

St. Patrick Parish INFOCUS

www.stpatuurbana.org

March 2014

Lent: A season for dreaming

We keep the season of Lent with the traditional practices of fasting, prayer, and almsgiving. We keep it as a time of penance and reconciliation. But Lent is also a good season for dreaming.

We are not talking about wildly impractical dreams, and we are certainly not talking about the kind of daydreams that should begin with a blinking marquis that reads, "Starring ME!" We're talking about the kind of dreams that saints and prophets dream, the dreams that come in prayer when you ask God why the world isn't the way he wants it to be.

When you fast this Lent, dream about a world in which everyone has enough food. When you give alms, dream about a place where everyone who wants to work can live on what they earn. When you receive the gift of God's forgiveness in Reconciliation, dream of a world where everyone knows God's love and forgiveness. When you pray, remember those who have special needs and those who could help but, for whatever reason, do not.

Then find yourself in the dream. It's not your job to feed everyone, or to bring justice to everyone, or to preach to everyone. But do it for someone. Give some of your time to a group that provides food, shelter, or healthcare to the poor, or reaches out to the lonely, the vulnerable, and the hurting. Make a donation to groups that do these things. Write to your representatives in government to ask them to vote according to your priorities.

It may be that this Lent you will find your niche, a place where you can live your dream and do God's work.



Living Faith

By Rachael McMillan

To its members, Moms Meeting Moms (M³) is many things. It is a place to get advice and sometimes therapy—not in an official sense, but the time together can be a healing experience. It can be a place to get free stuff; one mom's clutter is another mom's Incredibly Useful Item.

It is a place to laugh, to learn, and to refresh. For our children, it is a place to play with other kids under the loving care of some amazing veteran moms.



Rachael and son William

I assumed leadership of M³ in the fall of 2010. Our membership has swelled to include upwards of 20 moms and—at times—dwindled to a few diehards.

I understand why. When you're a mom of little ones, coming to a meeting can be as hard as not coming. Having everyone in your family be healthy at the same time, and getting everyone dressed and out the door is a never-ending struggle, the likes of which could daunt a four-star general. But missing out on that time with other moms (kid-free time, for most of us) is also a hardship. We crave it,

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Lenten Dinners Starting Friday March 7th!

6pm in St. Patrick's Main Hall

St. Mary's and St. Pat's present a Latin American themed Lenten dinner, sponsored by the Urbana Council of the Knights of Columbus. Menu includes classic Fish options, healthy alternatives, plus tasty new additions.



Come and enjoy this Lenten tradition with a new flavor!

When do you know you're a mom?

For Dianne Gordon, St. Patrick's parish bookkeeper, that moment may have been the time she reached into her pocket for a pen and found baby socks but no pen. Or perhaps it was the first time "I licked my finger and used it to wipe something off Rory's face. Did I really just turn into my mom?" she wondered.

Getting to those moments with almost two-year-old Rory and to the joyful day this February when Dianne and her husband, John, finalized the adoption of their daughter, was a long journey.

Dianne and John first began the adoption process back in 2004. Initially they wanted an international adoption because those can happen more quickly than domestic ones. When they ran into some obstacles, they put their quest on hold for a while. They started the process again in 2009, this time working through what was then Catholic Charities. After a couple of years passed with no progress, they decided to explore other options. Concluding that private adoption was too expensive, they settled on foster parenting--and before they had even finished their class, they received a life-changing phone call.

"John and I had lunch together that day," Dianne recalls. "Just after he left, our case worker called." There was a two-month-old baby who needed a home. Because they needed to make a decision within the hour, Dianne drove to John's office to tell him the news, including the fact that the baby had some medical issues and was likely to have developmental delays. What did John think, Dianne asked. "He looked at me and said, 'Why are you asking? Go tell them yes!'" The call had come at 1:30 p.m. and at 4:00 baby Rory was dropped off at their door. "Talk about life changing



John, Dianne, and Rory Gordon, with Judge Blockman

in a minute--or 180 minutes!" Dianne says.

After that abrupt arrival, the journey to becoming Rory's legal parents was more drawn out. "I was surprised by how incredibly complicated the foster system, and adoption in general, is," Dianne says. There were home visits, visits with the birth parents, court dates, and medical appointments. But she adds, "Everyone involved in our case truly had Rory's best interests at heart and did a wonderful job advocating for her well-being. Would we foster another child in hopes of adopting? Absolutely!"

Their family has grown in unexpected ways. Because Rory has three siblings who have been adopted by two other families, Dianne says, "We've become part of an extended family that I couldn't even begin to put into a family tree." All three families bring the children together several times a year so they will know one another as they grow up.

