will continue to meet bi-monthly to collect finished shawls and have a shawl-blessing service. The dates will be announced in the bulletin and In Focus.



If you'd like to join the Prayer Shawl ministry, you can choose from patterns ranging from simple to advanced, and an abundance of yarn. Contact Nancy Olson (359-6424 or nancybolson@yahoo.com) to pick up materials and patterns.

## Vocation Prayer



Heavenly Father, bless your Church with an abundance of holy and zealous priests, deacons, brothers, and sisters.

Give those you have called to the married state and those you have chosen to live as single persons in the world the special graces that their lives require.

Form us all in the likeness of your Son so that in him, with him, and through him we may love you more deeply and serve you more faithfully, always and everywhere.

With Mary we ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.



## Change is in the air...

A team representing the people who create the parish bulletin, the Web site, and In Focus has been meeting with Fr. Joe for the last few months to take a fresh look at the way we communicate about the parish. You'll begin seeing the results of their work in the next few months.

Some people nowadays get their news on the Internet, so the parish Web site is more important to them than the printed materials distributed at the end of Mass. Those looking for a new parish are likely to find us online as well. On the other hand, some people don't have Internet access

and sometimes printed materials are more convenient. We shall not abandon print, but would like to economize on the printing that we

do. So here are some of the things that will happen:

The parish **Web site**, [www.stpatricksbana.org](http://www.stpatricksbana.org), has a new look. It will receive many new features. *In Focus*, the weekly bulletin, and liturgical ministry schedules

are just a few of the things you can already find there. We hope it will eventually be possible to register online for parish events. Check it out!

The **bulletin** will change to an 8-page format. To accomplish this, two pages will be set aside for our advertisers. Instead of separate

inserts, publicity for parish events and projects will be incorporated into the pages of the bulletin, as nicely designed as the inserts

are now. The bulletin will have a monthly calendar on a tear-out page. It will also have the "people lists" that have been included in *In Focus* up till now—the names of those who have joined or left the parish, been baptized, been married, or have died.

On the last Sunday of the month, two pages of the bulletin will be set aside for a preview of the current issue of *In Focus*, with a few sentences about each article. This will call your attention to the newsletter and encourage you to read it on the parish Web site, or to pick up a full printed copy at the church doors. If we find that we need fewer copies because people are reading *In Focus* online, we will be able to reduce the amount printed.

There will be opportunities for new features and services in all three ways we communicate with parishioners: parish Web site, bulletin, and newsletter. Got ideas? A survey will be coming out soon to ask what you think.



## Merrie Olde England will return to St. Patrick's!

Last fall St. Patrick's parishioners had the opportunity to experience a touch of early 19th-century England via the Jane Austen Book Club, which met Fridays at 7 p.m. in the parish center. Bao Bui, one of our parish's Young Adults, guided a group of parishioners from St. Patrick's and other parishes, as well as many Jane Austen devotees, through an evening of spirited discussion of her novels and their examples of English culture, morals, and relationships.

Discussion was followed by viewing scenes from movies based on the books. In September they read and watched *Sense and Sensibility*. In October it was *Pride and Prejudice*, which Jane wrote when she was only twenty. In November they read a later novel, *Mansfield Park*.

To give the meetings an English Country flair, tea was sometimes

served, invariably accompanied by Bao's homemade croissants. To deepen their appreciation of Jane Austen's era, members of the group participated in English Country dancing at the Phillips Recreation Center in Urbana. The fall program ended Dec. 4, with a potluck at a participant's home and a screening of the movie *Becoming Jane*.

If you think this is something you would enjoy, the meetings resume on Jan. 22, again on Fridays

at 7 p.m. in the parish center. For four weeks the group will discuss and view *Emma*. The meetings pause for Lent and then resume Apr. 23 for three weeks to study *Persuasion*. The program will finish on May 14 with a screening of *The Jane Austen Book Club*. All the books may be purchased from the Barnes and Noble Classic Editions for around six dollars.

What can Jane Austen teach us today about the art of living? Come and see!



## St. Prisca, evangelist and Church administrator

St. Prisca was one of a number of women who played a prominent role in the early Church—not simply as helpers to the male apostles, but as evangelists and church administrators in their own right.

