

# St. Patrick Parish IN FOCUS

www.stpaturbana.org

May 2020

## An elastic community

There's a kind of elasticity in community and, in these days of social isolation, thank God for it! Many of us miss the opportunity to gather with the many communities that we're a part of. We miss being able to see and greet one another, to know that our friends and co-workers are okay, and to be able to reach out to them if they're not okay. This

the liturgy. How often do you say to someone, "Glory to God!" or "I am not worthy"? How often do you say, "With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption"? Maybe not so often.

At Mass, we witness to our shared faith and receive the witness of one another. We have our faith in common, and yet we know that our faith



is true of our communities at work, at school, and in our neighborhoods, just as it is true of our parish community.

But a parish community, our Sunday gathering in particular, is altogether different. When we gather to worship, we're more than simply a group of friends. What draws us together is deeper than friendship. When we gather to worship, we express our faith in terms that we probably don't often use outside of

is not a static thing that everyone believes, at every moment, in the same way. A newly confirmed teen and her grandmother don't believe in the same way.

What truly draws us together is not our action, but God's, the God who gives us not what we think we need, but what God knows we need. When we gather, we break open the Word of God and ponder its mean-

## SVDP Food Pantry keeps serving our neighbors

Even after the state of Illinois issued a stay-at-home order tak-



ing effect on March 21, a number of food pantries and meal providers kept serving, albeit with increased caution and a number of adjustments. St. Patrick's SVDP Food Pantry was one of them. On March 29, Food Pantry Coordinator Sally Czapar reported that the food pantry would be open from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Monday and Thursday, the same number of hours per week as usual but contained in just two days.

"We have been blessed with support from old and new volunteers," she said. "Some volunteers have wisely stepped back for health or family concerns but new volunteers have stepped in to fill our ranks. Amazing! We are so grateful to them all." Since the first safety guidance came out in early March, the pantry

see **Elastic Community** on page 4

see **Food Pantry** on page 8

## Cousins embrace in wonder and love

We celebrate Mary's visit to her cousin, Elizabeth, on May 31, two months after Mary conceived of the Holy Spirit at her acquiescence to the message conveyed by an angel. We can imagine Mary becoming aware of Jesus' growth in her womb. She would have turned to her mother,



er, if St. Anne was alive, for answers to questions about pregnancy, birth, and baby care.

Mary's elderly cousin, Elizabeth was also experiencing a divinely inspired pregnancy. Her time was nearing, and help would be welcome. This alone would have been a strong motive for Mary to plan a trip to Elizabeth's home, all the more so if Mary could not turn to her mother for advice. And Elizabeth

would have been glad of help from a young relative.

Women did not travel alone in those days and it took time to organize a trip, yet Mary went "to the hill country in haste." We can imagine the joy and relief in their embrace on meeting, even as their unborn babes acknowledged each the other's presence.

On the feast of the Visitation, we rejoice just as the two women did at their meeting. Elizabeth gave us the words we use with familiarity: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb." And Mary gave us the prayer of praise and thanksgiving, the Magnificat, prayed by all priests and religious (and by many lay men and women) at Vespers at the close of each day.

As we celebrate this feast on May 31, we too may draw on these prayers as we reflect on Mary's generosity in acquiescence to God's request that she mother his son and in seeking out her cousin for advice and to give comfort as both neared the birthing of their sons.

### Read In Focus online

Did you know you can read In Focus online at the parish web site? Click on the image of In Focus, or go directly to <http://www.stpaturbana.org/focus/>. From there you can

