

St. Patrick Parish IN FOCUS

www.stpaturbana.org

June 2011

Trinity Sunday: Feast of God Transcendent

Easter is a very down-to-earth season. It begins with the celebration of Jesus, truly human, truly dead, and yet truly risen. It is marked by readings from the Acts of the Apostles—stories of how the Christian community found a way of life together and began to spread the Word. If this were all we knew of our faith, there might be a risk that we'd domesticate Jesus, perhaps becoming too chummy, too casual with him. We might accept him as teacher, but forget that he is also truly God.

Perhaps that's why the Church follows the Easter season with the Feast of the Holy Trinity, observed this year on June 19. This feast reminds us that God is three in one, totally different from anything else in existence. Our words become clumsy as we try to explain the essence of God. How can God be both one and three? How do the Father, Son, and Spirit relate to each other and work together—or is that a silly question because they are so united that there is no difference between them? We gaze at God through a wispy fog, sometimes catching a glimpse of what God is, but incapable of grasping the whole of God's

being. Yet we are in awe of what we do see.

Trinity Sunday is the feast of God transcendent. It reminds us that there is a mystery and grandeur of God that is beyond our understanding. Who but God could create the universe with a word? Who but God could know and love everything in creation and continue to act for our

good? Who but God could dream of drawing us to God's self for all eternity? Remembering these things gives us joy. It is a bit like the joy we feel when a friend

receives an honor. We are happy for the person, not because we helped with his accomplishments, not because his honor reflects on us, but simply in love and friendship. Nothing we can do can increase God's greatness, but remembering God's greatness sets our hearts on fire.

God is both intimate and transcendent. God walked the earth to show us how to live. God knows us as unique individuals and loves us better than we love ourselves. God lives in our hearts and feeds our spirits with the God-Christ's body and blood. And yet God's power, wisdom, goodness, and love are greater than we can comprehend or express!



Honoring Our Past
BUILDING OUR FUTURE
ST. PATRICK'S CATHOLIC CHURCH CAMPAIGN

One volunteer's story

At first reluctant, I soon came to realize that serving as a volunteer in St. Patrick's capital campaign would reap results I never could have imagined. Although I witnessed time and time again how parishioners made sacrificial gifts to advance the campaign, I was taken aback by how listening to them was part of a two-fold mission in each visit I made.

When I listened to fellow parishioners, I learned how much they truly loved their faith community here at St. Pat's, and what wonderful stories they shared! How vibrant our liturgies! How compassionately we minister to those in need! How we see ourselves as an active and passionate laity, whose pastor encourages our participation however we choose to serve and live out our faith. This affirmation of our mission has renewed us and strengthened our resolve as we have continued to make historic visits to parishioners.

I also learned that there is hurt and disappointment caused by scandals in recent years, the relegated roles of women in the church, and concerns of the elderly and infirm who are alone and separated from their worshiping community. These concerns I could bring to our pastor and find ways to bring about healing.

Many of these people reached deep and put aside their own con-

see **Volunteer's Story** on page 14

Church windows tell some of our family history

The windows of St. Patrick's church reveal stories about some of the people who were part of the parish in its very early years.

The two Conerty windows on the east wall of the church help to situate us in history. Hugh Conerty (1840-1908), who donated the Sacred Heart window, was a veteran of the American Civil War. His son, James P. Conerty (1870-1915), donated the nearby window depicting a host and chalice.

He was a farmer and civic leader. His wife, Carrie, was pregnant when he died of cancer. The child, named James after his father, has also passed on, but his wife, Betty, is still an active member of the parish.

The window between the two Conerty windows is inscribed, "In loving memory of John P. Daly." John was shot while trying to break up a street brawl at the corner of Race and Main. He died a few days later, on July 23, 1901. The crowds at his funeral were so large that only half the people could squeeze into the wooden church that served our parish at that time.

Also on the east wall is an image of Jesus crowned with thorns. It was donated by Fr. John H. Cannon, the first pastor of our parish. Serving here from 1901 to 1910, he was the dynamo who established our

church, both the buildings and the community of faith, and gave us St. Patrick as patron.

The image of the crown of thorns was "Donated by Joseph Coombs & Family." Joseph (1848-1939) was the father of Mayme Coombs, the first bride to be married in the brick church.

Many windows were donated by members of the Hudson family. It is difficult to sort out its many members. The guardian angel window was donated by Joseph Robert Hudson (1844-1906), who came to Champaign County in 1854 and had a farm two miles south of Mayview. One of the baptism windows in the southeast sacristy is in memory of Leonard Patrick Hudson, who died in infancy (May 21-August 26, 1901) and is commemorated where



so many were reborn in the waters of baptism.

St. Anthony of Padua's window was "Donated by the A.O.H. Ladies Auxiliary." The Ancient Order of Hibernians was a cultural and benevolent organization of Irish immigrants. Nearby is a window donated by Bessie Toole, a teacher. She was born in Ireland in 1839 and died here in 1918. Next to hers is a window in memory of Thomas F. Redding (1843-1882). He worked as a roadhouse foreman for one of the railroads and also farmed 80 acres.

There are probably many other stories connected with the people, our parish ancestors, named in the windows. If you know them, please leave a message at the parish office and one of our roving reporters will contact you.

Just think! We are carrying on the work of faith and prayer as we expand our church, just as the founding families did. A hundred years from now, will someone write about us in *In Focus*?



Q: Why does the priest wear red vestments at Mass on Pentecost?

A: The color red worn for the great feast of Pentecost calls to mind the Holy Spirit's appearance as flames of fire over the heads of those gathered in the Upper Room—perhaps also the courage these followers of Christ would need in proclaiming the risen Lord in a time of persecution.

Red is also the color of vestments worn on Passion (Palm) Sunday and Good Friday, recalling Christ's passion and death, and for feasts commemorating martyrs, those who gave witness to Christ with their very lives. Some would say that red is the color of the Church itself, built on the blood of martyrs.

