

St. Patrick Parish IN FOCUS

www.stpaturbana.org

May 2013

Celebrating a month of families

Have you noticed that May is a month of families? Like every month, it includes ordinary events in our families: rising and sleeping, eating and cleaning, sharing and serving together. It is also a month of extraordinary turning points: graduations, ordinations, confirmations, first communions, weddings, a move to a new school, a new town, or a new job. The ordinary and the extraordinary weave together to create the fabric of our lives. These events are our challenge, our formation, our place to serve, and our blessing from God.

In the life of the Holy Family, May is a month of everyday things. On May 1 we celebrate the feast of St. Joseph the Worker. On May 31 we celebrate Mary's visit to care for her pregnant cousin, Elizabeth. We see them engaged in the everyday business of building a family.

We see their service, their challenges, and how they are blessed.

In the life



of that most extraordinary "family" of all, the Holy Trinity, we celebrate the Ascension of Jesus into heaven, his homecoming to the Father and Holy Spirit. In the Trinity, we see the ideals of family life: a shared life, a common purpose, gifts expressed in different times and ways, and the creation of a heavenly home for all of us.

Family life isn't easy. It includes old grudges and new misunderstandings, sickness and death, physical separation and closed-heartedness. It includes the uneasy balance between growing as an individual and the shared life of the family, and the uneasy shifts of roles as we grow and age. When things are difficult, look to the Holy Family and to the Holy Trinity for inspiration and for help.

When things are going better, give thanks to God, who has given us one another and himself to help us on our journey home!

Happy 25th, Father Joe!

What's so special about 25 years? A young woman was once heard to remark despondently, "Today I join the Quarter of a Century Club, and I don't even have a steady boyfriend yet!" What were you doing when you turned 25?



When Fr. Joe turned 25 years old, he was a seminarian preparing for ordination to the priesthood, probably studying theology and philosophy and all the

while giving himself over to prayer and developing a loving relationship with the Lord—yet keeping his feet on the ground with outings for fun with fellow seminarians.

On May 28, Fr. Joe will celebrate 25 years as a priest. Just imagine—25 years of celebrating Mass, hearing confessions, anointing the sick and dying, counseling, comforting, and sharing the lives of his parishioners!

On May 28 all of us, parishioners of St. Patrick's and St. Mary's, are invited to celebrate the 25th anniversary of his ordination with him. Fr. Joe will celebrate Mass at 5:30 p.m. at St. Patrick's, with local priests concelebrating and deacons assisting. Afterward, we'll adjourn to the parish center's social hall to con-

St. Patrick would have had a great time—we did!



The St. Patrick’s Day Celebration, hosted by the Parish Party Ministry, was a huge success. More than 200 parishioners packed the parish hall enjoying authentic Irish cuisine including colcannon and bangers, corned beef and cabbage, Irish soda bread, bread pudding, and even green lemonade. God miraculously provided enough food, like the multiplication of the loaves and fishes, as only 150 dinners were planned but more than 200 were served!

Pre-dinner entertainment included a performance by the Champaign Park District Children’s Irish Dancers, an entire room of Irish displays, balloon and caricature artists, Irish trivia, Leprechaun Leap (aka Cake Walk), Irish road bowling, Irish-themed crafts, and even a snake hunt.

Post-dinner activities included a Reader’s Theater featuring dinner guest volunteers, and the evening closed with a trivia contest and raffle drawings.

A big thank you is extended to the Parish Party Ministry, to all the parishioners who brought baked goods, to all the volunteers who ran activities—and especially to all who came to honor our parish’s patron, St. Patrick! All of you made this year’s St. Patrick’s Day Celebration the largest in recent history!



Preparing for First Communion

My name is Miriam Arend, and my classmates and I are preparing for our First Communion. We are doing lots of things to get ready.

In November, my family and I went to my First Reconciliation. I had to learn the Act of Contrition and how to make a good confession. I learned that confession is important because the priest is acting like Jesus, and when you say all your sins, you don't have to worry about them anymore. Also, before you take Communion, you need to go to confession if you committed a mortal sin. A mortal sin is a serious sin. God doesn't want us to accept the body and blood of Jesus unless we have a



Miriam Arend

clean heart. That's why reconciliation is important.

My family also went to the Seder Meal together. This is the Passover, and that's what Jesus and his apostles were eating at the Last Supper. We all had some lamb and lots of foods that were symbolic, like bitter herbs that symbolized the Israelites' slavery in Egypt. Papa gave us all pieces of matzah, and he filled our cups with grape juice too. When Jesus gave the matzah to the apostles, he said, "This is my body." And when Jesus poured wine into their cups, he said, "This is my blood." That's why we have the Eucharist at every Mass.

At the end of Lent, my family went to Holy Thursday Mass and watched Father Joe wash twelve people's feet just like Jesus washed the apostles' feet at the Last Supper. Jesus was trying to teach them to do things for others. We sang a song in English and in Latin, and we walked in a long line to the Parish Center, where Father Joe carried the body and blood of Jesus. Holy Thursday was the night of the Last Supper when Judas betrayed Jesus, so people like to pray on that night.

