

St. Patrick Parish IN FOCUS



www.stpaturbana.org

December 2016

Do you know what you want for Christmas?

Early in the fall the voices begin clamoring to tell us what we want. We cannot read the newspaper, listen to the radio, or watch television without being told what will make our holidays complete. But the voices will never tell us what we really want, what we really long for, what we desire with heart and soul.



Those who have sat in the darkness know how the shadows give way to desire. Without sight, without our heads swimming with the images of what others tell us we want, we can turn our gaze inward and search our souls. What speaks to us? What calls to us? What dreams have we buried? What wounds cry out for healing? What longs to be born in us in this season? What is the yearning which we

have not dared to name?

Advent affords us the opportunity to explore, to discern, to name our desires. What and who do I desire? Do my desires spring from a longing for wholeness or from a sense of inadequacy? Do they come from within me or from what others say I should want? Will what I long for bring healing to others as well as to myself? Will my desires draw me closer to God? Do I really believe the Holy One desires me, loves me unconditionally, longs for me?

The Holy One, who invited Mary into partnership, assures each of us that we too are desired and desirable. So desired, what do we claim as our own desires, what are the longings that we carry in this season of Advent?

There is something on the horizon the likes of which we have never seen before. It is not possible to keep it from coming, because it will come. That's just how Advent works. What is possible is to not see it, to miss it, to turn just as it brushes past us. Only then do we begin to grasp what it was we missed.

So stay. Sit. Linger. Tarry. Ponder. Wait. Behold. Wonder. There will be time enough for rushing, for worrying, for pushing.

For now, stay. Wait. Watch.

Attention, Mass-goers!

There is a growing need for parishioners to serve St. Patrick's faith community as Eucharistic ministers at Mass. Some parishioners who have served faithfully have moved away, others find the steps into the sanctuary daunting, and still others are trying to find their "sweet spot" among the rescheduled weekend Masses.



In the current scheduling of Eucharistic ministers there are many "open" spots to be filled—18 in all, 6 of them for the 5:00 Mass alone. The hope at present is that an unscheduled minister will step forward to fill in as needed a system that is frequently successful, but often enough is not. Some generous Eucharistic ministers are scheduled for more than one weekend each month in answer to the need.

If you were to choose to become a Eucharistic minister, you would receive information about this ministry, training in the exercise of this ministry at Mass, and scheduling once (or maybe twice) a month at the Mass time of your choice. Current openings are available at every Mass time.

Can you help? God may be calling you to assist your faith community in this way. How will you respond?

Lots of fun and sweets at Trunk or Treat!

On a sunny fall afternoon, with the temperatures in the lower sixties, more than 20 decorated cars and vans lined up in the church parking lot. It was the fifth annual St. Patrick's "Trunk or Treat" held on the day before Halloween. Colorfully dressed kids wore a variety of costumes: there were religious costumes, including a very young bishop, several mermaids and octopi, princesses and knights, and even witches.

The autumnal sun sent orange shafts of light over the adorned vehicles. Many displayed traditional Halloween themes of ghosts, witches, and skeletons. There were also Illini themed vehicles and other clever ideas such as an "M & M" van covered with huge colored dots. Some even had music playing. All handed out treats to the costumed kids, but some required the kids to play games before receiving their treats. The-trunk-or-treaters voted on the best trunk and the best treats. The best trunk was won by the Pociask family, and the best treats were won by the McMillan family.

Before the Trunk-or-Treaters spoiled their appetites with the plundered candy, their parents led them into the parish hall for a Halloween meal, where they were served hot dogs, little bags of chips and Oreo cookies, and orange and blue frosted cupcakes for dessert. They washed it all down with lemonade or hot cocoa.

Then the costumed kids could participate in the indoor activities. There was a craft room where they could construct Tootsie Pop spiders with black pipe cleaner legs, candy corn collages, and black paper bats.

Afterward they could go to the large game room behind the stage, where they could play ring toss onto several black pointy witch's hats or drop a white ghost into a canning jar. They could also toss a beanbag into a pumpkin's nose or bowl down a squadron of ghost paper towel rolls.

The shrieks and laughter reverberating in the parish hall proclaimed that a good time was had by all.