* * *

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

Looking forward to the next step

On April 30, graduating eighth- and twelfth-graders of St. Patrick Parish were honored at the 5:00 p.m. Mass. The recipients of the 2011 Father Charles Martell Scholarships, sponsored by the Urbana Council of the Knights of Columbus, were also announced at that Mass. This year's scholarship winners are Jennifer Crull, Claire Drone-Silvers, Alicia Drook, Katherine Floess, Cora Freidhof, Kyle Hammel, Kelsey Kaiser, Christopher Long, Grace Mayer, Kaleigh Niccum, Betsy Schuele, Caitlin Schutz, and Shelby Simmering.

Congratulations to each and every one of our graduates. Well done! Well done indeed!

Eighth-Grade Graduates (and potential new CREW members):

Gavin Campbell is graduating from Urbana Middle School. He is looking forward to playing football at Urbana High School in the fall.

Willie Campbell is graduating from St. Joseph Middle School. He looks forward to the next step, starting at St. Joseph-Ogden High School.

Claire Dust is finishing at Unity Junior High and will attend Unity High School, where she is ready to try out for the marching band.

Morgan Graham is graduating from St. Joseph Middle School. She is looking forward to meeting new classmates and all the sports and activities at St. Joseph-Ogden High School.

After graduating from Urbana Middle School, **Keith Lee** is ready to move on to Urbana High School and Drivers Education classes.

Peter Millsap is finishing at Edison Middle School and looks forward to meeting new friends at Central High School.

Also graduating from Edison Middle School, **Andrew Myers** is ready to participate in band and jazz band at Central High School.

Olivia Owens, who is moving on from St. Joseph Middle School, looks forward to the new experiences attending St. Joseph-Ogden High School will bring.

Braxton Parisi is graduating from Holy Cross Elementary School. He will be attending the High School of St. Thomas More.

As **Molly Smith** graduates from Holy Cross, she is looking forward to new friends, new experiences, expanding her Catholic faith, and becoming a better soccer player at the High School of St. Thomas More.

Nicholas Walden is graduating from St. Joseph Middle School. He looks forward to new friends and playing sports at St. Joseph-Ogden High School.

Neil Walsh-Hendricks will graduate from Urbana Middle School and go on to Urbana High School.

Anne Rose Zola is finishing at Franklin Middle School and looks forward to participating in choir and theatre at Centennial High School in the fall.

High School Graduates (and retiring CREW members):

Angela Anderson is finishing at Centennial High School. She will major in Agribusiness Markets and Management at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Mary Kathleen Cimasky is graduating from the High School of St. Thomas More and will attend Beloit College to study Biology and Anthropology.

Luke Cottingham is graduating from Champaign Central High School and will be going to Illinois State University to study English and Secondary Education.

After graduating from the High School of St. Thomas More, **Jenny Crull** will be heading to Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville to attend pharmacy school.

Alicia Drook is graduating from the High School of St. Thomas More and will be going into the Parkland Pathways Program in order to attend the University of Illinois. She plans to study Liberal Arts and Sciences with a concentration in mathematics.

Also graduating from the High School of St. Thomas More, **Claire Drone-Silvers** will go to Truman State University in Kirksville, Mo., to study Classics and Linguistics.

Katherine Floess is graduating from the University Laboratory High School. She will attend Columbia University in New York City, where she will major in Human Rights and minor in Music.

Cora Freidhof is finishing up at the High School of St. Thomas More and plans to study social work at Concordia University in Chicago.

Jessica Glazier is graduating from St. Joseph-Ogden High School and will go on to study special education and elementary education at Indiana State University.

Kyle Hammel is graduating from Champaign Central High School and will study agribusiness at Parkland College.

Also finishing at Champaign Central High School, **Kelsey Kaiser** will be attending Illinois State University to study Graphic Design and Photography.

Christopher Long is graduating from Champaign Central High School. He will attend Illinois State University to study environmental sciences and history.

Chris Mathy is graduating from University High School. After spending a year in France with the Rotary Youth Exchange, he will be studying Bioengineering at Stanford University.

Grace Mayer is graduating from the High School of St. Thomas More and will be going on to college this fall to study Human Development.

Also finishing at the High School of St. Thomas More, **Kaleigh Niccum** plans to move on to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Jackson Nguyen is graduating from Urbana High School and will be going to the University of Illinois at Chicago to study biochemistry.

see **Graduates** on next page

Graduates

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Betsy Schuele is graduating from St. Joseph-Ogden High School. She plans to major in Biology/Pre-Medicine at St. Louis University.

Caitlin Schutz is finishing at Centennial High School and plans to attend the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign to major in Human Development and Family Studies.

Shelby Simmering is finishing at the High School of St. Thomas More. She will study Music Therapy at Western Illinois University.



The CREW Praise Band led the assembly in enthusiastic praise during the Mass, concluding with a glorious "Jubilate Deo" to the accompaniment of bells.



Graduating eighth- and twelfth-graders alike were quizzed by Fr. Joe Hogan on their knowledge of Pope John Paul II, who was to be declared Blessed the following day by Pope Benedict XVI. (All our scholars fielded Father's questions deftly!)



Graduating seniors who were present for the Mass honoring them and their achievements are (front) Kyle Hammel and Luke Cottingham; (back) Katherine Floess, Gracie Mayer, Claire Drone-Silvers, Mary Cimasky, Kaleigh Niccum, Kelsey Kaiser, Caitlin Schutz, and Cora Freidhof.



Grand Knight Ed Clancy gave scholarship certificates to seniors who were awarded the Fr. Charles Martell Scholarships, sponsored by the Urbana Knights of Columbus.

