

St. Patrick Parish IN FOCUS

www.stpaturbana.org

December 2021

Christmas Gifts

This time of year, many of us are worried about Christmas gifts: What to get for whom? How much to spend? Gifts are an important part of Christmas; they give joy and festivity to our time together. They remind us of the gift that God gave us, the gift of his son, Jesus. But there are other kinds of gifts too. Perhaps, as you think about the people you'll be with at

Christmas, you can consider giving some of these gifts.

How about a gift of welcome and friendship? Is there

someone you know who needs a friend at Christmastime? Perhaps you could give them this gift – after all, Mary and Joseph made Jesus welcome!

How about a gift of affirmation? If you know someone who never gets much credit for the good they do, maybe even someone who does good things every day, give them this gift.

Could you give a gift of acceptance? You may know someone who is always just a bit on the fringes, not quite part of the family or group. This would be a terrific gift for them.

Maybe you could give a gift of stories. Many families have stories that the younger generation needs to hear. Some people have stories to tell that will allow others to know them better. Stories have a way of drawing us together and enriching the ties among us. Think of how often we recall St. Luke's stories about the birth of Jesus.

You might give a gift of sharing your hopes. Parents, tell your children what you hope for them. Children, tell your family your dreams for the future.

Elders, tell your children how you hope to live out your final days. Hopes are every bit as intimate as stories. Sharing them draws us closer and allows us to work toward them.

Could you give a gift of forgiveness? Are there old hurts that haunt your family gatherings and make people tread gingerly? Are there new issues coming up that have caused divisions? These can be very difficult issues to address. But Jesus, who came to offer us forgiveness, will be with you as you try to forgive others.



Christmas cookies? Really?

Yes, really! The popular Christmas cookie (and other homemade treats) sale is scheduled to take place on Sunday, December 12. Modified, to be sure, because of the pandemic, but plans are already in the making.

The Women of St. Patrick are putting out the call for donations of cookies, home-baked goods of all kinds, home-canned goods such as jams and jellies, and homemade crafts and needlework items. Watch the bulletin for additional information and updates.



Mark your calendar, save your nickels and dimes, get out your favorite baking recipes – the Christmas cookie (and other homemade treats) sale is coming. Just imagine!

See **Christmas Gifts** on page 3

Celebrating the Year of St. Joseph

On December 8, 2020, Pope Francis declared a Year of St. Joseph. This special day commemorated the 150th anniversary of Pope Pius IX's declaring St. Joseph as Patron of the Catholic Church on the feast of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, Joseph's spouse.

In his 2020 Apostolic Letter "Patris Corde" Pope Francis urges us to learn from Joseph's example as a beloved and tender foster father to Jesus and husband to Mary. Joseph was obedient to God by accepting the pregnant Mary and then saved her and Jesus from Herod's anger. He protected and provided for them in Egypt and then in Nazareth.



St. Joseph is also a model for us all in his acceptance of God's will with courage, patience and faith. An ordinary working "Joe," he listened to God, and then guided and taught Jesus during his childhood. His virtues earned him a special place in the Mass's Eucharistic prayers, the Nativity story, and the Holy Family.

Many St. Patrick's parishioners have participated in the 2020-21 year of St. Joseph through prayers, fellowship, and reflections. The Knights of Columbus and other men have met, shared meals, and jointly studied the book *Consecration to St. Joseph: The Wonders of Our Spiritual Father*, by Fr. Donald Calloway. Recently our weekend Masses begun with a prayer to St. Joseph. Special consecration novena prayers started on November 9 and will run until December 19, the final week of Advent.

Advent is an ideal time to reflect on Joseph, the guardian of Christ and the Catholic Church. A common man called to an extraordinary mission, he is an example of faith, love, and acceptance. As Pope Francis wrote, "In a way we are all, like Joseph, a shadow of the heavenly Father ... and a shadow that follows his Son."

Tricky weather couldn't stop Trunk-or-Treat!

The weather played a trick, but St. Patrick's children and parents still got their treats at this year's Trunk-or-Treat. An estimated 75-100 parishioners came for the event on October 24, even as rain tried to scare them away.



Fortunately, our parish has learned something about adaptability during the pandemic and we have adjusted. Festivities were moved from outside in the parking lot to inside the parish center. Costumed children were able to trick-or-treat at "trunks" set up in the office hallway. CREW hosted games in the classrooms. St. Brigid's Hall had plenty of room for safely enjoying food.



