

St. Patrick Parish IN FOCUS

www.stpaturbana.org

December 2013

Advent: Wait. Listen. Hope...

Waiting is hard. For young children at this time of year, it seems unbearable, even though they can mark off the days on a calendar. So think of how hard it was for our Jewish ancestors in the faith, waiting for the Messiah for countless generations, and not knowing when he would come.

Waiting isn't passive. We need to know ourselves well enough to realize what we are waiting for. We need to prepare for what we're waiting for, as parents prepare for the birth of a child. Sometimes the hardest part about waiting is the hoping, holding in our hearts the thing we're waiting for and not being sure when it will come.

Advent is a season of waiting. We wait for the celebration of God setting foot on the earth, and perhaps we hope that God will enter into our lives in a new way. We wait for God's coming as a helpless child born into poverty, and perhaps we hope to learn the lesson of humility more deeply. We wait for God's presence, showing us how to live, and perhaps we hope to live a life more profoundly shaped by God's teaching.

These things take time. Our culture is already celebrating Christmas with parties, music, and sales. By December 26, people are exhausted and ready to clear away the decorations. Yet it doesn't have to be like that for us.

Give yourself some quiet time this Advent and ask yourself, "What am I waiting for? What am I hoping for?" Be content to wait and to share with God the longing of your heart. If there is anything that you can do to prepare for it, get started. At Christmas, listen anew to the way Jesus lived and the lessons that he taught. As the story of his life unfolds over the coming year, continue to listen until you hear the answer to your prayer.

Although we may find the waiting hard, we are advised by Psalm 27 to "wait for the Lord with courage. Be stouthearted and wait for the Lord." Wait, listen, hope...something is on the horizon.



Fr. Albert Haase returns to St. Patrick's

You surely remember Fr. Albert Haase, the dynamic Franciscan priest who spoke so movingly to us during the parish mission last February—about our Father God



who loved us into being, about the Son who lived among us as a human being, about the Spirit who lives and acts in and among us today. Well, Fr. Albert is coming back to see us on Thursday, Dec. 5.

Asked what he planned to share with us this time, Father said, "I might talk about the ten characteristics that are signs that God's spark has begun to catch flame in our lives. These characteristics also make for a great examination of conscience!"

So there you have it. Another opportunity to hear from Fr. Albert Haase, author of *Catching Fire*, *Becoming Flame*, the program many parishioners have been immersed in since October. You'll be disappointed if you miss him, so clear your calendar for Dec. 5! Father's presentation will be in the church at 7:00 p.m., followed by a reception afterward in the parish hall.

Shop at St. Patrick's for Christmas goodies

Sunday, December 8, from 8:00 a.m. to noon, is the long awaited, much anticipated, festive Christmas Cookies and Baskets Sale. Donna Rinkenberger and Ruth Ann Kingery, together with the council of the Women of St. Patrick, are organizing it, and the entire parish is encouraged to contribute home-made cookies and to come prepared to take care of some of their Christmas shopping at this event.

All kinds of home-made cookies are sought: sugar cookies, special Christmas cookies, Grandma's favorites, gluten- and sugar-free cookies, candies and fudge, and Christmas breads. Donated goodies may be dropped off at the parish hall on Friday, December 6, so that WSP can package them on Saturday and set up for the sale on Sunday.

Also for sale at the event are 60-70 beautiful Christmas baskets created by Jolene McGrogan, Kathy McKenzie, Sandy Shaw, Chris Langendorf, Leslie Risatti, Sandy Pijanowski, and Marcia Raab. Most baskets have a unifying theme; you'll find Christmas baskets with yuletide placemats, plates, and mugs; baking baskets with bowls, tea towels, and oven mitts; bath baskets with tub and shower products; baskets with bottles of wine and wine glasses, one with eight Italian wine glasses, and another with four fancy glasses. There is even a black leather carrying case for a wine bottle. You'll also find a basket with mugs and Starbucks coffee; a lovely Japanese basket with two sets of chopsticks in wooden containers and tea cozies; several doll baskets, one with handmade doll clothes; and Illini baskets for the many Illini fans among us.

Catch the Christmas spirit before or after Mass on Sunday, December 8, and visit our parish hall between 8 a.m. and noon to purchase cookies and beautiful baskets for yourself or as gifts for others.



Did you know?