St. Patrick's worship ministries are in need of parishioners to assist during weekend Masses. If you feel called to participate more actively, please consider serving in one of the following ways:

- Eucharistic minister, weekends or weekdays
Contact Mary Karten: 898-0938 or mlkarten@hotmail.com
- Lector, 10:30 a.m. or noon Mass on Sunday
Contact Tracey Johnson: 356-1807 or tlj82@aol.com
- Mass set-up, noon Mass on Sunday
Contact Mary Lou Menches: 344-1125 or mmenches@illinois.edu
- Ushers/Greeters, 5:00 p.m. Saturday Mass or noon Mass on Sunday
Contact Chris Billing, 493-1145 or cbilling@bernsclancy.com

Close encounters with the Catholic Church

Not many people have encounters with Christ similar to the one **Terry Walker** shared with In Focus. “About ten years ago I had a heart attack. I had not been to church in forty years. With great medical doctors my life was spared. I begged for one last chance. I woke up with a priest sitting next to my bed. He was praying out loud for me. I have not missed many Sundays since then, and now I pray daily.”



Terry and his wife Barb—“the most wonderful lady in the world”—have four grown children and ten grandchildren. They had been attending St. Matthew’s, but “we came to St. Patrick’s to get our marriage renewed. Then we started RCIA in Urbana at St. Patrick’s because of a time issue. It has been a blessing.”

Sean Blanchard tells us “I was fortunate enough to marry a wonderful Catholic woman who introduced me to St. Pat’s and the Catholic faith. I was immediately drawn to this faith and am excited to complete my journey.” Sean is a carpenter with local #44.



He and his wife, Toni, have two sons, aged 2 and 7.

Kristin Weatherford’s mother was Lutheran, her father Catholic. “My parents chose to raise me Lutheran, but I have always been familiar with the Catholic faith.” When Kristin and St. Patrick’s parishioner Michael Sandone became engaged in 2009, “we decided we would one day raise our children Catholic. It was an easy decision for me to make



the choice to start RCIA. I knew this would be the best decision for our family.”

Kristin also felt that this was the right faith journey for herself. She and Michael will be married at St. Patrick’s in September. “Since Mike’s family are members of St. Pat’s, naturally I chose to join the same parish. Plus, the St. Patrick’s community is very supportive and welcoming.”

Kristin enjoys her work as an Administrative Assistant at Next Generation School. “Each day I hear a student say something that makes me smile, making each day memorable.”

“I was searching for a faith community that would deepen my appreciation of the Eucharist,” says **Joe Siegel**. “I was first attracted to St. Patrick’s because of its location within walking distance of my apartment. I have two wonderful children, Cara and Colin, who are my best friends and teach me something every day. I enjoy animal crackers, coffee, and things that smell nice.”



Howard Erlandson and his wife, Margaret, were married at St. Patrick’s in 1970. “I’ve been meaning to get around to coming into the Church ever since.” This year’s RCIA group has been delighted by Howard’s wonderful laugh. The look of joy on his and Margaret’s faces at the Easter Vigil was a real inspiration for the entire RCIA team.



Patricia Greenan “felt a calling to the Catholic Church several years ago and decided last year to officially convert from the Lutheran faith to the Catholic faith. I came across St.

Patrick’s Parish by simple proximity to my house and loved the Irish



roots we share. I attended Mass a few times and felt I’d found the place I belong.

“I enjoy working with animals and am currently employed at All Creatures Animal Hospital in Urbana. We have two cats at home. Most of my family lives in northern Illinois, with the exception of my sister, who resides in Champaign.”

According to **Dominique Aarons**, “My father was Catholic, and we always attended the Catholic Church. I went to St. Mary’s as a child and then to St. Malachy’s in Rantoul.” Dominique found St. Patrick’s to be just like St. Malachy’s. He works as a handyman for Roland Realty.



A “cradle Catholic,” **Richard Mierkowski** was baptized and confirmed as a child, and then was away from the Church until he started coming to St. Patrick’s with his friend, Kelly Hartford. The RCIA process was a refresher course for Richard. He shares “I’m from a Catholic background and I’m excited about joining this congregation.”



“I am getting married to Steve Cockburn on June 18,” **Donna Lacey** tells us.

“Since my fiancé is Catholic, I decided to learn about the Catholic faith and become closer to God. St. Patrick’s offered the



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RCIA from page 5

RCIA class and seemed to be a good religious community.” Donna is 22 and a graduate of Illinois State. She works as a Program Assistant at the U.S. Army Construction Engineering Research Lab.

Brad Weir tells us he has “close family members who are Catholic and I’ve been curious about the Catholic faith. This was the right time in my life to learn more about Catholicism. I attended St.



Patrick’s as a guest and found Father Joe and the congregation to be warm and welcoming.”

Brad works in healthcare and has a five-year-old daughter. He enjoys sports such as football, basketball, snow skiing, and scuba diving.

“The strong examples set by my maternal grandmother, fiancée, and fiancée’s mother brought about a desire to inquire into the Catholic faith”

says **Matthew Johnson**. “St. Patrick’s has a culture of inclusion that I found very inviting, and it is my home parish in Urbana.”



Matthew was born in Eagle, Idaho, and spent 1995-99 in Guadalajara, Mexico. He is a graduate student in Computer Engineering at the U of I. He has a younger brother, Scott. “I attend St. Patrick’s church and the Cathedral basilica in St. Louis equally, since my fiancée is a graduate student in Psychology in St. Louis.”

“I first attended St. Patrick’s with my boyfriend and his family at Christmas Mass in 2007,” relates **Nicole (Nikki) Shelby Melander**. “As my relationship with Brian grew, so did my desire to learn more about the Catholic faith. When we were

engaged in 2009, I learned a lot from Father Joe and from our marriage preparation classes. Shortly before our wedding in August 2010, I decided that joining the Catholic Church was right for me. Since that decision, and through the RCIA classes, I have received nothing but positive experiences and cannot wait to join both St. Patrick’s and the Catholic family.”