Prisca (or Priscilla) and her husband, Aquila, were Jewish tent-makers living in Corinth. They moved there from Rome when the emperor Claudius had all Jews expelled from the imperial capital.

St. Paul met them soon after his arrival in Corinth. Their common trade—Paul too was a tentmaker—provided the basis of their acquaintance. Through Paul's influence, they soon also shared a common zeal for the gospel. Their house became Paul's base of operations in Corinth, and before long they were also serving as evangelists, preaching the gospel to their fellow Jews.

When Paul left for Ephesus, they joined him. There they established a church in their home that included gentile as well as Jewish Christians. They later returned to Rome, probably encouraged by news of

the installation of the new emperor, Nero, who had no record of anti-Christian activity. Once again their house became the meeting place of the local church.

In the end, their hope of finding tolerance in Nero's Rome was misplaced. According to tradition, Prisca and Aquila perished in the general persecution that occurred

around the year 64. Although they are not listed in the Roman Calendar, St. Paul in his letters reminds us of their role in extending the hospitality of their home, in

the very early days of the Church, to Christian and non-Christian alike.

In our day, home churches as such are rare—this is certainly so in the United States. But today's Prisca can find every opportunity to serve as an evangelist, preaching the gospel by example if not always by word, and she can be sure of assistance from her patron in seeking ways to foster community in parishes that can't squeeze into a house.

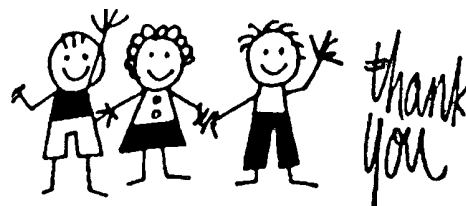


Patron Saints for January

## Special call for volunteers

**Good Samaritans**, a group of parishioners helping other parishioners with small acts of kindness, is looking for volunteers to help with grocery shopping for a parish couple, and for someone to stay with an ill parishioner while her husband goes to 5:00 p.m. Mass. *Carla Simmering, 328-4841*

**Some wheelchair residents at Champaign County Nursing Home need help getting to and from their chapel for Mass on Friday mornings.** The need is great; one helper must stay at the chapel so early arrivals don't wander off, while other helpers collect Catholic residents for Mass. There simply aren't enough helpers at the present time. Can you help even once a month if weekly isn't possible? *Sandy Anderson, 469-2416*



Parish groups or individuals can submit entries for this column to the Communications Committee or contact Mary Lou Menches (344-1125 or [mmenches@illinois.edu](mailto:mmenches@illinois.edu)). Provide your name and telephone number or e-mail address with a brief description of the kind of help being sought.





## Parishioner Minette Sternke attends Vatican conference

“No words or Signs can fully express this experience.” This was a comment made to me at the conclusion of the Vatican conference “Ephphatha! The Deaf Person in the Life of the Church.” I had to agree—the experience was too amazing for words heard or seen.

In June 2008, Archbishop Jose Redrado attended a conference near Rome for pastoral workers for the Deaf. After hearing eight deaf people share their experiences of deaf ministry in their countries, he was moved to start planning a conference on this topic at the Vatican. His leadership was continued by the new President of the Pontifical Council for Pastoral Assistance to Health Care Workers, Archbishop Zygmunt Zimowski.

The Catholic Office of the Deaf (Archdiocese of Chicago) and St. Patrick’s Parish generously sponsored my attending this 3-day conference that gathered 400 people, including about 100 deaf, from 60 countries. I met many inspiring people, including a Maryknoll missionary priest working with the deaf in Cambodia, whose Sign language was nationally recognized barely a decade ago.

During the conference, Vatican officials respectfully listened to the experiences, dreams and hopes of deaf people: the deaf psychological experience, childrearing in the Church, how to feel part of the congregation, lack of local interpreters, lack of sacraments (confessing only annually, because no local priest knows Sign Language). Many deaf speakers urged seminaries to include classes on Sign Language and deaf culture. Cyril Axelrod, a deaf/blind priest from London, felt the Holy Father could extend his octolinguality to at least beginning Sign Language.