I've learned a lot of prayers, but I still need to memorize the Apostles' Creed. My mom and I bought a white dress and veil for me to wear to my First Communion, so I will look like an angel. Grandma Long is too sick to come, but my Busia and Grandpa Arend and my cousins and uncles and aunts are coming to see me. I am very excited to take my First Communion!

—Miriam Arend

Women of the parish, you won't want to miss Mary Hogan!

St. Patrick is privileged to have Mary Hogan (yes, Fr. Joe's sister) give an exciting and instructive presentation to the women of St. Patrick's. The presentation, sponsored by The Women of St. Patrick, takes place on Saturday, May 4 beginning with Mass celebrated by her brother at 8 a.m., followed by a small but nourishing breakfast in the parish center. Mary's presentation begins at 9 a.m.



Mary knows the many demands on a woman's time and the struggle to fulfill them all. She will explore how we respond to our divine call using our individual gifts and our strong community. Her interactive presentation will bring Scripture alive and challenge us to explore our personal call with the help of our parish community.

Mary earned her Bachelor's degree in Psychology from Illinois State University, and her Master's degree in Pastoral Studies from Loyola University. She also has a Certification in Spiritual Direction from Loyola University. Currently, Mary is Executive Director of the Claret Center, which offers spiritual direction, psychotherapy, body

therapies, and educational courses.

Passionate about outreach to the marginalized, Mary provides group and individual spiritual direction to men and women living in shelters in the Chicago area. She sits on the board of Harmony, Hope, and Healing, a music ministry that supports underserved populations. And she develops and leads retreats.

Each of us has a personal call. Each of us has unique gifts to share. How can we identify our gifts? Come, be challenged by Mary Hogan to recognize your gifts and share them with our community!

St. Patrick's Youth Orchestra's Debut

St. Patrick's Youth Orchestra performed its debut concert on Sunday, April 21. The concert featured a wonderful selection of liturgical melodies and traditional classical music.

The orchestra was founded in February by several St. Patrick's teen-aged parishioners, including Jack and Matthew Reeder, Joanie Urban, and John and Ellie D'Andria. According to Jack Reeder, the orchestra's conductor, there are few opportunities in the Champaign-Urbana area for teenagers to participate in an orchestra.

The teenagers conduct, perform, write, and arrange the music. Moreover, Jack and the other founders wanted to provide a healthy, supportive environment for young musicians who play well and are passionate about orchestral music. Joanie Urban, who plays in Edison Middle School's concert and jazz bands said she likes playing in the Youth Orchestra because she has the opportunity to play orchestral music for a change, and she likes meeting kids outside of her school.

The founders, who have enjoyed

Laura Theby's support and guidance, knew St. Patrick's would be the perfect environment for a youth orchestra because the parishioners are so enthusiastic for and supportive of the arts. Yet the Youth Orchestra is not just for the parish's teenagers. Laura Theby and Fr. Joe were enthusiastic about making the Youth Orchestra a welcoming, friendly organization for all sixth-through twelfth-graders in the area. The group is very much a non-denominational one with students from Centennial, Central, Urbana, and University High Schools; Franklin, Edison, and Urbana

Middle Schools; and Holy Cross Elementary School.

Fr. Phelps, our youthful parochial vicar who plays trombone with the orchestra, commented on St. Patrick's support for the Youth Orchestra by saying: "The Catholic faith has always had a great love for the arts, which give glory to God and help develop the whole of the human person." He enjoys playing with the orchestra. As he put it, "The youth just blow me away with their skill and dedication."

For more information or to join, contact: stpatsyouthorchestra@gmail.com.



Annulment process explained

Easter is a blessed and graced moment to grow, like the apostles, from mere observers to doers. We too must become our truer selves so as to be truer disciples, unencumbered by the past and unafraid of the future.

In this Year of Faith, the Diocese of Peoria's Office of the Tribunal is hosting informational meetings throughout the diocese regarding annulments. An annulment is a legal process that examines the circumstances of a marriage's beginning to determine whether the marriage was valid as defined by the Church. One of the parties requests the Tribunal to



review the situation. Because starting this can be worrisome, these informational meetings can be of help.

On Saturday, June 15 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon, this informational meeting will be presented at St. Patrick's. Trained and experienced Notary-Auditors who

serve Champaign-Urbana and Rantoul will outline the options and the process, answer questions, and even arrange appointments for those ready to begin. For others even mildly curious, receiving information may be beneficial for the future or for sharing with others.

Happy 25th from page 1

tinue the celebration with refreshments, a chance to mingle and to wish Fr. Joe well on this special occasion, and maybe an appreciative speech or two.

You are welcome to bring to the celebration cards with notes of appreciation, congratulations, best wishes, and prayers for his future as a priest who serves God by serving God's people.

Mark the date and plan to join in the celebration of our pastor's 25th!

Holy Cross Happenings

Congratulations to the St. Patrick's parishioners enrolled at Holy Cross who made Highest Honors and Honors for the third quarter. **Highest Honors:** Justin Smith, Rachel Loftus, Hannah Niccum, Jessica Hood, Ethan Smith, Maris Wszalek, Elie Nyembo, and Shelby Turner. **High Honors:** Nate Baker, Luke Herzog, Lisa Altaner, Austin Ford, Brianna Hopper, Van Gundersen, Nicholas Jackson.