Also in St. Brigid Hall, participants could enter a variety of contests. Winners included Addi Childers, whose pumpkin-decorating contest win earned her a movie-theater gift card, and the Little family, which won \$70 from the 50/50 Rubber Ducks contest.

Organizers are looking forward to next year, hoping better weather will bring out more parishioners to this popular event.

Christmas Gifts

from page 1

In fact, this is true for all the gifts that we've been considering. We can give them because Jesus first gave them to us. He has welcomed us as members of his body, as part of himself. He knows every good in us and wants nothing more than to help us develop them. He calls us together, Sunday after Sunday, to remember and nourish us with the stories about himself. His hope for us is that we will live with him for eternity.

Jesus, the Father's gift to us, is the one who gives us every good gift. And we, in turn, share those gifts with one another.



Q: Why do priests wear purple vestments at Masses

during Advent? Purple is the color of penance, but isn't Advent focused on the joyous event of the coming of Christ?

A: Well, yes, but . . . The Church is rooted in the customs and practices of Judaism, from which it evolved. One of many such customs was to observe a period of preparation, one of penance or self-denial, before a major religious event. As the Church grew, this penitential preparation was observed before two major events, Christmas and Easter. And violet, or purple, marks this penitential preparation.

Your observation about Advent, however, is significant in light of the developing flavor of the Church's observance of Advent, a significant event for Christians.

In times past, Advent was seen as somewhat of a mini-Lent, a time of penance and self-denial – but with a tinge of joy, perhaps reflected now in the rose vestments that priests wear at Mass on the

Third Sunday of Advent and in the rose candle lit in the Advent wreath that day.

As the Church's liturgy developed during the past century or so, the predominant spirit of Advent has become one of joyful waiting and hope. This theme clearly appears in the Scripture readings for Masses and in other liturgical texts for this season. Stay alert for it!

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



There was nothing scary about the Knight of Columbus Pancake Breakfast on October 31, just delicious food.



You do what God has called you to do. You show up. You put one foot in front of another. You do the job – which is a mystery. And a surprise. You have no idea, when you are called, what God is calling you to. But he needs you. He needs me. He needs all of us.

—Mychal Judge, OFM

Speaker shares his stories of pain and hope

The second session of *Sharing Stories around the Table: An Educational and Spiritual Series about the Sin (Soul Sickness) of Racism* gave those attending a lot to think about. Lemond Peppers, the Community Engagement Coordinator for the City of Urbana, spoke eloquently about some of the more memorable incidents of racism he has encountered in his life, ranging from his confusion as a child at finding out that he was not allowed in his White friend's house to a terrifying and abusive incident with police when he was a college student, which led to his ending up as a convicted felon.

Raised by a father who was a minister and a mother who was a teacher, Lemond's life is informed by a strong faith in God. He chooses to look for and promote healing. His work with the city of Urbana lets him do that, and more. As well as being staff liaison to the Police Review Board, he works with community groups, in the schools and anywhere connection and engagement need to be made in the city of Urbana. One important group he works with is the Self-Made

Kings, a group of at-risk teenage African American boys. He and adult volunteers from Urbana High school mentor the boys and help them develop skills that will keep them out of trouble and moving forward on a successful path. Some of the Kings and mentors accompanied Lemond that night.

Midway through the session, moderator Stan Yanchus asked Lemond – who was Stan's student decades earlier when Stan taught high school – if he had any questions that he would like to ask the participants. Lemond's questions included “Are you ready to have a

public stand-out to a private moment of racism?” and “How important is it to your spiritual life to have a diverse congregation?” Participants got together in groups of two or three, some parishioners pairing with the young Kings, to explore their answers to those challenging questions.

At the end of Lemond's talk, Stan asked him, “So, what can we do?” Lemond suggested engagement first and foremost. He stressed that anything we do should be done with intentionality. If you want to get involved or help in some way, do so in the way that *you* would want to receive that kind of help. Ask yourself honestly what you want to do. Be very clear about your intended action. It's also important to be honest with yourself about what you *don't* want to do. Make peace with that. Then make a plan.

Plans don't need to be big. Invite people to come to your church. Treat everyday interactions as meaningful. Remember that African Americans interacting with

White people will be very conscious of your tone, your timbre, your body language. Be genuine and authentic.

