

# St. Patrick Parish IN FOCUS

www.stpatuurbana.org

March 2018

## Holding Faith, Forty Days and Counting

Lent is a season that we typically see as an opportunity for self-discipline and spiritual enrichment. The ancient custom of giving up things for forty days is deeply ingrained in our psyche.

We forgo little luxuries like sweets or movie-going or ice cream or alcohol. We undertake programs of prayer and scripture study. We participate in weekly meager meals of soup and bread and water, followed by evening prayer. We drop our coins into Rice Bowls.

We are seeking to deepen our faith through study, charitable activity, contemplation.

These may not be activities of volcanic proportions, but their practice has much in common with the molten energy seething under the Pacific ring of fire. Both change things. And Lent is about

change – change of heart, of perspective, of focus, of the death that precedes new life. It is about recognizing what is our cross and taking it up to walk in the company of Jesus with that new life as our goal.

One day we might carry our cross lightly, but it can suddenly become a heavy burden. We carry our cross across the horizon of our lives. Circumstances may – and often do – change, but we carry on. Jesus is our teacher, and we practice following his path.

David Sandel is a counselor, spiritual director, and writer, who lives in Urbana. Each year he writes and publishes daily Lent and Advent reflections. From his book *Finding My Way 2016*, here is his Lenten reflection on carrying the cross:

**Holding Faith** continued on pg. 11

## St. Patrick Offers Lenten Opportunities for Women and Men

Are you looking for opportunities to nurture your spiritual growth this Lent? The Women of St. Patrick have some suggestions.

Every Thursday during Lent, come meet with others in church at 12:15 p.m. to pray the rosary. If you have signed up for the Thursday afternoon sessions of Catholic Social Teaching 101, don't worry, you'll have plenty of time for a quick lunch before the 1:00 p.m. session.

A Mass of the Anointing of the Sick will be celebrated on Tuesday, March 6, at 11:00 a.m. with Fr. Luke presiding. Afterwards, everyone is invited to a soup lunch in the main hall of the parish center, hosted by the WSP.

The WSP's annual Women's Lent Retreat Day will be led this year by Sr. Barbara Leonard, OSF.



Sr. Barbara Leonard

**Lenten Opportunities** continued on pg. 8



## Pew Ponderings

### Are there reasons why St. Patrick's doesn't use bells at Mass during the consecration?

When bells were introduced in the late 12th century, large belfry bells were rung to indicate the elevation of the newly consecrated Sacred Host. These days, smaller bells are allowed. The lack of altar bells at St. Patrick's dates back to the 1970s, when many churches rode the wave of Vatican II and opted for fewer practices that that harkened back to the Latin Mass. For some, the thinking is that because the Mass is in English there is no longer a need to signal when the consecration occurs. Moreover, some enjoy the quiet contemplation during the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Others contend that the bells are a good reminder when we are often distracted, or a good signal for children and perhaps for those present who don't have English as their primary language.

### Speaking of Catholic practices, there was a time when we had High Masses and Low Masses. Do we still celebrate both?

While High Masses and Low Masses aren't widely celebrated today, many parishes do engage in a practice of "Progressive Solemnity," where significant feast days are celebrated with greater vigor than ordinary days. For example, Easter Sunday is celebrated with more decoration, music, and incense than is true of an Ordinary Time Sunday Mass. One simple distinction between High and Low Masses has to do with music. Low Masses utilize the spoken word (much of it in silent prayer by the priest), no deacon, and two lighted candles. High Masses are distinguished by the use of music, deacons, incense, chanting, multiple candles, etc. (By the way, some parishioners remember the Low Mass lasting only about 30



minutes.)

### The following are great suggestions that the Parish Council will be addressing over the next few months:

- Cup dispenser in the Main Street bathroom
- Altar servers should not use matches to light the individual candles
- Second collection baskets placed by the doors as people are leaving church
- Widen space between Body/Blood distribution to decrease congestion
- *In Focus* article about the spiritual directors and their areas of specialty
- Wall-mounted holy water vessels to avoid "traffic jam" after Mass
- Encourage people to turn off cell phones and put them away during Mass
- Better advertising of the "Cry Room" (preferred term is "Family Room")
- Can we publish the Mass attendance numbers taken each October?

### What kind of security do we have for the parish buildings?

Fear not, the church and adjacent buildings are secured using a combination of security tools, including an alarm system. Our parish is in the process of developing guidelines for emergency procedures as well.