The student production of "HONK!" on April 11-14 at Holy Cross School proved to be hugely popular. Based on Hans Christian Andersen's The Ugly Duckling, this is the funny and thoughtful story of Ugly, whose odd appearance instantly incites prejudice from family and neighbors. But in a rollicking and harrowing journey, Ugly finds both love and acceptance.

The colorful cast included many St. Patrick's parishioners: Lisa Altaner, Marissa Altaner, Hans Herzog, Luke Herzog, Meghan Kelly, Zach Lewis, Kate McMillan, Hannah Niccum, Noelle Ramaly, Kyle Rasmussen, Clara Serao, Ethan Smith, Joe Solava, Sophia Solava, Grace Whittington, and Maris Wszalek. They obviously had a great time—and so did their audiences!



Coming to faith together

"I think that watching the faith of my children, Abby and Emily, grow and seeing how excited they were about my becoming Catholic inspired me to join RCIA last year," said **Craig Goad**. "I joined knowing that my wife, Stacey, and I had a lot of work to do to complete our journey of faith. It was a journey that was 14 months long, but after this weekend I realize that a new and exciting



journey has just begun. I have gained an entire church family, whose support was truly shown on Easter weekend." Craig thanks everyone who has prayed for and supported the RCIA candidates. "I look forward to walking in faith with all my new brothers and sisters at St. Patrick's and St. Mary's."

After attending a few Masses and really enjoying the fellowship of the parish, **Sarah Raymond** read about the upcoming RCIA in the parish bulletin and decided to investigate.



"My husband, Matt, is Catholic and we were married in the Catholic Church, so I have always thought about someday converting to Catholicism. I realized that 'someday' could be now and that I did not have a reason to put it off." Sarah and Matt started dating in high school and have been married for 14 years. They are originally from

Kankakee and now reside in Urbana. Sarah is a graduate of the University of Illinois and works at First Financial Bank.

Kyle Davis is from Monticello and went to high school with Fr. Phelps. This month he is moving to Pekin to work with Caterpillar.



Rebekah Arana and her husband, Andy, moved to Champaign last year. They have three children:



Carmen, Teddy, and Charlotte. Rebekah teaches math at the University of Illinois. "Our

two older children, Carmen and Teddy, received their First Communion during the Easter Vigil."

Derick Dahlstrom shared that he had been away from the Church for about ten years. "When my fiancée, Brittany, and I were talking about marriage and our future together, she said she wanted to get married in a Catholic church



since she was raised Catholic. I loved the idea; I have always been really intrigued by Catholicism. I was eager to rejoin the Church and re-find my faith." Because Brittany and Derick started dating around St. Patrick's Day, they found it a happy coincidence that there was a Catholic church in the area named for St. Patrick. "After visiting a couple of other churches in the area, we found St. Patrick's really comfortable and we were welcomed with open arms."

Derick is a local tattoo artist who loves to draw and paint; he has been practicing his craft for ten years. He bicycles to work because he loves the adventure of that ride, even in the winter. "I will marry the girl of my dreams here at St. Patrick's in October." Derick just bought a house in Champaign.

Jackie Judth said she was a



Lutheran and her husband, Jim, was Catholic when they were married in a Lutheran church. When their children were old enough for Sunday

school, Jim decided to become a Lutheran so they could worship as a family. "Many years later we felt that something was missing in our church lives and found ourselves falling or drifting away. One day, about a year ago, I asked Jim if he would like to return to the Catholic Church with me at his side. The look on his face was all the answer I needed." They contacted Father Joe, met with him soon after, and started the RCIA process.

Jackie and Jim have been married for more than 54 years. "Jim is

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patient, kind, and long-suffering," she said. They have five grandchildren and three great-grandchildren, the great joys of their lives. Now retired, Jackie works part-time in the County Recorder's office. Their daughter, Robin, works next door in the County Treasurer's office.

Concerning her RCIA experience, Jackie said, "I wanted to embrace the Catholic Church, but found it embracing me instead."

Mary, the Mother of God;
 Mary, an unwed Mother;
 Mary, a political refugee;
 Mary, the homeless one;
 Mary, disciple and prophet;
 Mary, Third World woman;
 Mary, the one full of grace.



STM high school students present Fine Arts Night

On Wednesday, May 8, join the STM students and community in celebrating the students' achievements in the fine arts, featuring music, drama, and visual art. Performances will be presented by the STM band, choir, percussion, guitar ensemble, and the improv group Improvables. Visual artwork will be on display. The Art Gallery opens at 6 p.m. and the musical concert starts at 7p.m.. Refreshments will be served throughout the evening. The event is open to all.

Fr. Dennis Spohrer moves on to hospital ministry

Sometimes we are just getting started at something when we are called to move on to something else. This is the case for Fr. Dennis Spohrer, who arrived at St. Patrick's just last June. On April 7, the parish held a farewell reception for him and he celebrated his last Mass with us before leaving for his next destination.