Benedict XVI indeed honored us with a special audience on Friday, Nov. 20. We wanted not only to see the Holy Father, but also to have him see us, the deaf, fully express our joy and faith in our native Sign language. In his address (which you can read at [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)), he told us that we are “not only recipients of the Gospel message but also legitimately heralds of it.”

If implemented, the recommendations presented on the last day of the conference will give the deaf much greater access to sacraments and programs. One speaker rightfully said, “We are standing on the shoulders of many who have gone before us.” People who had spent 40 or 50 years in deaf pastoral work graciously told me their stories during meals and breaks. Many of them could never have conceived of such a conference happening in their lifetimes. They are an inspiration to me and many others.

The work continues for all of us, back in our parishes, dioceses, and countries. As we left Rome, we will always remember: “The Body of Christ assumes

a place for everyone. The Gospel of Jesus Christ demands a place for everyone.”

—*Minette Sternke*



*Minette Sternke (right) and friends wait for the papal audience in Clementine Hall at the Vatican. The woman beside Minette is a deaf Chicagoan.*

### Did you know?

Roger Ebert, famous film critic and sponsor of the annual Ebert Film Festival in C-U, grew up in Urbana (“I was born at the center of the universe...”) and was a parishioner of St. Patrick’s. Parishioner Eileen Unander wrote to him at his blog, where he talks about his life in Urbana, and asked him to tell about his memories of St. Patrick’s. Here is his response:

“Midnight mass. The first time as an altar boy, when I went behind the altar, I was astounded to discover it was a set. I always thought it was carved from solid marble. Serving during the Stations of the Cross, singing, “At the cross, her station keeping, stood his mournful mother weeping; close to Jesus to the last.” Climbing the circular stairs to sing in the choir with the organist, Sarah Marquardt. Incense on the charcoal. Getting tipped 50 cents by the best man after a wedding. Orange juice and sweet rolls in the rectory basement on Good Fridays, served up by the Altar and Rosary Society. The lending library in the vestibule, where I checked out *Death Comes for the Archbishop* when I was in about fourth grade.”

Ebert’s blog, and his correspondence with those who write to him, makes for interesting reading. You can find it at [http://blogs.suntimes.com/ebert/2009/04/410\\_east\\_washington\\_street.html](http://blogs.suntimes.com/ebert/2009/04/410_east_washington_street.html).

## St. Patrick's Seniors enjoy Christmas luncheon

It was a dark and stormy day with high winds and light snow, but 24 St. Patrick's persistent seniors met for their annual Christmas party on Dec. 9. There were plenty of treats, and members brought food stuffs for St. Vincent de Paul Society. The meal included ham prepared with 7-Up by Judy Long and turkey prepared by Mary Ann Luedtke.

Fr. Hogan gave the prayer of thanks and blessing. Parish staffers Carolyn McElrath and Tyra Quinones joined the group for lunch, and Dianne Gordon came briefly before business required her to staff the phones. Fr. Luong Tran sang Christmas carols in Vietnamese and led the group in singing Silent Night in both Vietnamese and English.

The Seniors also played bingo, with everyone present receiving a gift. The grand prize in blackout bingo was a poinsettia, provided by Betty and Wally LaBerge. Other committee members for this event were Betty Blanco, Bob Haessley, Ray Wait, and Walter and Shirley Splittstoesser.

Nine members are planning to start a Bridge group—call Chris Whippo (352-7263) if you'd like to join. Committees were formed for 2010 meetings. The Seniors' next meeting will be Tuesday, April 6, 2010.



*A poinsettia went from centerpiece to prize for blackout bingo.*



*Carolyn McElrath joins in the conversation over lunch.*



*Fr. Tran enjoys his meal before singing for the seniors.*

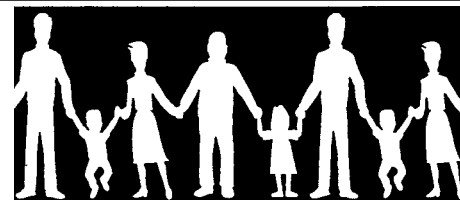


*Tyra Quinones relaxed briefly over lunch.*



Globalization has revealed an interdependence that calls us to turn economic, social, political, and cultural forces toward the creation of a global community of love, a single human family united in solidarity and peace.

