

St. Patrick Parish IN FOCUS

www.stpaturbana.org

November 2019

Recognizing autumn joy

The splendor of the autumn trees and the satisfaction of harvest time are wonderful things to celebrate at this time of year. But for some of us, it can be a gloomy time. You may be affected by the

dwindling sunlight or the quiet deaths you find in your garden. All Souls Day may remind you of people you miss, and will miss even more during the coming holidays.



To anchor us during this season of ups and downs, the Church gives us scripture readings that remind us of what really matters, of where we're going, and of who is going with us. At first glance, the readings may seem as emotionally ragged as the season, but there's great strength and hope in them.

What really matters? There's the tale of seven Jewish brothers in the time of the Maccabees, all choosing to die for their faith, supported by their courageous mother. For them, what really mattered was staying true to their faith. There's the story of

Zacchaeus. For him, it mattered that he could get to know Jesus and allow his life to be changed. These two answers have a lot in common. People of faith, people who

encounter Jesus and are changed by him, grow in integrity, honesty, love, justice, and witness. These are things that matter.

Where are we going? The readings of All Saints Day make us hope that we are going to heaven. Forget about images of chubby cherubs and harps. The heaven we hope for is to be totally in love with the God who is totally in love with us, to be changed by God in ways that bring out every bit of goodness and joy in us, to be free from every pain and need, to be part of the community that responds to God's work with thanks and praise. That's a heaven worth hoping for!

One person in the scriptures who is in a really bad fix ...

Autumn Joy...Continued Pg 10

Getting to know your neighbor: FirstFollowers

How do formerly incarcerated persons rebuild their lives? What obstacles do they encounter as they return to the community? If you would like to learn more about these issues, as well as help raise funds for a group that is serving this population, then be sure to buy your ticket now for St. Patrick's Second Annual Know Your Neighbor Dinner, which will take place on Saturday, November 16, in the parish center.

The neighbors our parish is getting to know this time are the FirstFollowers, a group dedicated to assisting formerly incarcerated people with their re-entry into the community. FirstFollowers members are themselves formerly incarcerated people who ...

KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOR
DINNER AND FUNDRAISER

FIRST FOLLOWERS
RE-ENTRY PROGRAM

"...When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?"
And the king will say to them in reply,
'Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.'

Matthew 25:39-40

Saturday, November 16th | 6:00 pm
St. Patrick Catholic Church | Parish Hall
708 W. Main St., Urbana

Tickets | \$10 Individual | \$30 Family

Contact Ryan Hughes at rhughes416@gmail.com or 502-381-3050 for more info

First Followers is a local not-for-profit that provides support to community members returning home from prison. Their services include peer mentoring, a drop-in-center, job assistance, computer training and more.

St. Patrick Church

Know Your Neighbor...Cont. Pg 9

Fare-thee-well, Father Narcisio!



At the Knights of Columbus pancake breakfast on September 30, parishioners bade Father Narcisio good-bye with handshakes, hugs, and some not-quite-dry eyes. This humble priest served out the summer at St. Patrick's, helping with liturgical and sacramental functions and sitting in on meetings of various kinds, but always available to meet and greet parishioners and respond as best he could to the needs and desires of individuals.

In addition to his spirituality, he shared with us information about his home, his family, his priest friends in Uganda. And he especially enjoyed conversing freely in Swahili, a language he was delighted to use in speaking with Dr. Susan Nagele.

For his service here, for giving of himself so freely to everyone, we are very grateful. Fare-thee-well, Father Narcisio!

Want to receive *In Focus* by email? Join our email list to receive a monthly notification when a new issue of *In Focus* is published, with a link to it on the parish website (stpaturbana.org). Go to <http://eepurl.com/duJdY1> and sign up—it's that easy!

You can also find on the parish website all issues of the newsletter that have been published during the current year, as well as access to all previously published issues of *In Focus*.

An invitation to Men's Cursillo

Jesus challenges us to be wonderful loving stewards of God and all that he brings to our lives. The men's Cursillo weekend to be held at St. Patrick's February 20-23 is designed to show men how to be better stewards.

Cursillo is a lay movement that began in Spain in the 1940s. *Cursillo* is a Spanish word meaning "short course." This ecumenical short course in Christianity, open to people of all faiths, was introduced into the Peoria Diocese in 1964. Local leaders have helped to establish similar national programs in Episcopal, Methodist, and Lutheran churches. The prison ministry program is an outgrowth of the Peoria Cursillo movement.

Be open to the love of God and all that God pours forth into your life. May you find true joy in sharing God's love with all.

Contact St. Patrick's parishioners Steve Billman or Stan Yanchus for an application and for sponsorship, or go online for more details by accessing www.champaigncursillo.com/cursillo_application.pdf.



I am not asking you tonight, Lord, for time to do this and then that, but your grace to do conscientiously, in the time that you give me, what you want me to do.

—Michel Quoist

“Laudato Si!”

The four-week study of Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical on the environment concluded on September 30. We learned the Pope's over-riding message that climate change is the preeminent global challenge of our time: “I hope this encyclical can help us all understand the urgency of the situation and face it squarely.”



In small groups we read and discussed the Pope's assessment of the problem and his suggested plan of action. He called for an “ecological conversion” that starts with individuals and families who conserve and consume less; faith communities that help members “develop personal qualities of self-control and self-giving love based on ecological values”; and political leaders who are “more courageous...and give up being owned by investors; invest instead in the human family.”