Health Fair provides useful information and resources

On October 30, the parish nurses sponsored a Health Fair in the parish hall—the first since construction on the church expansion began.

While the Knights of Columbus held a pancake breakfast on one side of the hall, tables on the other side were staffed with representatives from an assortment of local healthcare providers and organizations, among them the Mills Breast Cancer Institute, Promise HealthCare, Champaign County Healthcare Consumers, and others. Information was available about cancer prevention and early detection, health insurance assistance, free and low-cost medical and dental care, and other concerns.

Those attending the Health Fair could pick up a Vial of Life, have their cholesterol tested, get a breast cancer risk assessment, have their blood pressure checked, or receive a flu shot.

Thanks to our parish nurses for bringing all these resources to our parish!



Parish nurse Marie Horne displays a Vial of Life at a past Health Fair.

The Cath'lic Boys win the presidency!

This wasn't your usual Ladies Knight Out. For one thing, it was on a beautiful autumnal evening instead of a cold winter's night. For another, the Knights had a whole new building to use, and they took full advantage of it.

The dinner was elegantly presented in the parish social hall. Every



Joe Hogan. Father Doug Hennessy made a special guest appearance. As always, the group showed off their many talents for singing, playing musical instruments, writing, and performing.

As the title suggests, the premise of the show was that the Cath'lic Boys couldn't make up their minds

between the two presidential candidates and so decided that they should run for the job themselves. After plagiarizing Neil Sadaka's "I love, I love, I love my little Hillary (calendar) girl" and "You got to have Trump (heart)," the

Cath'lic Boys decided to hit the campaign trail for themselves with the slogan "Let's make America Catholic again."

In New Orleans they sang, "It don't mean a thing if it ain't got that swing-vote." Then they came out in plaid shirts and straw hats playing guitar, mandolin, washboard, and jug, singing, "Potty Stop (Rocky Top) Tennessee." In the next skit they rode a raft across the Missouri River singing, "O Omaha (Shenandoah), I long to see you." Under the Cath'lic Boys' influence, the Las Vegas candidate debate became a musical one. Trump sang Lancelot's song from "Camelot," "C'est Moi." Hillary responded to that with "These boots are made for walking."

Each skit was funnier than the last. What a fun evening!

lady received a long-stem rose. There were more roses in crystal vases on every burgundy-clothed table. Knights constantly circulated with carafes of white, rose, or red wine to pour into the waiting goblets.

The only time the ladies were quiet was when Jeff Kneer led grace for the dinner—and thanked God for the Cubs' World Series victory. The steaks and chicken were cooked perfectly, accompanied by salad, baked potatoes, and green beans. All cleaned their plates, forgetting to leave room for the creamy cheese cake. During dessert and coffee, the Knights held the raffle for bottles of wine, coupons to restaurants, and dozens of red roses.

At least the ladies had a short walk before the show. This year the Cath'lic Boys performed downstairs in the new Trinity Hall. The show, "The Cath'lic Boys for President: Write In/Write On," was dedicated to Father





in our parish library

As we approach the fall and winter seasons, the weather becomes more and more bleak. Skies are gray, and it is often windy. The Midwest fall and winter weather can really put a damper on one's spirits. For an uplift, you might read *Humor Me*, by Barbara Johnson. This book contains several short, humorous stories intended to lift your spirits.

Another book you might find a good read is *Surprised by Truth*, by Patrick Madrid. It follows the personal conversion stories of eleven people who discovered (or rediscovered) the wonder of the Catholic faith and made the decision to come closer to God.

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

As the Christmas season approaches, it is important to remember those who helped to make Catholicism in America what it is today. *American Catholic: The Saints and Sinners Who Built America's Most Powerful Church*, by Charles R. Morris, recounts the historic events that lead to the spread of Catholicism in the United States. It also recounts the Church's ever-present struggle to come to terms with secularism and pluralism in America.

As the New Year approaches, you might want to consider whether you are doing all you can to become the person God created you to be. Steven Covey's *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens* and *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* detail the virtues and characteristics needed in order to become more compassionate, caring, and empathetic to those around us.

