

# St. Patrick Parish IN FOCUS

www.stpaturbana.org

March 2021

## St. Patrick, from slave to bishop to patron saint

Around 400 A.D., Patrick was a young man in western Britain. As the son of a local Roman official, he probably lived a comfortable life. As a Christian, he was well schooled in the faith, but not particularly devout. Everything changed abruptly when, at age 16, he was kidnapped by Irish raiders and carried across the sea into slavery. He was sold to a local king who put him to work as a shepherd and probably valued him less than the sheep.



to return to their land. At first, his superiors were not convinced that he had the skills or learning for such a dangerous mission, but he won them over. Around 432, he was ordained a bishop and allowed to return to Ireland. On his way, he returned to his home village in Britain. Can you imagine the scene? His family must have thought him dead for many years, yet here he was, alive, scarred by slavery, but with a faith that they had never before seen in him. And he was preparing to return to the pagan land where he could easily be enslaved again or killed. They must have questioned his plans. They probably wondered if they would ever see him again.

How would you have felt in his place? Shocked? Abandoned? Despondent? Patrick probably felt all these things. As an old man looking back at those days, however, he saw this as a time of grace. He returned to the prayers he had learned by heart as a child and clung to his faith as never before.

Six years later, God told Patrick in a dream that it was time to escape. He made a difficult journey overland 200 miles to the sea, and found a ship sailing for Gaul that was willing to take him. There he studied for the priesthood and was ordained. During this period, he had repeated dreams of Irish voices asking him

Yet Patrick went where he was called. For 30 years, he wandered up and down the island, preaching by word and deed, and organizing the foundations of the Church in Ireland. He established the primatial see of Armagh. He baptized tens of thousands. He built a network of monasteries and churches, and ordained hundreds of Irish priests to

see **St. Patrick** on page 3

## Can you help this garden grow?

As our thoughts turn to spring, many of us may be looking forward to getting outside and gardening once the days begin to warm and the time to plant seeds arrives. Have you considered helping in our parish's SVDP Food Pantry Garden?

The Food Pantry has a plot in the organic community gardens at Meadowbrook Park in Urbana. For several years now, volunteers have been planting, cultivating, weeding, watering, and harvesting to provide the food pantry with home-grown vegetables. Food pantry guests have been grateful for the tomatoes, squash, green beans, and other delicious fresh food produced in this garden.



This past fall, several parishioners worked to improve the fencing and to build garden boxes to prevent the rabbits from taking too much of the harvest this coming year. As spring approaches, there is more work to be done, filling those boxes with soil, compost, and mulch, and completing the task of reinforcing the fences.

see **Garden** on page 3

# Many hands make *In Focus*

The Communications Committee has been able to function almost normally since the Covid-19 shutdown. You know it's true because you're reading *In Focus* now! Creating this parish newsletter is our most important function as a committee. We believe that publicizing and reporting on parish events builds up our parish community by encouraging participation, strengthening the ties among us, deepening faith, and chronicling parish life.

Our process each month begins with a brainstorming meeting. Our five committee members gather (via Zoom, these days) to discuss articles that might be included in the next issue. We are Cathy Salika, chair; Denise Green, secretary; Elizabeth Hendricks, executive editor; Judy Fierke; and Mary Lou Menches, who has served on the committee since the first issue of *In Focus* was produced in 1981!

At our meeting we consider the parish calendar, the feasts and seasons of the Church, our knowledge of other parish groups that we are involved with, and sometime suggestions from our readers. We come out of the meeting with a list of possible articles and people who might help us by taking pictures, writing articles, or providing information. A typical issue receives input from 15-25 people.

Then we scatter to take up our tasks. The deadline for articles is 10-17 days after our meeting, and there's a lot to do, contacting our helpers, writing, researching. Our executive editor, Elizabeth, receives all the articles and photos and follows up on any that are missing. She locates photos and graphics. She suggests articles for front-page attention, and ones that could be postponed till the next issue, if necessary. Then she turns it over to one of our copy editors.