Participants in the study shared how they plan to move forward as individuals based on the Pope's message. They were given the opportunity to sign letters to Representative Ammons and Senator Bennett asking their support of state House and Senate bills currently in committee that will impose a statewide tax on plastic bags distributed at retail stores in Illinois.

Exploring prayer through written and visual art

For where two or three gather in my name,
there am I with them.
—*Matthew 18:20*

Many of us can debate the impacts of the sex abuse crisis in the Church based on recent articles and news flashes. We participate in social media exchanges and most have formed strong opinions on this often divisive topic. Our minds move at manic speed, while our souls carry a very difficult reality about this chapter in Church history.

How do we reach those places where we experience what the mind struggles to absorb? Some say that art touches the deepest parts of our interior state. Through color, texture, shape, sound, our groanings can reach the heart of God, where we can find solace and hope for a new day.

Eileen Mathy shares that she had a difficult year with the deaths of her aunt, sister, and mother. It was while attending Mary Long's Prayer through Art class that she experienced a release of grief that she wasn't aware of until Mary guided her and others through a free-flowing use of color and paint. It was from this experience that she thought of expressive art as a way to process the experience of the sex abuse crisis in the Church. “We have all been impacted in one way or another,” she says. “I have learned in my own journey how cathartic and deeply spiritual it can be to suspend my rational mind and use what Ignatians call imaginative contemplation.”

Many parishioners have been poring over the *Hear Our Prayers/Heal Our Church* booklet provided by our Peace and Justice ministry. This booklet is intended to promote reflection and inspire expression of thoughts, feelings, and petitions regarding the Church's sex abuse crisis. Feedback indicates that several parishioners have been working with clay, paint, pen and paper to put their creative energies to use. All work that is to be displayed at Mass the weekend of December 6-7 should be submitted to the parish office by November 22.

While many are working on their own, some find inspiration and encouragement in a group setting. On November 2 an opportunity to work with other exploring prayer visual art will be parish center from Spiritual directors Eileen Mathy will Frank Modica in and expression.

Some supplies (paper, writing paint and brushes), also encouraged to the specific would like to use. as a chance to community of parishioners.



parishioners in through written and provided in the 9 a.m. to noon. Mary Long and be joined by writer guiding meditation

will be available utensils, acrylic but participants are bring supplies for medium they Please consider this reflect in a creative fellow

Please contact Jim Urban (jim.urban@staturbana.org) at the parish office to sign up for this retreat.

All saints, all sorts



“There is no way of telling people that they are all walking around shining like the sun.”
—Thomas Merton



You don't have to search far for heroes and saints. They are in our midst - or have been. Most will probably never be canonized. What brings us all together? Love of God, love of neighbor, a willingness to sacrifice self for others. Saints already with God and saints still witnessing God's love among us are easily discovered - just look around you!



St. Patrick's Honor Roll in Heaven

The following members of St. Patrick's faith community have entered eternal life this year, joining so many others who preceded them and now share in the love and glory of our Father. We pray for them and for their families – and for all of us, too, that we may one day gather with the community of all the faithful in peace and joy.

Ida D'Urso
Helen Halpin
Rachel Kaap
Peter Bloom
Joseph Abell
Shirley Penny
Betty Blanco
Joanne
Hutchcraft
Betty Woodard

Lorraine "Larri"
Gerhart
David Zola
Roy Rhodes
Joseph Costa
Betsy Dickerson
Sandra Cheek
Patricia Whelan
Dennis McTaggart
Catherine
Rutledge

Jeanne Hackett
Mary Tavis
John Duffin
Elaine Theobald
Constantin
"Timo" Rebeiz
Jim Smith
Alice
McLaughlin

*May the angels lead you into Paradise,
may the martyrs come to welcome you
and take you to the holy city,
the new and eternal Jerusalem.
May you have eternal rest.
—Commendation, Rite of Funerals*



Q: What is the communion of saints?

A: Borrowing from the Letter to the Hebrews and from theologian Sr. Elizabeth Johnson, we can imagine the communion of saints as a giant stadium of people, all of whom have run, or are running, a great race. As each of us takes our turn at the starting line, we are lifted up by the love and encouragement of all those who know well the challenges ahead of us and have stayed to accompany us and cheer us on.

References to the communion of saints in Catholic belief can be found as far back as the fourth century. The term appears in the Apostles' Creed, thought to have been written in the fifth century. It commonly means a communion of "holy ones," both the living and the dead.

Remember, in the New Testament "saints" means not canonized saints (a much later development), but rather all the people of God.

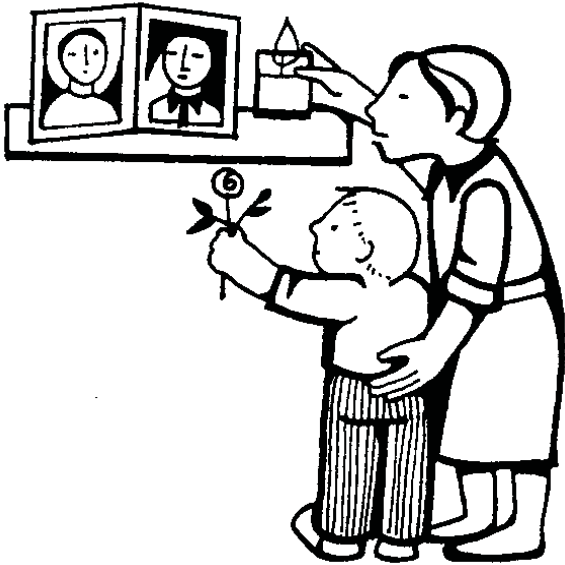
The communion of saints encompasses not only all believers in Christ, but all those of truth and love, in whom the Spirit is at work. This includes those on earth, those still journeying to God in the purification process that Catholics call Purgatory, and those who now abide in God. Together we all make up the Church, the body of Christ.