### Why do altar servers bring

### up the "red book" before Mass? Why isn't it part of the procession?

Many times, the number of altar servers will determine whether the "red book" (now called the Roman Missal) is carried in the entrance procession or brought up before Mass. The need for candle and cross bearers supersede the need to carry this book in procession. Typically, the decision about the Roman Missal is made just before lining up for the entrance procession, and from time to time another server arrives after it has already been placed in the sanctuary.

## VOCATION PRAYER

Father,  
I know you love me  
and have plans for me,  
but sometimes  
I am overwhelmed  
by the thought  
of the choices  
to be made.  
Help me to listen  
for your call,  
a call to a lifestyle  
that will let me love  
as only I can,  
and that will let me  
serve others  
with the special gifts  
you have given me.

## “Lord, When Did We See You?” *by Stan Yanchus*

I have been serving as a volunteer tutor and program facilitator for the University of Illinois' Education Justice Program (EJP) at the Danville Correctional Center (DCC) for over two years because I finally listened to our Lord. There were many signs that Jesus was answering my prayer for discernment of how I might serve him more fully, but I was slow in opening my eyes and my heart.

Every day I began noticing more and more news stories about the horrific impacts of decades of mass incarceration on so many lives and so many communities. This tragedy struck even closer when a former student with whom I had a lifelong relationship was arrested and sentenced to prison for armed robbery after relapsing to his drug addiction. I ran into several former colleagues and friends with whom I had previously worked in teaching and mentoring students who had been on probation and parole for criminal offenses. A few mentioned EJP and suggested that I look into the program.

I reflected on Matthew 25 (*For I was ... in prison and you visited me*), but I still did not act. One day I was having coffee with a former student who turned out to be a volunteer EJP coordinator. After listening to me for a few minutes, she silenced me by holding up her hand and saying, “Yanchus, you have done enough thinking and talking; it’s time for you to start doing! I am going to email Rebecca (EJP’s director) and tell her that you will be in to see her by Friday.” I listened, and I acted.

EJP is a comprehensive college-in-prison program that offers many components to assist incarcerated men become “educated and active agents of positive social change.” Several months after I

completed the interview, orientation, and state clearance process, I began working as a writing tutor at Danville Correctional Center. DCC is a men’s medium-security state prison; most students there have committed violent crimes and are serving long-term sentences.

My commitment to EJP and to the men it serves has deepened over the past two years. In addition to tutoring, I now help facilitate the Chicago-Anti-Violence Education group. CAVE is a trauma informed education program to help people understand and recover from violent, dysfunctional human behavior in all its forms. I also facilitate the Impact on Victims research workshop (IVP), which is developing a program to help incarcerated men gain a broader awareness of crime victims’ suffering.

As a unit of the Department of Education at the University of Illinois, EJP is a secular program. However, a powerful spirituality radiates from students and volunteers. I have felt Jesus’ presence every time I have visited the prison.

These men hunger for education and yearn to discover ways to make their lives meaningful. They prepare diligently for their courses and group meetings, continually seeking feedback on their academic work and pursuing suggestions for additional readings. They eagerly share their thoughts for applying their educational and life skills to help other incarcerated students. Many EJP programs at the prison, including CAVE, originated from student ideas.

These men also hunger for repentance. They talk painfully of the suffering they caused and of the fear they feel when they think that they may not be able make amends for their acts. Many aspire to dedicate their lives to working



in some way with young people who struggle with the same hardships and temptations that paved their own paths to prison.

In spite of the hardships they have experienced and the daunting daily challenges presented by the harsh reality of prison existence, these men regularly give thanks. Many are thankful for the families who have remained by their sides. Many are thankful for those who come into the prison to help them. They tell us how much it means to them to be treated respectfully as human beings capable of growth and change. Many give thanks for a merciful God who forgives and loves them.

Remembering Jesus’ words, *Amen, I say to you whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me*, I am thankful for this opportunity to serve our Lord. I feel the love of Jesus every time I witness the presence of the Holy Spirit in one of our brothers in prison.

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*Anyone interested in information about volunteering for EJP may email Stan at [yanchusfamily@comcast.net](mailto:yanchusfamily@comcast.net).*



## You Can Run But You Can't Hide

St. John of God was born Joao Duarte Cidade in Montemor-o-Novo, Portugal, on March 8, 1495. He traveled a long and winding road before he let God catch him.