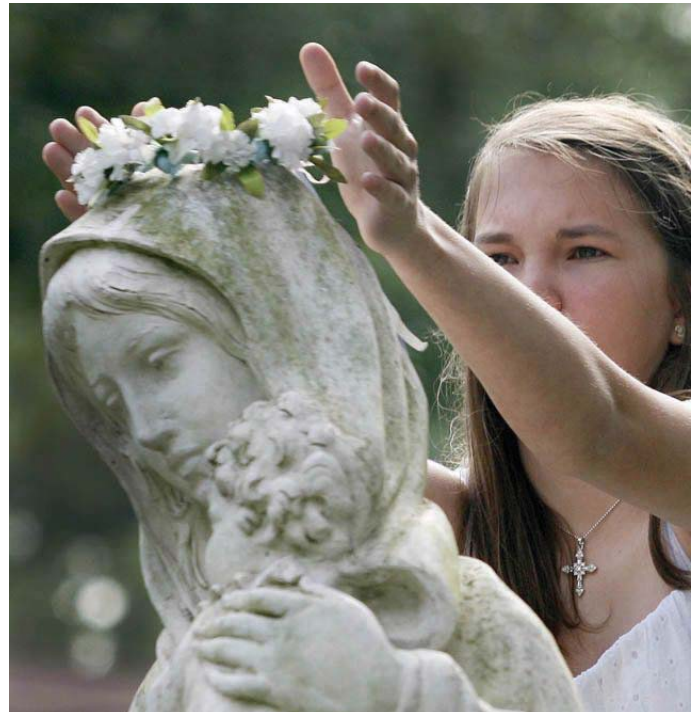
- Read recent issues
- Subscribe to receive an email when future issues are available
- Review our complete archive of issues going back to 1981
- Search the archive

It's a great resource for history buffs, genealogists, and people who love the story of our parish!

## To Mary, Queen of the May

It seems so long ago: Sometime during the month of May, youngsters in every Catholic school gathered to sing this hymn to Mary while crowning a statue of her with a garland of flowers. Perhaps you will find some small flowers to weave together for your own May crowning, and if you can't remember the tune, you could simply pray the words:

Bring flow'rs of the fairest,  
Bring flow'rs of the rarest,  
From garden and woodland and hillside and vale;  
Our full hearts are swelling,  
Our glad voices telling  
The praise of the loveliest Rose of the vale.  
O Mary! We crown thee with blossoms today,  
Queen of the Angels, Queen of the May,  
O Mary! We crown thee with blossoms today,  
Queen of the Angels, Queen of the May.



Remember,  
O most gracious Virgin Mary,  
that never was it known  
that anyone who fled to your protection,  
implored your help,  
and sought your intercession  
was left unaided.  
Inspired with this confidence,  
I fly unto you,  
O Virgin of virgins, my Mother.  
To you I come, before you I stand,  
sinful and sorrowful.  
O Mother of the Word Incarnate,  
despise not my petition  
but in your mercy  
hear and answer me.

## Out of the mouths of babes ...

By Tracey Wszalek

“When is the party again?” That was the question posed to me by a smiling seven-year-old girl during the second session of our sacrament prep class. When I told her that I wasn’t sure what party she was referring to, she patiently reminded me, “You know, the party where we dress up and all eat together ... you know, our first Jesus dinner.” While she had some of the details a little confused, I was touched by her excitement and humbled by her eager anticipation.

For more than a decade I helped prepare second-graders for the celebration of their First Communion. Over those years, a number of adults asked me why I kept coming back. Sometimes I asked myself the same question! Seven-year-olds are not known for their long attention spans; asking them to come to church for another hour of class on a Tuesday night after a long day was often a challenge for them—and for me. Sometimes neither the students nor I had had a chance to go home between after-school activities and the early evening class, so we had grabbed a quick dinner at some drive-through. I learned early to bring enough fries to share with the whole class!

Having taught First Reconciliation prep classes earlier in the year, I appreciated the challenges of presenting complex theological principles to little ones that were still learning the basics of so many things in life. What they lacked in foundational background they made up for in enthusiasm. They were sponges who were eager to know what happened at the front of the church on “the priest’s desk.” They weren’t constrained by doubts of their unworthiness; instead, they rejoiced in their worthiness. This was a big deal to



*The First Communion class of 2018*

these little parishioners.

For such a long time they had wanted to be a part of what they saw happening. They likened it to getting a chance to play in a baseball game that for years they could

only watch. I use the sports analogy not to diminish the sacredness of the event, but to underscore it. As adults, we sometimes take for granted what these second-graders knew without a doubt—that communion is a celebration, a party they are thrilled to be invited to and be a part of.