Beginning in December, there will be a book drive to donate reading material to the Salvation Army, Goodwill, and the Catholic Worker House. If you would like to donate your gently used reading material, look for the donation box in the parish center near the mail boxes.

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If you have questions, contact our parish librarian, Megan Raab (raab41987@gmail.com); she will be happy to assist you. The door to the parish library is now always open—come and browse to your heart's content!



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

my sins?

A: No, not at all. You will be asked to bring to mind any sins you've committed or any sinful tendencies you've recognized in yourself, tell the Lord that you're truly sorry for them, and promise to try to avoid repeating them in the future. This is done, however, in the privacy of your own heart to begin with, and then you share them in confidence with one of the priests who stand ready to give you counseling and absolution.

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

* * *

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



Patron Saints for December

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

- Monday, Dec. 12, at Holy Cross, Champaign
- Tuesday, Dec. 13, at St. Patrick's, Urbana
- Wednesday, Dec. 14, at St. Matthew's, Champaign
- Thursday, Dec. 15, at Our Lady of the Lake, Mahomet

Seniors celebrate All Souls Day with Fr. Deptula

On Nov. 2, All Souls Day, 14 St. Patrick's parishioners met at Manzella's for a very enjoyable Italian lunch of choices from the menu. Lunch was followed by an inspiring talk on purgatory, resurrection, and indulgences given by Fr. Matthew Deptula from St. Matthew's parish in Champaign. A brief summary of his talk follows:

Fr. Matt clarified for us differences in Catholic and Protestant belief in purgatory, citing scriptural references in Hebrews and Maccabees.

Purgatory, an experience of God's mercy, assures us of reaching heaven. The feasts of All Saints Day (Nov. 1) and All Souls Day (Nov. 2) are a single celebration, spoken by St. John and St. Paul. We are not alone; through the Communion of Saints we are one in the Mystical Body of Christ.

Paul's writings present Christ within the Church, Christ our judge but also our savior, for it is the Son of God who has died for us. As we accept God's love with repentance and forgiveness of others, we grow closer to Jesus. The assurance of purgatory is stress-releasing for us, for we walk in the Light of Christ.

Fr. Deptula explained the differences between partial and plenary indulgences, pointed out that the Sadducees did not believe in resurrection although the Pharisees did, and drew a parallel

between Jesus' resurrection and Lazarus's restoration to life.

The Church can be understood as a divine ship with a human crew. Mary, who acquiesced to God's invitation to give birth to the Son of God, can help us and our loved ones (alive or deceased) as we consecrate them to her.

An All Souls Day Mass had been scheduled to take place at Woodlawn Cemetery in Urbana at 4:00 p.m.



A parish family works to create hope in the face of loss

On December 28, 2015, St. Patrick's parishioners Paul and Wanpen Anderson experienced the devastating loss of their daughter, Angela, who was only 22 years old. Angela had developed a fever and eye infection on Christmas Eve, for which she was seen at Convenient Care. On Christmas morning her parents took her to the Emergency Room, and she was admitted to the ICU. She was diagnosed with a rare condition called Stevens-Johnson Syndrome/Toxic Epidermal Necrolysis (SJS/TEN) and died only three days later. Even after testing, doctors still do not know what triggered this disease.

At her visitation and funeral, Angela's family asked for donations for research to fight Stevens-Johnson Syndrome. After a long search, they found a team of doctors at Vanderbilt University Medical Center (VUMC) that was willing to start research in SJS/TEN. The research team is headed by Dr. Elizabeth Phillips. Thanks to the generosity of friends and family, the Andersons have now accumu-

lated \$20,000 in donations that they are going to give to Dr. Phillips and her team. In addition to this, Vanderbilt has promised that they will match donations dollar for dollar.

While the Andersons will always have heavy hearts with the loss of their beautiful daughter, they hope to bring something good from it by helping to encourage and fund research so that someday a cure may be found for this terrible condition.

If you would like to contribute to this cause in honor of this vibrant young member of our church community and her grieving family, you have several options. You can make a donation by check, payable to "Angela Anderson Memorial Fund," and mail it to Paul and Wanpen Anderson, 3218 Brentwood Dr., Champaign, IL 61821 or to Prospect Bank, 1601 S Prospect Ave., Champaign, IL 61820. You may also donate online at www.gofundme.com/2gc6png.