Fr. Spohrer's new assignment is assistant chaplain at OSF St. Francis Hospital in Peoria. His tasks will include visiting patients, administering sacraments, and "Anything I'm needed to do, anywhere from the neonatal ICU to the hospice," he said.

While this is Fr. Spohrer's first full-time position as a hospital chaplain, it is far from the first time he has ministered in hospitals. "I've been a priest for only ten years," he said, "but I've been in hospital and hospice ministry on and off for 20 years." In fact, when he was pastor at St. Teresa's in Alexis before he came to St. Patrick's, he was chaplain to OSF's Holy Family Hospital in Monmouth.

Fr. Spohrer became involved in hospice and hospital ministry at the same time he began discerning his call to religious life. The two callings are intertwined: he points out the strong tradition of priests tending to the sick, as well as Christ's admonition that we care for the sick and poor. In carrying out this ministry, he sees the face of Christ in each patient he serves.

From the beginning, Fr. Spohrer has felt at home in hospital ministry. "It feels natural," he said. It appealed to him in part because it involves, "Being present for people who need you. Also, I can be myself." The sacrament of Anointing the Sick and having a priest pray over them brings comfort and healing to the sick and dying, but even the simple gift of presence makes a difference. Before he was able to administer the sacraments, Fr. Spohrer recounts, he found that at times he could bring great comfort to hospice patients simply by



sitting with them in silence.

While at St. Patrick's, Fr. Spohrer spent Mondays and Tuesdays visiting patients at Carle Hospital and bringing them Communion. He smiled when he heard that a eucharistic minister who serves at Carle had been told by numerous patients and families that they had greatly enjoyed their visits and conversations with him. One patient had even spoken of Fr. Spohrer who inspired him to start attending Mass at St. Patrick's and contemplating becoming involved in the parish.

As a member of the diocesan Scouting Committee, Fr. Spohrer had hoped to become involved with the Boy Scouts at St. Patrick's, but he said that it takes at least a year for a new priest to get to know his way around a parish and really get involved in such activities.

What did he like the most about St. Patrick's? Fr. Spohrer says he found "There are a lot of wonderful people here." Although he regrets the shortness of his stay here, he is ready for his new assignment. Not only will it immerse him fully into the hospital ministry that he has a passion for, it reunites him with an old friend and mentor. At OSF St. Francis he looks forward to reporting to Msgr. Mike Bliss, who he first met years ago at St. John's on campus.

We wish many blessings on Fr. Spohrer as he leaves to take on this important ministry full-time.

“Could you not keep watch with me for one hour?”

These words of Jesus to Peter in the garden of Gethsemane are addressed to us as well. When we hear the Passion readings during Holy Week, we may squirm a little in the realization that we too fail in this regard, and we may resolve to do better about this in the future. And then life picks us up again and our resolve is forgotten. What can we do? How can we renew this resolve and actually put it into practice?

In 2002, in response to Pope John Paul II's request for greater devotion to Christ present in the Eucharist, St. Matthew's Parish established Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration. The Adoration Chapel is available to and a blessing for all Catholics in the



Champaign-Urbana vicariate.

The chapel is open 24/7. From 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., enter the chapel through the glass doors between the church and the office doors. From 6 p.m. to 6 a.m., ask beforehand for a keycard to the

chapel.

Just being with Christ in the Eucharist brings peace to the soul. We can speak honestly to Jesus about our blessings, our struggles, our sins. We know that Jesus is present before us and that he truly listens to us. We may even receive good advice from him!

Adoration of the Eucharist does not replace receiving the Eucharist at Mass, but it offers an additional way of communicating with Jesus, a

way that may encourage us to attend weekday Mass.

The chapel's stained glass windows reveal teachings about the Eucharist of both modern and ancient saints. For example, Thomas Aquinas proclaims that, “The Eucharist is the sacrament of love, it signifies love, it produces love.” Cyril of Alexandria, a Father of the Church, teaches us that, “Just as by melting two candles become one piece of wax, one who receives the Body and Blood of Jesus is fused together with Him.”

Instructions, prayer cards, and sign-in and thanksgiving books are in the vestibule.

There are hours when no adorer of the Eucharist is scheduled. To become a scheduled or substitute adorer, contact St. Matthew's parish office (359-4224). Drop-ins are always welcome, but watch out—visiting with Christ in the Eucharist can be catching!

A remarkable feast of our very own!

On Friday, May 24 at morning Mass, parishioners will celebrate a special event. It happens every year, but none can talk first-hand about the first solemn dedication of our parish church on May 24, 110 years ago in 1903.

You may have heard how the parish began: Fr. J. H. Cannon from Gibson City arrived in Urbana and celebrated Mass on June 30, 1901 at St. Mary's Church in Champaign. In his sermon he promised to lay the cornerstone for a new church in Urbana the following morning at 7 o'clock and to dedicate the new church the following Sunday. There were skeptics!

But he did it, with 37-and-a-half hours of help. It was a temporary structure, 48 by 60 feet, with a borrowed altar and pews, and



flowers from local gardens. Within two weeks, in July 1901, the new St. Patrick's parish numbered 200 parishioners attending 8 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Sunday Masses.