Cidade was kidnapped when he was eight years old. His mother died of grief, after which his father joined the Franciscan Order. Young Cidade found himself a homeless orphan in Oropesa, Spain, near Toledo. A kind man hired him as a shepherd. Over the years this man was so impressed by this young man's strength and diligence that he wanted him to marry his daughter and thus become his heir. Instead, Cidade joined passing foot soldiers to fight for the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V.

For decades Cidade marched all over Europe fighting battles and leading an immoral life. Eventually he returned to Spain and resumed life as a shepherd. As he pondered his past adventures, Cidade decided he wanted to go to the Portuguese colony near Morocco to free enslaved Christians and become a martyr. After many more adventures, he went to a Franciscan friary in this Portuguese colony where they advised him to return to Spain for spiritual growth.

While Cidade wandered around Andalusia, he had a vision: the infant Jesus bestowed upon him the name John of God and directed him to go to Granada. He settled there and opened a shop that printed and sold books about works of chivalry and devotional literature.

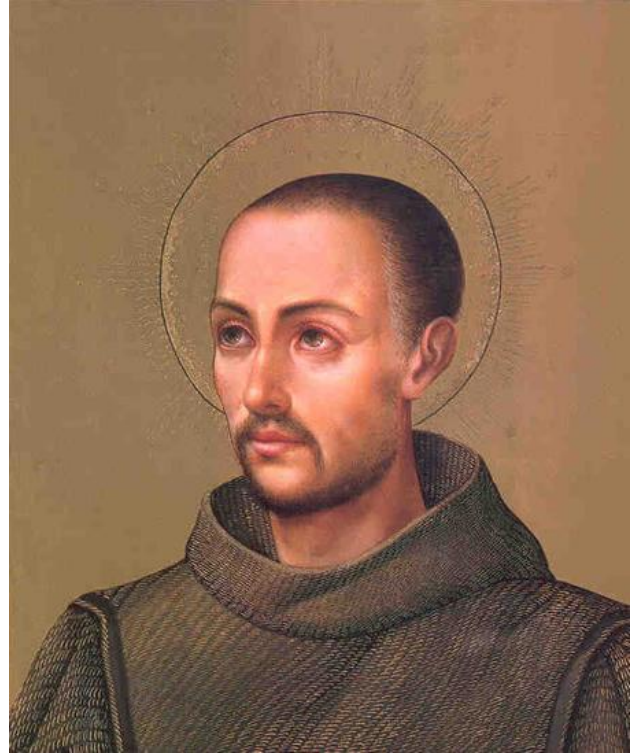
John of God experienced a major religious conversion on St. Sebastian's Day, January 20, 1537, while listening to a sermon given by John of Avila. John of Avila became John of God's spiritual director and, after John of God had an acute mental breakdown, encouraged him to work among the poor. Later John of God went on a pilgrimage to a shrine of Our Lady, where he experienced a vision of Mary, who also encouraged him to work with the poor.

John of God established a house in Granada where he attended to the needs of the sick and poor. He gradually received the cooperation of charitable priests and physicians, and eventually organized the Order of Hospitallers. His final illness was precipitated by his effort to save a drowning man in a flood, but was undoubtedly the result of the rigors of

his labors on behalf of the sick and of his austere lifestyle. He died in Granada on March 8, 1550, on his fifty-fifth birthday.

In 1572, the Holy See approved his followers as the Brothers Hospitallers of Saint John of God. The order now operates more than 300 hospitals in 53 countries and serves a wide range of medical and mental health needs. It has been officially entrusted with the medical care of the popes.

St. John of God was beatified in 1630 and canonized in 1690. He is the patron saint of hospitals, nurses, firefighters, booksellers and printers, heart patients, the sick and mentally ill, and the dying. His feast day is observed on March 8.



### MARCH PATRON SAINTS



Fr. Wuellner

## Faith and Begorrah, Let's Paint the Parish Green!

St. Patrick's is planning a great celebration of the feast day of our patron, St. Patrick. The celebration will take place in the main hall after the 5 p.m. Mass on Saturday, March 17. The Irish are known for their love of fun and music and good food that "sticks to your bones," and plans are in place to offer all of that to our parish family.

We're not the Food Channel, but we will be channeling Irish food by kicking off St. Patrick's first annual Irish Cook-Off competition. The committee has chosen three traditional Irish foods to be highlighted in the competition: corned beef and cabbage, shepherd's pie, and Irish soda bread.

After an appropriate blessing, the chef contestants will present their fully cooked fare to the judges' table to be summarily tasted by an especially select panel of judges. After the judges taste and consult, they will award a prize in each of the three categories.