We have three copy editors who take turns editing an issue, Mary Lou Menches, Rick Partin, and Jerry Walsh. They merge the articles into one document and edit them for grammar, style, and length. When finished, they send their edited file to Elizabeth, who sends it on for review by our parish staff. Then she turns everything over for

pagging.

Our page layout volunteers, John Colombo and Shirley Splittstoesser, take turns doing layout. They're the ones who really make *In Focus* look good. They lay out the articles and decide where the photos and graphics should be placed. Because of the way it's printed, an issue of *In*

*Focus* usually has 8 or 12 pages. Sometimes a little more material is needed to fill the issue, and sometimes something has to be omitted to fit, so they consult with the editors to adjust as needed.

Finally, the completed issue is turned over to our Parish Secretary, Patricia Fowler, who does the printing (or, in non-pandemic times, sends it to the company that prints the bulletin for printing). It also goes to our webmaster, Jose Schutt-Aine, who posts it on the parish website.

So you see that it takes many talented people to create an issue of *In Focus* every month. We'd love to have more help! We really need more volunteers to do page layout and brainstorming. We can always use more writers, photographers,

and editors. And we always welcome suggestions for articles. Does it sound interesting to you? You can reach us at [infocusstpat@gmail.com](mailto:infocusstpat@gmail.com), or by contacting our chair, Cathy Salika, at 217/367-7861 or [csalika@illinois.edu](mailto:csalika@illinois.edu).

Even the predictable turns into surprise the moment we stop taking it for granted.

—David Stendl-Rast

## St. Patrick Parish IN FOCUS

www.stpatrhiana.org

March 2013

### Lent: Spring Planting

*S*pring planting is hard work. Whether you do it on top of a tractor in the fields or on your knees in the back yard, it's tough.



It takes time and effort, and you're likely to be sore the next day. It is satisfying to look at your work and see that it's well done, but that's all the reward you get for now. You're at the mercy of the weather. If the sun and the rain come in the right balance, and if you're willing to wait for it, you know you'll get lots of food or flowers for yourself and for others. No rain? You could put in more work and water. Too much rain? That's harder. There's no guarantee that you'll get a crop, but one thing is sure: if you don't plant, you'll have nothing but weeds.

Lent is spring planting. It takes time and effort, and it's satisfy-

ing to know that you've done what you can. You might see the fruit of it this year, years from now, or never—there are no guarantees. But one thing is sure: if you don't plant, there will be nothing but weeds.

But there's one important difference between planting during Lent and planting in the fields. God is both the sun and the rain, and you are at his mercy. He's not an indifferent rain cloud. He cares deeply for you. If you plant good seed, he wants it to grow, and he'll pour himself into it just as you pour your effort into planting. He wants it so much that sometimes, even if you don't choose your seed well, he'll make a valuable crop grow. You might not see the results in forty days; it might take years, but you can trust God to give you abundance at the harvest.

What seeds are you planting this Lent? What do you hope will grow from them?



### Living Faith

#### Bringing Jesus to the sick in hospital

*I* was asked to write a few words on serving as an extraordinary minister of communion at Carle Hospital. Serving in this role takes a few hours one day a month—and a few



Joe Hendricks

hours to reflect on what has happened. A primer on serving as an Eucharistic minister described being Communion in the sick as "the most important thing you'll do that day. That assessment is probably right."

When I first began, I worried a good deal about doing this task properly. A parishlunee who does this volunteer work walked me through the process, and others have offered pointers. Prayer is a good way to start before collecting hosts from the tabernacle.

I have come to realize that this ministry is a communal expression helping the relationship between God and a communicant. I just help, watch, and make deliveries. An illustration may make this point see *Living Faith* on page 12

# Meals-on-Wheels, despite the pandemic, still going strong!

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 fortunate to have a flexible work schedule, enabling me 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

conversations are rewarding for both of us, I believe.

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 one week in June, however let me at least say that I now have a much more detailed knowledge of streets in Champaign-Urbana than previously!

The folks who receive the meals



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 are expecting them (at most a dozen homes).

The most complex parts of the work involve our navigation. Sometimes the scheduled path is hard to follow, but 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.