Many members of the parish have shared in Dianne and John's journey in big and small ways, and they are grateful for all the love and support they have received. Dianne particularly wants to thank "Father Joe for his willingness to be flexible with my work schedule; the rest of the staff for helping out when I couldn't be there for my normal

hours, and for all of their caring, love, babysitting, parental advice, and shoulders to cry on when things got a little dicey; Laura Theby and Tyra Quinones for their special ability to get Rory to sleep when she was at the office on Thursdays and for coming to the adoption hearing to support our new family and cheer us on; the Women of St. Patrick, who threw me a baby shower and organized meals right after Rory was literally dropped off on our doorstep

with only a couple hours' notice; Pat Justice for being my 'adoption mentor,' sharing so much with me and giving me such good advice before Rory had been placed in our hands; and so many people who have asked along the way how Rory is doing and offered help and advice or dropped off little things for her. St. Pat's is a truly loving community!"

Dianne and John would also like to thank "the unsung heroes within the St. Patrick's community who work for children's well-being: the state's attorney who managed Rory's case when the birth parents were still involved; the CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) worker who was her "voice in court"; and her case managers at early intervention." According to Dianne, all of these people are St. Patrick's parishioners, but "I don't think any of them knew that Rory's case and our adoption were one and the same since all they ever saw was Rory's birth name."

So when do you know you're a mom? Dianne would be hard put to pinpoint the precise moment, but left it to the courts to declare on paper what her experiences had already shown her!

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because it is *so* good for us.

Two wise women once gave me advice about M³: the first (Ms. Stephanie Smith, I'm looking at you) said that if we could get 20 women to sign up, 10 would be able to attend any given meeting. The second (Hi, Chris Whippo!) advised me to just plan, that God would lead to us whoever needed to be with us.

Both of those bits of wisdom have definitely held true. Currently, we're a smallish group, but that's okay for now. We always have great fellowship, not to mention *great* food.

I've always said I'm not afraid for us to be small; I am afraid, though, for us to be an unwelcoming or off-putting place. Our gathering should be a space in which all moms feel comfortable sharing their lives with one another.

I've seen some great friendships form and bloom in M³, and I'm incredibly proud of what we've been able to do for ourselves and our parish.

Please, join us if you can! More moms are always welcome, and more awesome, incredible childcare volunteers are always needed.

In preparation for the season of Lent, several lectors met to read and discuss the Scripture readings for the five weeks leading up to Holy Week, with an ear to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. This resulted in the selection of a focus statement for the season:

"Trust in the Spirit that leads to light and joy."

Watch the bulletin for weekly reflections on God's Word for the Sundays of Lent as a guide in our Lenten journey.

And the winner is...

It was Omelets vs. Biscuits and Gravy at the KC Super Bowl Breakfast. "There has been no determination in football history if the winning breakfast teams influence the outcome of the actual game," said Ed Clancy of the Knights of Columbus after Sunday Masses on February 2. The cooks were the coaches, and 176 parishioners found that their choice of food determined the team they were on. The competition was stiff, but Chris Stohr's Sea Hawks Omelets edged Steve Beckett's Broncos Biscuits and Gravy, 91-85. If the Omelets helped the Seattle Sea Hawks at the game that evening, their 43-8 win was little credit to the morning's delicious biscuits and gravy.

Preparations in the kitchen started Saturday afternoon and cooking began early Sunday morning as each team readied extra choices: Eggs Benedict and waffles by the Broncos and crepes with fruit fillings by the Sea Hawks. Every customer was offered a fresh fruit bowl and beverages.



More than a dozen Knights and one CREW mother came to help. Three

teens from CREW (Christ Renews Everyone's World) performed the necessary service hours at the event to qualify for a scholarship. And the Charles Martell Scholarship Fund for graduating seniors grew as the general fund netted \$633 after \$456 in expenses was subtracted from the gross proceeds, \$1089.

Jim Risatti and Steve Beckett of the St. Patrick's Council of the Knights of Columbus organized the first Super Bowl Breakfast about 15 years ago, and set it on its successful course. The Knights support many charitable activities, including help for our two parish seminarians, Alex Millar and David Mendoza, Jr., plus the Developmental Services Center, Camp New Hope for Disabled Children, projects at Empty Tomb. The High School of St. Thomas More, and others.



Ladies Knight Out

The Knights of Columbus invite you to attend Ladies Knight Out on Saturday March 8th, 2014 in the Parish Hall.

The doors will open at 6 pm. Appetizers will start at 6pm with Dinner following at 7pm.

Entertainment, provided by the *Catholic Boys*, starts at 8pm. Their show this year is: *Catholic Boys... Vatican Correspondents (A tribute to Pope Francis). You don't want to miss it!*

Cost for a steak or chicken dinner is \$20.00. Tickets can be purchased at the parish office or from any Knight.



Who killed Sweet Sue?

What a fun night! CREW presented its annual play on Friday evening, February 7, and on Sunday afternoon, to a SRO audience in St. Patrick's parish hall. The dialog of "Last Call at Chez Mort," about the murder of a singer at a French night club, kept the audience in stitches. The actors' timing was perfect as they hilariously hammed up their lines, even though according to one of the acting coaches, Stan Yanchus, they had had only two weeks to rehearse.