- All of the apartment buildings on the block shared with St. Patrick's are now empty, and demolition is slated for the near future.
- Sassafras Alley (it runs behind the church) has been sold by the City of Urbana to St. Patrick's (for \$33,000). This purchase enables the parish to consolidate its holdings and provide more parking for church-goers once the apartment buildings have been demolished.

Sacrament of the Sick to be offered at Anointing Mass

A Mass of the Anointing will be celebrated on Wednesday, December 4, at 11 a.m. with a luncheon to follow in the parish hall. Three parish ministries are planning this event: the Worship Team, the Seniors Group, and our pastoral care staff.

The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick will take place during the Mass, following the president's homily. The sacrament is open to anyone with current or chronic physical or mental illness, impending surgery, or infirmities of aging, and can be



received as often as necessary.

Parishioners can help by providing transportation and other assistance needed to make each person comfortable during the Mass and luncheon. If you can help, please call the parish office (367-2665) as soon as possible.



St. Patrick's Capital Campaign We're getting closer!

Pledged: \$3,958,124
Cash in hand: \$2,461,246

*What's needed before
we can break ground:*
Pledged: \$4.0M
Cash in hand: \$3.2M

Seniors enjoy a Halloween Oktoberfest

The Seniors' Oktoberfest menu featured brats and hotdogs, grilled by Ray Wait and Bill Plymire, as well as German potato dishes and sauerkraut contributed by other seniors. Clare Barkley, who brought the beer,



Bill Plymire invited a young Halloween visitor to take a closer look at Irma Wait's decorations.

described a Bavarian Oktoberfest for members who had assembled in the parish hall, transformed by Irma Wait into a Halloween scene.

Lorraine Kim, pastoral associate who is the new liaison for Parish Community Life ministries, offered grace to open the meal.

Norma Kite reported on a former Parish Community Life meeting. Dan Richards showed a DVD of the Shrine of Christ's Passion, at St. John's, Indiana. The shrine has 40 life-sized bronze statues in a half-mile winding pathway that allows one to journey through the Passion of Christ as never before. Also on the grounds are a hand-carved Italian marble statue of Mary, the centerpiece of the Marian Wayside shrine, and the Sanctity of Life shrine featuring a black tombstone in honor of the unborn and a bronze statue of Jesus weeping, holding an unborn baby.

Seniors will meet Dec. 4 at 10:00 a.m. to write out Christmas cards for shut-ins. At 11:00 a.m. they will attend the Mass of Anointing in the church, and afterward they will join in the luncheon organized by the Worship Ministries Team.



Irma Wait gave the hall a distinctly spooky feel for the Seniors' luncheon.

Special volunteer opportunities

- There is real and present need for a parishioner (or a parishioner couple) to **set up for the 5:00 Mass** once a month. If you've ever wanted a very special way to serve your parish priests and people, this is it! *Mary Lou Menches, 344-1125 or mmenches@illinois.edu*

- **Drivers needed!** Can you take someone to keep a doctor's appointment or to shop for groceries or to join us for Sunday Mass? The parish's **Good Samaritans** (Carla Simmering, 328-4841), **Family Service** (352-0099), and **Senior Support Services**, formerly Faith in Action (337-2022) are in pressing need of drivers. Call if you can help.

- A volunteer from St. Patrick's drives his own truck to the Eastern Illinois Foodbank every other Tuesday morning to pick up the week's order and deliver it to our **Food Pantry**. He needs someone to help load the truck and unload it at the Food Pantry. Can you help? *Ellen Abell, 367-2665*



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.



Deadline for submission of information, articles and news items for the next issue of *In Focus* is December 8.



in our parish library

As we approach the Christmas season, it is very easy to be consumed by the materialism that today's culture seems to put on Christmas. It is especially important at this time of year to remind ourselves about what the Christmas season is really about. Perhaps these books will help to accomplish that.

In the fall and winter seasons, the weather begins to become much bleaker. Skies are gray, the sun is in hiding, and it is often windy. This nasty Midwest fall and winter weather can really put a damper on one's spirits. To help bring you back to life, a short but very uplifting book entitled *Humor Me*, by Barbara Johnson, contains several short, humorous stories intended to lift your spirits.

Surprised by Truth, by Patrick Madrid, follows the stories of eleven personal conversion stories of those who have discovered (or rediscovered) the wonder of the Catholic faith and made the decision to become closer to God through a communion with him.