Nicole received an M.S. degree in accounting from Illinois State in December 2010. An auditor/tax accountant at Clifton Gunderson in Champaign, Nicole will be sitting for her CPA exam this summer. “I will celebrate my one year anniversary with the most wonderful husband this summer as well.”

Sean Fingold and his wife, Teresa, first attended St. Patrick’s when they moved to Urbana from Denver in 2001. “I was baptized and confirmed in a Protestant church, but not overly exposed to the religious faith.” In spite of moves to the other side of town and to Minnesota, “we always found ourselves making our way back to St. Patrick’s. There was something about the community and the ministry that just felt right.”



Sean and his wife Teresa were born and raised in Winnipeg, Canada, and were high school sweethearts. In 1997, Sean followed Teresa to Missouri State, Springfield, where she was a graduate student. They were married there in 1998, and Sean has attended Mass since then. Sean and Teresa have two children, Joseph Gordon, 4, and Megan Louise, 3. The couple became U.S. citizens in 2010.

“Over the past few years, in conjunction with the birth of our two children, I began to feel pulled towards the Catholic faith. I had

always been curious, but this past summer I really developed the mindset that I wanted to improve my relationship with God. RCIA has been a wonderful experience, and I am extremely excited to join the Church as I continue in my faith journey.”

Nicola Serao, his lovely wife, Mariana Rossoni, and special daughter Clara, 4, moved here from Brazil in 2009. Nicola was baptized Catholic but never received First Communion. Born and raised in a Catholic country like Brazil, Nicola felt uncomfortable about not having received this sacrament.

When Nicola went to college in 2002, he attended a spiritual weekend with a friend. “Since that time, I’ve been trying to get closer to the Church, but without any success,” including an effort to enter a program in Brazil similar to RCIA in 2006. It was when he came to Urbana that he again felt ready to inquire into the Catholic faith. “My wife’s boss indicated St. Patrick’s, and we started to come to Mass here in December 2009. We actually identified ourselves with this parish, especially due to the nice people, structure, and support.”

Nicola is pursuing his Ph.D. in Animal Science, and Mariana is also a researcher. Their daughter is excited about starting kindergarten at Holy Cross School in August. She is also happy that she will become a big sister in July.

“I can say that I’m finally becoming Catholic because St. Patrick’s offers this great program, RCIA. We are extremely happy in how St. Patrick’s is changing our lives.”

Whether our new Christians came from far or near, made a fairly recent decision or had been searching for a long time, they all know that they are now in the right faith and the right church home. Now that you know their stories and have seen their pictures, it is your turn to welcome and get to know them.

—Carole Rebeiz



The RCIA team a channel of grace as well as knowledge

The RCIA team shepherds adults through the questioning, searching, learning, listening process we know as the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults. Team members for the past several months met weekly with adults who were discerning God's call to Roman Catholicism. They presented information and answered questions and prayed with and for the men and women, who were responding to an invitation from a friend or spouse or to God's gentle persuasion through other means.

The RCIA is a simple yet inspiring process that calls forth the best the team can offer. Yet it isn't only the adults who acquire new depths of understanding; team members learn and grow through the process as well. Team member Frances Drone-Silvers remarked: "It's always an inspiration to see adults listening to God's call and choosing to explore a different kind of faith. Though I am sometimes discouraged by actions of the Church's hierarchy, the catechumens and candidates make me take a deeper look at the richness and joy of our Catholic Faith. I learn new things every year that take my own faith to new levels."

Shown here are members of the team who prepared the catechumens and candidates to receive the sacraments of initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist) during the Easter Vigil: *front*, Pat Mayer and Tracey Wszalek; *back*, Frances Drone-Silvers and Chris Freidhof. Fr. Joe Hogan, a significant participating member of the team, was preparing for the Easter Vigil when this photo was taken.

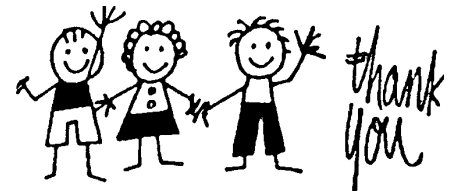


Photos on display—come and see!

Walk through the parish center lobby to see several photos of architectural renderings that illustrate planned changes to the parish church and its connection to the parish center. The parish Web site, www.stpaturbana.org, presents a narrative video about the church expansion, which will double the church's seating capacity for worship services and increase space badly needed for meetings and gatherings of various kinds.

Special volunteer opportunities

- Do you enjoy the colorful first page of In Focus? To keep it in color, this page must be printed separately and then collated and stapled with the rest of the issue's pages. Can you help? The work crew gathers usually on the last Saturday of the month from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. Mary Lou Menches, 344-1125 or mmenches@illinois.edu
- Two small groups of parishioners, alternating monthly, count the collection from weekend Masses on Monday morning. With some counters unavoidably out of action, both groups need help. They gather on Mondays at 8 a.m., enjoy a quick cup of coffee, and get to work. Can you help? Parish office, 367-2665
- More Eucharistic ministers are needed to carry Communion to Catholics at Carle Foundation Hospital. Carolyn McElrath, 531-7014 or carolyn.mcelrath@stpaturbana.org



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). Provide your name and telephone number or e-mail address with a brief description of the kind of help being sought.



in our parish library

This month's selected list includes mostly newly purchased books pertaining to the Christian-Jewish connection, and new books focusing on Mary. Most are available in the New Books section in the library or on display on the shelves near their call number ranges.