Although they were often nervous, they were more often excited. They certainly wanted to get it “right.” They wanted to hold their hands in the right way; they wanted to cross themselves correctly; and, they were eager to know when to say “Amen.” We practiced the logistics and mechanics often so that they did not have to fret about remembering what to do. More than once during practice with Ritz crackers, a young student answered, “thank you” when offered “the body of Christ.” If you think about it, that is a pretty genuine and heartfelt response to such a gift.

When I first began teaching, I thought that seven years of age was awfully young to be expected to grasp the meaning of the sacrament. However, I soon learned that seven was the perfect age, as these little ones fully appreciated what joy there is in having “dinner with Jesus.”

## Pre-Baptism classes continue under new leadership

Classes to prepare parents and godparents for the baptism of an infant have been held at St. Patrick’s for as long as many of us can remember. They continue to be offered at 7:00 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month, except for July. Anyone interested in coming to the Pre-Baptism classes is very welcome.

In recent years Deacon David Zola, of blessed memory, conducted the classes and baptized infants after a noon Mass at St. Patrick’s—a celebratory event not only for parents and godparents, but for all of us at the welcoming of a new member into our faith community!

With Deacon David’s death, the classes have been assumed by Deacon Cliff Maduzia, with the assistance of team members Dorothy Maduzia, Patricia Fowler, and Shirley Splittstoesser. They are currently reviewing the materials used by Deacon David and evaluating others that may be included.

Please pray for this new team, for the parents and godparents, and for those who are to be baptized—and for all of us, all the members of this faith community, that we may provide an environment that will help the newly baptized to grow in wisdom and grace.

### *Vocation Prayer*

*Loving Father, are you calling me to a vocation of ministry in the Church? Or are you asking me to help call others to a consecrated life of ministry to your people? Speak to us, Father. Open the minds and hearts of many to live your Word and build your Kingdom. Plant your Word within me so that whatever you call me to be or to do I may say “Yes, here I am, Father.”*



**Q: I know some churches have relics of a saint in the altar. Do we? Why is this done?**

**A:** Relics became ingrained in Catholic Church orthodoxy at the Second Council of Nicaea in 787, when Church authorities passed a law stating that every altar (the primary altar, if more than one) should contain the relics of one or

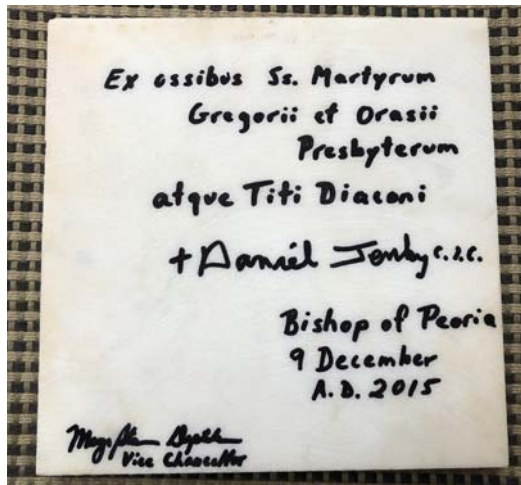
more saints.

This is an ancient custom that the Church has retained, as specified in the General Instruction of the Roman Missal: "The practice of the deposition of relics of saints, even those not martyrs, is fittingly retained. However, care should be taken to ensure the authenticity of such relics."

The relics are generally encased in an altar stone, a piece of natural stone intended to serve as the essential part of an altar for the celebration of Mass.

Why does the Church do this? In the very early days of the Church it was common for Christians to celebrate memorial Masses in the catacombs, on top of the tombs of the martyrs. This custom was confirmed by Pope Felix I, about 270, and was continued, when churches were built, by transferring the remains of the saints to the interior of newly erected altars.

When Bishop Jenky dedicated St. Patrick's expanded church in December 2015, an altar stone containing the authenticated relics of two saints, a priest and a deacon, was placed in the new altar. Regrettably, we have not been able to uncover information about these two saints, but when we remember our patron, St. Patrick, we might also pray to Sts. Gregory and Titi, upon whose relics our every Mass is celebrated!