The cast of CREW members included Alex Adamek, who played the detective, Inspector Constantine. A newspaper reporter, Smitty, was played by Meghan Kelly. They engaged in some hysterical "Who's on first" type of dialog. The French emcee, Jean Paul Truffaut, was outrageously acted by Nathen Meadows from Parkland College. He was the butt of much humor resulting from language



misunderstandings. Jack Reeder ably played the stage manager of the nightclub, Mack. The gangster, Big Suit Stu, played by Sean Kelly, and his henchman, Helga the Hatchet, played by Molly Smith, had forced the nightclub to feature the atrocious singing of his girlfriend, Sweet Sue, played by Pascale Grant. Sweet Sue died on stage, both as a singer and as a person, when she was electrocuted by the microphone. Lady Lelu, played by Jamie Simmering, was Chez Mort's usual singer; she was not greatly upset at Sweet Sue's demise! It turns out that everybody had a motive to kill Sweet Sue except Chez Mort's two

customers, Grace Rogers and Colton Parisi, and the waiter, Father Joel.

During the intermission of the play, the audience enjoyed delicious desserts and drinks, even wine for the adults. Tip jars helped defray expenses. CREW also raffled off gift baskets (baking and gardening supplies, a huge Fourth of July basket, a tower of chocolate, etc.). All the money raised by this event goes to CREW's summer mission trip to a Native American reservation in Nebraska.

But just a minute here—who did kill Sweet Sue? Well, if you were in the audience on Friday evening, you pinned it on the waiter (Fr. Joel). It's unknown to this writer who was found guilty by the Sunday afternoon audience; Did they claim "The butler did it! to avoid double jeopardy?

What a fun way to help pave the way to Nebraska this summer!

Think "green"

When people hear the word "stewardship" they often think of the careful use of money. However, the term rightly applies to all things we have been given and are asked to care for. One of the most important things that we are asked to be good stewards of is the natural world, the environment in which we live.

We are not meant to use up or squander what has been given to us. We are meant to care for the Earth and all the other species that share it with us. Environmental stewardship is not just a cultural and secular concern. If we believe that everything we have is a gift from our loving Creator, then taking care of all of it is a spiritual imperative.

As a congregation, we have begun to consider this responsibility in all its forms with the establishment of St. Patrick's Environmental Stewardship Committee. The committee serves to help educate, inform, advocate, and provide opportunities



for all of us to become better stewards of everything we have been given.

As the committee begins its initial work, we are all encouraged to lend our voices to the cause. Is there an idea that has been percolating in the back of your mind about how we can become better at taking care of our parish environment? Would you be willing to lend a hand with a parish garden that could provide fresh seasonal produce to our St. Vincent

de Paul food pantry? Are you interested in learning about opportunities that exist in our communities for becoming more in tune with our natural environment?

The committee welcomes input! This is an opportunity to make a real difference in the natural world and to help leave a better planet for generations to come. If you are interested in contributing to the work of this new committee, you are invited to attend the next meeting, March 10 at 7 p.m. in the parish center lounge.

+ + +

O gracious God, help us to reach beyond ourselves to give thanks for all of your creation that shares this universe with us: peoples of every nation, animals of every species, all forms of vegetation, the plants, stars, and all the elements. We pray this in union with the incarnate Word of God, in whose image all was created.

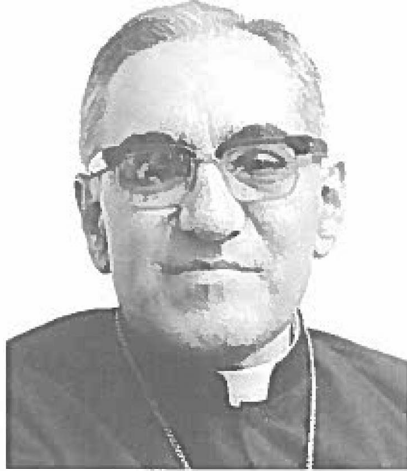
Remembering Romero

Thirty-four years ago this March 24, El Salvador's archbishop, Oscar Romero, was shot to death while celebrating Mass in a hospital chapel.

At the time, his country was suffering a civil war between rich and poor. The governments of some other nations saw this as a conflict between capitalism and communism, so a lot of money was sent to the Salvadoran military. Meanwhile, farmers and labor leaders who organized were murdered; even priests and catechists were threatened, tortured, and murdered when they preached that it was not God's will that the poor live in such suffering.

The week before he was assassinated, in a homily that was broadcast on the radio, Archbishop Romero urged soldiers not to obey orders to torture and murder unarmed civilians. He also called on the United States to stop helping El Salvador's military, which he said was only making matters worse.

Oscar Romero is a compelling model of Lent's call to conversion, of Christ's call to lay down one's life for others. Before he became a bishop, Romero was a good, pious, ordinary priest who never desired to



be a leader, who never expected to face huge challenges. Yet when he saw where life had led him, where God had called him, he stood in compassion with the poor and the suffering. Love is stronger than violence. Archbishop Romero once said, "If they kill me, I

will rise again in the Salvadoran people," and he has, in witness to Jesus' resurrection. Many today pray at his tomb in the cathedral as they wait for economic justice, and many have taken up his work of building a just peace.