The Christian/Jewish Connection

- *3 Faces of Jesus: How Jews, Christians, and Muslims See Him*, by Josef Imbach. Call Number 232 IMB 1992.
- *Come to the Table: A Passover Seder for Parish Use*, by Meredith Gould. Call Number 264 GOU 2004.
- *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant*, by John Dominic Crossan. Call Number 232 CRO 1991.
- *Introduction to Jewish and Catholic Bioethics*, by Aaron Mackler. Call Number 291.5 MAC 2003.
- *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist: Unlocking the Secrets of the Last Supper*, by Brant Pitre. Call Number 234.1 PIT 2011. Dr. Mackler takes the reader through methodology in Roman Catholic moral theology and compares and contrasts it with methodology as it is practiced in Jewish ethics. He then wends his way through many topics foremost on the contemporary ethical agenda for both Jewish and Catholic ethicists: euthanasia and assisted suicide, end-of-life decisions, abortion, in vitro fertilization, and the ever-growing problem of justice regarding access to health care and medical resources.
- *Was God in This Place and I, I Did Not Know: Finding Self Spirituality and Ultimate Meaning*, by Lawrence Kushner. Call Number 296 KUS 1994. Rabbi Lawrence Kushner draws this title from the Torah, the book of Genesis. It is the exclamation of Jacob who, upon waking from his dream about the ladder connecting heaven and earth, makes a startling realization about the reality of the seemingly mundane and ordinary place where he had stopped for the night.
- *What Do Jewish People Think about Jesus, And Other Questions Christians Ask about Jewish Beliefs, Practices, and History*, by Michael Brown. Call Number 289.0 BRO 2007. This book answers sixty common questions about Jewish people and Jewish culture.

Books about Mary

- *An Appeal from Mary in Argentina: The Apparitions of San Nicolas*, by Fr. Rene Laurentin. Call Number 232.91 LAU 1990.
- *Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World: Finding Intimacy with God in the Busyness of Life*, by Joanna Weaver. Call Number 248.8 WEA 2000.
- *Having a Mary Spirit: Allowing God to Change Us from the Inside Out*, by Joanna Weaver. Call Number 248.8 WEA 2006.

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If you need help locating materials in the library, Lori Mestre (365-9004), library team coordinator. She will be pleased to help. The parish library is open weekdays during office hours (ask for a key at the parish office) and on the fourth and fifth Sundays of the month from 8:30 to 10:45 a.m.

Parish sends shipment for Congo relief

Congolese parishioners are tracking the suffering of their countrymen where war and brutality of the most vulnerable still prevail. St. Patrick's kept hope alive with the collection of donated items that began with last year's unsold clothing and bedding from the Cellar-to-Garret sale. Aid grew from neighboring churches, Empty Tomb, and the Council of Congregations. Sheets and pillowcases, bedspreads, shirts, bathrobes, blue jeans, sandals and sneakers, and lots of other items were brought to the brown garage from caring donors.

Thanks especially to our Congolese friends, who packed boxes from floor to ceiling until the garage grew too cold for work. With the coming of Spring they have completed the job of filling the nine pallets required for a cargo container.

As this issue of *In Focus* goes to press, a cargo container has been ordered. By the time you read this, the shipment will most likely be on its way! Watch for a bulletin announcement of final plans and the shipping date.

Thanks to all who made this relief for Congo possible—those who donated items, encouraged others to bring clothing for the shipment, kept an anxious watch as the garage was filled, and packed innumerable cartons for shipping. God's blessing on one and all!



Deadline for submission of information, articles and news items for the next issue of *In Focus* is June 12.

First Communion a family-centered affair

Rain threatened and the Illinois Marathon made navigation tricky, but nothing could spoil a beautiful First Communion weekend at St. Patrick's.

Almost 50 children received the sacrament from Father Joe Hogan and Father Luong Tran, surrounded by their parents, grandparents, relatives, and friends. It was a full



Getting ready

house, with 45 children making their First Communion on Saturday, Apr. 30, and three more on Sunday, May 1, according to Suzanne D'Andria, coordinator of the children's religious education program.

Both the Illinois Marathon and the annual Ebertfest film festival were scheduled the same weekend, so hotel rooms were scarce. Families had to plan ahead to skirt the Marathon route or avoid it altogether. The ceremony went off without a hitch, however, and after a dreary week of rain the sun broke out on Friday and stuck around through the weekend.

Our children had prepared for this day for months through their religion classes and special events, including a Seder supper and Holy Thursday celebration. They also attended a retreat with their parents, who met separately with Father Joe and Carolyn McElrath to review their own understanding of the sacrament (stirring memories of catechism class).

During his homily, Father Joe asked the children what they had done to get ready for their First Communion. After some practical answers—"washed our hands," "wore nice clothes" and "bought a veil"—the children got to the heart of it. They studied in Sunday school. They practiced taking Communion. They prayed.



Almost set

We had gone through this ceremony four years ago, too, when our son was 7, and it was one of the most moving experiences we've had at St. Pat's. Of course there's the thrill of seeing our children decked out in spiffy ties and fancy white dresses. But more important are the special touches during the Mass, the beautiful music, and the emphasis on family.

Each child participates actively in some way, whether it's bringing up the First Communion gifts, reading a petition, or singing a song. The children sit with their parents and relatives, each pew marked with a family banner that they themselves designed. During the actual First Communion, the child is surrounded by loved ones as Father Joe takes care to make the moment special for each family.

To see those sweet faces basking in the love of generations and the grace of God moved more than one parent to tears.

The next day, during Sunday Mass, the congregation was able to share in the First Communion of three children who were unable to attend Saturday's ceremony or were waiting

for out-of-town relatives to arrive.

On behalf of all the First Communion families, we'd like to thank Father Joe, Father Luong, Suzanne D'Andria, Carolyn McElrath, and the Children's Liturgy Ensemble for making this day so memorable for all of our children.

*Julie Asmussen
(Elizabeth's mom)*



Go!

