

# St. Patrick Parish IN FOCUS

www.stpaturbana.org

April 2021

## Listen! Watch!

If you want to know how much God loves you, listen to the liturgies of Holy Week. If you want to know how committed God is to being with you, watch what Jesus does.

On Palm Sunday, Jesus rides

into Jerusalem, straight into danger. The danger might not be obvious that day, but it's there. It springs from the hearts of

leaders who are afraid of his teaching. It springs from the hearts of ordinary people who are just going along with the crowd, as willing to shout "Hosanna!" as "Crucify!" And yet, Jesus enters the city, the home of his people, to be with them in spite of the danger. He will always be close to us when we are in danger.

See Jesus at the Last Supper, knowing that his death is near. Listen as he creates a way for himself to be with each one of us tangibly, intimately, down through the ages. In the Eucharist, Jesus is closer to us than our own bodies, alive in our hearts and

souls in every way that we allow him to be. He knows that Peter will soon deny him, and others of the disciples will abandon him. He knows their sin and weakness just as he knows ours, yet he makes a way to be with us always.

Watch Jesus on the cross, suffering in body but not

swallowed up by it, still alert to the people around him. To his mother and John, he gives a closer relationship that will sustain them through life. To the "good thief"

he gives hope for the life to come.

He also suffers in spirit. Listen as he cries out that his Father has abandoned him, yet still he clings to faith. He will always be with us, even in times of fear, suffering, and darkness, understanding exactly what we are going through.

Listen to the silence of Holy Saturday. His followers are shocked by his betrayal and death. They are stunned, their hopes for a better world led by Jesus dashed.

They wonder whether

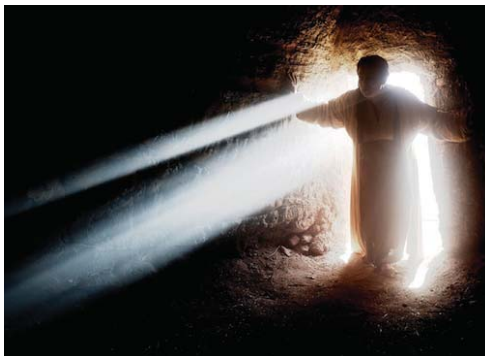
see **Listen! Watch!** on page 3

## A home for our priests

By Fr. Luke Spannagel

Most parishes provide a residence, called a rectory, for their priests, and St. Patrick's purchased one in 2018. Now that the debt from the church expansion has been paid off, the \$82,000 that we owe on the purchase of the rectory is our next challenge. In Focus asked our former pastor, Fr. Luke Spannagel, to recall the search for a suitable building. His account follows:

Most parishes have a house near the church and other facilities but, as many of you know, St. Patrick hasn't had a rectory on-site for many years. The last several pastors had lived either in apartments or in houses



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# A home

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in residential neighborhoods in Urbana. When Fr. Joe Hogan, then pastor of St. Patrick's, was named pastor of St. Mary's as well, the house Fr. Joe had been living in was sold and he lived in St. Mary's rectory.

Soon after I became pastor of St. Patrick's, as part of a long-range plan we decided to look at buying a home that would serve as a rectory for St. Patrick's. I formed an advisory group that included trustees Pat Justice and George Fahey, Joe Vitosky, Dave Palmisano, and Deacon Bob Sondag from the Diocese of Peoria. We looked at costs versus

benefits and decided that a rectory would be a good asset for the parish while providing appropriate housing for the pastor.

Initially we looked at solutions that would be inexpensive and "in house," including turning the pastoral offices area into an apartment or creating an apartment downstairs in the Trinity Hall storage area. Our advisory

group didn't think those were good long-term solutions, so we began looking at smaller houses in several Urbana neighborhoods, including the house Fr. Joe had previously lived in as it was becoming available.

Initially we had in mind a three-bedroom house that would provide room for a chapel and a guest room for visiting priests. It was during this time that I met with Bishop Jenky to talk over the options and seek his blessing in moving forward. Bishop Jenky reflected that he thought we should look at a larger house in anticipating that we could have a priest assistant again as in past years, along with the possibility that seminarians could be placed in our parish during their apprentice time.