Perhaps someday the Pope will declare Oscar Romero a saint, but we needn't wait until then to live as he did. In fact, we can't wait. Too many people, not just in El Salvador but even in our own neighborhoods, are suffering. How will we respond, we who are good, ordinary, pious people who don't desire to be leaders or even challengers of the way things are? Baptism gives us the grace to respond as Romero did, with the compassion of Christ.

You can read Archbishop Romero's homilies in *The Violence of Love*, published in 1998 by Plough Publishing House.

Vocation Prayer

Is what I do my calling? To whom do I listen? What, in the end, brings deep peace to my heart?

Paul claims to live the life of Christ, not his own. Peter would be taken down paths not of his own devising. Were they faithful to their true self?

Lord, dearest Lord, let my life speak. I pray that I will hear the task called love—a life of total self-giving. My true vocation.

From one of God's little ones

A parishioner who is a "drop-in" visitor to the Chapel of Perpetual Adoration at St. Matthew Church shares this experience:

One day, while I was praying, a small boy about 3 or 4 years old came in and genuflected, followed by his mother. Once they were both kneeling, he said, "Look, Mommy, there's Jesus." Then he waved his hand and said, "Hi, Jesus!" They left the chapel soon afterwards. I hoped his mom didn't think he was disturbing me—he really made my day!

IF

You've parted company with the Catholic Church

Over new changes, old rules, a marriage situation, hurt feelings, or for any other reason,

THEN

Come, talk with us and take in our six-week session beginning

Wednesday, March 5, 2014
7 p.m. at St. Patrick's parish center
708 W. Main St., Urbana

For more information:
367-2665 or 367-5014

Volunteers needed

Drivers needed. Can you take someone to keep a doctor's appointment or to shop for groceries or to attend Sunday Mass? Several programs—St. Patrick's Good Samaritans (Carla Simmering, 328-4841), Family Service (352-0099), Senior Support Services (352-5100), and Faith in Action (337-2778)—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*

The two volunteers who prepare the page layout for *In Focus* would very much like to have a third parishioner to prepare the page layout for two or three issues a year. *Cathy Salika, 367-7861 or csalika@illinois.edu*



Parish groups or individuals can submit entries for this feature to the Communications Committee or directly to Mary Lou Menches (344-1125, mmenches@illinois.edu). Provide your name and telephone number or e-mail address with a brief description of the kind



The deadline for submitting information, articles, and news items for the next issue of *In Focus* is March 9.

Divine Chocolates for Sale!



The Divine Chocolates offered for sale on March 30 are a fundraiser for CREW's next Mission Trip. Why "Divine?" Well, yes, they do taste divine—as one chocoholic commented recently, once you've acquired a taste for Divine Chocolates, you won't be satisfied by any other kind!

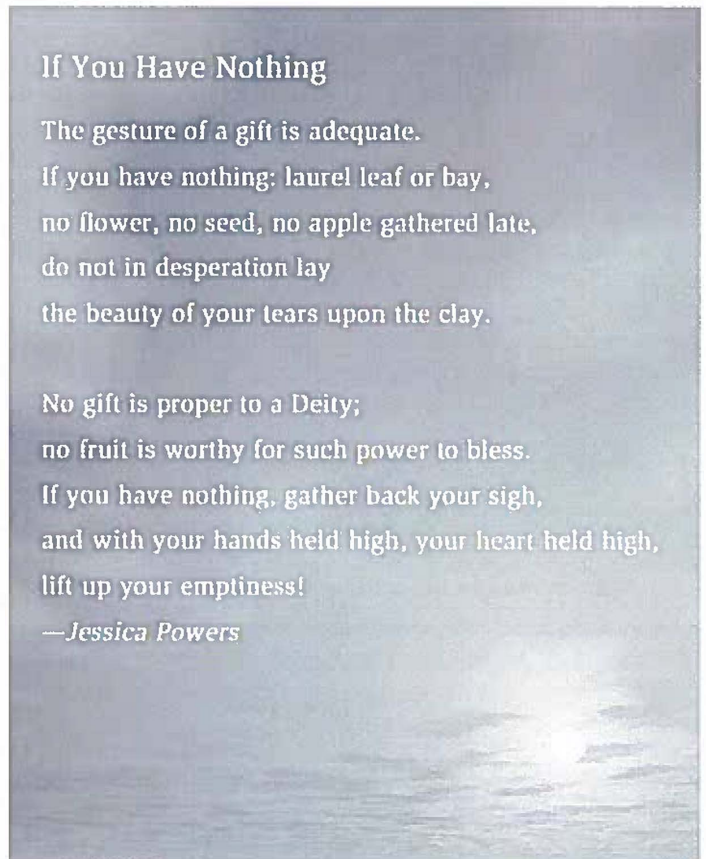
But there is a more significant fact you should know: Divine is the only Fair Trade chocolate company that is owned by its cocoa farmers. This "Fair Trade" chocolate, much like Fair Trade coffees, ensures that farmers receive a better deal for their cocoa and additional income to invest in their community. Company ownership gives farmers a share of Divine's profits and a stronger voice in the cocoa industry. So how many bars of Divine Chocolates did you say you wanted?