This is a potluck affair, so you are encouraged to bring your own favorite dish (not necessarily Irish food!), salad, side, or dessert to share with others. Dishes will enter in the cook-off only by permission of the family chef.

As always, volunteer help is needed and appreciated to make our 2018 St. Patrick's Day celebration the greenest ever. Please contact Jim Urban (531-7104 or

[jim.urban@stpaturbana.org](mailto:jim.urban@stpaturbana.org)) if able to help with food, setup, music, prizes, or family games.




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## CREW Mission Trip News

The CREW mission trip for summer 2018 is heading to the mountains of Pennsylvania and the Young People Who Care Ministries in Frenchville, Pennsylvania. The trip will take place during the week of July 15.

In order to go on the mission trip, teens must earn a number of service hours, and they have been busy doing that! Last fall, teens

and chaperons volunteered at the Daily Bread Soup Kitchen and the Phoenix Center. This winter, they participated in CU at Home's One Winter Night event in downtown Champaign on February 2; some of the teens and chaperons spent their time out in the cold in a cardboard box, while others helped out in the event's hospitality area.

To finish out their fundraising

for the mission trip, the CREW teens will hold their annual service auction on Sunday, April 8, at 9:00 a.m. in the main hall of the Parish Center. Be sure to come and bid generously.

As always, everyone involved in the mission trip thanks St. Patrick parishioners for your support and prayers.



## Parish Council News

The Parish Council's January meeting focused on the plan to create a parish mission statement for St. Patrick's. Fr. Luke identified a timeline for the process: in February and March, Council members will complete reflections on their view of St. Patrick's and conduct interviews with the 80+ parish groups; in April, parishioner Jenn LaMontagne will lead the Council in a retreat to summarize the interviews and reflections, and draft a mission statement; in May, Council members will finalize the mission statement.

The work Fr. Luke assigned the Council for February and March will enable members to get to know the parish on a deeper level. First, they will interview leaders of the 80+ groups. The interview questions will allow members to understand more fully what the groups do and to know whether the groups are currently active. More important, the groups will be asked to provide input on the parish mission.

Group leaders will be asked

such questions as "Whom does your group serve?" "How does your group fit within the greater whole of our parish?" and "What do you think the mission of St. Patrick's is and how does your group support that mission?" If you are active in a group, make sure to share with the group leader your perspectives on your group and its purpose at St. Patrick's.

The second assignment is for the Parish Council members to reflect on and answer questions regarding the six C's of our mission: Core, Category, Community, Competition, Context, and Criteria. **Core** refers to how we define our parish. **Category** refers to whether or not St. Patrick's is unique or part of a greater whole. **Community** includes those we serve. **Competition** identifies our peers, how they position themselves, and whether or not they are relevant. **Context** refers to how we relate to people. Finally, **Criteria** refers to how we define success and how we



will evaluate what we are doing. The six C's are adapted from marketing strategist Andy Cunningham, whose specialty is helping organizations figure out their DNA; that is, who they are and why they matter.

As we are in the midst of Lent, the season for reflection, Fr. Luke's charge for the Parish Council and parish group members to reflect on our ministries and parish mission statement is timely. Please pray for our parish as we reflect on who we are and how we can best serve God.



### Q: What is an "antiphon" and why are we singing them at Mass during Lent?

**A:** An antiphon in music is just a refrain or a chorus. Think of the hymn "I am the bread of life," with its refrain "And I will raise you up on the last day." That's an example of an antiphon.

Just as the Church gives us particular readings and prayers for Mass each day, there are particular antiphons for each day. They are included in the Roman Missal, and they are to be sung at the entrance and the offertory. We usually sing a hymn instead, which is a valid option, but this Lent we are trying to use the proper antiphons for each day.

Because the entrance antiphon is particular to each day, and because it is the first element of the Mass, people sometimes refer to a Sunday by the entrance antiphon. You may have heard the Fourth Sunday of Lent referred to as "Laetare Sunday." It has this name because "Laetare" is the first word in Latin of the entrance antiphon for that day.

Whether we sing a hymn or an antiphon, its purpose is the same, to foster unity and to help us reflect on the themes of the Sunday or feast. The entrance hymn or antiphon accompanies the procession of the ministers, and the offertory hymn or antiphon accompanies the procession bringing the gifts to the altar.

So if the antiphon is like a refrain, where do we get the verses? They come from the most ancient hymnal of the Church, the hymnal that Jesus used – the book of Psalms, of course!