After reviewing what might be realistic for our needs and keeping in mind the parish debt situation, we had in mind an upper limit of around \$200K. Altogether, we reviewed about 50 houses and personally toured around 10, if I recall correctly.

One house we looked at was the Victorian on Main St. across the corner from the parish center. It was appealing because I would be able to walk back and forth. Ultimately, we found that house was well beyond our price range and also needed some updating in the bathrooms and kitchen. We then found a couple of houses that fell in our price range but were much smaller than what Bishop Jenky had suggested, or needed a good deal of repair.

One afternoon as we were looking at houses, I noticed another listing that intrigued me – it

definitely had the size and was also a relatively new house (around 10 years old), but far beyond the price range (originally listed around \$240K). Even though it probably wasn't a fit for us, we decided to tour it anyway.

I was struck by the wide-open views at the back of the house looking out over

the fields, as well as the very quiet neighborhood. The house was definitely in good condition and featured some desirables, like a geothermal heating and A/C system and a large upper room that would work well for hosting area clergy gatherings, but of course the price was high. We found out the house had been on the market for more than a year, so after some discernment we decided to submit a significantly lower offer and see if we could get a dialog going.

Our initial offer was \$189K, which resulted in a counter offer of \$224K. After some negotiating, we settled on \$210K, pending the inspection and repairs

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## Listen! Watch!

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anything that they learned from him can be salvaged. They are comforted by the presence of one another and by observing the rituals of the Sabbath. If they could remember his words, "Where two or three are gathered," they might find a thread of hope that Jesus was, somehow, still with them, but they are probably much too sad for this. Yet even in times of sadness, Jesus is with us.

Watch as the stone is rolled away from the tomb. Watch as Mary Magdalene, Mary, Peter, John, and others come to the tomb and try to understand what they experience there. Watch as Jesus comes to meet them, there in the garden, in the room where they had gathered, on the road to Emmaus, and at breakfast on the seashore.

Watch as he continues to meet us: St. Paul on the road to Damascus, St. Patrick called to return to Ireland, St. Francis called to rebuild the Church. There are thousands of stories, millions of people who encounter the risen Lord and discover his love for them.

Jesus is with us, undeterred by danger, sin, suffering, doubt, and sadness. He is with us in joy and in sorrow, at home and on the road, in solitude and in community. He is with us every moment of our lives, and he has made it possible for us to be with him for all eternity to come.

*Alleluia! Alleluia!*

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"You are precious  
in my eyes  
and glorious,  
and I love you,"  
says the Lord..  
--Isaiah 43:4

## A home

from page 2

needed to the house. After a list of needed repairs was sent to the owner, we negotiated one more time and settled on a final price, saying we would take the house as is and do the repairs ourselves. The final money wired for the house was \$199K, just under our original goal! Chad Beckett oversaw the paperwork and handled the legal aspect of the process.

There were a few repairs needed, including replacing the sump pump in the basement and the sink/vanity in one of the bathrooms, as well as replacing the carpet in the ground floor bedroom and the room that would serve as a chapel. Dave Palmisano oversaw the repairs with Chuck Shaw assisting for the electrical work; Mark Gerhart assisted as well. Margy Palmisano selected the carpet and the paint colors (by the way the color scheme was chosen to match those used in the expanded church. I can't remember the painter's name but it was someone that Dave and Margy recommended.

I was determined to keep costs low and am happy to say that we didn't spend much money at all on furnishings; nearly everything was donated by my parents, family friends, and several St. Patrick's parishioners. We also obtained several pieces of furniture and beds from the Newman Center for a \$500 donation.

I would like to add a special thanks to The Women of St. Patrick, who helped with remaining household needs that weren't met through the Cellar-to-Garret Sale. The first summer in the house the Catholic Heart Work Camp group did landscape work and the Holy Cross Girl Scouts created a butterfly garden in the raised landscape beds at the back of the house.

That first summer we had one of the Peoria seminarians in residence, which fulfilled one of the anticipated uses of the rectory. And after I was reassigned, I think there was an assistant priest in residence for some time. We did also use the rectory for meetings with the trustees and for a staff retreat day, in addition to hosting regular clergy gatherings for the Champaign-Urbana area.