For more information about Stevens-Johnson Syndrome, visit: www.sjsupport.org/pdf/SJS_factsheet.pdf.



Holy Cross Happenings

The first quarter is officially in the books, and plenty of St. Patrick's students enrolled at Holy Cross School earned grades that qualified them for Honors. (See accompanying box.)

But that's hardly all they've been up to. Celebrations such as the K-5 Fall Festival and 6th-8th grade Halloween party have taken place, as have the annual All Saints Day and Veterans Day commemorations.

On the sports front, baseball, soccer, cross country, and girls' basketball have (mostly) wrapped up for the year. Boys' basketball has just started. All sports have ample representation from St. Patrick's parishioners. Check out the sports schedule at holycrosselem.org (click on "Parents/Students," then "Athletics" to find a clickable master schedule) and come to cheer on our kids at a game! Bring a little cash for admission and snacks.

Service projects are also well underway for the year: In November, it is the 6th grade's turn to walk donations of fruit and milk to Daily Bread Soup Kitchen. Students in grades 5-8 are grouped into "houses" (a la Harry Potter) named after different saints. On November 3—officially, the day the Cubs won the World Series!—the kids donned their various saint house shirts and went to area homes to rake leaves for residents in need of a little help. Additionally, each grade continues to honor the

commitments made to give back throughout the year.

Please continue to pray for our students!

* * *

Interested in having your children attend Holy Cross School? Schedule a tour of the school by calling Principal Chris Ellis (356-9521). Financial help may be available; contact St. Patrick's parish office (367-2665) for more details.

Honors

Calum Beckett
Will Moore
Sam Ramey
Cole Saunders

High Honors

Marissa Altaner
Brandon Hood
Kylie Hopper
Emily Leininger
Joshua Loftus
Parker Moore
Hadley Peters
Jay Saunders
Elizabeth Stubbers
Sylvia Withers-Sickles

Highest Honors

Lukas Grosse-Perdekamp
Joyson Kakinga
Kaleb Leininger
Ellen Loftus
Maddy McCoy
Kate McMillan
Ian Peters
Jasmine Waite



Kate McMillan (grade 5) and Joyson Kakinga (grade 8) rake leaves for neighborhood residents.



Michael McCoy, Anna Loftus, and Phillip Withers-Sickles (all grade 4) portrayed saints at the November 6 Mass.

A prayer for our earth

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures. You embrace with your tenderness all that exists. Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one. O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes. Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.

Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the earth. Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light. We thank you for being with us each day. Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace.

—Pope Francis, from his encyclical, *Laudato Si*

John Michael Talbot: All things are possible with God!

At our October 16-17 Parish Mission, renowned Catholic musician, author, and TV host John Michael Talbot (JMT) led hundreds of St. Patrick's parishioners and guests on an entertaining and spiritual walk with God. Humor plays a major role in his ministry, and JMT warned us early on the first night "that if you are expecting me to be serious, you will be seriously disappointed."

Informing us not to be "trapped by the notion that Jesus might be offended by applause in church," JMT had us standing and clapping enthusiastically as we followed his instruction "to give Jesus a big round of applause."

JMT made it clear that participation by the congregation was his expectation, while joking that we needed to expand our "Catholic Comfort Zones," and we did. With his energetic encouragement, we stood, arms raised and waving, and swayed to the music as we sang along with JMT.

As enjoyable and uplifting as participating with JMT was, he enthralled us even more when we listened to his beautiful voice as he sang classical worship songs and hymns such as "Lord Send Forth Your Spirit and Renew the Face of the Earth," along with many of his own songs from his 55 CDs. Particularly memorable was the title song from his recently released CD, *The Inner Room*. JMT mesmerized us with his plaintive guitar melody while softly singing spirit-inspired lyrics imploring us to "go into the inner room, God's secret chamber . . . not to pray like an actor on a stage . . . with empty words and vain reputations . . . (but) to pray with sincerity with open hearts and mean the words that you say."