Christmas Jars is very appropriate for this time of year. It details the story of Hope Jensen, a young aspiring author, and her search for an unknown benefactor who gave her a much needed gift at a low point in her life. Her search leads her to a family's unusual long-standing Christmas tradition. She desperately wants to inform the media of this family's tradition, but she realizes that in doing so she will have violated the family's trust in a large way. Her decision will forever change her life.

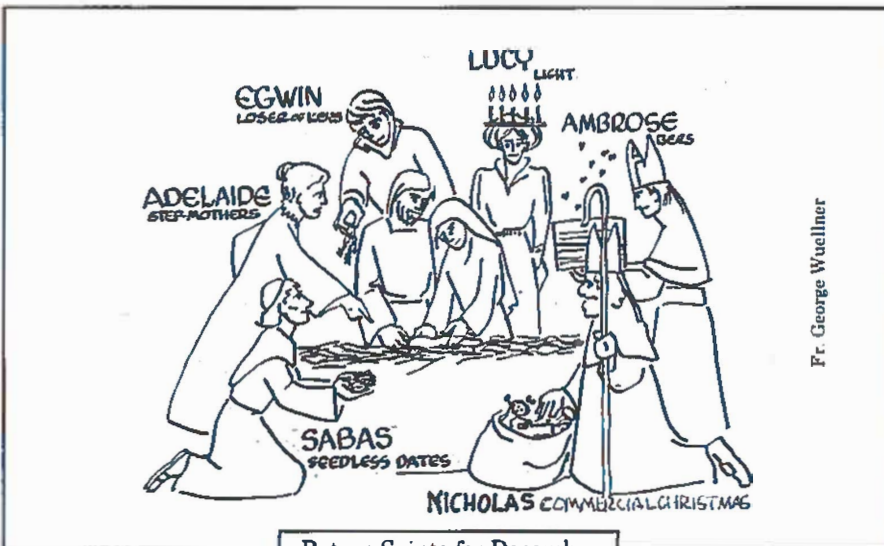
American Catholic recounts the historic events that lead to the spread of Catholicism in the United States. The book also reveals the Church's ever-present struggle to come to terms with secularism and pluralism in America.

Are we doing all that we can to be the person God created us to be? Steven Covey's *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens* and *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* detail the virtues and characteristics needed in order to become more compassionate, caring, and empathetic to those around us in the world. Good reading to prompt New Year's resolutions.

* * *

In December, library coordinator Megan Raab will have a book drive to donate reading material to the Salvation Army, Goodwill, and the Catholic Worker House. She will set up a box near the mailboxes in the parish center for your donations of gently used reading material.

As always, if you have any questions do not hesitate to contact Megan (raab4198@gmail.com); she will be happy to assist you. The parish library is available on weekdays during office hours; ask for a key at the parish office. It is also open on fourth and fifth Sundays, 8:30-10:30 a.m.



Patron Saints for December

Here's a use for those extra Christmas cards!

What do you do with all those Christmas cards that come in the mail with pleas for donations to the sender's worthy cause? You just might find a good use for them right here at St. Patrick's. The Seniors Group will send them to the home-bound in our community, writing a personalized note in each card.

Just leave the cards at the parish office before December 4, the date of the Seniors' next regular meeting. Questions? Call Shirley Splittstoesser (367-3330).



Vocation Prayer

Lord, in your loving care for us, you give each of us a piece of your saving work to do. Call from among us people who will preach your Word, seek out the lost and lonely, bring healing and reconciliation to those who are crushed in spirit, provide food for those who hunger in body or soul, and bear witness to your love.

Bless those who serve in these ministries. Give them gifts of love, faith, prayer, and friendship, that they may persevere in the life you have given them until you call them home to you.

Annual Health Fair a boon for parishioners

Did you visit St. Patrick's annual Health Fair on October 27? It was sponsored by the Parish Nurses, who provided informational leaflets and demonstrations and answered questions put to them by parishioners. The Bloodmobile provided an opportunity for parishioners to "give the gift of life," nurses gave flu shots, knowledgeable personnel addressed information about the Affordable Care Act, blood pressure screening was on offer, Presence Home Care and Hospice was represented—and much, much more. It was a marvelous opportunity to grow in aware-

ness of one's own health status and community resources.

St. Patrick's Parish Nurses, all of whom are registered nurses, volunteer to support the health of parishioners through health counseling and education, advocacy in the health-care system, and referrals to appropriate resources. They provided and maintain the defibrillators in the church and parish center, and offer free blood pressure screenings monthly on most fourth Sundays in the parish center. They are eager to share with parishioners the

benefits of their knowledge and experience.