By mid-July, an architect and builder had been chosen, and a contract was let for a permanent church structure and a rectory next door. On October 27, after a solemn high

Mass with packed church and standees, all processed to the corner of Main and Busey to see the cornerstone laid. Thus began our current building.

All through the autumns and winters of 1901 and 1902, funds were raised and money was saved until \$56,000 was available to complete the permanent building (plus the rectory, which has since

been demolished). A county-wide celebration honored St. Patrick on March 17, 1903 as the final dedication neared.

So it was that on Sunday morning, May 24, 110 years ago, the new St. Patrick's church building was dedicated at a solemn pontifical high Mass. Fr. Cannon spoke briefly of his satisfaction with the collection: \$1,540.

Every year since that day, those attending early morning Mass on May 24 have joined with the priest to offer the special feast day prayers for the rededication of our church.

Fr. Cannon, whom we thank for our remarkable founding, was pastor until July 1910, when he was transferred to St. Mary's in Pontiac. He is memorialized in a stained glass window picturing Jesus crowned with thorns, the first window on the east side above the baptismal font.

Happy 110th, St. Patrick's!

Introducing "Totus Tuus"

This year St. Patrick's will depart from its normal offering of Vacation Bible School. Instead, we will participate in a diocesan-led program called Totus Tuus. This Latin phrase, a motto of Venerable Pope John Paul II, means "totally yours." The program teaches children how to give their total selves to God through the education and practice of their Catholic faith.



The Totus Tuus program will be divided into two parts. Kids entering first through sixth grades will meet Monday, June 10 through Friday, June 14 each day from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Students entering seventh through twelfth grades will meet from Sunday, June 9 through Thursday, June 13 from 7 p.m. to 9:15 p.m.

The program aims to give our children a lifelong love of their faith by giving themselves totally to God. These seeds of love will be planted each day through stories, songs, skits, and activities that focus on the sacraments. The students will also learn about the Blessed Mother through the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary.

Besides helping students learn more about their faith, Totus Tuus also encourages them to experience their faith. One way they will do this is by attending daily Mass at 11:15

a.m. All parishioners, particularly parents, are invited to join them at this time. Furthermore, the kids will get to participate in the Mass by reading the Scriptures of the day, presenting the gifts, and serving. Lastly, they will have an opportunity to go to confession at least once during the week. The faith experience offered for junior high and high school students will be taking part in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

Even though the program will be run by the Totus Tuus team (two college-aged men and two college-aged women), additional volunteers are needed to lend a hand in each class during morning and afternoon sessions. Volunteers are also needed to help during snack time and lunch time. You can also help by donating recess equipment (balls, jump ropes, etc.) and other items such as wading pools and coolers.

If you would like to help the Totus

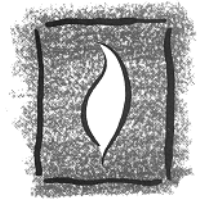


Tuus program in any way or if you have questions, contact Jon McCoy (jon.mccoy@stpaturbana.org or 493-2247). For more information on the program, visit www.comeandfollowme.org and click on the Totus Tuus link and look for the link to the parish information.

From our Parish Nurses:

Can you identify the signs of a stroke?

May is National Stroke Awareness Month. A stroke is a "brain attack" which blocks blood flow and oxygen to the brain. Know the warning signs of a stroke so that you can act fast when it occurs. Use the **FAST** test to remember the warning signs:



FACE Ask the person to smile. Does one side of their face droop?

ARMS Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

SPEECH Does their speech sound slurred or strange?

TIME If you observe any of these signs, call 9-1-1 immediately.

Recognizing signs and symptoms of a stroke and acting FAST could save your life or the life of a loved one!



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

Pledged: \$3,779,630
Cash in hand: \$2,109,467

What's needed before we can break ground:

Pledged: \$4.0M
Cash in hand: \$3.2M

Attention, shutterbugs! Photos of parish events are always needed for *In Focus*. When you've taken some that you think readers will enjoy, please send them along with a note identifying the event and/or the specific person or persons shown. If you're willing to be an "official" photographer of parish events 2-3 times a year for *In Focus*, even better!
Cathy Salika, 367-7861, csalika@illinois.edu

Yet another connection to Kenya for St. Patrick's

My dearest brothers and sisters in Christ,

Happy Easter!

What a joy it is for me to thank you for your prayers for my vocational journey. My name is Sr. Jackie Gitonga, and I am an alumnus of U of I and currently a novice with the Daughters of St. Paul. I came to the U of I in 2001 from Kenya, my home country (where Dr. Susan Nagele, one of our parishioners, is doing missionary work) to pursue a masters degree in human resource education. My intellectual journey quickly progressed to the pursuit of a doctoral degree in the same field with a focus on training and professional development. I graduated in May 2009.

My "Champaign years" were some of the best in my life, and I remain ever grateful for the abundance of grace that the Lord poured into my intellectual and spiritual journey. I received many opportunities to grow in my faith while at St. John's Newman Center. In my graduate school years, I became a parishioner at St. Pat's and steadily drew grace from daily Mass, prayer, and adoration of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. This "wellspring of grace" drew me to go out and bring Jesus to my brothers and sisters as a Eucharistic minister (at mass and homebound), proclaim the Word of God (lector), minister to the African Catholic community, and occasionally contribute to *In Focus*.