If You Have Nothing

The gesture of a gift is adequate.
If you have nothing: laurel leaf or bay,
no flower, no seed, no apple gathered late,
do not in desperation lay
the beauty of your tears upon the clay.

No gift is proper to a Deity;
no fruit is worthy for such power to bless.
If you have nothing, gather back your sigh,
and with your hands held high, your heart held high,
lift up your emptiness!

—Jessica Powers



Sharing wisdom from lives given to God

On a cold winter's evening, five retired men and women who'd given their lives to God sat in easy chairs around a flickering pretend-fireplace in St. Patrick's parish hall and answered questions that had been put by children, teens, and adults from four parishes. Lorraine Kim introduced the guests: Sr. Agnes Cunningham, Sr. Mary Himens, Fr. George Remm, Sr. Charlene Cesario, and Msgr. Albert Hallin. After an opening prayer, offered by Fr. Joel Phelps, Fr. Joe Hogan asked questions of the guests, drawing from eight pages of them; the quality of the answers and the limitations of time meant that only 38 of the 84 questions in hand were addressed.

The most frequently submitted question asked how these men and women knew that God was calling them to a consecrated life in religion. Sr. Agnes recalled that when she was four, she walked around her house with a towel on her head as a veil; when her mother asked her if she wanted to be a bride, Sr. Agnes replied no because brides wear a veil for only one day, and she wanted to be a nun and wear a veil every day. She added that she had made her first vows as a religious exactly 71 years ago to the very day of the gathering!

Sr. Mary Himens said her family broke up when she was four, but her priest said he would be her dad and he got her a college scholarship. Although later engaged, she realized that married life wasn't what God wanted for her. Fr. Remm said that he knew in fourth grade that he wanted to be a priest. His father, not a Catholic, was supportive, although he cautioned his son to be sure, to realize that as a priest he'd be unable to marry. Father has been a priest for 54 years, retired from St. Patrick's for ten.

Sr. Charlene came from an Italian family; following tradition, her parents had arranged a marriage for her with a young man who was coming to America on a ship. She remembers that as he disembarked and



walked toward her, she knew he wasn't for her and she told him she had already given her heart to God. Msgr. Hallin wanted to be a priest from fourth or fifth grade on. After four years in the Navy, he entered the seminary, where seminarian George Remm was a year ahead of him. He wanted to be a diocesan priest working with God's people, rather than a religious priest living in community.

Asked what he found funniest involving the people he worked with, Fr. Remm replied that he'd worked with people in Pre-Cana, in Marriage Encounter, and widows and widowers, and was always amazed that anyone listened to him since he himself had never had any experience of those stages!

When Sr. Mary Himens was asked her favorite part of her faith, she said she doesn't put her faith in "parts," that faith is a commitment to walk with Jesus and Mary every day.

Sr. Agnes was asked what had surprised her or taken her breath away as a religious. She said that when she was a novice, one day at Mass she was struck by the realization that the priest standing at the altar was really Jesus Christ. Thereafter, every Mass became an extraordinary experience. Sr. Agnes also revealed her key concepts to help one live a holy life: to know God as Friend and Father who loves us, to trust God even if we don't see his way, and to be aware of the treacherous Spirit of Darkness, the Devil, who tricks us into thinking we have escaped his evil wiles.

Msgr. Hallin, in response to a

statement from Pope Francis that even atheists can be saved, agreed, saying that no person was created to be damned. He added that we have lived with extraordinary papal leadership from Pope Leo XIII to Pope Francis, all of whom have been significant popes in the life of the Church and gifted by God.

Fr. Remm was asked whether church policies should change in the light of science. His answer: an emphatic yes. Fifty years ago, he said, no one knew that the universe was 13.7 billion years old. The more we know about creation, the more we know about God; to deny creation would be to deny the Creator.

Asked if she wished she'd had children, Sr. Charlene responded yes, but found that desire fulfilled in large part through her years of teaching children. She mentioned that she had often thought of starting an orphanage, and that she would someday like to spend some time at St. Jude Hospital.

When Fr. Remm was asked if animals go to heaven, he quickly answered: "If you want them in heaven, you'll have them."

In closing, the five guests shared thoughts about their calling with their audience, and Fr. Joe mentioned that, remarkably, together they have given 288 years of life to God—and to us.

The audience did not rush off into the chilly night after the formal program was over but stayed for refreshments and fellowship. Many formed small groups around the five guests, unwilling to let them go, with so many words of wisdom to ponder.