\* \* \*

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



## New Group to Make Infants' Baptismal Garments

In January, eleven parishioners responded to Fr. Luke's invitation to make white baptismal garments for children to be baptized at St. Patrick's.

During baptism the Church wraps new members in a white garment – a sign of acceptance and belonging in the community of faith. The white garment indicates that the person baptized has “put on Christ” and is now risen to new life in Christ. It reflects the white cloths that wrapped the body of Jesus when it was placed in the tomb after his death on the cross. White is a symbol of transition and change, purity and cleansing.

There are five universal symbols of baptism: the cross, a white garment (stole, scapular, or bib), oil, water, and light. Other familiar elements include the baptismal font, scripture readings and prayers, and godparents.

Bernadette Nelson designed the style, cross, and wording for the garments. She creates the cross and wording on the garment with her embroidery machine, using the selected color “temple gold.” Shirley Splittstoesser coordinates the newly formed group of volunteers.

Baptisms are held at St. Patrick's on the third Sunday of each month; last year there were 43 baptisms including five adults at the Easter Vigil. Families wishing to hold a reception at St. Patrick's following the baptism may make arrangements with the parish office. Members of the sewing committee will open and close the reception room and provide coffee, with the family responsible for other details, such as providing food, serving items, and decorations.



*Design of the baptismal garment.*



*Committee member displays a finished garment..*



*Cross and wording stitched in “temple gold.”*

Jesus gives a really honest job description:

“Whoever wishes to be my follower must deny self, take up the cross each day, and follow in my footsteps.”

## Can You Spend One Hour?

Holy Hour adoration is now being offered at St. Patrick. It will be held in the church on the first Saturday of each month following the 8 a.m. mass. A diocesan program called “Holy Hour for Vocations” will provide some prayers and reflections for participants. Fr. Luke encourages all parishioners to attend, and he plans to extend an invitation to other community churches as well.



*This monstrance dates back to 1922. Thanks to a generous donation from one of our parish families, it was recently repaired and replated.*

## Holy Cross Happenings

Mark your calendars! Holy Cross's spring musical, "The Music Man, Jr.," rolls into town on Thursday, April 19. Shows will be in the evening from the 19th through the 21st with a matinee on Sunday, April 22. St. Patrick's kids and families are always a big part of making the musical happen, and the results are always well worth the (HARD!) work they put in. Come, bring a few friends, and support the amazing fine arts program at Holy Cross.



Speaking of support, a heartfelt thank-you goes out to all who helped the inaugural "Cluckin' for Catholic Education" chicken dinner/fundraiser be a big success. It was a wonderful way to kick off Catholic Schools Week and to boost the scholarship funds for both St. Patrick's and Holy Cross families with children who attend Holy Cross School. Over 250 smoked chicken dinners were served, with thanks also to Nelson's Catering for doing all the cooking!

Catholic Schools Week featured a few other new events, such as a volleyball tournament for the upper grades and a parent coffee bar on one morning. As always, the week ended with a chance for our youngsters to show off their God-given abilities at the annual talent show. As always, the staff couldn't resist joining in with a few talents of their own.

Of course, the youngsters con-

Second Quarter Honor Roll		
<i>Highest Honors</i>	<i>High Honors</i>	<i>Honors</i>
Michael McCoy	Cate Feinen	Phil Withers-Sickles
Anna Loftus	Marissa Altaner	Grace Dimoke
Ian Peters	Natalie Caughlin	Elizabeth Stubbers
Jasmine Waite	Kate McMillan	Janey Thomas
Ellen Lofus	Emily Leininger	Aidan Beckett
	Brandon Hood	Christina Pembele
	Maddy McCoy	

tinue to grow and achieve in other ways as well. Be sure to check out the lists of those who made honor roll for the second quarter—many congratulations to them!

Congratulations also to our Girl Scouts who recently completed the work to receive the following religious awards, some of which were presented by Fr. Luke at our recent Scouting Mass: Elizabeth Withers-Sickles, Family of God; Cate Feinen, Anna Loftus, Maddie Bigler, and Maddie Logsdon, I Live My Faith; Ellen Loftus and Maddy McCoy, Silver Award.

Many blessings to all our Holy Cross students and families as the year rolls right along! Please contact Rachael McMillan (rachmcmill@gmail.com) if there is anything you'd like to see featured in an upcoming installment of Holy Cross Happenings.

Luke at our recent Scouting Mass: Elizabeth Withers-Sickles, Family of God; Cate Feinen, Anna Loftus, Maddie Bigler, and Maddie Logsdon, I Live My Faith; Ellen Loftus and Maddy McCoy, Silver Award.