The best thing about the communion of saints is that it connects us all – because we are one body. When we celebrate the Eucharist, we pray with all those who have gone before us. We living can pray for the dead, the souls in Purgatory, who need prayers on their journey to God. The multitude in heaven pray for the rest of us, inspire us by their example, and remain present to us in ways we know not.

We are united, in some inexplicable way, to those who have gone before us. Being part of a long tradition, we can converse with our ancestors. In the Catholic tradition we call this the communion of saints.

Add your page to St. Patrick's Book of Souls!

November is a special month to remember family members who have entered eternal life. On the first day, All Saints Day, we celebrate Mass in remembrance of all the known and unknown saints who have attained a place in Heaven. The very next day, All Souls Day, commemorates all the faithful departed.



At Saint Patrick's, one way that we commemorate our deceased family members is by compiling their names in the parish's Book of Souls. In this notebook, parishioners can create a family page listing loved ones who have died. The pages need not be elaborate. They can be as simple as heading the page with the family name and listing those you wish to remember.

If you placed pages in the book in the past, please check to see if they are still there. Some may have been accidentally removed. But the plan is to keep the old pages along with the newly added ones.

The Book of Souls will be displayed in the gathering space throughout November. All parishioners are welcome to look through it.

For more information, contact Susan Reese (susanereese@comcast.net, 377-6594).

Can you help fill empty tomb's baskets for dads?

For the third year, the Women of St. Patrick will be collecting new or gently used items to fill men's Christmas gift baskets for empty tomb.

On the first Friday of December, empty tomb, a Christian social service agency in Champaign, turns into a Christmas shopping boutique. Parents "shop" for gifts for their children, choosing from items in pristine condition that have been donated to empty tomb. There is no cost to the parent. The next day, one child from each household gets to choose a basket of gifts for their parents or guardians. Sometimes these Christmas gifts will be the only ones the adults will receive.

Empty tomb often receives enough items to create women's gift baskets, but items for men are harder to come by. So the Women of St. Patrick makes up baskets specifically for men. This year, they will create baskets with one of two themes: Handyman and Car Care.

So if you plan to do some early Christmas shopping, would you consider buying some extra items for a father or guardian who might count these his only gifts this year? The items will be collected before and after Mass in the gathering space on November 23 and 24.



Not sure what to donate? For the Handyman baskets, you might consider items like hand tools, light bulbs, work gloves, snacks, tape, etc. For Car Care baskets, it could be things like scrapers, travel mugs and games, tire gauges, air fresheners, car cleaning products.

For those who prefer to provide gifts for children, educational games and sports items (both boys and girls) are always needed.

If you'd like more suggestions or have any questions, please email Sue Schreiber (sue@suejohn.com).

The “Bread Ladies” are still at it!

By Jo DuBois and Ruthann Kingery

How long? We’re not quite sure, but for 15-20 years the “Bread Ladies” have sorted and bagged bread for distribution at St. Patrick’s food pantry. For Jo DuBois and Toni D’Urso, the longest-serving women currently in the group, it began as they innocently left 7 a.m. Mass and Sophia Zeigler asked if they had time to help her bag some bread to give away.



For some years they did this several mornings a week, after sharing comfortable conversation and a bit of sweet with a cup of coffee or tea. In more recent times bread donations have been coming in only on Wednesdays and Mass is no longer at 7 a.m., so now they come in especially on Wednesday mornings to spend an hour or so sorting and packaging bread and sweet rolls donated by local bakeries – and those packages are much appreciated by the guests of the St. Vincent de Paul Food Panty!

Is vitality related to bagging bread? Maybe! Both Jo and Toni are north of 90 years old!

Others include Norma Gremer, another long-time member; Barb Beckett and Judy Lubben, who have served “only” three or four years; Ruth Ann Kingery, who recently “retired” after some nine years in the group; Marilyn Marshall, the newbie; and Marty Sierra-Perry, one of the stalwart substitutes. Last, but surely not least, we remember with much gratitude the years of devoted service by one of the original crew, the late Shirley Penny of blessed memory.

Their work is possible only through the efforts of other parishioners who travel to the local bakeries and transport the goods to the parish center. The bread collectors include Lyle Fettig (also one who has served for some 15 years), Dwight and Marcia Raab, Lorraine

and Thomas Kim, Margaret and Richard Bronson, Sharon Lawhead and Tina DeMoss, Richard Leskosky, and subs Linda and Bill Weber. And another who, for many years, carried boxes upon boxes of breads to St. Patrick’s late at night, Joe Costa of happy memory.

We heartily thank the management of Panera’s on North Neil Street and the IGA in St. Joseph, which donate leftover bagels, rolls, muffins, buns, donuts, cookies, baguettes, flat bread, pita bread, scones, and – yes – loaves of sliced bread, to the food pantry. With the closing of the Great Harvest Bread Company, which donated bread and pastries for years, the food pantry has an opening for more donations. And there is always room for another Bread Lady!

The work of the Bread Ladies and the drivers illustrates the many hands (and feet and cars and businesses) that join to advance the mission of St. Patrick’s: “living the love of Christ through service.”