JMT made it clear that he means the words that he says, and that with the Lord's guidance he is following the path Jesus has shown him. "I asked God what I was supposed to do," he explains, "and



God said, 'Play your music and I will open and shut the doors.'" His song lyrics, scriptural references, and spiritual testimony moved and inspired us to seriously reflect on both our personal relationships with Jesus and our Catholic Church's responsibility to constantly lead us in a revival that causes us "to be on fire for God."

Frequently quoting scripture, he lovingly reminded us that to follow Jesus we must spend time in our inner room with Him. "For in the inner room, there is peace in Christ. In these times of conflict, anger, and violence, wouldn't it be great just to focus on Jesus? Not Trump, not Clinton, but only Jesus will save you." JMT beseeched us to be like Jesus in Mark 11 and have no inner doubts that "all things are possible with God."

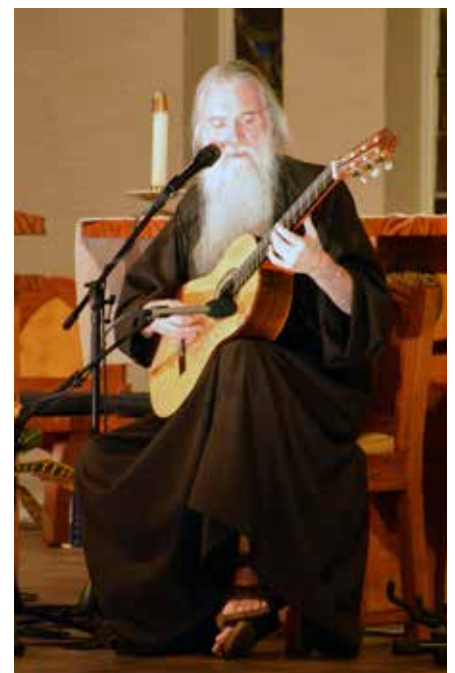
Another important part of JMT's message focused on revival. Quoting His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI, JMT said the Church will continue to be persecuted. Not seeing great enthusiasm in the country for renewal, he encouraged us to pray for revival

in the Church and in American culture. "We want to want revival, but we do not yet want revival. We need to change—we need to be on fire for God."

John Michael Talbot certainly set those of us attending on fire for God. God's love and spirit emanated from his being, and we showered him with our love and appreciation by ending both evenings with prolonged standing ovations. His website proclaims that "John Michael, like a modern St. Francis, is rebuilding God's Church one parish at a time, and renewing hearts one life at a time." His ministry at

St. Patrick's Parish Mission testified to this claim.

If you were not able to attend, you can find out more about John Michael Talbot by visiting his website, www.johnmichaeltalbot.com. You can also find some of his CDs and books online and at local libraries.



St. Thomas More Minute

The fall semester is just flying by! On the nights of October 20-22, St. Patrick's parishioners Ethan Smith and Hannah Niccum were the leads in the fall play, "Hamlet Thrill-Ma-Geddon," a comedy by Don Zolidis. Elie Nyembo was the Ghost of Hamlet's father. Costumes were designed by Theresa Niccum and Frances Drone-Silver. Shelby Turner and

Mikala Turner were on the costume committee, and Abby Goad was part of the set crew.

On October 28, the school held its annual Fall Follies with the school's a cappella group, Note Nerdy, performing several songs that it submitted for competition. Both of STM's cross-country teams with St. Patrick's parishioners went to State. Our

football team made it into the play-offs with a 6-3 record (we'll have to let you know how they fared in the January issue). All Saints Day was celebrated with our Grand Sabers for Mass, followed by a reception.

All of our St Patrick's students at St. Thomas More thank you for your continued support and prayers.



Did you know?

* The parish library has recent issues of several Catholic magazines and newspapers that you can take home to read and keep, or pass along to others in your family or to friends who might like to learn the "Catholic take" on topics of current interest. These are located on the revolving circular rack near the entrance to the library.

Among them are several you may recognize: America Magazine, Commonweal, National Catholic Reporter, The Catholic Post, and U.S. Catholic. Publications perhaps not so familiar include The Tablet, Weavings, Alive Now, and others.