My Champaign years also helped in the discernment of my religious vocation. Did I always know that I wanted to become a sister? Well, not quite. I became aware in my junior year of college at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA) in Kenya that I was drawn to become a consecrated single person in the Church. I had witnessed the vibrant spiritual lives of some consecrated single people in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in Kenya and wanted to be "like that." The only thing is that I did not know what "that" meant. So the Lord led me on a journey of discovery that



unfolded during my time in Champaign, beginning with my participation in the Samuel Group program that was held at the Newman center during my first year at UIUC. Over eight months, several young adults and I delved into prayer, study, liturgy, spiritual direction, and monthly meetings to listen more closely to what God was saying about our lives. It was then that I began to understand that perhaps the "consecrated single" idea I had been attracted to in my junior year of college could be referring to a religious vocation.

The rest of my graduate career was colored by the exploration of this possibility. The Lord graciously provided opportunities to learn more about religious life through visiting several religious communities, attending vocation events and retreats, and reading resources on religious life (e.g., *Vision Magazine*, religious community websites, etc.). My quest led me to the Daughters of St. Paul whose Eucharistic spirituality was my primary attraction.

Deeply rooted in the Word of God and the Eucharist, the Daughters of St. Paul grow in their life journey so that like St. Paul, we can say that it is no longer I but Christ who lives in me (Gal. 2:20). Through us Christ still accomplishes his mission today, and so daily we meditate on the Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*) and partake of the Eucharistic Jesus, who strengthens us for our mission of evangelization using the most modern means of our time (Internet, radio, television, phone apps, books,

etc.).

As an international missionary congregation, our mission territory is vast: the whole world. Our calling as consecrated women is to "become all things to all people" (1 Cor 9:22) like St. Paul so that many may know Christ. I am continually enthused by the beauty of our mission of being able to reach people of many cultures and nations with the Gospel message. To learn more about us, visit www.daughtersofstpaul.com or www.pauline.org.

After years of visits and correspondence with the Daughters of St. Paul, I felt that I had found a spiritual home. I applied to begin my formation as a Candidate in 2008 while I was completing my studies at the U of I. After graduation, I officially began my two-year postulancy journey with our sisters in St. Louis. Postulancy is considered a time of "checking out" the community from the inside. So I learned a lot about myself, our Pauline spirituality, and the basic foundations of our Catholic faith through classes at our convent and other institutes. I also participated in our Pauline mission through working at our book center, exhibits, conferences and parishes, vocation, and other outreach events.

In September 2011, I moved to our novitiate formation program at our motherhouse in Boston, Massachusetts. Our novitiate journey is considered the real initiation into religious life, when a young woman strives to make the Pauline charism her own through study of our Congregation's history and assimilation of our Constitutions. This intensive journey of preparation for religious vows lasts two years.

During this time, I have been blessed to participate in the online aspects of our mission and to experience our Pauline daily life in one of our mission houses. I recently spent four months with our sisters in New Orleans where I was

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involved in outreach to parishes, schools, and conferences and working in our book center. Filled with these rich experiences of mission, I am now back at our motherhouse in Boston and preparing to take my first vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience as a Daughter of St. Paul in August.

As for my journey thereafter, I hope to renew my vows yearly for about five years before taking final vows. I entrust myself to the Lord and wherever he sends me on mission. He knows well that my greatest joy is to help people achieve their fullest potential by leading them to an encounter with him.

I will keep you posted on where I am sent! Till next time, know that you remain in my heart and prayers, with my thanks for yours.

God is with you!

Sr. Jackie Gitonga

Vocation Prayer

Who? Me? You've got to be kidding!

That's what Jeremiah said. He complained that he was too young to be in God's service.

I don't have the right kind of skills.

Oh, I could tell you all about using skills I never knew I had.

So you're saying there'd be a use for someone like me?

Of course. God chooses whom and when he will.

Lord, you are a calling God.

You call, you invite, you inspire, you challenge. The question is: Am I prepared to respond? Am I open to your guiding Spirit? Do I quiet my heart to hear your voice?

What is it that I need to do to cooperate fully with your call?

Living Faith

I first heard about volunteers needed at the Champaign County Nursing Home when Monica Ritten asked me if I would be interested in helping. I immediately dismissed the idea; I had the time but felt it would be too difficult to work with so many sick people.

But as the weeks passed I started to wonder. Eventually, after many discussions with my husband, he suggested I try it, pointing out that I was under no obligation, yet it was possible that it would all work out for me. As it turned out, he was absolutely right.

I join other parishioners in visiting Catholic residents of the Champaign County Nursing Home. We prepare the chapel for Mass and assist those who need help to gather for Mass. Most of our residents are in wheelchairs and need our help getting to the chapel. This commit-



Sandy Anderson

ment requires only a few hours on Friday, and the reward is immeasurable. The residents of the nursing home have quickly become my friends and my "other family." I hope I have helped them in some small way—they have given me far more than I could ever give them.