In Focus online? You’ve got options!

You can read our parish newsletter, *In Focus*, on the parish website (www.stpaturbana.org) by clicking on the image of *In Focus*. The most recent issues are there, as well as issues dating back to 1981, when it was first published.

To receive email notification when a new issue is posted on the website, sign up by clicking on the link near the bottom of the page, which reads: “Want to receive an email when new issues of *In Focus* are available online? Click here.”

To search for specific information or articles in *In Focus* online, here are some tips that may help:

- To find older issues of *In Focus* by date, click on “*In Focus* Issues from Previous Years.”
- To search for names and events in all issues of *In Focus*, use the search box near the top of the page. (It will help to put quotes around the subject of your search.) Then click on the magnifying glass to start your search.
- Skip through any ads that appear at the beginning of your search results.
- Click on an entry to get to the issue of *In Focus* that you want. Once there, you can page through the entire issue or use the search function in your browser to find what you want in that issue. (On many desktop browsers Ctrl-F will present a search box.)

Printed copies of *In Focus* will still be available at the doors of the church for all who prefer to read it on paper!

Ministry at St. Patrick: People, Programs, Possibilities

If you'd been speaking with St. Teresa of Avila, you might have heard her say this:

Christ has no body on earth but yours;
yours are the only hands with which he can do his work,
yours are the only feet with which he can go about the world,
yours are the only eyes through which his compassion can shine forth upon a troubled world.

Christ has no body on earth now but yours.

What would you have replied? If you're still pondering, there's time to respond – there is always time, and so many opportunities, to be Christ in today's world!

Righteous God,
you plead the cause
of the poor and
unprotected.
Fill us with holy
rage
when justice is
delayed,
and give us the
persistence
to require those
rights that are denied;
for your name's
sake, Amen.

—Janice Morley



From Karen Barnes, St. Patrick's Business Manager

Here are some important updates from Karen Barnes, parish Business Manager, on our current financial situation:

Rectory Deck Project

Situation: The rectory deck is unsafe and needs to be replaced.

Status: Last year a decision was made to designate each February's Second Collection for the Rectory Contingency Fund. With collections from February 2019 and anticipated collections from February 2020—and with help from an anonymous donor—the parish should have enough cash to complete the project. We are still fielding estimates on this project.

HVAC project

Situation: The heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system in the church and Trinity Hall needs to be fixed. When the church was being renovated and expanded, the HVAC system was designed for maximum capacity and did not take into account the fact that the church is rarely at that capacity. The cost to fix the system is \$90,000. Delaying these repairs will lead to other problems that will result in even greater expense. **Status:** The good news is that we have the funds to remedy the situation. In July 2018 the parish started saving a percentage of income from offertory collections in a Repair Contingency Fund just for these types of situations. Since capital projects more than \$15,000 require approval from the Diocese of Peoria, we have submitted a request and are awaiting final approval. Work could begin as early as January, but more likely will start in March or April.

Diocesan Loan for Church Renovation

Situation: St. Patrick's Parish took out a diocesan loan of \$2,200,000 for the church renovation. To date, we have paid \$1,015,884 toward the loan principal. The total interest on the loan was \$368,750; we have paid \$270,660 of the interest.

We still owe \$1,184,116 on the loan principal and \$98,090 in interest. Our monthly loan payment to the diocese is \$30,580. Currently we have \$691,032 in our Building Fund accounts, which will cover the next 22 months' payments, after which we will have an unpaid balance of \$591,174 with 20 months left to go on the loan.

While we are still receiving some pledge payments that increase the Building Fund accounts, many parishioners are now completing their pledges so we anticipate less cash coming in on a monthly basis. Since there are another three and a half years to pay on the loan, without new gifts we will need to make our loan payments from our regular offertory income.

Status: It will be very difficult to make those monthly payments while meeting all our other obligations without additional new gifts or pledges. If that happens, we will have to renegotiate the loan, resulting in more interest owed and possibly a longer time needed to pay off the loan.

In Conclusion

We end this month's column with the reassurance that St. Patrick is committed to financial transparency – a priority of Father Luke and now of Father Anthony. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Business Manager Karen Barnes.

Mother Cabrini, valiant woman

Did you know that Mother Cabrini, as she is popularly called, was the very first citizen of the United States to be canonized—that is, officially declared a saint by the Church? She died in 1917 and was named a saint just 39 years later. And, she was declared a saint for good reason.

She was born Maria Francesca Cabrini in 1850 near Pavia, Italy, youngest of 13 children. She tried twice to enter the religious community that educated her to be a teacher, but was declined for health reasons. So she became a schoolteacher instead.

The local bishop encouraged her to become a missionary; in 1880 she founded a small community of sisters, receiving papal approval for her Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart seven years later. Pope Leo XIII listened to her plea to embark on a mission to China, but he urged her to minister instead to Italian immigrants in the U.S. Armed with her letters from the pope, she set off for New York City in 1889 with six of her sisters to minister to an estimated 50,000 Italian immigrants living in poverty – and apart from the Church.

New York's Archbishop Michael Corrigan felt that the nature of the work was unsuitable for women and did his best to discourage them from staying, but stay they did. She and her sisters began work among the Italian

immigrants teaching their children, visiting the sick, and feeding the hungry. As their reputation grew, local shopkeepers donated what they could to help with their work.