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

## Lenten Opportunities

continued...

The theme for the day will be "The Beatitudes." The day will begin with continental breakfast at 8:30 a.m. and will conclude by 3:00 p.m. A \$10 fee covers breakfast, lunch, and all materials for the day. Lunch sandwich choices are turkey, ham, beef, or vegetarian. Register by email (womenofstpatrick@gmail.com) or call Nancy Olson (217-359-6424). Scholarships are available.

Both men and women are welcome at the "Ah – Day of Quiet" retreat on Tuesday, March 27. Held at the Chiara Center in Springfield, you may spend your quiet day (9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.) as you wish: in prayer, reading, journaling, walking the grounds, or any other quiet pursuit. Fee for the day is \$20, payable at the Chiara Center. Carpools will leave St. Patrick's parking lot at 7:30 a.m. and return at 4:30 p.m. Reserve a place by email (womenofstpatrick@gmail.com) or call Nancy Olson (217-359-6424). Feel free to invite a friend!



## Ponder the Last Words of Jesus

St. Patrick’s will host a very rich and beautiful reflection on the final words of Jesus in a performance of *The Seven Words of Christ on the Cross* by César Franck. Written in Paris in 1859, it may be that the work was never performed during the composer’s life. The score somehow fell into private hands and was lost to musicians and scholars for 118 years. A performance in 1977 was probably its debut. It has not been heard in Urbana-Champaign, so this is a special opportunity to encounter this work.

Many composers have set “The Seven Last Words.” A better title might be “The Seven Last Sayings,” because each “word” is actually a sentence, familiar to all who know the gospel accounts of Jesus’ passion and death:

- Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.
- Today you will be with me in paradise.
- Behold your son: behold your mother.
- My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
- I thirst.
- It is finished.
- Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.

These “words” along with other biblical and liturgical texts are expressed with great depth and beauty by the music.

Our music director, Frank Gallo, will conduct a choir and soloists drawn from several churches and the university community, along with a small professional orchestra. For the choir, it has been a wonderful opportunity to meet, sing, and pray with people of other parishes and faith traditions. For the St. Patrick community, it is a chance to welcome our neighbors to our church.

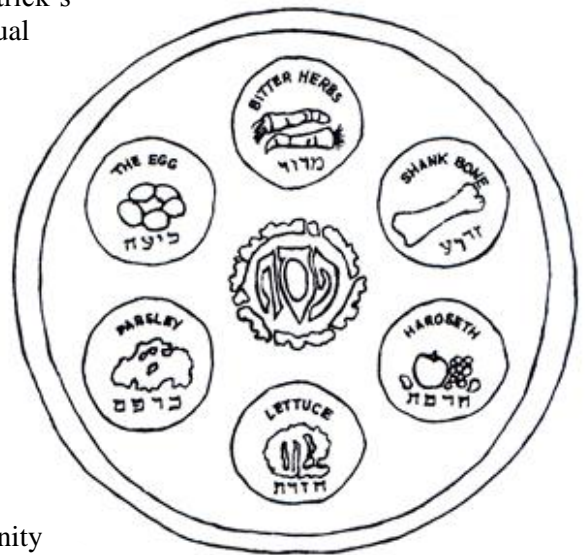
The performance will be on Saturday, March 3, at 7:30 p.m. The program will include the premiere of “Ave Verum Corpus”

by Frank Gallo. A free-will offering will help to cover the expenses of the event, and a reception will follow.



## A Reflection of Passover

A standing tradition of St. Patrick’s will return this year. The annual Seder meal will be held on March 1. The Seder meal mirrors a traditional Jewish Passover meal and focuses on the story of salvation and how God led his people into freedom. Fr. Luke points out that the meal can help people connect with early Bible history and our past. Like a Jewish Passover meal, the Seder has traditional foods and rituals, which at St. Patrick were approved by the Jewish community of Champaign-Urbana.



Included guests for this year’s meal are First Communion children, Confirmation students, RCIA candidates, and all their families. The meal takes place at 6 p.m. on March 1, and will be presided over by Fr. Luke, Jim Urban, and Jon McCoy.

## Holding Faith continued...

In *The Prayer of Faith* Jesuit Leonard Boase describes the “rope of prayer” as four strands: work, play, the cross, and mental prayer. What does he mean by “the cross”?

“At each succeeding moment of our lives we are held in a matrix of circumstances, and that matrix is at that moment for us the will of God. To respond with loyal acceptance of God’s will is prayer in one of its richest forms.”