The purchase of a rectory was a good move for St. Patrick's, and a real benefit for the pastors who will reside there in the years to come.

### Vocation Prayer

Loving Father, you invite each of us to serve you through the life you have given us. May your grace encourage us to heights of holiness through service to your people. Make me an instrument to encourage others to give of themselves – and challenge me to do the same.

# Holy Cross Happenings

It's been a while since the last HCS update, but that's certainly not because there hasn't been anything happening at the school! On the contrary, this year has been as busy as it has been undeniably unique.

The academic year began right on time; the school opened its doors on August 20, 2020. Before that date, parents were given a choice of sending students to full-time, in-person instruction, or to have them attend Holy Cross's virtual academy. At the end of each quarter, families have been allowed to reassess their decision and choose either to continue in their current instructional mode or to switch to the other.



**Ravi Neblett prepares to perform on the trombone.**

When Covid-19 cases

began to spike last fall, the school made the decision (along with all of the other area Catholic schools) to have all learning take place online. This lasted from Monday, November 16, through Monday, January 11. With the exception of one additional mandatory e-learning week, families since then have been able to choose either in-person or virtual instruction.

When students arrive at school, with masks firmly in place, their temperatures are taken before they exit their parents' cars. They are also asked to report any symptoms they may be experiencing before being cleared to hop out, sanitize their hands, and enter the building.



**Elizabeth Withers-Sickles sits ready for the socially-distanced concert to begin.**

Of course, all of these protocols means that many "extra" activities, like sports, clubs, and (especially) field trips, have been curtailed. However, when it's been possible to have them in whatever safe, distanced form was necessary, Holy Cross has kept them going. From sports to scouting, band to Scholastic Bowl, the staff of HCS has worked hard in their mission to nurture mind, body, and soul.

Please pray for the continued success of our school year and the safety of all of our students, families, and staff!

\*

*If there is anything you'd like to see featured in an upcoming installment of Holy Cross Happenings, or have any additions or corrections to report, please send them to rachmcmill@gmail.com.*

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



**Teachers stand ready to hand out treat bags at a celebratory Christmas drive-thru.**

## First Quarter Honor Roll:

### Highest Honors

Grace Arend  
Eireann Byard  
Elizabeth Withers-Sickles  
Eilla Pope  
Emily Surratt  
Natalie Pociask  
Anna Loftus  
Michael McCoy

### High Honors

Peter Samu

### Honors

Marleo Likya  
Alyson Clements



**Bundled – and masked – kids enjoy the snow upon returning from a good old-fashioned snow day!**

## The book drive exceeded all expectations!

Thank you, St. Patrick parishioners! Because of your generosity, children of many local immigrant families will have books to read! The St. Patrick Book Drive for Immigrant families was held on two weekends at the end of February and beginning of March. St. Patrick Peace and Justice Outreach coordinator Luis Cuza, in partnership with Immigrants Services of Champaign-Urbana (ISCU, formerly CU-FAIR), organized the drive to collect new and gently used books for children from birth to fifth grade.



The original goal was to collect 150 books to be given to 50 families. However, empty tomb staff member Sylvia Ronsvale and St. Patrick parishioner Richard Keane, a volunteer, contributed about 100 books, and before the drive was even completed, St. Patrick parishioners had brought that number to over 550!

Now the distribution of books will be able to include most of the 300 families that receive food assistance weekly from ISCU and its secular and faith group partners. There are also hopes to set up a mini-library at Shadow Wood and Ivanhoe trailer parks.

Immigrant children, as English-language learners, have suffered greatly from the change for remote schooling because of the pandemic. They miss out on the social interactions with teachers and classmates, and their parents often don't have the language skills, educational background, or knowledge of local resources to support their children's learning. ISCU is working with the Champaign School District, especially with the staff

Can you help these children and their families improve their lives and futures in our community? If you would like to take part or plan to help out after you are fully vaccinated, please contact Luis Cuza (217-954-8371 or [luis@cuza.us](mailto:luis@cuza.us)). of Edison Middle School, to encourage

summer programs and special assistance after school to help these children catch up.