—James E. Hug, S.J.



**Welcome to new parishioner Nick Josefik.**

**Welcome also to Wyatt Jeffery Kenyon, baptized into our faith community.**

**Please pray for deceased parishioners Diana Conerty and Lee Yemma.**

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



## Christmas Bazaar as big and bustling as ever

Seventeen vendors displayed their homemade crafts for sale Dec. 6 as part of St. Patrick's annual Christmas Bazaar. Diversity seems to be the best description for the vendors. They came from as far away as LeRoy and Ogden. They ranged in age from elementary-school girls to our own Sophia Zeigler (who is only six months younger than God, rumor says). Three men took part. Judy Haydel's mother, Millie, who was celebrating her 90th birthday that day, came to help.

Crafters have diverse reasons for their crafts. Some enjoy it as an outlet for their creative energies; some wish to gain experience in retailing; some donate the

proceeds from their crafting to charity, such as Sophia Zeigler to Women of St Patrick's and Judy Haydel to the Leukemia Foundation. Some enjoy craft sales as a social event; some use it as a way for people with special challenges to display their talents; and some just wish to make a little extra spending money.

And the parishioners of St. Patrick's benefit from it all!



## Knights of Columbus: Follow the money!

Pancake breakfasts, fish fries, and Tootsie Roll drives are just a few of the fundraisers the Knights of Columbus hold each year. Did you ever wonder what the Knights do with those funds they raise?

Some of the fundraisers are for specific causes. The Tootsie Roll drives are dedicated to organizations that benefit people who are mentally challenged. In 2009, the Urbana Council of the Knights of Columbus donated \$500 to the Rural Champaign County Special Education Cooperative and \$324 to the Developmental Services Center.

The fish fries that the Knights hold during Lent each year help to fund the Father Martell scholarships. This year, \$2400 in scholarships were awarded to high school students headed for college.

Proceeds from general fundrais-

ers go to a variety of charities and causes. In this past year, the Knights contributed \$500 to Restoration Ministries to help with housing for the Safe Haven group, \$250 to Empty Tomb, and \$300 to Dr. Susan Nagele's ministry with the Maryknoll mission.

How do the Knights decide where the money will go? According to Grand Knight Bob Glazier, a cause can come to the Knights' attention in several ways.

Sometimes a group requests a contribution, as in the case of Restoration Ministries' Safe Haven request. Sometimes, as with Dr. Susan Nagele, the Knights are aware of a person's or group's charitable work and want to contribute. A member or a parishioner might suggest an organization that does work the Knights support.



For example, Jim Mayer's work with the Rural Champaign County Special Education Cooperative led him to suggest that organization as a possible recipient of funds raised by the Tootsie Roll drive. Because Frank Modica's work in special education in the Urbana schools alerted the Knights to needs there, they bought equipment for autistic students at Urbana High School, as well as a lift chair to help disabled students use the pool at the Aquatic Center.

Sometimes help goes out to individuals. Some Knights had heard that a parishioner was in need of help because her porch had been condemned by the city. The Knights contributed money toward demolishing the porch and later donated labor to help with the repairs.

When you read about a Knights of Columbus fundraiser at St. Patrick's, be assured that the proceeds are going to a very good cause!



**Christmas Projects.** This holiday season, STM students are encouraged to carry their mission beyond the school's walls. Here are several service projects under way.

The food drive sponsored by the STM football team was a huge success! STM players and cheerleaders appeared on the Channel 3 evening news to promote the event, and Metamora fans were invited to participate and made significant donations to the food drive. The food drive collected over 600 pounds of food, donated to the Eastern Illinois Food Bank for distribution to needy families.

The Empty Bowl fundraiser to help feed the hungry will be held on Feb. 19, 2010. Students in Art Club and Visual Art classes are starting now to make the ceramic bowls that will be sold. The art department provides the materials and all the help needed, and the students provide their time to make the bowls. A local restaurant will provide wonderful soup and bread for our meal. You can support the event by coming and enjoying the meal for your \$10 donation and taking home a bowl of your choice. Contact Ms. Pagel or Ms. Metka at the school (352-7210)

for more information.