This is easier to accept when it consists of pleasant, agreeable things, which are as much a part of God’s will as are the painful things. Our circumstances and moods about them range from joyful to tragic. We each have our share of both. Boase’s point is that while we might accept or rail against our “cross,” it is the ground of every moment we live on earth.

This simply echoes the words of Jesus. Learn to give up your life, and you will live. Hold onto it and you will die. Still, we pray for each other at church, often praying that our circumstances will improve. “Is any one of you sick? Call the elders, and ask them to pray for you so that you might become well.” Those are the words of James in Chapter 5 of his epistle.

We are not wise if we invite suffering or entertain it with masochistic joy. No. We ask for healing.

At the same time, can I learn to carry my own cross and not be afraid? I am often caught in circumstances beyond my control. Sometimes these circumstances are just awful. And even then, “this is, at that moment, for me the will of God.”

God is working with us on

this puzzle.

*Lord, do not let me go gently into the good night. You did not make me to submit passively to oppression or abuse or ugliness. You created me to assert your goodness, your beauty, and your truth in every corner*

*of our world. Please give me the assurance I need every day that I can do this and still submit to you, still do my duty by you, Lord. Let me run with joy in the path of your commands, carrying my cross of gold.*

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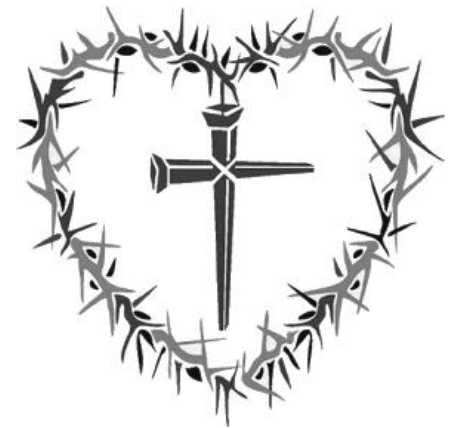
## A Meaningful Lent vs. Valentine’s Day

For the first time since 1945, Ash Wednesday and Valentine’s Day fell on February 14 this year. It could have been a conundrum for those who celebrate with heart-shaped chocolates, roses, and lacy cards expressing unrequited love, *and* have a desire to begin this Lenten season in a meaningful way.

Lent is a time when Christians around the world take on fasting, examining our lives, and asking for God’s help to become the best version of ourselves. It is a beautiful time of prayer, almsgiving, and fasting to prepare us for the celebration of the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

This year, if you haven’t already, make your Lenten season more meaningful by going beyond giving up chocolate. You can find many suggestions on the internet, but here are a few (in case you are giving up the internet for Lent!):

- Apologize to someone. Lent is a season of repentance and since most sins include hurting someone else, don’t just ask for God’s forgiveness. Reach out and say “I’m sorry” to someone you may have offended, not only in what you have done but in what you’ve failed to do.
- Share the love of Christ and take on a Lenten project, such as 40 days of letter writing, 40 random acts of kindness, 40 calls to



someone special (no texting, just talking).

- Help someone in need.
- Visit the sick and lonely.
- Volunteer.
- Don’t just fast from chocolate this year, fast from insensitive comments and gossip. (You might want to let go of social media for this one.)
- Read a book of daily Lenten meditations and journal.
- Attend a Lenten retreat, a Triduum retreat, or a Good Friday retreat.
- Take time for silence and listen to God.
- Pick a random stranger you see on the street, at the stop light, in line at the grocery, and pray for that person throughout the day.

If you think about it, all of these Lenten practices equate to love, so perhaps it’s no conundrum at all that Valentine’s Day and Lent arrived on the same day this year!

## Financial Peace University Offers a Strategy to Reduce Debt

At a recent meeting Fr. Luke noted that even though all of us are enjoying the beauty, the blessings, and the benefits that our renovated church brings, as a Christian body we are still carrying a not inconsiderable debt on the church mortgage. Fr. Luke, like the good steward that he is, expressed a heartfelt wish that we could find some strategies to reduce or retire St. Patrick's renovation debt. That brought the conversation around to debt as it applies to so many Americans. We can assume that many of our parishioners are carrying some type of debt, be it student loans, car loans, home mortgages, or credit card loans.

The name Dave Ramsey came up during this conversation. Ramsey is an author, a financial broadcaster, a television personality, a



motivational speaker, and a businessman, whose radio show, The Dave Ramsey Show, is carried daily on 500 stations throughout the United States and Canada. In 1994 he developed Financial Peace University, a tool that families can use to bring their personal debt under their control.