The session ended with a prayer offered by Leonard a prayer and a meditation led by Mary Long. Afterwards, many people lingered, talking with one another, Lemond, and the Kings.

The next session will take place on Saturday, December 4, from 9 a.m. until noon. Several St. Patrick's parishioners will share their stories of their experience as immigrants.

To be added to the email list for reminders, please contact Stan Yanchus (family4yanchus@comcast.net). If you missed previous sessions, contact Elizabeth Hendricks (elizabethwahlhend@gmail.com) for copies of each session's summary and resources. Videos of some sessions will be available on St. Patrick's YouTube Channel.



November 5, 2021
nagelesusan@gmail.com

To all the good people of St. Patrick Parish

“We cannot but speak about what we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:20).

This was the theme for World Mission Sunday on October 24. The Pope’s entire message can be read at this link:

https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/missions/documents/papa-francesco_20210106_giornata-missionaria2021.html

I am now retired from Maryknoll Lay Missioners (MKLM), but I volunteer for mission education and fundraising. Thanks very much to all of you for your continued support of Catholic laity in cross-cultural mission. The parish donated \$4000, and the Women of St. Patrick donated \$3000. I also contributed 10% of my pension, which comes from MKLM.

Like most of you, I now participate in mission from Urbana, Illinois. There is so much we can do! Relationships with people of other cultures opens my eyes and changes my thinking almost every day.



I was inspired when most Maryknoll Lay Missioners stayed in their ministries during the

pandemic. At this moment, there are 13 new candidates in



orientation at Maryknoll, NY beginning the process of preparing for ministry. They include single women and men, married couples, “a strong Hispanic woman,” a woman born in Korea who came to the USA as a teenager, and a Sister

of St. Joseph. Maryknoll Lay Missioners welcomes Sisters, Brothers, and priests as members of an inclusive, intercultural community focused on cross-cultural mission. If one of you reading this feels a similar call, check it out at the link below!

On World Mission Sunday, MKLM recognized Marty Roers

for his impressive commitment to mission. I worked with Marty when we were both Lay Missioners in Sudan. Ministry is anywhere and everywhere; you can see Marty’s mission journey at this link: <https://mkmlm.org/ms/>.

His journey continues – and so does ours.

Pope Francis challenges us:

Always, but especially in these times of pandemic, it is important to grow in our daily ability to widen our circle, to reach out to others who, albeit physically close to us, are not immediately part of our “circle of interests” (cf. Fratelli Tutti, 97). To be on mission is to be willing to think as Christ does, to believe with him that those around us are also our brothers and sisters.”

With gratitude as we all continue to follow Jesus. In mission,

Susan Nagle

If you would like to know more about Maryknoll Lay Missioners log onto the website: www.mkmlm.org or call toll free 1-800-867-2980.

Holy Cross Happenings

The first quarter is in the books, and it was an eventful one. Some pre-COVID activities, such as the annual Fall Festival, were canceled in light of the continuing pandemic, but others – like sports – have returned in more or less normal form.

Speaking of sports, a huge congratulations is in order to the girls' cross-country team, 12th at the IESA ties the team's all-showing. Well

One of Holy Cross most enduring Mass for All Saints features fourth- as the saints they learning about in looked fabulous with the touch of masked



which placed State meet. This time best done, ladies! Cross School's traditions is the Day, which graders dressed have been class. The kids this year, even anachronistic faces.

Another fun tradition that will be returning in December is the Kris Kringle Shoppe, at which kids get the chance to shop for Christmas presents for their loved ones. It is always a joy to see what clever crafted gifts donors supply the shop with each year, and the prices are always more than fair. Kids are encouraged to spend their own money, but it stretches pretty far – \$5 is usually more or for the kids to something under each of their

Yet another event is set to person (God year: Trivia committee has meeting to plan traditionally February. It is anticipated gathering for all



friends of Holy Cross and an effective fundraiser – in fact, it has single-handedly eliminated the need for other annual fundraisers!

Many thanks and blessings to those who work so hard to make this a special event, and prayers for a successful event this year!

*

Please feel free to contact 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/corrections to report.

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 more details.