News about area Catholic schools

From Rose Costello

This year's Empty Bowls Supper took place at The High School of St. Thomas More on Friday, February 21. STM art students use their creative gifts each year to help feed those in need by sponsoring this event. This year the money will stay in our immediate community, donated to the Daily Bread Soup Kitchen in Champaign. STM partnered with Culver's Restaurant of Champaign to bring participants a simple but delicious meal of soup and bread to remember those we are trying to help. All participants left with a handmade ceramic bowl to remind them of their gift to the needy. In addition to providing the fine meal, students performed with music, poetry reading, drama, and dance. Other supporting participants include St. Matthew's School, Holy Cross School, Campus Middle School for Girls, and Boneyard Pottery as well as many family members, teachers, and friends that have come to make bowls.

Students from the area Catholic schools were treated to a private screening of the movie "Jackson's Run" as part of their Catholic Schools Week celebration. Richie Berner, an STM senior, plays Sam, a young man who befriends Jackson, the title character, as he tries to overcome his troubled past and discover his purpose in life. The movie was awarded Best Feature Film and Best Lead Actor at the Churches Making Movies Film Festival. Various people connected with the production of the movie joined students at the Carmike Theatre in Champaign on January 31.

Holy Cross School and The High School of St. Thomas More are committed to providing opportunities for students in the performing arts. Each spring, both schools present a spring musical, and this year is no exception. STM students will perform "Bye, Bye, Birdie" on March

13, 14, and 15. Holy Cross students will perform "Seussical" in April. Both productions will involve many students from St. Patrick Parish. Check out the individual schools' websites for more details about performances.

Applications for the 2014-15 school year are now being accepted. Please contact the individual schools for more information about their programs. Links to the area Catholic schools' websites can be found at www.ChampaignCatholicSchools.org. Financial assistance is available through the Peoria Diocese Spalding Scholarship Fund; deadline for applications is March 15. More information about the scholarship is given on the diocesan website (www.cdop.org), in the parish bulletins, and from the schools.

For those interested in enrolling at The High School of St. Thomas More, please call (352-7210) to speak with a staff member about the application process. Additional application information is found on the STM website, www.hs-stm.org.

Feeling lucky? Parents of STM students are selling raffle tickets for the opportunity to win \$25,000. Tickets are \$100, and only 1000 tickets will be sold. Second prize is \$5,000, third is \$2,500, fourth is \$1,000, fifth and sixth are \$500 each, with an additional 10 \$100 winners. The main drawing will be on Sunday, March 2, at the Mardi Gras Party at the Esquire Lounge in downtown Champaign from 3 to 7 p.m. Tickets are available online on the school's website, in the parish offices, the various schools, and from any STM family.

This year's STM Gala, "A Night in the Big Easy," will be held at the high school on Saturday, April 5. The evening will include dinner and a silent and live auction. All proceeds help fund the many programs at the high school. More information is available on the STM website (www.hs-stm.org).



STM Theatre proudly presents the classic musical *Bye Bye Birdie!* Performances are 7 p.m., March 13-15, with a possible matinee performance on March 15 at 3 p.m. Ticket prices are \$7 for students, faculty, and staff, \$10 for the general public. Over 30 STM students are involved in the production, ranging from performing on stage and in the pit, in iconic musical numbers such as "Telephone Hour," "One Last Kiss," and "Kids!" to stage management, lights, sound, and stage crew.

Save the date for STM's "A Night in the Big Easy"—this annual gala event will include dinner, a live and silent auction, and much more!

Date: Saturday, April 5

Time: 6 p.m.

Location: The High School of Saint Thomas More

Laissez les bon temps rouler!

The STM Alumni Association Board of Directors is asking for nominations for the Young Alumni of the Year Award, which will be presented on Saturday, April 5, at the annual dinner auction event, "A Night in the Big Easy." This award is presented to an STM alum who has made a positive impact on the community (local, long distance, or international), has displayed exceptional human and ethical qualities, and exemplified success in and out of the classroom or in his/her chosen career.

If you know of a deserving STM alum, submit his/her name to Marsha Reardon (mreardon@hs-stm.org), along with a short explanation of why you feel this STM alum is deserving of this prestigious recognition. Nominations are due by Monday, March 17.

Holy Cross School Happenings



Holy Cross School observed the end of the Second Quarter by celebrating an Honors Mass recognizing students who made the Honor Roll, among them the following St. Patrick's children. Receiving **Highest Honors** were Kaleb Leininger, Sophia Solava, Justin Smith, Rachel Loftus, Sarah Grosse-Perdekamp, Hannah Niccum, Jessica Hood, Ethan Smith, Maris Wszalek, and Brianna Hopper. Awarded **High Honors** were Calum Beckett, Will Moore, Sammy Garcia, Kylie Hopper, Joyson Kakinga, Maci Walters, Lisa Altaner, Mary Agor, and Aidan Porter. Honors were awarded to Luke Herzog, Morgan Saunders, Austin Ford, and Josie Kuenning. *Good work, everyone, congratulations!*



The last week of January is always Catholic Schools Week across the country. This year Holy Cross School observed Catholic Schools Week with a Catholic Trivia Bee, an Open House, and an all-school Mass on Friday that also celebrated the feast day of St John Bosco.