If your budget doesn't stretch to include Catholic periodicals and newspapers, you can enjoy these at no cost—stop by sometime to see what's available. The parish library is now open, accessible whenever the parish center is open. Come and see!

* You are invited to participate in a spiritual bouquet of prayer for Fr. Joe. Cards on which you may check your prayer offering on his behalf are on top of the cabinet in the Gathering Space. You may put your card in the collection basket or turn it in to the parish office.

* If you haven't walked through the parish center recently, you won't have seen the cozy, attractive seating areas in the lobby and in the transitional space between the parish center and the church. Check them out! You might also visit the lower level to see the transformation of the lobby area, with yet another attractive seating area large enough to accommodate a small group. On the walls there you can follow St. Patrick's transition through its first hundred years and beyond in mounted posters. More changes to come, we've been told.

Fall in Love

Nothing is more practical than
finding God, than
falling in Love
in a quite absolute, final way.
What you are in love with,
what seizes your imagination,
will affect everything.
It will decide
what will get you out of bed in the
morning,
what you do with your evenings,
how you spend your weekends,
what you read,
whom you know,
what breaks your heart,
and what amazes you with joy and
gratitude.
Fall in Love,
stay in Love,
and it will decide everything.

—Father Pedro Arrupe, S.J.

St. Francis and a beloved Christmas tradition

One of the most recognizable saint banners in our Saints Chapel is the one depicting St. Francis of Assisi. Most of us are familiar with the story of this man who gave up wealth and possessions to live among the poor and devote himself to the stewardship of God's creation. But did you know that he originated the idea of the Nativity scene?

In fact it was the first living crèche that St. Francis staged on Christmas Eve, 1223. Outside the town of Greccio, Italy, he set up a manger in a cave, bringing in hay, an ox, and an ass. During a time when many people were obsessed with wealth and material possessions, Francis wanted to remind them that Jesus had begun as a poor child. As the villagers looked on the scene, he preached about "the Babe of Bethlehem."

At that time, mystery or miracle plays that re-enacted Bible stories were very popular. Because most laypeople did not understand the Latin Mass, this was how most ordinary people learned Scripture. The Nativity scene served a similar function, so it's no wonder that soon Nativity scenes were popular throughout Italy and then southern Europe.

Interestingly, our St. Francis banner has a connection to Nativity scenes. The robe St. Francis wears was created using images of a 12-inch square of burlap fabric donated by one of the Sunday school teachers who used to teach the 3- and 4-year-olds. She helped the children make their own Nativity scenes from toilet paper rolls and cloth, so many older children in the parish may possess their own piece of this same burlap fabric.

Parishioner Pat Mayer, who created the beautiful banners, says that the nail in St. Francis's belt is from the original 1901 construction of the church. This lovely reminder of St. Patrick's founding represents God's call to Francis to rebuild his church and also the stigmata that he received later in his life. The rope-like cord he wears was the belt of



the poor, which Francis adopted. The three knots in the cord symbolize the three vows he took: chastity, poverty, and obedience. One of the servers' cinctures (belts) was used to create the image of the cord. The rosary Francis holds has elements from three different parishioners' rosaries.

The only images in any of the banners that were not made from items lent by parishioners or photographed around the parish are the birds in the St. Francis banner. Have you noticed all of them? Pat says that she can still remember the small details that drew her attention in the church when she was little, so she placed a small bird at the bottom of the banner because she wanted something eye-catching at a level for the very youngest parishioners. She considers the St. Francis banner her tribute to all the wonderful gifts that the young and simple hearts of the parish offer.

When you see a crèche this Christmas season, remember to give thanks to St. Francis for this beautiful idea!

Vocation Prayer

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

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

The Holy Vietnamese Martyrs were celebrated with a Vietnamese Mass

In November, the Church in Vietnam gives thanks to Almighty God for the fidelity of our ancestors to the cross of Christ. On November 20, the local Vietnamese community celebrated a Mass in recognition of those who gave their lives in faithfulness to the Gospel.