The Parish Nurses want to thank especially the participating nurses, technicians, pharmacists, and others who gave so freely of their time, knowledge, and experience during this event for the benefit of parishioners.



Parish nurses (from the left): Teresa Krassa, Marie Horn, Nancy Roth, Roxane Lowry, Phyllis Rogers, Diane Cousert, and Lilia Peters. Not pictured: Carolyn Artz and Rica Saligan.



Parish nurses were available to demonstrate how to use an AED (Automatic External Defibrillator).

St. Patrick's hosted Carle's Parish Nurse class

The Parish Nurses of St. Patrick's hosted the 2013 Carle's community Parish Nurse classes, held September 20 and 21 and November 1, 2, and 3. There were twelve nurses in the class; two were from out of state, one from Concord, New Hampshire, and the other from Shipperville, Pennsylvania. Others were from East Central Illinois: one from Champaign, two from Danville, one from Savoy, one from Lincoln, two from Mahomet, one from Normal, and one from Urbana.

The first Parish Nurse class, offered in 1997, was also held at St. Patrick's. At that time there were three nurses from our parish in attendance. Since then more than 400 nurses have been trained for the

Parish Nurse program.

Fr. Joe Hogan presided at the dedication for the new Parish Nurses on November 3; it was followed by a reception.



Vatican II touched all Christian churches

By Cathy Salika

I often attend the annual conference of the Hymn Society in the U.S. and Canada. It's my ecumenical "shot in the arm," a chance for me to sing and worship with people of many faith traditions and to catch up on what's happening in other churches. Most of the attendees are Protestant, perhaps 10 percent are Roman Catholic, and there are always some Unitarian Universalists and often a Buddhist or Jew. Everyone has some connection to hymnody: authors, composers, publishers, educators, and church musicians mingle happily and share their own gifts and the gifts of their faith communities.

This year's conference celebrated the Second Vatican Council and looked at how the liturgical reforms of the Roman Catholic Church affected all the churches.



Breaking open the Scriptures

Before the Council, Roman Catholics read an Epistle and a Gospel at each Mass, the same readings on a given Sunday every year. Many Protestant churches did the same; others used whatever reading an individual pastor chose. Vatican II challenged

us to become more familiar with the Scriptures: we now have three readings and a Psalm at Sunday Mass, repeated on a three-year cycle. Many other Christian churches picked up on that idea. There are variations because many have their own special holidays (Reformation Sunday, for example). But for their Sunday readings most churches now use the Common Lectionary, which is very similar to our own. As a result, Bible studies, homily helps for preachers, and worship planning resources can be shared among many churches.

The Liturgical Year

Of course, all Christians celebrate Christmas and Easter, but many did not have an Easter Season, or Lent, or Advent. As churches have adopted the Common Lectionary, they have also developed an appreciation for the

liturgical seasons of the Christian year.

A return to the ancient roots of the liturgy

The changes to the Roman Catholic liturgy were informed by a growing

see **Vatican II** on page 10

Youth Orchestra a Halloween treat!

It was standing room only in St. Patrick's Parish Hall on Friday, October 25, the night that St. Patrick's Youth Orchestra performed their Halloween concert. As they warmed up, the audience scurried to find available seats. Once seated, if you closed your eyes, you could imagine yourself in Krannert Center's Great Hall. Rodney Mueller, the Orchestra Director at Centennial High School, said that the acoustics in our hall are remarkably good.



Jack Reeder, the orchestra's talented young conductor, began by thanking everyone who helped make the evening possible, including the loan of a podium, and both tympani and player for the more rousing pieces. The program opened lightheartedly with a "Rockin' Halloween" comprised of recognizable melodies such as "Ghostbusters" and "Scooby-Doo." Highlights from "Lord of the Rings" were so well performed that the audience might well have been transported to Middle Earth in their imaginations.

Mr. Reeder loaned his baton to violinist and associate conductor Noah Larson for two musical pieces composed by members of this orchestra. The first piece was "Storm," composed by Noah Larson; the second was "Skia," composed by oboist John D'Andria. Mr. Larson skillfully led the strings of the orchestra through both of these lovely pieces.