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

# Elastic Community

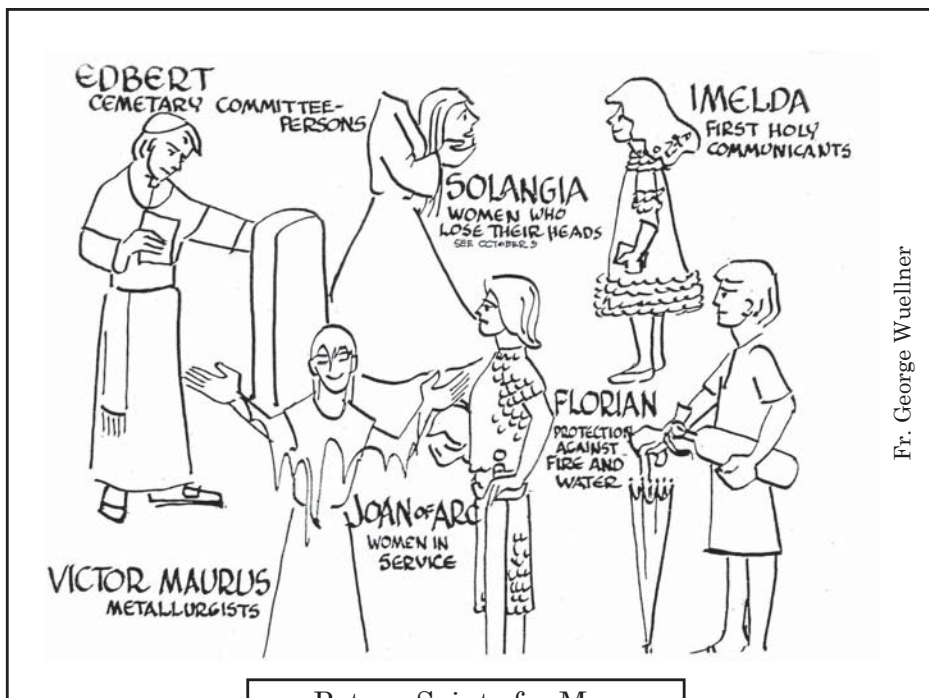
from page 1

ing in our lives. As we do, we catch a glimpse of the life that God wants us to have and the world that God wants to help us build. When we gather, we break bread, and receive the nourishment of Jesus' body and blood. These shared experiences shape us. Yes, they shape us as individuals but, more importantly they shape us as community. They make us, all of us together, in this time and place, into the body of Christ, alive and active. Christ is even more deeply present in the world because of what he does in our community at Mass.

So, what about now, when we watch Mass on a screen at different times? Are we still formed into the body of Christ? Maybe not in the same way, but God's grace is never defeated. God has made our sense of community elastic enough to cope. Because we have been shaped by worshiping together, we can still catch a glimpse of where God is leading us.


God knows that we're doing our best, and gifts us with what we need now and in the future. Have you been cheered up by a phone call from a friend? Remember that, and get in the habit of reaching out to others, both now and long after this contagion is over. Are you feeling isolated or dry as you watch the Mass from afar? Remember that, and find a way to reach out to our hospitalized and homebound parishioners, both now and in the days to come. What about the people you know who don't gather with us regularly? Keep them in your prayers and, when the time is right, invite them back.

God will always find a way to make our community more elastic!



Fr. George Wuellner

Patron Saints for May

 Deadline for submission of information, articles and news items for the next issue of In Focus is **Sunday May 10.**

## From Dr. Susan Nagele

March 29, 2020  
nagelesusan@gmail.com

To the people of St. Patrick Parish,

I begin this letter in Lent knowing it won't reach you until the beginning of May. We are now in this pandemic and where we will be when you receive this letter is impossible to know.

Thank you for your support for Maryknoll Lay Missioners during 2019. We received the following donations:

- 2019 Parish Donation to the Ministry Fund, \$5,000
- 2019 Women of St. Patrick Donation to the Retirement Fund, \$3,000
- TOTAL: \$8,000

The annual report for Maryknoll Lay Missioners will be available by May15 at the following link:

[www.mklm.org/annual-report/](http://www.mklm.org/annual-report/)

Our budget for 2020 was decreased by 10% from 2019. Now we are again decreasing our expenditures for the rest of the year by at least 10%. Along with many of you, we are hoping to survive.