The 2009 Children of Hope and Faith STM Christmas project will help provide a water system for the new Angel Orphanage in Tanzania, Africa. Orphans sponsored at STM's sister school, St. Peter Claver, live at the orphanage when school is not in session. Students are encouraged to make monetary donations to help bring water and the love of Jesus to these orphans.

Another holiday service project is the sixth annual Angel Tree, sponsored by the National Honor Society. Students are purchasing ornaments for the tree. Proceeds will buy Christmas presents for area foster children.

**Sports Page.** It's a great time to be a Saber—the fall sports teams swept the Sangamon Valley Conference. Cross Country boys' and girls' teams (including Andy Wszalek, Will Laumann, and Gracie Mayer) advanced to Sectionals, with Theresa Welle qualifying for State. In tennis, the girls' team enjoyed its first year as an organized sport, with Maddie Baillon qualifying for State. Girls' golf placed fourth in State and the boys' team claimed the Regional title. In volleyball, the team won the IHSA Regional title, advancing to Sectionals. Finally, football made STM history with a perfect 9-0 season, advancing to the second round of playoffs.

## CREW teens give joy to the world

On Dec. 6 St. Patrick's teens of CREW (Christ Renews Everyone's World) filled our orders for holiday evergreens and sold a few as well to deck our halls. Then, since it was St. Nicholas Day, they joined teens from all the parishes in the Champaign Vicariate at St. Thomas Church in Philo. After a teen Mass, they made gift bags for the Don Moyer Boys and Girls Club.

Good King Wenceslaus has nothing on these teens for kindness. They set aside the evening of Dec. 20 for a "light cleaning" of the church. This task fulfills one of CREW's required service projects for their summer mission trip.

After making sure there is no dust in the church for the Christ Child's welcome, the teens plan to fill and tie bags of peppermints, and maybe tootsie rolls and cinnamon drops, to top off the food baskets the St. Vincent de Paul Society prepares for the needy who come to the food pantry.

The teens wish you a merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year!



*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. Materials must include the name and telephone number of the person submitting them. Please send news items to a Communications Committee member, leave them in the committee's 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 Suzanne D'Andria, Sandy Broda, Pat Fettig, Judy Fierke, Bob Goss, Elizabeth Hendricks, Mary Lou Menches, Lori Mestre, Ellen Noonan, Nancy Olson, Tyra Quinones, Cathy Salika, Sue Schreiber, Stephanie Smith, Shirley Splittstoesser, Minette Sternke, Eileen Unander, Mary Welle, and Peggy Whelan. January saints by Fr. George Wuellner. This issue was edited by Camille Goudeseune and paged by John Colombo.



Deadline for submission of information, articles and news items for the next issue of *In Focus* is January 17.



## Holy Cross Happenings

Although the weather threatened to shoo the proceedings indoors, Hot Dog Day, the annual October lunch hosted by the Parent/Teacher Club for current students, families, and friends of HC students, was another success with over 800 hotdogs served! Special thanks to the STM Ambassadors, who helped kids put toppings on their dogs.

Msgr. Hallin, along with Fr. Steve Willard and Fr. Joe Hogan, celebrated the Sacrament of Confirmation with 29 eighth graders at Holy Cross School, including seven students from St. Patrick's: Gabrielle Wszalek, Ian Niccum, Annie Rasmussen, Colton Parisi, Liz Fahey, Cole Kangas, and Chase Kangas.

At the end of the first-quarter grading period in November, Holy Cross was proud to announce that a full eighty-three students in grades 5–8 qualified for the First Quarter Honor Roll, an outstanding achievement! To make the Honor Roll, students had to receive all As and Bs.

The all-school Christmas programs were Dec. 9 and 10, with the kindergarten through second-graders performing the musical *Listen to the Angels*. Third through eighth graders sang and played holiday music.

The Holy Cross Theater Club performed *Isn't there anyone who knows what Christmas is all about?* with the Peanuts Gang at St. Patrick's on Sunday, Dec. 13.