Efforts are also underway to recruit tutors and mentors to provide (virtual) after-school activities such as reading and math support. More activities are being planned to assist both the adults and children of these families once the pandemic is brought under control. These might include trips to local farms, museums, sports events, UIUC, Parkland College, and more.

## Praying our good-byes

You may be wondering whether, or even how, how funeral services are being held at St. Patrick in the time of pandemic. While no funeral liturgies were allowed during the initial lockdown in March and April of 2020, once in-person Masses resumed, funeral Masses were resumed as well. While observing all pandemic protocols issued by the Diocese of Peoria, many details remain unchanged. Here's what it looks like today:

After a death, the parish office is notified of the impending funeral by either the funeral director or the family of the deceased. Family members meet with Fr. Anthony Co either in person or by phone to discuss arrangements, such as the date and time desired for the Mass. Father may also invite the family to share stories and memories of the deceased person. All of this is a step in the grieving process.

The family is given a small booklet developed by the parish to help them plan the funeral Mass. The booklet includes Scripture readings and music to choose from, along with a place to decide details such as who will do the readings, if a specific cantor is requested, and whether there will be anyone who will give a brief eulogy.

This funeral-planning booklet is also available on the parish website under the tab at the top for "Sacraments." The section marked for funerals under the Sacraments tab contains answers to frequently asked questions, as well as a place to enter the choices for Scripture, music, and participation chosen by the family.

Once the family has made decisions regarding the funeral Mass, they meet with Music Director Dr. Frank Gallo, who prepares the printed worship aid for the funeral Mass. Communication may take place by phone or by email. The information entered via the website can be emailed directly to Dr. Gallo. All of the final details are shared with members of the parish staff and members of the Ministry of Consolation funeral team to prepare for the Mass and determine where their help is needed.

At the funeral Mass all pandemic protocols are followed. Everyone who comes must wear a mask and

see **Praying our good-byes** on page 7



**Q: How can I help my children celebrate Easter at home this year?**

**A:** Actually, there are probably more ways to celebrate Easter at home than away! Even in this time of pandemic restrictions. Here are just a few suggestions – you can probably come up others.

Because Easter is first and foremost a celebration of Jesus' resurrection, you might read or tell the story of a Gospel account of his resurrection and subsequent interactions with others – his compassionate encounters with his followers in the Upper Room, his appearance in the garden to the grieving Mary Magdalene, his breakfast on the beach with his fisherman friends, his walk with a despondent couple on their way to Emmaus.

Easter baskets (and their contents!) have always been a welcome treat. And an Easter egg hunt outside in your own yard or inside your home can be organized with little fuss and are rewarded with gales of laughter as excited youngsters search everywhere for that very last egg! Chocolate or plastic eggs filled with small treats are equally desirable.

Young children will also be intrigued by dyeing hard-boiled eggs in different colors and might like to come up with different designs for them. If you plan a special dessert, you might involve your children in its preparation in a way suitable to their age.

Would your children enjoy dressing up for an Easter parade at home, choosing their own adornment and clothing? Maybe Easter bonnets they create themselves, perhaps with an example or two provided, could become the start of an annual tradition.

Let your imagination (and the ages of your children) be your guide – after all, Easter does come but once a year!

## Quick fixin's from the kitchen of . . . Land O Lakes

*We thought you might like something a bit different for dessert on Easter, so we looked for lamb cake recipes that didn't require a mold – and we found this! It's not really quick, and maybe not easy, but your children might enjoy turning cupcakes into lambs. (Note: It makes 24 cupcakes.)*

### Easter Lamb Cupcakes

#### Cupcakes:

1 pkg (15-16 oz) white cake mix  
1 c milk  
1/2 c butter  
3 large eggs  
2 T orange juice  
2 t orange zest

#### Frosting:

1 1/2 c butter, softened  
2 c powdered sugar  
2 t vanilla  
2 jars (7 oz) marshmallow crème

#### Decorations:

1 pkg (10 oz) miniature marshmallows  
Gumdrops, licorice pieces, M&Ms . . .

In a large bowl combine cake mix, milk, butter, eggs, orange juice, and orange zest, and mix thoroughly. Divide batter evenly among paper cupcake liners and bake at 350° for 18-22 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool 5 minutes in pan, then move to cooling rack and cool completely.