At this moment in the unfolding pandemic, my work has pivoted to serve the needs of our missioners overseas. I have hosted Zoom meetings and communicated with missioners in Africa, Asia, and the Americas. They need a lot of assistance with advice for medical needs for themselves and the people they serve, as well as planning and safety in the coming months. Each area has particular challenges including poor health care systems, poor or absent governmental leadership, and cultural and religious practices that encourage transmission of the COVID-19 virus.



*Camps for displaced people in South Sudan*

All of the missioners are in resource-poor communities, and each had to make a decision about whether to stay or leave. About 90% have remained in their mission sites and are no longer able to leave. Gabe Hurrish, our missioner in South Sudan, works as the Project Officer for Solidarity with South Sudan, and the airport and all borders are closed. This country has the poorest infrastructure of the countries we work in. Other countries have reduced or discontinued airline service and almost all countries have restricted travel through their borders.

The people we serve have very few options. Kenya implemented a curfew from 7 p.m. to 5 a.m. to curtail social gatherings. A recent video showed police using tear gas while beating people, forcing them to rush to the ferry to get home before dark. Many people live in crowded informal settlements (slums) and must search every day for the water and food they need. Social distancing is culturally unimaginable and practically impossible, with crowded congested shacks stacked one on top of another.

In Tanzania the President has required the churches to stay open and gather people together saying, "This virus is the devil and cannot live in the body of Christ." We have two doctors in Tanzania, and local people chide them when they walk by, saying, "Corona is coming, Corona is coming!" The people have no concept of a virus and believe it is an affliction of white people.

People have been interested to follow what happens in East Africa, and I continue writing my blog on the first of each month at this link:

<https://healthministryinkenya.blogspot.com/>

I also prepared a scripture reflection for Catholic Women Preach for Sunday, May 3, 2020. It will be placed at the following link sometime in April:

<https://catholicwomenpreach.org/>

We have established an emergency fund for lay missioners to support special needs that this pandemic has brought to their ministries, both globally and locally:

<https://mklm.org/covid-19-emergency-appeal/>

I am keeping all of you in my prayer from a distance, but I am as close as the computer if I can be of any assistance. Let us live in the joy of Easter with faith that we are birthing a new way of being the body of Christ. Often, giving birth is a long and painful process!

*Peace + God Bless,*  
*Susan*



*Police attack Kenya citizens at Mombasa ferry on March 27*

*We are grateful for your prayers and financial support.  
If you would like to know more about Maryknoll Lay Missioners, log onto our website:  
[www.mklm.org](http://www.mklm.org), or call toll free 1-800-867-2980.*

## Choosing love

Throughout history saints have often faced widespread outbreaks of severe illness. With God's help, they and their patients survived and grew in faith. We can call on these and other saints today for help with COVID-19 as we seek ways, even in isolation, to be the loving embrace of God for our neighbor.

St. Roch, or Rocco (1295–1327), went on a pilgrimage from France to Rome when he was 20. He found Italy overwhelmed by plague. He cared for the sick strangers along his route until he himself contracted the illness. And he survived. His icon usually includes the dog who comforted him in his isolated suffering.

Cardinal St. Charles Borromeo (1538–1584) organized nuns, priests, and brothers to care for the hungry and sick of Milan, Italy, in 1576. He spent his fortune and borrowed more to feed victims of the plague. Despite personally nursing many patients, he did not contract the disease.

St. Virginia Centurione Bracelli (1587–1651) was a wealthy widow doing charity work in Genoa, Italy, when an epidemic and famine broke out in 1629–30, and many rich people fled the area. St. Virginia opened her home to the sick and later rented an empty convent and other houses for patients. When the epidemic ended, her hospital continued serving them for decades.



St. Virginia Centurione Bracelli

Four saints are known for working with patients afflicted with Hanson's disease, or leprosy, during outbreaks and extended quarantines:

Bl. Peter Donders (1809–1887) was a Dutch missionary priest who served in South America for 45 years. He cared for slaves and the poor during many epidemics in Suriname, including a thirty-year relationship with a leper colony.

St. Jose Gabriel Brochero (1840–1914) was an Argentinean priest known as the "gaucho" or "cowboy" priest for his extensive traveling by mule to minister to the people. He nursed many patients through an 1867 cholera epidemic and also many leprosy outbreaks. He died from leprosy after 40 years of priestly service.