\* \* \*

Mark your calendar for Catholic Schools Week, Jan. 31 – Feb 6. This year's theme is Dividends for Life. Highlights include:

- Mon., Feb. 1, 9:30 a.m., St. Matthew's church: regional Mass with Bishop Jenky

- Tue., Feb. 2, 7 p.m., Holy Cross parish center: Kindergarten Round-Up
- Wed., Feb. 3, 9 a.m.–noon: Open House
- Fri., Feb. 5, 12:50 p.m., gymnasium: Talent Show

\* \* \*

A Catholic education is a marvelous gift you can give your child. Students can start in kindergarten or transfer at any grade, depending on availability. Parents considering Holy Cross School should call the school office in January, and attend the Open House on Feb. 3. Kindergarten parents should plan to attend Kindergarten Round-Up. Parents of older students should call to set up an appointment with Principal Costello. In addition, Mrs. Costello will visit St. Patrick's on a Sunday in January to answer parents' questions.



Among those confirmed from St. Patrick's were (from left) Gabrielle Wszalek, Ian Niccum, Annie Rasmussen, and Colton Parisi. Not pictured: Cole Kangas, Chase Kangas and Liz Fahey.

## Quick fixin's from the kitchen of . . . Bob Goss

### Better-Than-Fried Chicken

- 1 c fat-free Ranch dressing
- 1/2 c nonfat milk
- 1 c cornflakes, crushed
- 1/2 c wheat germ (toasted, no sugar added)
- 1 t dried Italian herbs
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 6 chicken breasts, skinless and boneless (about 1-1.5 lbs)

Preheat oven to 350°. Spray a glass baking dish with cooking spray. In a shallow bowl, whisk milk and dressing until smooth. Mix cereals and seasonings in a second shallow bowl. Coat chicken with dressing, then with cereal mixture, and place in a single layer into baking dish. Bake until done (no longer pink), for 45-50 minutes. Serves 6.

\* \* \*

If you have a recipe you'd like to share, please send it to Ellen Noonan (403-0979 or eknoon@comcast.net). The only requirement is that it be easy and quick to prepare!



In the November issue of *In Focus*, in an article about St. Patrick's funeral dinners and the many women who have been coordinators of the service, we failed to mention Irma Wait, who served as coordinator for many years. We regret the omission, and thank Irma for her many, many years of service to the bereaved.



## From seminarian Alex Millar

*Many parishioners will remember Alex Millar, who served as a Eucharistic minister at weekend Masses and carried Holy Communion to the homebound of St. Patrick's. We saw him at work around the parish facilities and at play with youngsters during Vacation Bible School last summer. We said our good-byes and offered our prayers for him when he left last fall to begin his studies as a seminarian for our diocese, studies that will lead eventually to ordination, God willing. On Dec. 3 he wrote:*

Dear members of St. Patrick's Parish,

I offer you my greetings from Mount Saint Mary's Seminary. I apologize for the delay in writing, but though I think of and pray for you all constantly, I have had little time to sit down and write. I deeply appreciate the prayers you have offered for my sake, and pray that this letter finds you in the best of spirits during this Advent Season.

We are currently in our last two weeks of classes, and naturally class work is peaking before the post-finals wind down. Outside of class, I have become an active member of the Legion of Mary. As first pre-theology students do not have apostolates, the Legion of Mary has been a wonderful chance to reach out to the community in Emmitsburg. We regularly visit residents at St. Catherine's Nursing Home, which is attached to the St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Shrine. It is certainly a wonderful opportunity, and at the risk of sounding cliché, I continually learn the power of our Lord through my interaction with the residents.

On the spiritual side, I have been preparing to make the "Total Consecration to Jesus through Mary" according to the method of St. Louis de Montfort. As part of my preparation I have read St. Louis's True Devotion to Mary and have been praying through the 33 days of preparatory prayers included as an appendix.

This time of prayer has been truly amazing, especially as I have reflected on the Litany of the Holy Ghost. Particularly I am struck by the phrase "pour down into our souls the gifts of the Holy Ghost." This petition seems to echo the lavishness with which our Lord provides his grace, grace which, if we will let it be poured upon us, will fill and transform.

Furthermore, our Lord has given us the wonderful gift of his mother. Through her powerful intercession, we can with confidence ask for the gifts of the Holy Ghost, remembering her intercession at the wedding at Cana.