The program ended with "In the Hall of the Mountain King," by Edvard Grieg. That piece and Gounod's "Funeral March of a Marionette," played earlier, were performed with as much energy and excitement as a professional orchestra would display.

It redounds to their credit that these teenagers plan, practice, and perform with such competence. Those privileged to hear them that evening were enriched by their experience.

Quick fixin's from the kitchen of . . .

Kathy McKenzie

Crock Pot Italian Beef

- 2 cans French onion soup
- 1 jar sliced pepperoncinis
- 3-4 pound chuck roast, cut in half

Put all ingredients in the crock pot, and cook 6-8 hours. Shred meat and serve with juice.

* * *

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!



From Dr. Susan Nagele

Box 84425-80100
Mombasa, Kenya
nagelesusan@gmail.com
December 2013

To all the good people of St. Patrick's,

This has been quite a year of ups and downs. The Kenyan presidential elections were held on March 4 and because of concerns for safety, our travel to the different health units was restricted in February and March. Fortunately the process was peaceful, despite long lines that caused people to wait up to 11 hours in the hot sun. Kenyans are to be admired for their patient determination to perform their right to vote. The men chosen to be President and Vice President are both charged with crimes against humanity for violence that occurred in the elections in 2007. Currently the Vice President is on trial in the Hague, and the President will be tried next February 2014.

In July my 20-year-old nephew, Alex Vitalis, drowned of cold shock syndrome in a tragic river accident. I was able to arrive in Minnesota for the wake, which gathered over 1000 people. He was a wonderful young man and, and we are grateful for the time we had with him. Still, we are trying to adjust to the reality that he is no longer with us here on earth. The family asked that donations be made to my mission account in lieu of flowers, and people have been extremely generous. With those gifts we have already completed renovations to the pharmacy at Giriama Dispensary and have begun to renovate the lab. I will give a full report early next year.

While I was in Minnesota I also had an unfortunate accident and fractured my sacrum (tailbone). In order to recuperate I had to extend my stay in the U.S., but I healed completely and returned to Mombasa in October. The accident allowed me to spend more time with my parents and with you at St. Pat's. I am very grateful for all the support I received from Maryknoll and the Archdiocese during these difficult months.

Kenya has been beset by numerous problems. In August the arrivals hall at the International Airport in Nairobi burned to the ground. In September a large shopping mall in Nairobi, Westgate, was attacked by terrorists and closed



Giriama Dispensary



Giriama Pharmacy



Lay missionaries Coralie Salvador, Judy Walter, Susan Nagele, and Anita and Curt Klueg, with Anita and Curt's youngsters, Bethany and Rehema

down for four days; at least 70 people were killed and over 200 were injured. In October a Muslim Sheikh was killed in Mombasa, along with three people in his car and four bystanders. Each incident increases fear and it becomes more difficult to know who to trust or how to make plans for everyday activities. As Sr. Pauline, our health coordinator said, "We are all traumatized."

Lastly, our beloved Archbishop, Boniface Lele, retired on November 1 for health reasons. He is a caring, pastoral man who has been at the forefront of ministry to people living with AIDS. The door to his office was always open and we rarely needed an appointment to meet him. He welcomed all with a gracious smile and genuine humility. We were blessed to have him as our shepherd these past eight years.

As we wait for the birth of Jesus, I have my own mother and child story to share. In April Asha brought her year-old son, Seif, to the clinic for vomiting and diarrhea. He had stopped growing six months earlier and

see **Dr. Susan Nagele** on next page

The SVDP is about more than the Food Pantry

In an effort to help more parishioners learn about the activities of the parish's Society of St. Vincent de Paul conference and the SVDP Food Pantry, members and volunteers attended the 5:00 p.m. Mass together on October 19 and invited all present to join them at a reception in the parish center afterwards.

Ellen Abell, president of the parish SVDP conference and Food Pantry coordinator, began by talking a little about the history of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and its mission of serving those in need. Kathy Jobin spoke movingly about her experiences as a volunteer who takes down information from those seeking assistance from the food pantry. She told of people who are struggling with job loss, a medical crisis or chronic medical conditions,



mental illness, full-time jobs that don't pay a living wage, fixed incomes that don't keep up with rising prices, and many other difficulties. Many new clients tell her that they never expected they might need to

seek help from a food pantry.