St. Marianne Cope (1838–1918), featured in the January issue of In



St. Marianne Cope

Focus ([www.stpaturbana.org/focus/Jan2020.pdf](http://www.stpaturbana.org/focus/Jan2020.pdf)), and St. Damien De Veuster (1840–1889) cared for the rejected, shunned, and severely ill of the leper colony of Molokai, Hawaii. Both were known for their kind and long-lasting care of the sick, in this case in a permanent quarantine and



St. Jose Gabriel Brochero

rejected by their society.

Inspired by the examples and prayers of the saints of epidemics, let us appeal for their intercession for those suffering today's pandemic.

## Prayer for a Pandemic

May we who are merely inconvenienced  
Remember those whose lives are at stake.

May we who have no risk factors  
Remember those most vulnerable.

May we who have the luxury of working from home  
Remember those who must choose between preserving their health or making their rent.

May we who have the flexibility to care for our children when their schools close  
Remember those who have no options.

May we who have to cancel our trips  
Remember those that have no safe place to go.

May we who are losing our margin money in the tumult of the economic market  
Remember those who have no margin at all.

May we who settle in for a quarantine at home  
Remember those who have no home.

As fear grips our country  
Let us choose love.

During this time when we cannot physically wrap our arms around each other,  
Let us yet find ways to be the loving embrace of God to our neighbors.

Amen.

—Cameron Wiggins Bellm

## A medical hero

*This isn't the first time that St. Patrick's Parish has had to deal with an epidemic. The story below appeared in the Urbana Daily Courier on October 16, 1918. Members of the medical profession and other essential workers were heroes then, as now.*

The private funeral of Dr. E. J. Miller, whose death occurred yesterday at 1:30 at his home on Pennsylvania avenue from pneumonia following an attack of Spanish influenza, will be held from St. Patrick's church Friday morning at 9:30 o'clock. Only immediate relatives will be present. The body will be taken at 11:00 o'clock to Princeville, northwest of Peoria, his former home, for burial.

Dr. Miller is survived by his wife, his father and mother, a brother, and two sisters, one at Kewanee and the other at home. He was 30 years of age and had practiced in this community for the last three or four years, coming here from Chicago. His brother, Dr. C. L. Miller, entered the United States war service and turned his practice over to Dr. E. J. Miller. This occasioned much

see **Medical Hero** on next page

# Women of St. Patrick looking ahead

Although they had to give up any thought of spring events, the Women of St. Patrick encouraged members to use their time constructively, for both spiritual refreshment and study, and for serving others by sewing masks for use at Carle Hospital.



They are also looking ahead, asking that parishioners begin thinking about the annual Cellar-to-Garret sale. Assuming things are back to normal by then, it will be setting up on August 2, with the sale scheduled for August 13-15.

“We will need people to help with the organizing: committees for set-up, tear-down, publicity, volunteers, food for the week of the sale and set-up day. Please prayerfully consider whether you would like to help as a coordinator for one of those areas. Bernadette Nelson and Anna Conner will co-chair again this year and would like very much to have “shadow” chairwomen who could perhaps take on the sale next year.”

If you are willing to be a chair for one of the areas listed here, or work with Bernadette (bernelson@comcast.net) or Anna (annaconner2@gmail.com), please contact them.

# Lessons of the WSP Lenten Retreat for us all

On March 7 the Women of St. Patrick held their annual Lenten Retreat, and the theme could hardly have been more prescient. Spiritual director and college instructor Amy Penne lead the retreat, entitled “Living in the Present: What if the present disappoints?” She used the previous Sunday’s Gospel, Mt 4:2-10, the story of Jesus’ temptations by Satan after fasting in the desert for 40 days and 40 nights.



Along with small-group discussions, participants were provided with materials to journal and draw, as well as many quiet places in the church and parish center for prayer and contemplation, as they worked through the questions related to those temptations: What do you hunger for? How do we

test God’s power in our own lives? What tempts us to test God’s power in our own lives? What do we worship? What are our idols?