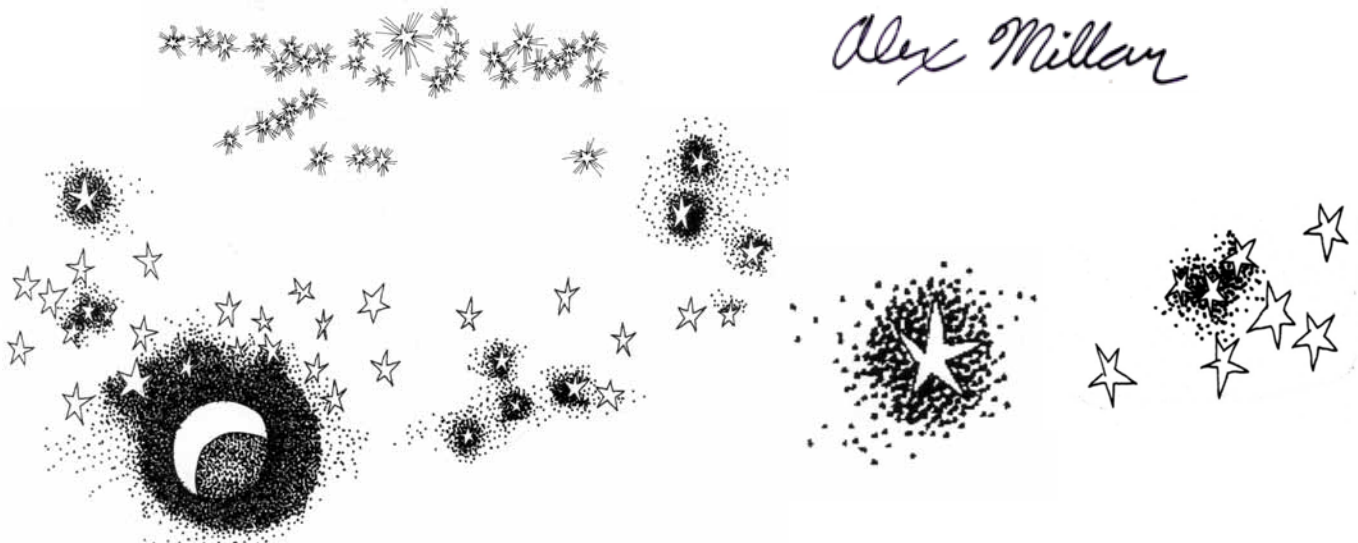
From my experiences during this season of prayer, I am continually awed at the generosity of our Lord and can do little but fall to my knees in gratitude, especially with regard to the fact that I am worthy of none of the consolations that have been granted. During this Advent Season I highly encourage meditation on our Lady, who is always our Lady of Perpetual Help.

I pray that this Advent Season will be spiritually fruitful for you. I will continue to remember you in my prayers, and I hope that I will be able to visit you all soon. May our Lord Jesus Christ continue to bless you.