Although the St. Patrick's SVDP conference concentrates most of its efforts in operating the Food Pantry, Ellen brings other services to food pantry clients. As often as possible she arranges for Smile

Healthy, a charity that provides free dental care to adults, to hold clinics in the parish hall. In October, parish nurses arranged for a pharmacist from Walgreens to come and administer free flu shots to eligible clients on two Thursdays. Ellen and the parish nurses are currently working to bring blood pressure checks and

other health screenings to the food pantry.

There are also some events held for food pantry clients. Chris Whippo spoke about the Christmas Giveaway, in which clients can choose gifts for themselves and their families from donated items. Elizabeth Hendricks described the annual Friends Dinner, at which volunteers from many parish ministries prepare, serve, and share a buffet dinner with food pantry clients.

Though turnout for this reception was small, SVDP members were pleased to have a chance to share with fellow parishioners what they are doing to reach out to those in need.

If you are interested in learning more about the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, volunteering to help with the food pantry, or donating to or helping with the Christmas Giveaway, please contact Ellen Abell (ellen.abell@comcast.net or 367-2665).

Dr. Susan Nagele

from page 7

could hardly sit up, let alone stand. I was afraid he had some type of muscular dystrophy but wanted to check his thyroid function too. I sent him to the provincial hospital and told them what I suspected and what tests needed to be done. Asha tried her best, but the first time she went to the hospital the doctor wasn't there. The second time the doctor didn't have time to see him. Someone wrote for lab tests to be done at a private hospital, which would have cost two weeks of the father's salary.

The third time she went they were angry that she hadn't had the tests done and refused to examine the child. When she brought him back to me, I just took the mother and child to a lab that I know well and paid for one test to check his thyroid. It was abnormal, so we started him on treatment for low thyroid. In just two weeks he was starting to get stronger. The Sister at the clinic continued to treat him with my advice by email while I was in the U.S. and he continued to improve. The Sister also encouraged the mother to keep breastfeeding, only to find out the mother was pregnant; she delivered another child in September! The family is Muslim and the mother wore the traditional long black robes, so we had no idea she was pregnant. Seif continues to improve and now has a little sister.

Let this season of hope for new life encourage each of us. God came to our world to live among us. No matter what our challenges, struggles, or sorrows, we are never alone and God is with us...Emmanuel.

I have started a blog and try to write on the first of each month. Just click on the link below:
<http://healthministryinkenya.blogspot.com/>

Merry Christmas,

Susan

P.S.: We are grateful for your prayers and financial support. If you would like to know more about Maryknoll Lay Missioners, log onto our website (www.mkkm.org) or call toll free (1-800-867-2980).

Holy Cross Happenings



The end of the first quarter coincided with the end of October at Holy Cross School. Receiving "Highest Honors" were Kaleb Leininger, Sophia Solava, Justin Smith, Rachel Loftus, Hannah Niccum, Sarah Perdekamp, Jessica Hood, Ethan Smith, Maris Wszalek, Veronica Burton, Aleks Nadwodney, and Sophia Sobeski. Receiving "High Honors" were Calum Beckett, Will Moore, and Kylie Hopper. And receiving "Honors" were Luke Herzog, Morgan Saunders, Lisa Altaner, and Brianna Hopper. Congratulations to all of our St. Patrick's parishioners who made the Honor Roll!

The students celebrated the end of the first quarter and Halloween with a Halloween Festival, where even the new principal, Mrs. Chris Ellis, got into the spirit of things. The middle school graders had another party out at Kaufman Lake Park in Champaign. One of the priorities of 5th- through 8th-graders in the second quarter were service projects in our local community, like raking leaves for senior citizens.

In November, the students invited veterans from Holy Cross and St. Patrick's parishes and from the Champaign County Nursing Home to a Veterans Day celebration, where there was the singing of patriotic songs and the 8th-graders wrote and recited very moving statements.



Mrs. Chris Ellis with two young charges in hand (Hansel and Gretel, perhaps?)



Leaf raking on a sunny day provided good exercise, fresh air—and service hours.

Praying Breath

May the breath you give me be my prayer of praise and thanks and adoration when words cannot be found. May the rhythm of this breath draw me deeper, beyond all words. May each breath be a sigh of love and surrender, holding me in your presence. Each breath you give me returns to you. You breathe me and I live; you love me and I breathe you; I love you and you breathe me.



—Susan Whitney

Helping to bring Christmas cheer

Christmas can be a bleak time for people who are struggling to put food on the table, keep warm, or provide a few gifts for their children. In an effort to add a little more comfort and cheer to the holiday, the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry holds a Christmas Giveaway, where food pantry clients can come and choose gifts for themselves and their families from donated items.