Mother Cabrini eventually established an orphanage, a novitiate and house for her congregation, and foundations in Chicago, New Orleans, and other

U.S. cities. During an epidemic in New York she founded a hospital, and went on to establish hospitals in other cities as well.

The Rule for her congregation was finally approved in 1907, the same year she became a naturalized citizen of the U.S. By then her missionary outreach had

extended to Central and South America, France, and Spain.

In 1916, her work nearly done, she went on a six-month retreat. While wrapping Christmas presents for Italian parochial-school children in Chicago on Dec. 21, 1917, she collapsed. She died the next day.

What a valiant woman!

St. Frances Xavier Cabrini's feast is celebrated on Nov. 13, with much joy and gratitude for all that she accomplished during her 66 years, trusting in the Lord she served with such love. Appropriately, she has been named patron saint of immigrants and hospital administrators.

The compassion and dedication of Mother Cabrini is still seen in those who care for the sick in hospitals, nursing homes, and state institutions. While we complain of increased medical costs in an affluent society, those with little or no medical care are calling for new Mother Cabrinis.



Know your neighbor

Continued from Pg 1...

successfully rebuilt their lives. Now they are helping others to do the same. They operate a drop-in center at Bethel AME Church, where they offer peer-mentoring, job training, housing assistance, and many other services.

One of the biggest obstacles for people returning from prison is finding housing, so the FirstFollowers are launching FirstSteps, the first transitional house in our area. A full-time house manager will live on-site along with four men recently released from prison. A part-time caseworker will work with the men to help them to connect with jobs, housing, education, health care, mental health services, addiction treatment, or anything else they might need in order to successfully re-enter the community. In this project, FirstFollowers have partnered with the Champaign County Housing Authority, which provided the house and will take care of major renovations; FirstFollowers are raising funds to do minor renovations, furnish the house, and staff it.

Will you help? This dinner and fundraiser is a wonderful opportunity to get to know an inspiring group of people who are doing important work in our community. Tickets for the dinner are \$10 for individuals, \$30 for families; they are being sold after Masses, or you can ask at the parish office. Questions? Contact Ryan Hughes (rhughes416@gmail.com).

LGBTQ+ ministry seeks to create a “culture of encounter”



In order to fully discern their mission, the St. Patrick LGBTQ+ ministry took part in a retreat over two evenings in September. They invited Stan “JR” Zerkowsky, executive director of Fortunate Families, to facilitate the retreat. Fortunate Families is a Catholic organization based in Lexington, Kentucky, that ministers to Catholic families with LGBTQ+

members. Throughout the two evenings, participants prayed together, shared their experiences and concerns, and worked to develop a mission statement.

Among the quotations from Scripture, the Catholic Catechism, and Pope Francis that JR shared, one particularly resonated with participants:

For me this word is very important. Encounter with others. Why? Because faith is an encounter with Jesus, and we must do what Jesus does: encounter others. . . with our faith we must create a “culture of encounter,” a culture of friendship, a culture in which we find brothers and sisters, in which we can also speak with those who think differently, as well as those who hold other beliefs, who do not have the same faith. They all have something in common with us: they are images of God, they are children of God.
Pope Francis, May 18, 2013

Keeping in mind this “culture of encounter,” some ministry members decided to attend the local PrideFest at the end of September. They stood next to the parade route, holding signs with their ministry’s name. “We were doing nothing other than just standing there, but we were clearly showing God’s unconditional love to people who needed to experience it,” one ministry member says. Another feels the conversations members had with people who approached them were like the “Divine Appointments” Fr. Anthony described in a recent homily.

One of the several cards the group handed out that day was a prayer card from Fortunate Families:

Give us vision and grace
to build the culture of encounter together,
understanding that we do not have to
agree on everything
to walk together or work together.
Help us meet one another on the bridge
– on every bridge we can find or create –
united in spirit, dignity, love, and hope.
Give us grace to go forward,
always forward,
walking as the one Family of God:
the Church!
Amen

The St. Patrick LGBTQ+ ministry seeks to provide LGBTQ+ Catholics and their families a safe and accepting faith community and allies to accompany them on their faith journeys. Call or text Lorraine Kim (217-721-3489) if you can help or want more information.

Autumn Joy...

Continues from Pg 1...

One person in the scriptures who is in a really bad fix is the criminal hanging on the cross next to Jesus. Maybe he was guilty of a serious crime, maybe not. But his life is over, he is in torment, and the best he can hope for is a quick death. And yet Jesus is beside him, suffering along with him. He has not lost his will to love and to pay attention to another. Jesus sees him as a person, sees his potential for faith, and he promises, “Today you will be with me in Paradise.” That man’s life is totally changed, even as both die and awake to new life in heaven.

There’s a lot of death in the scriptures at this time of year, but it is always death as a doorway to a new, deeper, love-filled, and happy life. And who is with us on our way? Jesus, of course!

**Someone I loved once gave me
a box full of darkness.**

**It took me years to understand
that this, too, was a gift.**

—*Mary Oliver*

Holy Cross Happenings

Holy Cross Parish's motto is "Always home, always family." This never seems more appropriate than during the first month of school. By the time it ends, Holy Cross has already celebrated its feast week, which brings parishioners, current students and families, and alumni together to celebrate what makes Holy Cross special.



This year's week-long festivities, which culminated in Mass on Saturday, September 14, to celebrate the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, included a family game night, a concert featuring both student and church choirs, and a Marian Mass and ice cream social hosted by Girl Scouts.