Sincerely,

*Alex Millar*



## St. Patrick's Parish January 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					<b>1</b> <b>New Year's Day</b> Masses: 9:00 AM and Noon  <b>Office Closed</b> <b>SVDP Closed</b>	<b>2</b> <b>6:00 PM</b> Great Dates
<b>3</b> <b>9:15 AM</b> Rel Ed <b>10:30 AM</b> Children's Mass <b>6:00 PM</b> CREW Mission Meeting <b>6:30 PM</b> CREW Confirmation Reflection	<b>4</b> <b>5:30 PM</b> Web Site (2 sites) <b>6:30 PM</b> Engaging Spirituality <b>7:00 PM</b> Centering Prayer <b>7:00 PM</b> Respect Life  <b>SVDP closed</b>	<b>5</b> <b>1:00 PM</b> Bible Study <b>7:00 PM</b> Baptism Preparation <b>7:00 PM</b> Bible Study <b>7:00 PM</b> Mystagogia <b>7:00 PM</b> Web Site	<b>6</b> <b>9:00 AM</b> Moms Meeting Moms <b>6:30 PM</b> Peace and Justice Ministries <b>6:30 PM</b> Religious Ed, St Joe	<b>7</b> <b>7:00 AM</b> Men's Prayer Group <b>7:00 PM</b> Communications Com. <b>7:00 PM</b> RCIA <b>7:00 PM</b> Divorce Care	<b>8</b> <b>10:30 AM</b> Mass, Canterbury Ridge <b>10:45 AM</b> Communion Service, CCNH <b>5:00 PM</b> CREW Confirmation Retreat Begins	<b>9</b> <b>6:00 PM</b> CREW Confirmation Retreat Ends
<b>10</b> <b>9:15 AM</b> Relig Ed <b>10:30 AM</b> Children's Mass <b>6:30 PM</b> Vivo	<b>11</b> <b>6:30 PM</b> Engaging Spirituality <b>7:00 PM</b> Centering Prayer	<b>12</b> <b>1:00 PM</b> Bible Study <b>5:30 PM</b> Financial Affairs <b>7:00 PM</b> Bible Study	<b>13</b> <b>9:30 AM</b> Schola <b>5:15 PM</b> Children's Choir <b>6:00 PM</b> Women's Faith Sharing <b>6:30 PM</b> JustFaith <b>6:30 PM</b> Religious Ed, St Joe <b>7:00 PM</b> Choir <b>7:00 PM</b> Faith Development Ministries <b>11:00 PM</b> WSP Rosary luncheon	<b>14</b> <b>7:00 AM</b> Men's Prayer Group <b>1:00 PM</b> Cards, Coffee & Conversation <b>7:00 PM</b> Choir <b>7:00 PM</b> RCIA <b>7:00 PM</b> Divorce Care	<b>15</b> <b>10:30 AM</b> Mass, Clark-Lindsey <b>10:45 AM</b> Mass, CCNH	<b>16</b>
<b>17</b> <b>9:15 AM</b> Rel Ed <b>10:15 AM</b> K of C <b>6:30 PM</b> Vivo	<b>18</b> <b>1:00 PM</b> Bible Study <b>7:00 PM</b> Centering Prayer	<b>19</b> <b>1:00 PM</b> Bible Study <b>6:30 PM</b> Worship Ministries Team <b>7:00 PM</b> Bible Study <b>7:00 PM</b> Mystagogia	<b>20</b> <b>9:00 AM</b> Moms Meeting Moms <b>5:15 PM</b> Children's Choir <b>6:30 PM</b> Religious Ed, St Joe <b>7:00 PM</b> Choir	<b>21</b> <b>7:00 AM</b> Men's Prayer Group <b>6:30 PM</b> Parish Council <b>7:00 PM</b> Choir <b>7:00 PM</b> RCIA <b>7:00 PM</b> Divorce Care	<b>22</b> <b>10:45 AM</b> Mass, CCNH <b>7:00 PM</b> Jane Austen Book Club	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b> <b>8:30 AM</b> Blood Pressure Screening <b>9:15 AM</b> Rel Ed <b>6:30 PM</b> CREW Confirmation Reflection <b>6:30 PM</b> Vivo	<b>25</b> <b>1:00 PM</b> Bible Study <b>6:00 PM</b> SALT Leadership Training <b>6:30 PM</b> Engaging Spirituality <b>7:00 PM</b> Centering Prayer	<b>26</b> <b>1:00 PM</b> Bible Study <b>7:00 PM</b> Bible Study	<b>27</b> <b>9:30 AM</b> Funeral Schola <b>5:15 PM</b> Children's Choir <b>6:00 PM</b> Women's Faith Sharing <b>6:30 PM</b> JustFaith <b>7:00 PM</b> Choir	<b>28</b> <b>7:00 AM</b> Men's Prayer Group <b>7:00 PM</b> Choir <b>7:00 PM</b> Communications Com. <b>7:00 PM</b> RCIA <b>7:00 PM</b> Divorce Care	<b>29</b> <b>10:45 AM</b> Mass, CCNH <b>7:00 PM</b> Jane Austen Book Club	<b>30</b> <b>6:00 PM</b> Congolese Gathering
<b>31</b> <b>3:30 PM</b> Vietnamese Reconciliation & Mass <b>6:30 PM</b> CREW Mass, Dinner	<p><b>Because this calendar is prepared in advance, be sure to check the bulletin to confirm actual dates and times of specific events.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">* * *</p> <p><b>The deadline for the next issue of <i>In Focus</i> is January 17.</b></p>					