The school has a tradition of holding a talent show on the last day of Catholic Schools Week, and this year it was spectacular. Kindergarten youngsters performed a dance routine, followed by solo performances by many children in other grades. St. Patrick's was well represented by parishioners Sarah Perdekamp, Jessica Hood, Justin Smith, and Ethan Smith. The week was capped with an all-school Sock Hop on February 1.



Did you know?

- Ours is one of 21 parishes in the Diocese of Peoria that are named for St. Patrick. The diocese—and our parish—owe a great deal to our illustrious patron!
- There really will be a parish celebration of our patron saint's feast day, although plans were only just underway as we completed work on this issue of *In Focus*. Watch the bulletin for announcements and ways you can help to make this year's celebration a memorable event in honor of St. Patrick!
- The ashes we receive at the onset of Lent are the burnt remains of the previous year's palms that were blessed on Palm Sunday. If you'd like to contribute last year's palms for next year's Ash Wednesday, look for the box labeled OLD PALMS in the church vestibule; it will be there on Palm Sunday and the following few weekends.



in our parish library

Our parish library offers good reading for Lent and Easter. You might try one or more of these:

Books for Adults

Easter Vigil and Other Poems, by Pope John Paul II. Here are poems written during the pope's years as a parish priest and Auxiliary Bishop of Cracow, on factory working, acting, children, love, and faith. 891.8 WOJ

Lent for Families: A Time to Grow, by Mary Carol Kendzia. 263.2 KEN 2000

The Little Way of Lent: Meditations in the Spirit of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, by Fr. Gary Caster. This book is an outgrowth of the promise Caster made as a seminarian, to try to bring others to Thérèse so that she might bring them to Christ. The meditations are based on Lenten Mass readings and are real "little ways" to connect with God during Lent. 242.3 CAS

Of Fast and Festival: Celebrating Lent and Easter, by Barbara O'Dea. 263.2 ODE

Renewed for Life: Brief Meditations to Help Catholics in Their Lenten Renewal, by Henri Nouwen. Excerpted from the works of Henri J. M. Nouwen by James E. Adams. 263.2 NOU

Scripture, Thoughts, and Things to Do during All the Days of Lent, by Colane Recker. 263.2 REC

Sower's Seeds of

Encouragement: Fifth Planting 100 Stories of Hope, Humor, and Healing, by Brian Cavanaugh. This book contains numerous sources of inspiration for Lent and Easter; it won an Honor in the Anthology Category at the 1999 Storytelling World Awards. 251 CAV 1998

Books for Children Children's books have call numbers with a C or CH on top, and are located on the right side of the library.

Arts and Crafts for Lent, by Jeanne Heibert. C HEI 1997

Easter Is Coming!, by Mary Herb-Montgomery. C MON 1973

The Easter Story, by Carol Heyer. C HEY 1990

The Jesus Garden (An Easter Legend), by Antoinette Bosco. C BOS 2004

Lent for Children, by Alison Berger. C BER 2000

Passover around the World, by Tami Lehman-Wilzig. CH 296.4 LEH 2007

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If you have questions, contact our parish librarian, Megan Raab (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.



Q: Are Sundays part of Lent or not?

A: Early in Christianity the discipline of fasting became associated with the number forty, thereby eventually determining the length of Lent. If you are curious to see how the forty days are met, just count forward from Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, and end with Holy Saturday—but do not include Sundays. Excepting Sundays, you should arrive at the prescribed forty days. (Officially, Lent now concludes before the evening celebration of The Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday. Thursday, Friday, and Saturday of Holy Week, known as the Triduum, recall the most sacred events of our salvation and are therefore not observed as days of Lent.)

Why excepting Sundays? Sundays during Lent have traditionally been excluded from fasting or other Lenten practices, because Sunday is *always* a feast day, a weekly celebration of Jesus' resurrection—a "little Easter," as it were. Does this mean that you should go out of your way on Sundays to indulge in whatever you gave up for Lent? Of course not! But you needn't actively avoid it—to do so would be "fasting," in a manner of speaking, and that's forbidden on Sundays, even during Lent. So if you really *must* have that piece of candy or relief from whatever Lenten practice you have taken up, save it for a Sunday—and let it remind you in some small way of the happiness and joy of Easter, the culmination of our redemption.

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



Are you ready to come home?

Have you been away from church for a while? Are you ready to come home?

Hi! My name is Brenda Baumgartner. I was away from church for 16 years. Then I saw an ad in the *News-Gazette* inviting Catholics who have not been attending Mass to re-connect with the Church. I called the phone number that was listed and started the six sessions the next week.

In these sessions, I learned many things, such as all of the changes that had been made while I was away. In my case, there had been so many changes! I shared my story and participated in the discussions, with the assurance



that anything said was confidential and would not leave the room. When I finished the six weeks, I felt ready to walk back into my church as if I hadn't missed a Sunday.

Now as a member of the Returning Catholics Team, I

am eager to help you take your first steps back to reconnect with a Catholic community.

Returning Catholics will begin its next six-week series on Wednesday, March 5, at 7 p.m. in the parish center. Wednesday evening sessions extend to April 9. For more information, please contact the parish office (367-2665) or Barbara Wysocki (367-5014).