When clients come into the food pantry on one or two special days in December, they are given a ticket that allows them entrance into the main hall. There they can choose gifts from different categories of items laid out on tables, including men's, women's, and children's clothing; children's toys and books; baby needs; winter wear; household items; and Christmas decorations.

Food Pantry coordinator Ellen Abell recalls that the first year of the Giveaway, when she suggested to clients that they might want to visit the main hall before picking up their groceries, they were confused. After they came out of the hall, however, they were all smiles. Some had found things they badly needed: one man immediately removed the ragged, inadequate coat he was wearing and put on the warm winter jacket he had chosen. Others were grateful to have found gifts to give their children or other family members. In recent years, everyone has enjoyed receiving a Christmas mug filled with Christmas candy.

Ellen is seeking donations of new or gently used items such as children's toys, books, and coloring books; clothing for all ages; baby needs; men's and women's winter jackets and coats; scarves, hats, and gloves; bulk packages of socks (which will be divided); household items such as pots and pans; and Christmas items. Volunteers are also needed to set up and help with the Giveaway.

If you have new or gently used items to donate or are able to volunteer, contact Ellen (ellen.abell@comcast.net or 367-2665).



Q: If I go to Communal Reconciliation, do I have to stand up in front of everyone and

tell my sins?

A: Good gracious, no! You will have to bring to mind any sins you've committed or any sinful tendencies you've recognized in yourself, tell the Lord that you're truly sorry for them, and promise to avoid repeating them in the future. This is done, however, in the privacy of your own heart to begin with, and then in confidence with one of the priests who stand ready to give you some brief counseling and absolution.

The "communal" aspect of Communal Reconciliation comes from the fact that all of us who have gathered recognize that we are sinners and in need of God's mercy and forgiveness. We sing and pray together, listen to God's word together, hear a priest's words of encouragement together, and then—as individuals—we approach one of the priests to make our confession and be forgiven, once again to make a new beginning, once again assured of God's love.

* * *

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

Four local churches offer Communal Reconciliation this year in an attempt to fit your schedule. Priests from the four parishes gather at each church in turn for the 7:00 p.m. service:

- Monday, Dec. 16, at Holy Cross, Champaign
- Tuesday, Dec. 17, at St. Patrick's, Urbana
- Wednesday, Dec. 18, at St. Matthew's, Champaign
- Thursday, Dec. 19, at Our Lady of the Lake, Mahomet

Prayer of a Would-Be Saint

With heart serene
and cheerful face
and will and wit
and God's good grace,
let me do what I can
where I am
with what I have.
What is God calling me to?



Vatican II

from page 6

body of scholarship on the worship of the Church in the early centuries, and some of those ideas were adapted by other churches. Many churches have communion services more often. Many have added an acclamation after the blessing of the bread and wine, often "Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again." Many churches sing the Psalm responsorially, as we do, with verses sung by a cantor and the refrain sung by all.

Common liturgical texts

At about the time that Roman Catholics translated the liturgy from Latin to the vernacular, other churches were moving from thee-thy-thou language to clearer, more contemporary English. Liturgists from many churches worked together on texts and adopted very similar language. As a result, throughout the English-speaking world you will find very similar translations for the prayers spoken by the assembly at

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.

Editorial board: Judy Fierke, 352-7670 (j-fierke@comcast.net); Elizabeth Hendricks, 328-2184 (elihen@att.net); Mary Lou Menches, 344-1125 (inmenches@illinois.edu); Cathy Salika, 367-7861 (csalika@illinois.edu); and Peggy Whelan, 367-3668 (margaretwhelan@att.net).

Associates: Carol Bosley, John Colombo, Joe and Nancy Costa, Frances Drone-Silvers, Mary Fonner, Camille Goudeseune, Mary Karten, Rachael McMillan, Ellen Noonan, Nancy Olson, Rick Partin, Carole Rebeiz, Lucille Salika, Sue Schreiber, Kelly Skinner, Stephanie Smith, John Towns, Jim Urban, Mary Welle, and Joseph Youakim.

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Sunday worship.

Even though we are all members of the Body of Christ, there are important differences of theology and tradition among the Christian churches. It is a sign of our shared faith, however, that a Council of the Roman Catholic Church has borne fruit in many other churches as well.