Carolyn McElrath—justice, spirituality, and furry friends

With her ready laugh and her talent for persuading people that they want to do things they hadn't realized they wanted to do, pastoral associate Carolyn McElrath is the most senior staff member at St. Patrick's. "In 1984 I was hired by Father Doug Hennessy as Adult Education Coordinator, teaching adult Bible study and Church history," she says. At the same time, she pursued an M.A. in Religious Education at Mundelein College. Just before Father Hennessy left for Rome, she became the Religious Education Director. "Working with Father George Remm, I enjoyed many years assisting with and planning First Communion, Confirmation, teacher inservicing, Adult Education classes in the New Catechism, and in Church History, and Little Rock Bible Studies, as well as developing and coordinating the baptismal preparation program and the RCIA in the parish."

Meanwhile Carolyn was doing Ph.D. work in Theology at Loyola University, specializing in the area of social justice. When Father Joe Hogan became pastor, she moved increasingly into the development of a peace and justice ministry. That meant bringing in JustFaith and related programs, such as Engaging Spirituality, that seek to integrate spirituality and justice activities. "It is a great joy to work with parish staff and others in the parish to develop an intentional community devoted to the corporal and spiritual works of mercy," she says.

She also likes that she can bring together what she has learned from her studies of both anthropology and theology in her work, particularly in such programs as JustMatters, which this year dealt with ecological justice and next fall will deal with the issue of immigration.

Carolyn was born in Madison, Wis., but when she was in third grade, her family moved to Flint,

Mich., where her father worked in the auto industry. The daughter of a Catholic father and Lutheran mother, she was raised Catholic from about fourth grade on. One of her passions from that time of her life was animals. "We had had dogs, cats, hamsters, guinea pigs, birds, etc." Her other passion was sports, "playing table tennis and volleyball in the



CANUSA games against Hamilton, Ont., all through high school, and later playing volleyball at Western Michigan University."

It was in high school that she developed her love of languages and decided that she wanted to become a Spanish teacher. It was with this aim that she went to Western Michigan University, where both her Spanish and French teachers had studied. At WMU, besides playing volleyball, she also participated in student retreats and became a member of the Legion of Mary.

While at WMU, Carolyn had the opportunity to participate in a summer project in Guatemala. This influenced her to change her major to Anthropology, with a second major in European History (Reformation and Renaissance). It was this change to Anthropology that led to her meeting Dale, who was to become her husband. After their wedding in 1970, they returned to Madison, Wis., to do graduate work—Dale in Archaeology and Carolyn in Cultural Anthropology.

Following their Ph.D. coursework,

Carolyn and Dale spent a year in Cajamarca, Peru, gathering archeological and ethnographic data. "On our return to the United States in 1974, we both went to work on an archeological project around East St. Louis, thinking the work would take about a year." In fact it was five years later that they moved to the University of Illinois in Champaign-

Urbana to do the write-up and analysis. Dale took a job with the university and continues there.

After several years of helping to edit the several volumes for publication, Carolyn decided that she was ready for a change. She and Dale had joined St. Patrick's in 1980; in 1984 she joined the staff. Twenty-seven years later, Carolyn still approaches her work with joy and enthusiasm, working to expand the social justice ministry at St.

Patrick's to involve all parishioners.

Her love of animals fuels some of her enthusiasm. She and Dale currently have two adopted shelter dogs: Kelsey, a retriever mix, and Dutchy, a shepherd mix. Animal welfare is one of Carolyn's particular social justice concerns, and she has a lot to say about how much the unconditional love of our companion animals can teach us about love and caring for one another. Knowing how much her own pets have enriched her life, she makes a point of donating pet food to the SVDP Food Pantry so that people who find themselves in need of help making ends meet don't have to sacrifice the companionship of a beloved pet in their time of hardship.

Both Carolyn and Dale are anticipating retirement in the next few years. What are they looking forward to? "Besides our involvement at St. Patrick's, we have come to appreciate opera brought live from the Metropolitan Opera to the Savoy theater," Carolyn says. They also enjoy vegetable gardening and, of course, walking their dogs.

Alex Millar's first year as seminarian

St. Patrick Parish is blessed to have a young member, Alex Millar, studying for the priesthood. Alex is studying at the seminary at Mount Saint Mary's in Emmitsburg, Md. He joins us at St. Patrick's when he is on vacation and for some of the major Church feasts such as Easter. Most recently he served as master of ceremonies for some of the Holy Week and Easter liturgies and has served at the altar at 7:00 a.m. weekday Mass when he is here. While 7:00 a.m. may seem early to some of us, it is a late start to the day for Alex and his fellow seminarians.



A typical day for Alex and his fellow seminarians begins at 5:00 a.m., with 30 minutes of spiritual reading and 45 minutes of prayer before Mass at 7:00 a.m. Classes run through the middle of the day and there is typically a holy hour at 4:00 p.m., followed by Vespers. After dinner there is time for study until about

10:00 p.m. While this sounds like a fairly rigorous schedule, there is leisure time and Alex fills his well.

A runner since his freshman year in high school, Alex still finds time to run for his health and as a form of relaxation. He sometimes runs with music, usually that of a favorite Christian rock band, Skillet. His enjoyment of music also extends to playing the violin, which he also does mostly for his own pleasure, although he occasionally plays for a liturgy at Mount St. Mary's. Alex confides that all of his family are musical, especially his sister, who plays four instruments.

Although studying takes up a lot of his time, Alex finds time to read for relaxation and enjoyment. He particularly likes science fiction and historical fiction, and includes Frank Herbert and Robert Graves among his favorite authors.

All is not solitary at the seminary. On major Marian feasts, Alex joins a group that celebrates with a trip to the local Dairy Queen! He also enjoys going to movies and playing games with friends.