—Sandy Anderson



Parishioners who volunteer to help Catholic residents participate in Mass are (from the left) Jo Emerson, Susie McArthur, Sandy Anderson, Monica Ritten, Leslie Risatti, and (seated) Mary Sleeter. Two volunteers who missed the photo op are Judy Long and Toni D'Urso.

Vocations shared first-hand

On Sunday, April 7, the St. Patrick's Vivo (Junior High Youth Group) presented a Vocations Panel. Fr. Phelps represented the priesthood, while Deacon David Zola and his wife, Dr. Susan Zola, represented the permanent diaconate and marriage. Representing religious ordained life were Sr. MaryAnn Schaefer, a Salesian Sister on the pastoral staff at St. John's Newman Center, and Br. Kevin Coffey, a Benedictine monk from Lisle, Ill.

Vivo students heard how these men and women of God experienced (and sometimes resisted) God's calling. Their lives took twists and turns that led to their true purpose. They learned that a tomboy can grow up to be a Salesian Sister, that a boy who expected to be an accountant could become a priest, and that sometimes, perhaps, a high school youth group planning meeting may even be considered a date!

Many prayers were offered for the youth of the parish to continue to discern their vocation, their calling from God. The highlight of the evening was probably contributed by Br. Kevin who, after great pleading by the students, put up the hood of his black habit, showing that formally vowing one's life to God hardly imperils one's sense of humor.

Participants' numerous questions gave witness to their interest in the presentations and appreciation of the panel members. And all seemed to find especially enjoyable the Easter dessert banquet that followed, indulging at last in desserts many had given up for Lent. In addition to the fun and great desserts, the youth heard the invitation to open themselves to the voice of God speaking to them, to pray and discover the person God has created them to be.



in our parish library

In May we celebrate Mother's Day, a day when we honor our earthly mothers who gave birth to us, as well as a time to remember and honor Mary, the mother of Jesus. These two very influential women provide some of the core values and beliefs for our faith life.

Mary has been influential throughout history. As there is a whole subcategory of Catholicism called Marian devotion, presenting here only five of the resources devoted to Mary in our parish library can hardly do her justice.

- **Mary, Mother of the Lord**, by Karl Rahner. A glimpse into Mary's life as it relates to Jesus, including her influences in Jesus' life. Because of her role in the redemptive work of Christ, Mary is at once Mother of God and mother of all the faithful. As Mother of God she is to be honored above all the saints, as mother of the faithful she is to be loved and cherished by every Christian. (232.93 Rah)

- **Our Lady of Fatima: Prophecies of the Tragedy of Mary**, by Antonio Borelli. A recounting of the events of the sighting of the Blessed Mother by Correa de Oliviera, according to another witness, Sister Lucia. Sister Lucia

includes her personal insights on the event based on her experiences as a sister. (232.93 Bor)

- **Mary Queen of Heaven: Miracles, Manifestations, and Meditations**, by Peg Streep. For almost two thousand years, Mary has inspired some of humanity's most exalted art. She has stood watch over sown fields, the waters of fishermen, battlefields, and the wombs of women. Mary's story is told here, from the outlines in Scripture to the full flowering of Marian legend and devotions, and to places and people associated with her miracles and apparitions over centuries. This book details the journey of faith and imagination that depicts Mary as a figure of inspiration, compassion, protection, and solace around the globe. (232.9 Str)

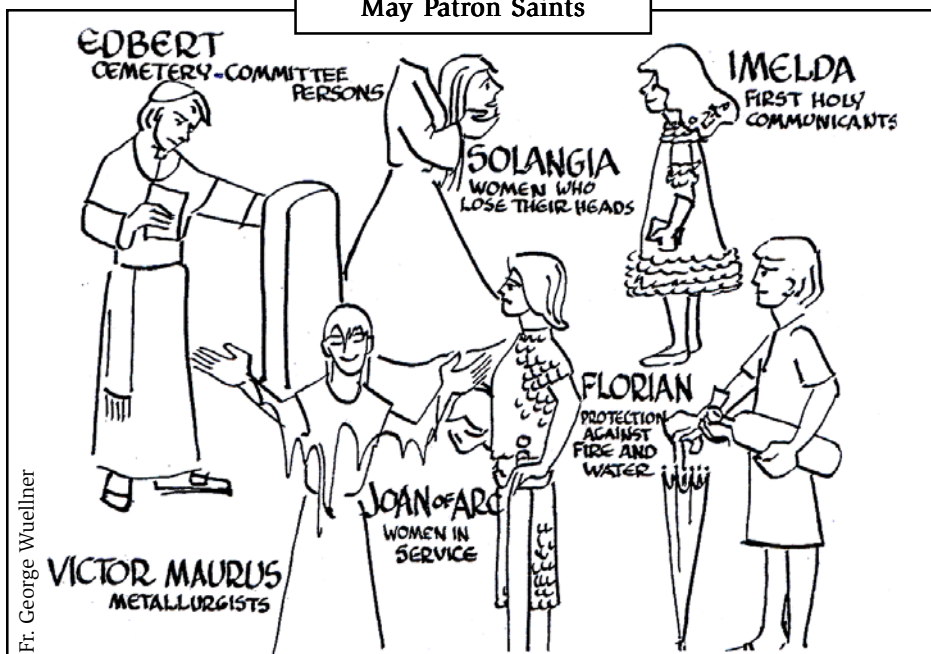
- **True Devotion to Mary**, by Louis-Marie Grignon de Monfort. Considered the greatest single book on Mary, this classic shows the way to Jesus through Mary. It sums up the entire Christian life and provides the key both to sanctity and salvation. St. Louis de Montfort prophesied that true devotion to Mary would be the way of life of the great saints of latter times.