**Frosting:** In a medium bowl combine butter, powdered sugar, and vanilla, and mix until creamy. Add marshmallow crème and continue mixing until well combined. When cupcakes are completely cool, frost them, creating a mound of frosting in the center of each.

Create lamb faces by flattening black gumdrops to 1/4-inch thickness, using the palm of your hand, and poke holes in them for nostrils. Attach one lamb face on the front third of each cupcake and add candy eyes using frosting to adhere. Press miniature marshmallows onto cupcakes. Use licorice pieces for tails, gumdrop or licorice pieces for tails and ears. Let your imagination be your guide!



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

\* \* \*

*It is I, Lord,  
your small black sheep.  
Out of the sheep dip  
I cry to You.*

*It is for my good that I am here,  
I know, but there is fear –  
the sights, the sounds,  
the horrid smells,  
discomfort, even pain  
enough to make a strong man weep.*

*You promised to be with me,  
it is true;  
yet I would so much rather  
be with You.*

*—Ruth R. Rains*

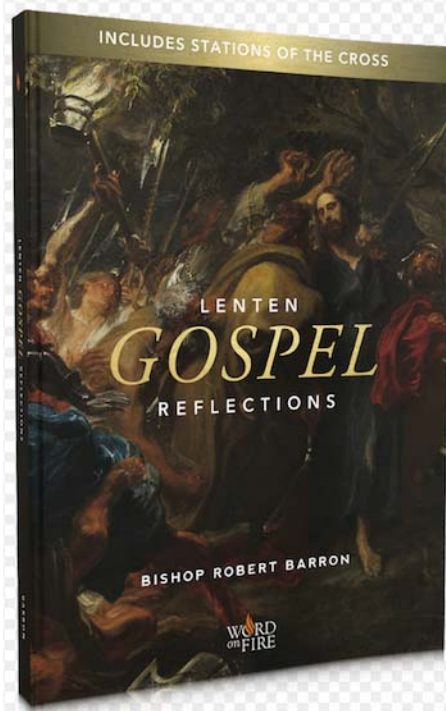
## Parishioners reflect on Lenten Gospels

Over fifty parishioners signed up for our parish's Lenten book study. Eight groups meet once a week to discuss the Gospels from the previous Sunday's Mass, based on Bishop Barron's *Lenten Gospel Reflections*.

Mary Long, our acting pastoral associate, ordered books for those who signed up to participate. With their input, she arranged the days and times that would be convenient for everyone. Each group's leader sent out the Zoom ID number that would enable everyone in the group to join in on the selected day and time.

One aspect of the book study that Mary finds powerful is that Catholics all over the world are participating in the same lessons each day as part of the Universal Church.

There are many lessons in the Gospel of Matthew based on Christ's words and parables. In the group this reporter participates in, all found examples relevant to our lives and need for improvements.



In Matthew 6, Jesus spoke to his disciples, and to us, about how we should give alms, pray, and fast. Jesus said, "Take care not to perform righteous deeds

in order that people may see them; otherwise, you will have no recompense from your heavenly Father." Every Gospel carried a relevant and rewarding lesson for each of us.

At the end of Bishop Barron's book there is a section of reflections on the Stations of the Cross. For each of the fourteen Stations there are two pages of moving reflections, some invoking ancient history and learned men, and others using examples from modern literature. This illustrated section alone makes the book especially conducive for Lenten reflection and prayer.

## Praying our good-byes

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have their hands sanitized as they enter the building. Seating for all except the immediate family is in alternate pews. The number of those attending is limited to 125 in order to accommodate the seating.

While there are no gifts to be brought forward, family or friends may assist with placing the pall on the casket (in the event that one is present) and may also do the Scripture readings or assist with Holy Communion if they are commissioned Eucharistic ministers. As at every Mass, Communion is distributed with persons remaining in their pews while the Eucharistic ministers come to them. The family may also choose to have the Mass broadcast via live-streaming so that those who are unable to attend can still participate.