Ramsey is well acquainted with personal debt. In 1986 he was a successful businessman with a \$1.4 million real estate portfolio. He was carrying \$1.2 million in 90-day notes from a bank. The bank was suddenly sold and the new owners called in the notes. For Ramsey this was the beginning of a chain reaction that took away everything he had worked for. After recovering from his financial crash, Ramsey, a devout Christian, began counseling couples at his local church on

sound financial matters. He then set out to attend every workshop and seminar on consumer debt that he could find.

In 1992 his first book, *Financial Peace*, was published, and in 1994 the program Financial Peace University was introduced to five families. By 1998 more than 10,000 families had participated in the program nationwide, and by 2013, 2 million families had benefited from Financial Peace University.

In January 2018, the parishioners of St. Patrick were invited to participate and a new class has begun, facilitated by Jillian Depuy. Pastoral Assistant Jon McCoy said, "Enrollment is actually greater than expected, with 40 adults, (mostly couples)." He added that "nine teens and college students babysat 15 children at the first session."

Contact Jon McCoy (jon.mccoy@stpaturbana.org) or call him (367-2665 ext. 132) for additional information.

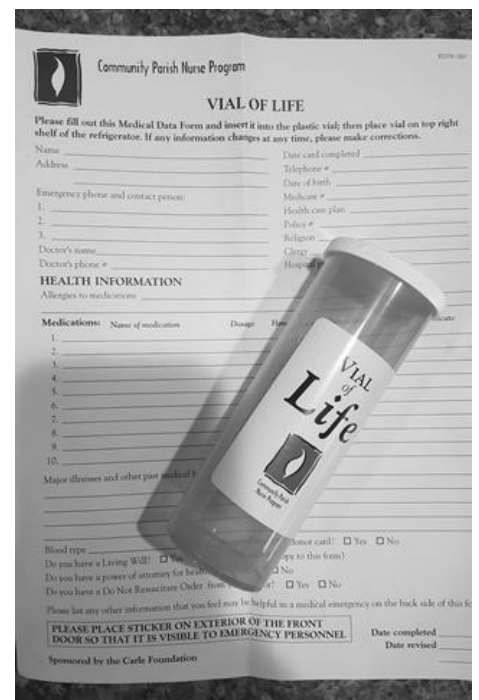
## A Vial of Life Speaks for You When You Cannot

At their monthly blood pressure screenings, the parish nurses offer additional services. One of these is "Vial of Life" kits, which are available at no charge. The Vial of Life, also known as Vial of L.I.F.E (for Lifesaving Information for Emergencies), is a program that allows individuals to have their complete medical information ready in their home for emergency personnel to refer to during an emergency.

This program is used to provide the patient's medical information when a patient is not able to speak or remember this information. The kit includes a container labeled "Vial of Life" along with a medical data sheet to complete and insert into the vial.

The vial is to be placed on the top right shelf of the refrigerator and the included sticker is to be placed on the exterior of the front door (or in a front window in or near the front door) visible to emergency personnel.

It's important to keep updated medical information readily available in case of emergencies, so stop by one of the blood pressure screenings to get a Vial of Life for yourself or a loved one!





## Quick fixin's from the kitchen of...

Judy Lubben

### Spoon Bread Casserole

1 pkg Jiffy corn muffin mix  
1/2 c margarine or butter, melted  
1 can (8-3/4 oz) whole kernel corn,  
drained  
1 can (8-1/4 oz) cream style corn  
1 c sour cream  
2 eggs

In a large bowl pour melted margarine or butter and both cans of corn. Blend in sour cream. In separate bowl beat eggs and stir into casserole. Add muffin



mix. Blend thoroughly, and pour into 1-1/2 quart greased casserole dish. Bake at 375° for 35-40 minutes, or until center is firm.

\* \* \*

*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!*

## Did You Know?

- A small copier (reproduces in black-and-white and in color) is available in the lounge for parishioners who need to make copies when the parish office is closed.
- A few back issues of *In Focus* are available in the bookcase at the Main Street entrance to the church. You can also find them on our parish website (stpaturbana.org) if you don't need a printed copy.

*Don't set limits to the mercy of God. Don't believe that because you are not pleasing to yourself you are not pleasing to God. God does not ask for results; God asks for love.*

—Thomas Merton

## 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 info-cusstpats@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.

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The deadline for submitting information, articles, and news items for the next (April) issue of *In Focus* is **March 11**.