The traditional annual Hot Dog Day was held on Friday of Feast Week. This event – which, as its name implies, means hot dogs for lunch for students and their guest – allows family members to grab an outdoor lunch with their students on one of the remaining summery days of the year. It also provides a chance for STM staff and Holy Cross alumni to serve lunch to prospective Sabers.

On the eve of the Feast, the parish holds its festival on the school blacktop. A potluck, cotton candy, games, face painting, bounce houses, and a live band were the means through which this year's revelers took part in the joy of the

Cross Triumphant, and the parish church and school that bear its name.



Beyond that, many aspects of the school year are also off to a wonderful start. The eighth-graders who are being confirmed in December recently completed a retreat at the Newman Center. Please pray for our confirmation candidates as they continue their preparation!

Junior-high students were given the opportunity to participate in Mission to Mars, a program of the Challenger Learning Center at Heartland Community College in Normal, for which they had to prepare with bi-weekly lessons after school. All of the traditional field trips to learn about what's going on as the seasons change are well underway, as are weekly walks to Daily Bread Soup Kitchen to provide milk and fresh fruit.



Holy Cross's golf, baseball, and cross-country seasons are in the books. Girls' basketball is in the midst of their schedule, and the boys are preparing to take the court in a few weeks.

Many blessings to all of our students, their families, their teachers, the Holy Cross staff, and all of the amazing volunteers who help to nurture our little ones, mind, body, and (especially) soul!

*

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 or if you have any additions or corrections to report.

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

Prepare for Advent with a retreat

What will you do this Advent to prepare yourself for the coming of God? One way to enrich your spiritual growth might be to attend a day-long retreat offered by the Servants of the Holy Heart of Mary. It will take place on Tuesday, December 3, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., at the Mercy Community, 301 N. Wright Street, Champaign. Sister Charlene Cesario and Susan L. Amann, director of spiritual ministry, will be the presenters.

The cost is \$25 or a free-will offering, with lunch provided. Be sure to register soon because the retreat is limited to 20 participants. Both women and men are welcome. Deadline for registration is Friday, November 29.

For more information or to register, please contact Sister Charlene Cesario (217-841-2916 or charlenemec@gmail.com).

Can you help fill a Thanksgiving basket?



Every year the St. Patrick's SVDP Food Pantry prepares about 260 Thanksgiving baskets for people in need in the Champaign-

Urbana area. About 110 of those baskets will be picked up by employees of Rosecrance to deliver to the people whom they serve. The remainder are distributed through our SVDP Food Pantry.

Baskets will be distributed on a first-come, first-serve basis on Saturday, November 23, from 10 to 11:30 a.m. People wanting to receive a basket will need to bring a photo ID and meet the income requirements for receiving food from DHS. Anyone who uses the food pantry is eligible.

The baskets (actually reusable grocery bags) are packed with the makings of an easily prepared Thanksgiving dinner, including canned sweet potatoes and vegetables, stuffing mix, canned fruit, Jello, eggs, cheese, margarine, biscuits, and a frozen pumpkin pie. While the Rosecrance bags will contain a canned ham, those receiving baskets through SVDP will receive a \$10 food-only gift card from Meijer so they can purchase the meat of their choice (or other food items).

In your current batch of offering envelopes you will find a special yellow envelope for your Thanksgiving basket donation. If you use a different envelope, simply mark it clearly "SVDP Thanksgiving baskets" and place it in the Sunday collection or bring it to the parish office. The cost of food for one basket is approximately \$30. If that strains your budget, any amount you can contribute will help.

Many volunteers are also needed to make this project a success. Several people with trucks or vans are needed on Saturday morning, November 23, and on Tuesday morning, November 26, beginning at 8 a.m. to pick up food at local stores and take it to St. Patrick's. Volunteers will be needed on Saturday, November 23, starting at 8:30 a.m. to pack bags. All of the dry goods will be packed on Saturday, as well as the cold food for that day. Help will be needed with distribution from 10:00 a.m. until about 11:30 a.m.

On Tuesday, November 26, help will be needed starting at 8 a.m. to pack the cold items for the

Rosecrance baskets. No St. Patrick's volunteers are needed for those deliveries.

If you can help, contact Sally Czapar (217/638-5178 or svdpthanksgiving@gmail.com) with questions or to get the link to the Doodle sign-up form. Helping out is a wonderful way to begin the holiday season!

Coming soon: The Christmas Cookie and Basket Sale!

Delicious treats and beautiful gift baskets will be available for holiday shoppers in one place on Sunday, December 8, from 8 a.m. until noon in the parish hall. The Women of St. Patrick sponsor these events as fundraisers for the parish to support activities, purchases, and supplies.

More than one hundred beautifully wrapped and coordinated gift baskets will be available for direct sale and silent auction that day. Small items are reasonably priced for that special teacher, friend, or relative. Larger specialty items will be displayed for silent auction, including an Illini basket, a "Nuwave" Infrared Travel Oven, an eight-piece Fenton hobnail glass set, and an original Gucci scarf. Silent auction items also include a safari set, spa items, several rooster-themed baskets, an Irish basket, and several wine baskets.

The Women of St. Patrick are asking that donated cookies, candy, and baked goods be dropped off on Friday morning, December 6, in the parish hall for the sale. Setup will be done on Saturday morning, from 8:00 until 11:00 a.m. Volunteers are needed for drop-off and setup. Additional reminders will be posted in the parish bulletin and sent as a Doodle poll and emails. Please be generous with your time and talent!