- **Mary's Message to the World**, by Annie Kirkwood. A series of "talks" given by Mary to the Texan author from 1987 to 1991. At Fatima, Lourdes, and Medjugorje, Mary has spoken through miraculous apparitions. Here, she predicts specific disruptive earth changes and urges us to open our minds and hearts to God. She explains how to live more fully conscious of our presence and purpose here on earth and how to prepare ourselves for eternal life after physical death. Mary's eloquent words on love, energy, truth, and prayer reveal a most compassionate and universal Mother. (133.9 Kir)

These five books are only some of the many materials devoted to Mary that are available in the parish library. To find many more, during office hours ask our receptionist Tyra for a key to the library.

As always, if you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact parish librarian Megan Raab (mer1987@sbcglobal.net), and she will be happy to assist you. Scanning the shelves and looking for subject labels may also prove fruitful in finding something you'd enjoy reading. The parish library is available on weekdays during office hours--ask for a key at the parish office. It is also open on the fourth and fifth Sundays between 8:30-10:30 a.m.

May Patron Saints



Praying

It doesn't have to be the blue iris, it could be weeds in a vacant lot, or a few small stones; just pay attention, then patch

a few words together and don't try to make them elaborate, this isn't a contest but the doorway into thanks, a silence in which another voice may speak.

— Mary Oliver

Volunteer opportunities

▪ Who sets out hosts and wine for Sunday Mass—the priest? No! Parishioners just like you do this! Currently there is real and present need for a parishioner (or a parishioner couple) **to set up for the 7:30 Mass** once or twice 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*

▪ Can you assist with **funeral liturgies** by greeting family and friends of the deceased as they arrive, providing worship aids, perhaps helping those unfamiliar with our church to find the restroom? These are just very simple things, but it takes someone to do them. *Nancy Olson, 359-6424 or nancybolson@gmail.com*

▪ The SVPD food pantry needs someone to help on Mondays with food distribution, arriving between 3:45 and 4 p.m., and helping until the pantry closes between 5 and 5:20 p.m. *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).



Q: It's hard for me to join the Communion procession. What are my options?

A: St. Patrick's reserves the first pew on each side of the center aisle for anyone in these circumstances. Before Mass, take your place in one of these pews (marked "Reserved for the infirm"). When the Communion ministers come down from the sanctuary, stand in your place for them to come to you. If standing is difficult, then simply catch the eye of the minister with hosts, and reach out your hands to receive Communion.

If you are seated in a wheelchair, sit beside one of the shorter pews in the front, and the Communion ministers will approach you. If you can move about comfortably in your wheelchair and are able to join the Communion procession to the front of the church, you will find room for wheelchairs at the back of the church.

The church's east door has a ramp for people using walkers or wheelchairs.

All churches have probably made some accommodation for people who can't easily join the Communion procession. If uncertain just what to do, ask one of the ushers for advice.

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

Did you know . . . ?

▪ In 1906 St. Patrick's established a women's group called the Altar and Rosary Society, charged with caring of altar linens, flowers in the church, cleaning the church—well, you get the idea. In the eighties, this venerable society was renamed to St. Patrick's Guild. And just a few years ago it was again renamed to The Women of St. Patrick's. The focus of this organization has shifted over time from the church to the parish as a whole. Today we are informed, educated, entertained, and served in a variety of ways by these indomitable women. Just imagine, this organization (not its members!) is over a century old!

▪ On a shelf in the church vestibule are eight large-print Worship hymnals that contain the words to the hymns we sing during Mass. Help yourself to one of these as you enter the church—just please return it to its shelf afterward. (Regrettably, the hymnals don't include the Sunday Scripture readings.)

▪ Fr. Joe hopes that this fall the expansion of the church will start with demolition of the apartments on the north and west sides of the parking lot. Much depends on the continued generosity of parishioners making and meeting pledges to the Capital Campaign.

Quick fixin's from the kitchen of . . .

Ellen Noonan

Italian Beef

3-4 lb rump roast
1 can beef broth
1 pkg McCormick Au Jus mix (4 oz)
2 pkgs Zesty Italian Dressing mix



Place roast and broth in (3.5 quart) crockpot. Mix the Au Jus according to directions, and then add to crockpot. Add dressing mix, and stir to dissolve. Cook on low for 6—8 hours. Remove roast and pull apart using forks; return meat to crockpot to absorb more flavoring. Serve on French rolls (we like ours with pepperoncini).

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



The deadline for submitting information, articles, and news items for the next issue of In Focus is **May 12**.

First Communion April 20th



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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