The holy martyrs are good examples to the Catholics of today. In heaven the martyrs beseech God for all friends and families to have the graces they need to stay faithful. The history of the Vietnamese martyrs shows the passion of Christ and the conquering of death through his resurrection. Pope St. John Paul II, who canonized these martyrs, said:

“The Vietnamese Martyrs gave testimony that it is necessary to adore the one Lord as the personal God who made heaven and earth... They affirmed their freedom to believe, holding with humble courage that the Christian religion was the only thing that they could not abandon, that they could not disobey the supreme sovereign: the Lord.”

The Vietnamese Catholics always pray the following prayer, written by Mr. Thiem Vu, every day after Mass and at home to remind every generation following them to be willing to give up their lives for the kingdom of God:



O beloved Vietnamese Martyrs, you are the children in whom the Father is well-pleased, heroic witnesses to Christ and always faithful to the Church.

Together with you and with the Virgin Mary, Queen of Martyrs, we praise God the Most High.

The Father has filled you with the Holy Spirit that you could be faithful to his Son, the Word made flesh, courageously bearing all kinds of suffering, travelling with Jesus on his way to the cross, even to the point of shedding your own blood.

You rejoiced in becoming the seed sown in the earth that the Church in Vietnam might have an abundant harvest of grace.

And now the Church offers you in thanksgiving to God, in union with Christ, as the first fruits of that abundant harvest.

You love our country, pray for us now that we may have peace and that we may work for peace in our world.

You died without feelings of resentment and bitterness or even hatred.

Pray for all the men and women of our world, that whatever race or culture we may learn to love and care for one another.

Amen.

Prayer when lighting a candle

Lord, I cannot stay long here with you: in leaving this candle, I wish to give you something of myself. May this candle be a light for you to enlighten me in my difficulties and decisions. Help me to be with you in everything I do this day. Amen.

We who are on our way to eternity, living our baptismal lives in this world, can already celebrate the promise fulfilled in those who have gone ahead in death to share new life in Christ. We can communicate (in both words and through the mystery of the Eucharist) with our beloved dead. For they are alive—and even more alive than we are because they now possess the fullness of the promise we journey toward in time.

—Pat Marrin

Prepare for Christmas with Simbang Gabi

For the eleventh year, the Filipino community of East Central Illinois will celebrate Simbang Gabi. This novena of Masses helps the community prepare for the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. Simbang Gabi dates back four centuries to the early years of Christianity in the Philippines. In the beginning, the Masses were held early in the morning before farmers went to work in the fields. More recently the novena is held in the evening, most text and songs in English with some Tagalog songs. All are invited to attend.



Times and locations of the Simbang Gabi Masses:

- Friday Dec. 16, 7:00 p.m. Holy Cross Church, Champaign. Social hour after the Mass.
- Saturday, Dec. 17, 5:30 p.m., St. Paul's Church, Danville. Social hour after the Mass.
- Sunday, Dec. 18, 10:00 a.m., St. Mary's Church, Champaign. Social hour after the Mass.
- Monday, Dec. 19, 7 p.m., Our Lady of the Lake Church, Mahomet. Social hour after the Mass.
- Tuesday, Dec. 20, 7 p.m., St. John's Chapel, Champaign.
- Wednesday, Dec. 21, 7 p.m., St. Mathew's Church, Champaign. Social hour after the Mass.
- Thursday, Dec. 22, 7 p.m., St. Patrick's Church, Urbana. Social hour after the Mass.
- Friday, Dec. 23, 7 p.m., Holy Cross Church, Champaign. Social hour after the Mass.
- Saturday, Dec. 24, 4 p.m., St. John's Chapel, Champaign.

Cookies and baskets and sweet treats galore!

Following a hiatus in 2015, the Women of St. Patrick's annual Basket & Bake Sale will return on Sunday, December 11, after the 8:00 and 10:00 Masses. Join us in the main parish hall for sweet treats and gift baskets sure to please the most discriminating persons on your Christmas list!

The ever-popular "cookies by the dozen" will be a main feature of the bake sale, allowing purchase of a variety of cookies to tempt your sweet tooth. But cookies are just the start of the fun. Parish bakers will have donned their aprons, opened their recipe files, and produced wonderful homemade cookies, pies, cakes, and breads. Plan to take some home, or enjoy them with your Sunday morning coffee after Mass. You are invited to donate your own family favorite Christmas cookies or other baked goods. Check the parish website to sign up.