Parish Council News



It's been an active autumn for St. Patrick's, and the Parish Council has been a big part of the activity. After our "Keep the Fire Burning" event to celebrate the retirement of our parish debt, the Parish Council has not slowed down. In October, it helped with the men's event to honor St. Joseph. Soon after that, it was on to assist CREW in putting on its Trunk or Treat party for the younger members of our parish. Then it was time to turn to prayer by sponsoring a day of Eucharistic adoration on November 16.

If it seems that the Parish Council has been more involved in producing the activities of the parish, this is because it has! As we emerge slowly from the pandemic, it's clear that people are hungry for opportunities to come back together in person for worship and fellowship.

The Parish Council is a group of active parishioners who are willing to plan and execute events to meet the needs of our diverse parish. Soon we will be looking for some new members. Gratefully, we acknowledge the retirement of Council members Mary Schmitz and Bridget McGill. We appreciate all they have done in offering their gifts to St. Patrick's.

Additional new members will be needed in the spring, as seats will open when some person's terms come to an end. If you or someone you know is interested in an active role in the parish, please consider a rewarding three-year term as a member of the Parish Council. For information, please contact the Council's current president, Mary Tate (maryltate@comcast.net).

Did You Know . . .

Will there be a Ladies Knight Out this spring? Jack Parisi sends this good news: “Ladies Knight Out has been rescheduled for April 30, 2022 as long as COVID-19 numbers allow for a sit-down dinner and live entertainment.” Keep your fingers crossed!

Quick fixin’s from the kitchen of . . . Clare Barkley



Hearty Potato Soup Makes 2 ½ quarts

6 medium potatoes, peeled and coarsely chopped
2 carrots
6 celery stalks, chopped
8 c water
1 onion, chopped
6 T butter, cubed
6 T flour
1 t salt
½ t pepper
1 ½ c milk

In a large soup pan (e.g., a Dutch oven), cook the potatoes, carrots, and celery in water until tender, about 15 to 20 minutes. Drain, reserving liquid and setting vegetables aside. (*This can be done up to three days ahead of time.*) In the same cookware sauté onion in butter until tender. Stir in flour, salt, and pepper; gradually add milk. Bring to a boil, and cook and stir for 2 minutes, or until thickened. Gently stir in cooked vegetables. Add reserved cooking liquid until soup is desired consistency.

*

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!

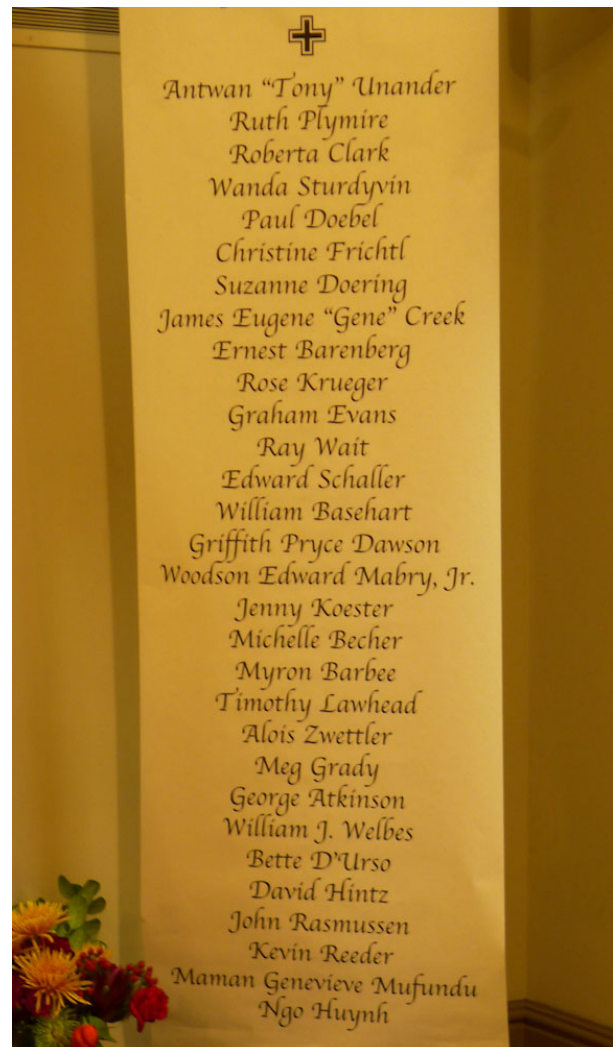
When God desires to make someone truly holy, he, who knows the best way to go about it, touches the most sensitive point. We resist at first, then we submit, and then we throw ourselves flat on the ground – and joy, peace, and pure charity are born in the ruins.