When asked about what he enjoys most about seminary life, Alex replied, "My favorite part about being at the seminary is that all of our studies and actions are directed toward service of God and fostering love of God in ourselves and in others." We are blessed to have Alex preparing for this life of loving God and serving God's people here in the Diocese of Peoria. Please continue to pray for Alex, for all seminarians, and for an increase in vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

Did you know?

- Fr. Luong Tran, who has had his return ticket to Vietnam June 16 for several weeks now, will be exchanging it for a round-trip ticket. His bishop has granted us another year of Fr. Luong's ministry here.
- There are many ways to be active at St. Patrick's—as you may have guessed! The booklet *Ministry at St. Patrick's: People, Programs, and Possibilities* (available in the church vestibule and the parish center) provides a description of the many ways in which we live out our faith. If you haven't yet taken that important first step, perhaps this summer you might explore opportunities listed there in preparation for our parish's fall ministry signup weekend.
- The parish newsletter, *In Focus*, has been informing and entertaining our readers with news about parishioners and parish events and activities since 1983—and we often call on other parishioners for help. May we call on you? Let us know by leaving your name and telephone number with Tyra, parish secretary (367-2665).

Calling all crafters!

The Women of St. Patrick have formed a crafting group that meets the first Monday of every month from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m.

The focus of this group is to bring together people who want to spend time visiting with others as they work on individual craft projects. At this time, the group is not planning to have communal projects—it's a "bring your own" affair. So, crocheters can crochet, quilters can quilt, and jewelers can make beautiful baubles while enjoying one another's company!

The exception will be that all group members will have the opportunity to assemble baskets for the holiday basket sale if they'd like to help with this endeavor. The group leaders will provide all of the materials and some instruction, and individual members can enjoy putting together pretty gift baskets to raise money for the parish through the event sponsored by the Women of St. Patrick.

Anyone interested in learning more about the group is invited to contact Kathy McKenzie (328-2214 or kamckenz@illinois.edu). Or simply come to the next meeting, which is on June 13 at 6:30 (the date was moved to avoid conflicting with Catholic Connected, featuring Mass with Bishop Jenky on the first Monday of June). Come anytime during the evening.

Hope to see you there!



Let's win the world for Jesus!

Here's a chance for you to "Win the World for Jesus"! That's the theme of this year's Vacation Bible School, and the VBS planners are inviting you to participate. "Kids" from 4 to 104 are welcome to join in the songs, skits, games, snacks, crafts, stories, and fun.

According to Suzanne D'Andria, Religious Education Coordinator, this year's VBS is particularly special; a local artist and Holy Cross parent, David Howie, wrote all the music and songs for the program. The program comes from a company called K for J, which writes Catholic religious ed and Vacation Bible Schools curricula.

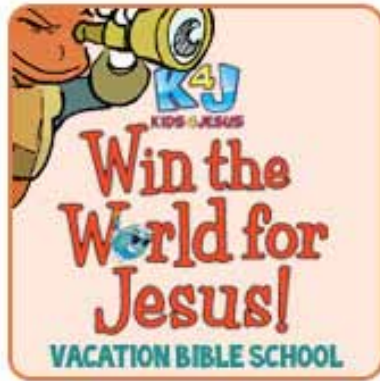
The theme "Win the World for Jesus" takes kids around the world to learn about saints and missionaries. They learn that they can be saints too, and how they can make a difference both in their communities and in the world. New this year will be "Chapel Time," where youngsters will go to the church to learn about why we Catholics do what we do. It should be a really great week!

In the past there have been up to

110 boys and girls participating in the week's events, with another 60-75 volunteers. Every year Suzanne and her volunteers try to get our amazing young people to be more and more involved so that the adults don't have to be.

It has been really exciting for the planners to see how they step up to all the challenges they are given. Last year there were 10-12 adults on site every day, managing and coordinating and generally putting out fires as needed, but the majority of the work went to the teen staff of high-schoolers and the junior staff of middle-schoolers and fifth-graders.

Vacation Bible School will take place June 20-24, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. You may register as a volunteer or participant through the parish Web site (www.stpaturbana.org) or by calling the parish office (367-2665). If you can't come for the entire week, feel free to stop in and say hello on a day when you can, check out what it is about, and join in the fun. You never know what you might find!



Getting connected—again

Let's get connected – connected with friends from St. Patrick, with Catholics from other parishes, with the Church! This year's *Catholic Connected: Beyond the Pew* will provide another opportunity to do just that.

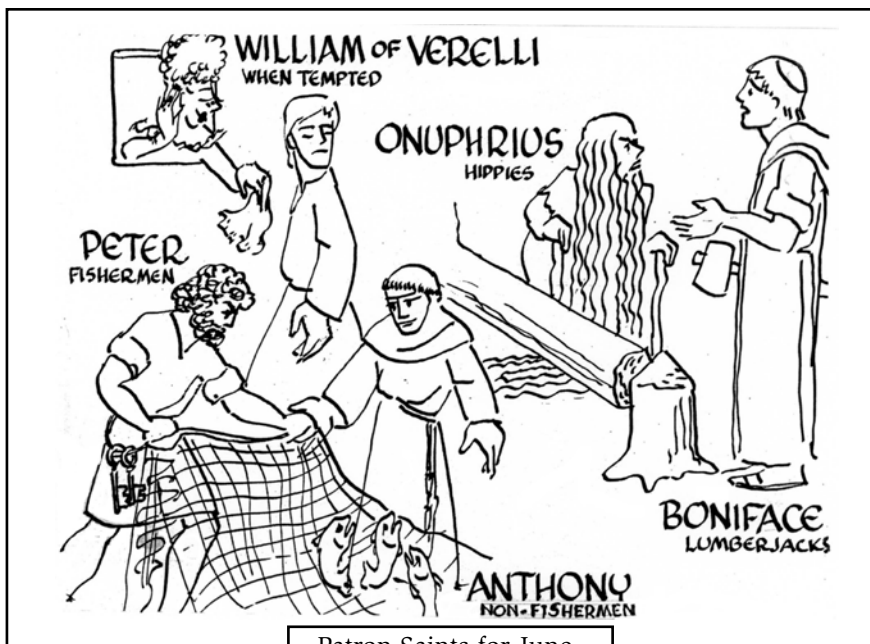
The eighteen parishes in the Champaign Vicariate are planning this event, and it looks to be a joyous and faith-filled evening. Bishop Daniel Jenky will celebrate Mass; priests from parishes in the vicariate will concelebrate. Bishop Jenky will give a homily related to the theme "A Heart to Heart: The Bishop and His People."