For some unknown reason, my partner leaves the driving to me, which may have shortened her lifespan and improved her patience, but the camaraderie and

are invariably grateful – for the meals, of course, but also for the brief exchanges with such all-to-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 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 for Kevin's next request for volunteers, probably sometime in May, and give him a call!

# St. Patrick

from page 1

root the faith deeply in the Irish land and culture.

There are many stories of wonders that occurred as he spread the faith. Perhaps the most wonderful things are the simplest: that God warmed his faith into flame, and that Patrick was willing to share his life and faith with a people that had done him great harm. Even today, he is a model for us of faith, forgiveness, and evangelization.


St. Patrick, you who are our parish patron saint, pray for us!

# Garden

from page 1

Can you help? Volunteers are needed to assist with this preparation, as well as with planting, weeding, and harvesting throughout the season. Volunteers follow COVID safety precautions, wearing masks and keeping proper distances. This is a great opportunity for those who love to garden and those who love to help feed our neighbors.

Contact garden coordinator Anna (annafedders@gmail.com) if you would like to help make this special garden grow. She would love to hear from you!



Deadline for submission of articles and news items for the next issue of In Focus is **Sunday, March 7.**

I never asked God for success.  
I only asked for wonder  
and God gave it to me.

—Abraham Joshua Heschel



# Q&A

**Q: How can I get the best out of the book I'm reading for Lent?**

**A:** Spiritual reading isn't the same as reading for information, or to be entertained. It's meant to bring us closer to our loving Creator. Spiritual reading, as Fr. Remm once said, can be "a springboard to prayer."

It helps to begin by recalling your purpose in reading, perhaps saying a prayer asking for help in being open to what it is that God wants of you during this time. Be aware of the ways God may be touching your heart as you read and pause when what you're reading seems to call for more thought. God is speaking to you through your reading, and through the movements of your mind and heart as you read. Listen to what God is saying through the words before you.

In the words of the psalmist, read "heedfully." Be alert. Listen. God is here for you, speaking to you, loving you. Don't miss the opportunity to hear what God has to say to you through your spiritual reading!

## Consider the impact of your diet choices this Lent

During the Lenten season, we join our global Church community in fasting, prayer, and reflection. This Lent could be a time to reflect on what we eat and how that affects our personal health and the health of our world.

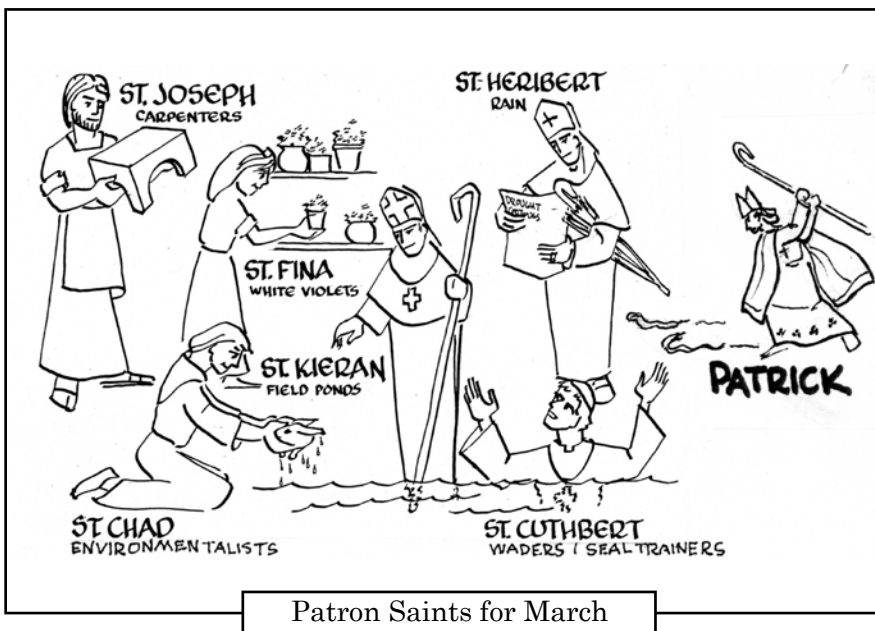
St. Patrick's Environmental Stewardship ministry reminds us that while you might know that diets lower in fat and higher in fiber are better for our personal health, did you know that they are also better for the health of our planet?