—Abbess Cecile Bruyere

Vocation Prayer

Loving Father, you know well the person I’ve become, no doubt far from what you expected of me. Yet here I stand, hoping that you still have a role for me in helping to advance your Kingdom – here where I am planted, and now, with whatever years remain to me. I need your help to see how best I may serve. What would you have me do? I love you, Father – use me however you will.

We Remember . . .



**In what remains
of my own gift of days,
may I be led
to find that magic silver thread
that turns the tangle of the world
to praise.
—Ruth R. Rains**



Can you help In Focus happen?

Many people contribute their time and talents to help *In Focus* come out each month. We're happy to have all kinds of help, but we have two special needs right now.

Page Layout: Three or four times a year, you would receive files of edited articles and photos, lay them out using whatever software you prefer, and create a pdf.

Committee Member: We meet monthly (virtually, for now) to brainstorm articles for the next issue. Meetings are usually held on the 4th Thursday of the month at 7 p.m.

Interested? Contact Cathy Salika at 367-7861 or csalika@illinois.edu.

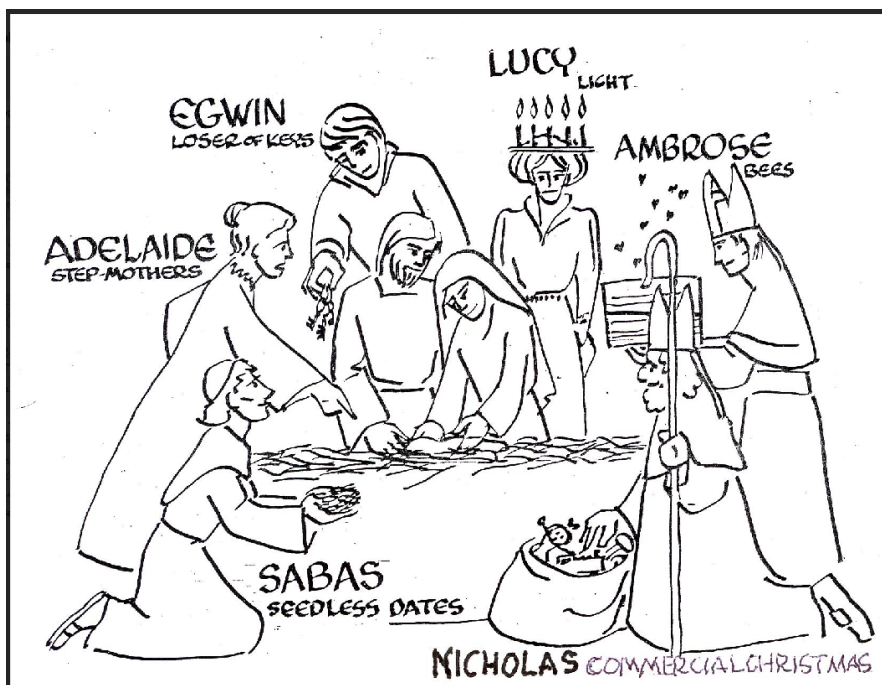
St. Patrick's Parish In Focus is published on the last weekend of the month in Urbana, Illinois. News items and information may be submitted by mid-month for the next issue. Materials must include the name and telephone number of the person submitting them.

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.

Editorial board: Judy Fierke, 352-7670 (j-fierke@comcast.net); Denise Green, 553-7110 (dgree1@gmail.com); Elizabeth Hendricks, 328-2184 (elizabethwalkend@gmail.com); Mary Lou Menches, 344-1125 (mmenches@illinois.edu); and Cathy Salika, 367-7861 (csalika@illinois.edu).

Associates: John Colombo, Rachael McMillan, Rick Partin, Shirley Splittstoesser, Jim Urban, and Jerry Walsh.

Articles, information, and photos for this issue were provided by Clare Barkley, Addi Childers, Denise Green, Elizabeth Hendricks, Mary Lou Menches, Cathy Salika, Lucille Salika, and Mary Tate. Patron Saints by Fr. George Wuellner. This issue was edited by Rick Partin; page layout by Shirley Splittstoesser.



December Saints by Fr. George Wuellner



The deadline for submitting articles and news items for the next (January) issue of *In Focus* is **Sunday, December 5.**