The coordinator for the basket sales is Leslie Risatti; she will appreciate your help and contributions. She may be reached at leslie.risatti@gmail.com or 1-217-390-4004. Co-chairs for the cookie sale are Sandy Cuza at Sandra@cuza.us and Roxanne Munch at Roxanne_munch@sbcglobal.net.



Singing along at CCNH!

by Mary Hodson

The Champaign County Nursing Home Auxiliary was founded around 1964. The Auxiliary used to be quite large, and the ladies volunteered in a wide variety of ways.

My friend Gloria Mueller started the Thursday sing-alongs sometime in the 1970s. I think Irene Whitman was her helper. (Gloria and her husband, Professor Allan Mueller, who died recently, have supported many students through an endowed scholarship at ACES. They also refurbished part of the Urbana Free Library in the name of their son Ross, who died young.)

Cheery and talented Lois White was their long-serving pianist for the sing-alongs, and there have been a number of singers. I first met them all when I started working at CCNH in 1986.

When Gloria was no longer able to continue, auxiliary president Mary Brown took over leading the music, and led the group for about 13 years. I can't remember exactly when I started singing, probably around 2013. Mary did an amazing job, but was having trouble standing, and she soon handed off her leadership role to me. She resides in an assisted-living facility now.



Marilyn Marshall leads the singing.

We have had several pianists over the years: since I have been leading the group, Theresa Mack, Serena Cai, Nancy Stagg, and now Linda Vaughn have been our pianists. We have also had a number of soloists, including Margaret Hayes, Lorraine Prior, Carol Livingstone, Beth Otto, and Marilyn Marshall. At least three-fourths of the programs we sing were put together by Gloria. (I don't read music so I wouldn't be good at that.) Fortunately, Carol has put together a few more programs for us! I have loved getting to know all the special people who have sung with our group. Together, we have learned that singing restores mind, body, and soul!

Sing-a-Thon!

If you enjoy choral music, have we got an event for you! St. Patrick's will be hosting a Sing-a-Thon to benefit the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. It's a wonderful opportunity to enjoy the talents of young singers in our area, and to help an organization that serves many children with serious illnesses.



Music Director Frank Gallo recounted how the event came about: "Jack Parisi is very involved with the St. Jude Champaign Run each year and proposed to me to do a benefit concert for St. Jude's at St. Patrick. We discussed this last spring, and I reached out to the high-school choir directors in our area and asked if they would be interested in participating. We found a date that worked for eight of them and have been organizing the concert ever since."

Each of the choirs will sing for about ten minutes, led by their own choral directors. The Parkland College Chamber Singers, led by Frank, will also sing for ten minutes. Then everyone – choirs and audience too – will sing the finale. Like a marathon, the event should run about two hours.

The participating high-school choirs are Monticello High School Madrigals, Argenta-Oreana High School Choir, Champaign Central High School Choir, Tuscola High School Honors & Concert Combined Choirs, Maroa-Forsyth High School Concert Choir, Urbana High School A Cappella Groups, Champaign Centennial High School Expressions Choir, and Rantoul Township High School Chamber Choir. These groups started working together last spring when Frank led a choral festival for them at Parkland Community College.

The Sing-a-Thon will be held on Sunday, November 3, at 3:00 p.m., in St. Patrick's church. A free-will offering will be taken to support St. Jude's. All are welcome!

Did you know...

The defibrillator in the church has been moved to the corner near the Reconciliation Room.

There are changes this fall at St. Patrick

As we enter the season of autumnal changes, look for changes around St. Patrick. Have you noticed changes in the celebration of the Mass? Starting in October, after Communion has finished, the Eucharistic ministers with the cups wait at the bottom of the steps on the choir side for the priest to empty the Communion bowls. There the EMs consume any remaining Precious Blood from their cups. They then climb the steps to hand their cups and purificators to Father and immediately descend the ramp to their pews. This procedure keeps the activity at the altar, which enhances it as the focal point of the liturgy.

Another and bigger change, but maybe less noticeable to parishioners, is the new security system. This was initiated by Father Luke with the help of a large donation from a parishioner. The first step was the placement of security cameras inside and outside our building. In September the automatic locking system for all our doors was installed.

All the doors are programmed to lock and unlock by a computer. The church doors are programmed to unlock an hour before weekend Masses begin and a half hour before weekday Masses. During parish office hours, the north door from the parking lot into the office area is always unlocked. Our secretary, Patricia Fowler, notes the times of monthly meetings and gatherings in the parish center and sets the automatic system to unlock the door before these events.

The reason for this added security is that the parish has had intruders and thefts in the past.

On each Monday, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the parish center, there is a weekly home-school program for children. To insure that these children have a safe environment, the Diocese of Peoria mandates that the building is locked while they are present.

So enjoy the colorful changes of autumn brought by the weather – and the changes in ceremony and security brought about by our loving and vigilant parish.

Have you delivered Meals-on-Wheels yet?

By Richard Keane

A number of years ago Kevin Martindale asked me to be a



volunteer for Meals-on-Wheels, a program that was familiar to me because my mother was a fortunate recipient of these meals in Australia. I was blessed to have a flexible work schedule and a wonderful partner in Mary Lou Menches to undertake the twice yearly task.

The schedule of meal deliveries provides a route, a list of recipients and addresses, and meals prepared in a University kitchen, currently Hendrick House. We then follow the mapped route and deliver hot meals and accompanying bags of cold items to the folks on our route who

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are expecting them (at most a dozen homes).