According to the Union of Concerned Scientists, 60% of the world's agricultural land is used for beef production. Producing one ton of beef requires approximately 20 times more land on average than is needed for production of the equivalent amount of chicken or pork. Carbon dioxide emissions from beef production are much higher than those for other meats: 45-643 kilograms of carbon dioxide equivalent per kilogram of protein for beef versus 20-55 for pork and 10-30 for poultry.

In his encyclical on the environment, *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis writes that "the issue of environmental degradation challenges us to examine our lifestyle."

Most of us are not going to adopt a vegetarian or vegan diet, but we can still make choices that will benefit both our personal health and the health of our environment. Making small changes such as eating more fruits, vegetables, and grains and reducing our consumption of red meat can be good for our bodies as well as for our planet.

Lent is a good time to consider making such changes. When you are planning your meatless meals on Fridays, try something new—perhaps one of the many meatless recipes from around the world found on the Operation Rice Bowl website ([www.crsricebowl.org](http://www.crsricebowl.org)). You may discover a new dish that you will enjoy eating regularly.



Patron Saints for March

### Vocation Prayer

Dear God,  
I so much want to be in control.  
I want to be the master of my own destiny.  
Still, I know that you are saying:  
"Let me take you by the hand and lead you.  
Accept my love and trust that where I will bring you,  
the deepest desires of your heart will be fulfilled."  
Lord, open my hands to receive your gift of love.

It is in the shelter of each other that the people live.

—Irish Proverb

## How will you prepare this Lent?

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



celebration of the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

This year we can't take part in many of our usual formal Lenten activities but there are still many things we can do to make our Lenten season meaningful. If you haven't already begun, it's never too late to get started! You can find many suggestions on the internet, but here are a few (in case you are giving up the internet for Lent!):

- Apologize to someone. Lent is a season of repentance and since most sins include hurting someone else, don't just ask for God's forgiveness. Reach out and say "I'm sorry" to someone you may

have offended, not only in what you have done but in what you've failed to do.

- Share the love of Christ and take on a Lenten project. Every day, write a letter to someone, do a random act of kindness, or make a phone call to someone special (no texting, just talking).
- Help someone in need.
- If you are able, and can do so safely, volunteer.
- Reach out to someone who is alone. Send a card, make a phone call, run an errand, or deliver a meal or special treat.
- Don't just fast from chocolate this year, fast from insensitive comments and gossip. (You might want to let go of social media for this one.)
- Read a book of daily Lenten meditations and journal.
- Make time for silence and listen to God.
- Pick at random a stranger you see on the street, at the stop light, in line at the grocery, and pray for that person throughout the day.
- Try a new spiritual practice or way of praying. Now is a good time to learn to pray the rosary, pray the Examen, try Lectio Divina, or other ways of praying you have never tried.

Whatever you choose, however you mark this year's Lenten observance, you will make a real impact on your own life or the life of someone else. Why not give it a try? It's never too late!



*Pray for our Elect, those men and women who have responded to God's call to know, love, and serve him on their faith journey as a Roman Catholic.*

### You can 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!

## Joseph, husband of Mary

Pope Francis has announced a “Year of St. Joseph” for us (Dec. 8, 2020-Dec. 7, 2021), an acknowledgment of Joseph’s complete reliance on God in caring for God’s son and Mary, Jesus’ mother.

He pointed out that the pandemic reveals the importance of ordinary people such as caregivers and essential workers who are often overlooked. In many cases, he said, they resemble St. Joseph, “the man who goes unnoticed, a daily discreet and hidden presence, yet one who plays a significant role in salvation.”

The Bible pays Joseph the highest compliment: he was a “just man.” The quality meant a lot more than faithfulness in paying debts! When the Bible speaks of God “justifying” someone, it means that God so transforms a person that the individual shares somehow in God’s own holiness. By saying that Joseph was “just,” the Bible means that he was completely open to all that God wanted to do for him. He became holy by opening himself totally to God.