One of the most difficult aspects of a funeral at this time is that guests may not linger in church to greet the family members of the deceased. For this reason, some families have opted for a graveside service, which Fr. Anthony Co or Deacon Cliff Maduzia will perform, with a "celebration of life" event to be scheduled after pandemic restrictions are lifted.

Whether a graveside gathering or Mass of Christian Burial is planned, St. Patrick's faith community is there to support one another in their time of need.

## Did you know . . .

Have you checked out our spiffy new parish website yet? It has the same familiar address, [www.stpaturbana.org](http://www.stpaturbana.org), but it looks quite appropriate for the 21<sup>st</sup> century!

According to Jon McCoy, the new website was in large part Fr. Anthony's idea – he wanted something that was concise, that would easily provide parishioners with the information they needed.

It was largely put together, using Squarespace, by Chris Mandle, a member of Sacred Heart Parish in Rock Island, Fr. Anthony's former parish. Fr. Anthony added much of the illustrations and content, with some help from the staff.

I wonder, were they aided by St. Isidore of Spain, patron saint of the internet? (If you're having computer problems or, especially these days, trouble with Zoom, you might call on St. Isidore!)

## How is our weekly collection handled?

Pre-pandemic, St. Patrick's Sunday collection was counted weekly by one of two alternating teams of parishioners—but they found themselves out of a job when the pandemic hit.

When the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions were somewhat eased, our former parish business manager, Karen Barnes, met with Jean Anderson from the collection-counting team to count the offertory collection and verify each other's work. Once counted and the amount entered in the computer, the collection was deposited in the bank.

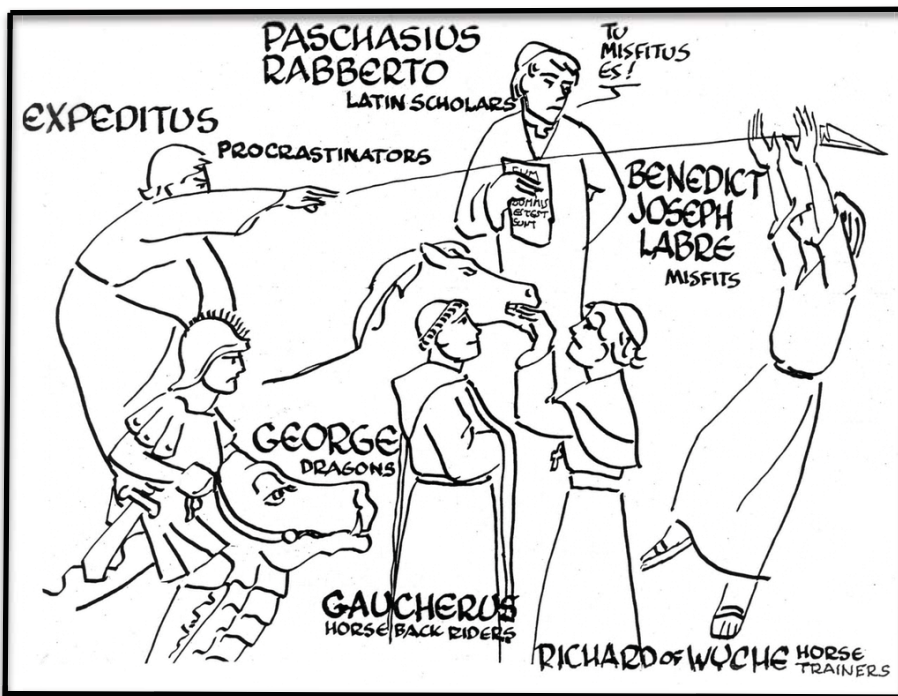
With the June arrival of Jackie Grandone, our current business manager, this process has continued.

During the pandemic, many parishioners have been making their weekly donations through the parish's online giving program. If you'd like information about how this works, please contact Jackie Grandone at the parish office (367-2665).

Meanwhile we hope and pray that we will soon be able once again to worship together in person and enjoy catching up on news in the lives of our parish friends!

*There is a voice  
that doesn't use words:  
listen.*

*--Rumi*



April Saints by Fr. George Wuellner



*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](mailto: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 (May) issue of *In Focus* is **Sunday, April 4.**