The most complex parts of the work involve our navigation and driving skills. For some unknown reason, Mary Lou leaves the driving to me, which may have shortened her lifespan and improved her patience, but the camaraderie and conversations are rewarding for both of us, I believe.

Sometimes the scheduled path is difficult to follow and even if we make a wrong turn or a recipient is not clearly indicated on our map, leaving a gap in the schedule, we somehow manage to deliver all the meals promptly. I could regale you with many comical anecdotes if that might induce you to participate in meal delivery during St. Patrick's commitment to do this for one week in February or the week in June, however, let me at least say that we now have a much more detailed knowledge of streets in Champaign-Urbana.

The folks who received the meals were invariably grateful—for the meals but also for the brief exchanges with us as all

too rare visitors. They are invariably friendly and courteous, which make us very happy despite the fact that the work itself is very simple.

Hence we continue to find this task very rewarding, despite spring rainstorms and slippery footing on snowy days. If asked why I do it, I'd say that it seems to be the right thing to do, and I enjoy the company of my partner enormously.

If you haven't volunteered for it yet, you might give it a try. Watch the bulletin next February for Kevin's request for volunteers and give him a call!

Blessed are you . . .

On a lovely October Friday, six pets and their friends gathered at St. Patrick for the Blessing of Animals. The feast of St. Francis of Assisi reminds of us of God's love for all Creation, including our brother and sister animals.



Prayers and intercessions for the needs of the pets were followed by a holy-water blessing. One of the dogs was inspired to drink from the holy-water bucket when it was within reach.

Landscaping Update:

It's hard to say good-bye . . .

Two trees are being removed from our parish campus grounds, a birch tree at the corner of the parish center and a red maple by the south entrance of the church. The birch is dying, in addition to the fact that it's too close to the parish center.

The red maple was planted too close to the church building and is now too close to the power lines. As the tree continues to grow, pruning by the power company and pruning to keep it clear of the church will become both problematic and unsightly. It is better to remove it now before it becomes too large and more expensive to remove.

While it is hard to say good-bye, much appreciation is owing to Landscaping for staying on top of this.

To God be glory;
 To the angels, honor;
 To Satan, confusion;
 To the cross, reverence;
 To the Church, exaltation;
 To the departed, quickening;
 To the penitent, acceptance;
 To the sick and infirm,
 recovery and healing;
 And to the four quarters of the world,
 great peace and tranquility;
 And on those who are weak and sinful,
 May the compassion and mercies
 of our God come;
 And may they overshadow us continually.
 Amen.

—From the Old Syriac used by Christians
 in Turkey, Iran, and South India

Quick Fixin's from the kitchen of . . . Cathy Salika



Egg Foo Young

4 eggs, beaten
 1 can tuna or chicken, drained
 1 can bean sprouts, drained
 1/2 c bread crumbs (or more)
 Salt, pepper, onion powder to taste

Mix all ingredients; if mixture seems too soupy, add more bread crumbs. Ladle about a half-cupful at a time into a greased and heated skillet and cook like pancakes.

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!

St. Patrick's Parish In Focus is published on the last weekend of the month in Urbana, Illinois. News items and information may be submitted by mid-month for the next issue. Materials must include the name and telephone number of the person submitting them.

Please send news items to infocusstpats@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. Bylines are generally omitted.

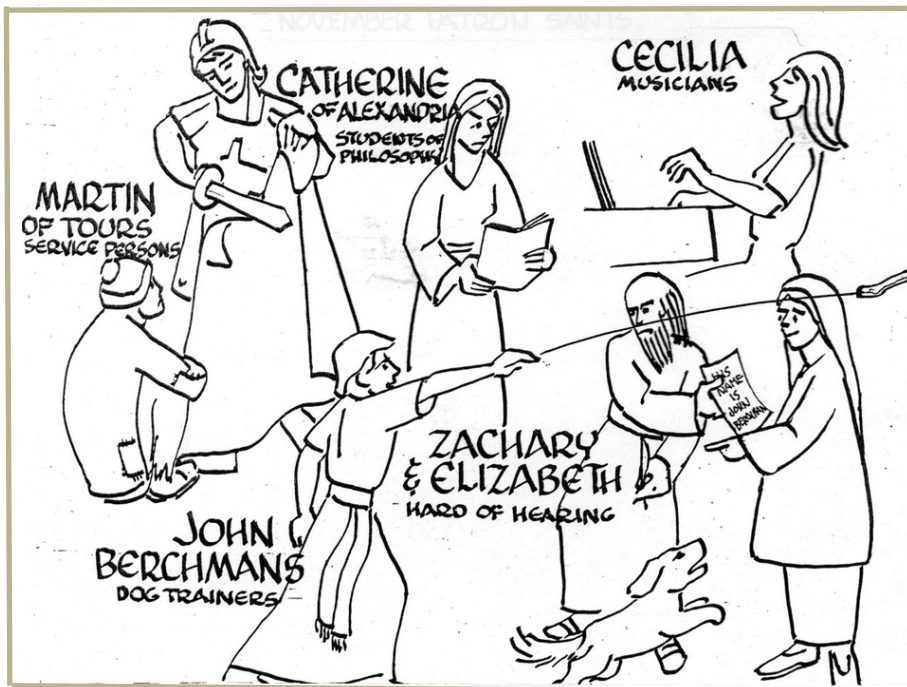
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The deadline for submitting articles and news items for the next (December) issue of *In Focus* is **Sunday, November 10.**



November Saints by Fr. George Wuellner