The rest we can easily surmise. Think of the kind of love with which he wooed and won Mary, and the depth of the love they shared during their married life.

The just man was simply, joyfully, wholeheartedly obedient to God – in marrying Mary, in naming Jesus, in shepherding the precious pair to Egypt, in bringing them to Nazareth, in the undetermined length of time

that he provided for them during years of quiet faith and courage.

The Bible tells us nothing of Joseph in the years after the return to Nazareth except for the probably harrowing search for the young Jesus and finding him at last,



teaching his elders in the Temple. The holiest family was like every other family, the circumstances of their family life were like those of every family, so that when Jesus’ mysterious nature became manifest,

people just couldn’t believe that he came from such humble beginnings.

What can we make of all this for ourselves? Are we open to all that God wants of us, of all that our loving Father wants to do for us? Are we joyfully, wholeheartedly, obedient to our loving Father in the circumstances of our daily lives? Joseph models for us a life of openness to God and to all that God wants for us, in the unremarked comings and goings of our lives.

Saint Joseph is the patron saint of the Universal Church and as such is mentioned in the canon of every Mass. His feast is celebrated on March 19, and he is remembered again as St. Joseph the Worker on May 1. Because tradition describes him as dying in the arms of Mary and Jesus, he is invoked as the patron saint of a happy death. Because he was a man who worked with his hands, he is the patron saint of workers, especially carpenters. He is the patron saint of fathers and of immigrants.

Saint Joseph, pray for us!

### 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 367-78761 or [csalika@illinois.edu](mailto:csalika@illinois.edu).

God’s messages  
and messengers  
are carefully disguised.  
Packaged in wrappings  
bright or brown,  
secret as love-notes  
wanting you surprised.  
Inviting God to speak  
is to engage  
in hide-and-peek,  
and puzzling,  
through and through.  
God speaks  
to anything that is  
through anything that is:  
and even you.

—Ruth R. Rains



# Here's hoping for a mission trip this year!

Some photos from the 2018 mission trip remind us to hope for a mission trip in 2021!



## Did You Know?

She started volunteering at St. Patrick's in the late 1970s. For

more than forty years she has purchased, organized, and cared for all that was needed for our liturgical celebrations: Masses, baptisms, funerals, weddings, and the special liturgical needs of Holy Week, Easter, Advent, and Christmas. Now she

is all but retired as the search for her

successor continues.

Who is she? She is Mary Ann



Luedtke, parish sacristan. May God's blessings enrich your life in retirement, Mary Ann! You have shared your many gifts with our priests and parishioners alike, enhancing our liturgies with your foresight, understanding, and graceful efforts. We are so grateful for all

you have done!

St. Patrick Parish  
**IN FOCUS**

**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.

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

**Associates:** JJohn Colombo, Frances Drone-Silvers, Rachael McMillan, Nancy Olson, Rick Partin, Shirley Splittstoesser, Jim Urban, and Jerry Walsh.

**Articles, information, and photos** for this issue were provided by John Dorsey, Judy Fierke, Denise Green, Elizabeth Hendricks, Richard Keane, Mary Ann Luedtke, Mary Lou Menches, and Cathy Salika. Patron Saints by Fr. George Wuellner. This issue was edited by Rick Partin; page layout by John Colombo.

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

#### Mary Ann Luedtke



#### Swiss Vegetable Medley

- 1 bag (16 oz) frozen broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, thawed and drained
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 c (4 oz) shredded Swiss cheese, divided
- 1/3 c sour cream
- 1/4 t pepper
- 1 jar (4 oz) chopped pimento, drained (optional)
- 1 can (approx. 3 oz) French-fried onions

Combine soup, 1/2 cup cheese, sour cream, pepper, pimento, and 1/2 can onions. Pour into one-quart casserole and bake, covered, for 30 minutes at 350. Top with remaining cheese and onions and return to oven for additional 5 minutes.

\* \* \*

*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!*

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

—Thomas Merton