Also back this year are more than 100 beautiful gift baskets ready to give to family, friends, or perhaps a favorite teacher. From Illini fans to tea aficionados, pasta lovers to wine sippers, there will be a basket

sure to catch your eye and please someone on your gift list. Small gift items will be available and ready for children to give to a special someone in their life. There will be something to warm the heart of both givers and



recipients of all ages and interests. A silent auction featuring beautiful tableware as well as a vintage wooden child's sled will round out the morning's offerings.

All proceeds go to the Women of St. Patrick to support their work in the parish. We hope you will plan on doing some of your Christmas shopping at the sale and be part of this Women of St. Patrick's palate-pleasing and enjoyable fundraiser.

The two volunteers who prepare the page layout for *In Focus* really need help from at least one more parishioner to prepare the page layout for a couple of issues a year.

Templates, guidelines, schedules—all would be provided. Can you help? Denise Green, dgree1@gmail.com



An Advent offering for you — and for our community

At the close of World War I, the first service of Lessons and Carols was held on Christmas Eve, 1918, at King's College, Cambridge. Since then, Lessons and Carols, a service of Scripture and Song, has become a popular Advent service at many churches, schools, and universities across the world.

Join members of the music ministries of St. Patrick's, St. Mary's, and St. Luke's Christian Methodist Episcopal churches as they lead the service that includes the traditional nine readings, which recount the Fall, the promise of a Messiah, the Incarnation, and the Great Commission to preach the Good News. These will be (untraditionally) read in the many languages that are spoken within our communities and interspersed with carols and music for the season from the Old and New Worlds.

The service will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 4. A free-will offering will support the music ministries of the participating churches.

Do come. May it become a new tradition for your family, and for our parish family.



St. Patrick Parish
IN FOCUS

St. Patrick's Parish In Focus is published on the last weekend of the month in Urbana, IL. 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 infocusst-pats@gmail.com. You may also send them 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); Denise Green, 553-7110 (dgree1@gmail.com); Elizabeth Hendricks, 328-2184 (elihen@att.net); Mary Lou Menches, 344-11253 (mmenches@illinois.edu); Cathy Salika, 367-7861 (csalika@illinois.edu); and Peggy Whelan, 367-3668 (margaretwhelan@att.net).

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Articles, information, and photos for this issue were provided by Paul and Wanpen Anderson, Luis Cuza, Donna Dalbey, Judy Fierke, Frank Gallo, Denise Green, Elizabeth Hendricks, Rachael McMillan, Pat Mayer, Mary Lou Menches, Nancy Olson, Father John Pham, Megan Raab, Dan Richards, Cathy Salika, Ruth Shaw, Adam Smith, Mary Twigg, and Stan Yanchus. Patron Saints by Fr. George Wuellner. This issue was edited by Rick Partin, page layout by John Colombo.

Quick fixin's from the kitchen of . . . Ruth Shaw

Sour Cream Coffee Cake


- 1/2 c butter or oleo
- 1-1/4 c sugar (divided)
- 2 eggs
- 2 c sifted flour
- 1 t soda
- 1 t baking powder
- 1/2 t salt
- 1 c sour cream
- 1 t vanilla
- 1/3 c brown sugar
- 1 t cinnamon



Cream butter and 1 cup sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs one at a time. Sift flour, soda, baking powder, and salt together. Add dry ingredients alternating with sour cream. Add vanilla, and mix all together. In a separate bowl mix 1/3 cup brown sugar, 1/4 cup white sugar, and cinnamon for topping. Pour batter into greased Bundt pan and cover with topping. (Can add nuts or chocolate chips—or dried cranberries for a festive touch—if desired.) Bake at 350 for 40 minutes, or until toothpick says it's done. Note: Topping can be layered with batter if preferred. (This type of cake freezes well.)

* * *

If you have a recipe you'd like to share, please send it to Mary Lou Menches (344-1125, mmenches@illinois.edu). The only requirement is that it be easy and quick to prepare!

 Deadline for submission of information, articles and news items for the next issue of In Focus is **December 4**.