Keeping Watch
 In the morning
 when I began to wake
 it happened again
 that feeling that you, Beloved,
 my sweet Lord,
 had stood over me
 all night long
 keeping watch....
 ...that feeling
 that as soon as I began
 to wake,
 you put your lips
 to my forehead
 and lit a holy lamp
 inside my heart.
 —Hafiz

St. Patrick's Parish IN FOCUS

St. Patrick's Parish In Focus is published on the last weekend of the month in Urbana, Ill. 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 (elilhen@att.net); Mary Lou Menches, 344-1125 (mmenches@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.

Articles and information for this issue were provided by Brenda Baumgartner, Carol Bosley, Rose Costello, Judy Fierke, Dianne Gordon, Elizabeth Hendricks, Mary Lou Menches, Ellen Noonan, Nancy Olson, Carole Rebeiz, Cathy Salika, Adam Smith, and Peggy Whelan. Patron Saints by Fr. George Wuellner. This issue was edited by John Towns, page layout by Jim Urban.

Quick fixin's from the kitchen of . . .

Cathy Salika

Baked Rice

- 3 cups chicken broth
- ½ stick butter
- 1 ½ cups uncooked rice
- ¾ cup chopped carrots
- ¼ cup minced parsley
- ½ cup chopped green onions

Combine broth and butter, heat until butter is melted, pour over rice in a casserole dish, and bake uncovered at 350° for 45 minutes. Add carrots, pars-



ley, and green onions, stir, and bake for another 10 minutes.

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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!

Update on St. Patrick's Building Project

Bravo! We have raised \$4 million in gifts and pledges!

What heart-warming news in the midst of these cold winter days! Thank you to the people of St. Patrick's – parishioners, former parishioners, and friends alike! Because of your prayers, your vision, and your generosity, St. Patrick's Capital Campaign has reached the \$4 million pledge goal.

Even so, it is vital to continue our sacrificial giving and watch our building fund grow. We will continue to accept pledges and gifts until our expanded church is completed.

We must work hard to reach that golden mark of \$4 million in hand – and beyond, recognizing that we might run into unforeseen costs as we undertake such major construction. We must ensure that we have ample funds to see our church expansion project through according to plan.

This is an incredible chapter in the history of St. Patrick's. Our campaign was launched in February 2011. After many years of prayer and planning, we were ready to build upon the vision of an expanded worship space for St. Patrick's. We realized that \$4 million was a high bar to set for our parish community, but as Father Joe said from the beginning, "This is God's work," and we moved forward with hope and enthusiasm.

Please continue to pray for God's blessings on our parish as we build for the future.

Pledged to date: \$4,021,306

Number of donors: 769*

Cash received: \$2,703,088

**Number of parishioners and friends (by household) who have made a gift or pledge to the Campaign or given a memorial gift to the Building Fund.*



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

Will you share your "giving story"?

St. Francis of Assisi said, "For it is in giving that we receive." As well, it is in receiving that we give. Behind each gift to the "Honoring Our Past, Building Our Future" campaign, there is a story. Perhaps the gift was inspired by a milestone moment at St. Patrick's – your child's baptism, your baptism, your wedding, the compassionate generosity received during a time of grief.

Perhaps it was inspired by your parents and grandparents who were parishioners years ago, or by the Sunday liturgies, the music, the

people you met here.

We would like to share some of those giving stories in the coming months in *In Focus*.

If you are willing to share your story, please send it to Carol Bosley (carolannbosley@gmail.com) or Joyce Wagner (wagner1989@comcast.net). We would also welcome photos of your giving inspirational moment or person – a wedding day at St. Patrick's, a Baptism, parents or grandparents, etc.

Thank you for sharing your story.

Keeping you informed

We are now in the fourth year of St. Patrick's Capital Campaign and moving "full steam ahead" with the church expansion plan. To facilitate communications and track campaign progress, Father Joe Hogan has asked several parishioners to serve in various capacities. Ellen Amberg, Pat Justice, and Scott McCartney are assisting with campaign follow-up. Pat Mayer is doing graphic design for special publicity pieces, and Jose Schutt-Aine is keeping our campaign website up-to-date. Carol Bosley and Joyce Wagner are responsible for publicity for the Capital Campaign and the building project.

As mentioned in previous *In Focus* articles, Father Joe has appointed three committees to support the church expansion – Building Committee, Music Advisory Committee, and Art and Environment Advisory Committee. Members of the Building Committee are Randy Pankau and Joe Vitosky (Co-chairs), Tim Kerestes (Project Manager), Dave Palmisano, and Mark Sweeney. Members of the Music Advisory Committee are Laura Theby (Chair), Yvonne Vitosky, Cathy Salika, and Camille Goudeseune. Members of the Art and Environment Advisory Committee are Mary Karten (Chair), Margy Palmisano, Pat Mayer, Thomas Skaggs, and Angela Kneer.

Special thanks to these parishioners for their service during this important chapter in our parish history.