Now that we are all in the desert, whether isolated in self-quarantine at home or social distancing while doing essential work, we might all keep these questions in mind. What can we learn in this desert? What is essential to us? What feeds us? What can we do without? How will we prepare to go forward?

# Staying home, staying safe

Most things at St. Patrick’s shut down on March 13, as did many things in the state of Illinois and beyond. Some of us are struggling with the loss of jobs and healthcare, and experiencing loneliness, but there are some consolations too. Have you thought about this? Here’s are a couple of lists that you can add to.

### Things we miss

- Sunday Mass
- Stations of the Cross
- Fish dinners
- Seeing friends and distant family
- Work and income
- Spring break trips
- Going out for books and movies
- School
- Dining at favorite restaurants
- St. Patrick’s Day celebration
- Sports

### Things we’ve gained

- Time with family
- Time to pray
- Reading good books
- An infinite number of online videos
- Fr. Anthony’s fort contest
- Home cooking
- Super-duper spring house cleaning
- Catching up on correspondence
- Organizing clutter

# Medical Hero from previous page

extra work and strain, and when the present epidemic of influenza spread to this community, Dr. Miller worked night and day administering to the sick. It was this overwork that proved too much, and Dr. Miller himself was taken ill about two weeks ago. Pneumonia developed following influenza and altho he put up a heroic fight for life, his death finally ensued. He was a martyr to his duty.

Dr. Miller was a member of the Urbana Elks and of the Knights of Columbus. His brother, Dr. L. C.

Miller, arrived about two hours after his death.

The Knights of Columbus will not attend in a body the funeral of Dr.

E. J. Miller, owing to the epidemic of influenza. The decision was made with the approval of members of the family.



## Food Pantry from page 1

has continually revised procedures to keep volunteers and guests as safe as possible.

Food distribution was moved to the area outside of the north doors of the parish center by the parking lot. Both volunteers and guests were encouraged to maintain a social distance of 6 feet. Volunteers used gloves, and a parishioner who was sewing masks for Carle Hospital donated masks for pantry volunteers to wear. (Thank you!)

On March 31, the pantry began a drive-through service. Guests were asked to stay in their cars, check in through an open car window, then proceed to a table where their food bags were placed. They loaded their own bags into their cars. People without cars could line up on the sidewalk, six feet apart, and proceed in a similar way. "We are hoping this keeps us safer!" Sally says. "While it is an honor to serve, it is also very scary!"

Food pantry guests are very appreciative, and Sally reminds us that "this crisis will have long-lasting effects for everyone financially. Pantries need to stay open to help fill the gap for those unemployed and the newly under- and unemployed."

Many thanks to Sally and her team of volunteers as they help our neighbors who are struggling in this difficult time! Please pray for their health and safety, as well as for that of our food pantry guests.

**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 [info-cusstpats@gmail.com](mailto: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. Bylines are generally omitted.

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**Articles, information, and photos** for this issue were provided by Carol Bosley, Sally Czapar, Denise Green, Elizabeth Hendricks, Mary Lou Menches, Susan Nagele, Cathy Rutledge, Cathy Salika, and Tracey Wszalek. Patron Saints by Fr. George Wuellner. This issue was edited by Jerry Walsh, page layout by John Colombo.

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



#### Easy Pot Roast

1/4 c vegetable oil  
2-1/2 lb lean boneless beef chuck steak  
1/4 c chopped onion  
4 small potatoes, quartered  
4 carrots, cut into 1-inch pieces  
1-3/4 c water  
1/3 c lemon juice  
1/4 c packed brown sugar  
1 t salt  
1/4 t ground cinnamon

In a soup pot heat oil over medium heat. Add steak and onion, careful to brown thoroughly (about 10 minutes), turning halfway through the cooking. In a separate bowl, mix water, lemon juice, brown sugar, salt, and cinnamon, add to soup pot, and bring to a boil. Cover loosely, reduce heat to low, and simmer 2 hours, or until meat is fork-tender, turning occasionally. Meanwhile peel and quarter potatoes, clean and slice carrots, and set aside for an hour before adding to the soup pot. Check to be sure the potatoes and carrots are also fork-tender before removing all from the soup pot. On a cutting board slice the meat for serving with the vegetables and sauce.

\* \* \*

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