Virtually all aspects of the evening are designed to include representatives from the eighteen parishes. St. Patrick's music director, Laura Theby, and Heath Morber from St. John's have prepared liturgical music for the Mass and have invited all the parishes, music directors and choir members, to participate in an all-area choir. The various parishes are providing ushers, child and teen servers, and teen lectors. Priests and religious sisters will be Eucharistic ministers. Banners from each of the churches will give a festive look to the hall.

The Knights of Columbus will provide an honor guard. Msgr. Albert Hallin will emcee. An interpreter for the deaf is being arranged. There will also be tables for organizations to promote their programs and items of interest; two of these are the C&A store and Provena Covenant Medical Center.

A reception will follow, providing a wonderful opportunity to chat with parishioners from our own and other parishes in the area.

Funded largely by a Sheen grant, this is the third year for *Catholic Connected*. It will take place on Monday, June 6, from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts. There is no admission charge, but reservations are requested and a free-will offering will help support the event.



Ft. George Wuellner

Patron Saints for June

They gave more than a lick and a promise

Easter joy shines in everyday places, such as in the spring cleaning given to the church and parish center by about 25 volunteers the day before Palm Sunday. A Vietnamese husband, hard at work, paused for a moment to ask if he could kiss his wife for the camera. The couple are in their mid-eighties. There were teens, too, enjoying the donuts and hourly door prizes (\$5, \$10, and one valued at \$20).

Many took time to make new friends as they whisked dust from sanctuary furniture and pews and polished them. They poked dusters into spots up high and down low, and then vacuumed the emerald aisles. Others took up brooms and spray bottles to clean the parish center, including the basement and windows.

It's more than fitting to give thanks for the Women of St. Patrick and all their helpers in the remaining fifty days of Easter!



Thank you, readers!

Thanks to all of you who responded to the In Focus readers' survey! We appreciate all your feedback, especially your thoughtful comments and suggestions. We are already considering how to implement your ideas.

There's still time to take the survey, if you wish. There are printed copies in the church vestibule and in the Communications Committee's mailbox in the parish center, or you can fill out the survey online at the parish's Web site (www.stpaturbana.org).

News from the Women of St. Patrick

All women of the parish are welcome at events planned by the Women of St. Patrick. Any woman may give her e-mail address to Kathy McKenzie (kmckenz@illinois.edu or 328-2241) to receive information about coming events. You may (but you don't have to) fill out a membership card to formalize your participation. And a pink T-shirt with the WSP logo is available for purchase, but not required. Come as you are!

Come to the new Craft Club. [More about this group elsewhere in this issue.] So far, about twelve women meet on the first Monday evening of each month except in June, when the group meets on Monday, June 13. Bring your craft project, or consider learning a new one.

Big events coming up:

- Cellar-to-Garret Sale, Aug. 7-13. Watch the bulletin for information as the date nears.
- Retreat Oct. 28-30 at Benedict Retreat Center, Indianapolis, Ind.

Knighthood is still in flower, as you will recognize from the following events. The women who provide meals after funerals had a problem recently: what to serve without meat after two funerals on the same Friday in Lent? Two Knights of Columbus came to their aid. Chuck Shaw contacted David Mendoza, who delivered his super-delicious marinara sauce for one of the meals. Chuck made a few calls and lo, fish arrived. David and Chuck cooked over 70 pieces of fish for the meals. Thank you, sir knights!

Volunteer's Story from page 1

cerns to contribute to the greater good of our faith community. Each visit became an opportunity to witness firsthand how we are not only building up our church physically, but building the Kingdom of God right here in each moment spent together.

Thank you for your gracious welcome of all volunteers in this campaign. May God's blessings continue to grace your lives, as you have so generously shared your time and treasure. You ensure that we will have a worship space that is inviting to both young and old and built for the glory of God by its grateful community of believers, who are alive and strengthened in our mission at St. Patrick's.

—Mary Karten

Vocation Prayer



Father, watch over the priests and all the ministers of your Church. May their lives always reflect the gospel they proclaim. Bless those you call to follow Christ your son with generosity and love. We pray that many young people will be willing to commit themselves to your service and respond generously to the demands of their Christian vocation.

St. Patrick 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. 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 for this issue were provided by Julie Asmussen, Suzanne D'Andria, Frances Drone-Silvers, Elizabeth Hendricks, Mary Karten, Peggy Loftus, Rachael McMillan, Mary Lou Menches, Lori Mestre, Ellen Noonan, Nancy Olson, Cathy Salika, Margaret Stewart, and Peggy Whelan. June saints by Fr. George Wuellner. This issue was edited by John Towns and paged by John Colombo.

Quick fixin's from the kitchen of . . . Mary Karten

Knox Blocks

- 3 3-oz packages Jello
- 4 packets Knox gelatin
- 2 T lemon juice
- 3 c hot (or boiling) water
- 1 c tap water



Use a 13 x 9-inch pan or glass casserole dish. Dissolve the Jello in the pan using 3 cups hot (or boiling) water. Dissolve gelatin packets in 1 cup tap water, and stir in the lemon juice. Add gelatin mixture to dissolved Jello and mix well. Refrigerate several hours until hard. Cut into squares.

* * *

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!