

St. Patrick Parish IN FOCUS

www.stpaturbana.org

November 2021

It is good to give thanks

Do you ever end a telephone conversation with a dear friend by saying, “Thank you for calling”? Do you ever tell guests, as they leave your home, “Thank you for coming”? Sharing time together is such a precious thing!

A friend who can listen or a friend who needs your ear is a great blessing. A friend with whom you can share troubles and laughter and everyday life is a joy. The time you spend together gives you strength and joy and perspective. So it seems natural to say “Thank you” to the people who are close to you.

In much the same way, it seems natural to end your day by saying “Thank you” to God. He had been with you all through your day. He has listened to your prayers and offered you guidance. When you laughed, he shared your joy. When you cried out for help, he was there. You may not have been aware of him all the time, but he has been there, giving you life and support in a thousand ways, so responding to God with thanks makes good sense.

It feels good to say, “Thank you.” It feels good to be conscious of the good that someone has done for you. It also feels good to give them

joy by expressing it. If you’ve been having a bad day, remembering something good that happened can make a big difference in your mood.

But good feelings are only one reason to give thanks, to God or another person. Giving thanks shows that you’ve been paying attention, you’ve noticed what the other person has done. Giving thanks says that you value the other person, not just for their deeds but also in themselves. After all, if the person weren’t of value

to you, you might not care enough to express gratitude. Giving thanks acknowledges that we need one another. Giving thanks shares joy. Giving thanks is an act of love. In all these ways, saying “thank you” builds relationships.

This is why giving thanks is one of the essential kinds of prayer: It builds our relationship with God. If giving thanks isn’t one of your prayer habits, why not give it a try? Find a moment at the end of each day to think of things that God has done for you or through you. If you don’t usually pray at night, it’s fine to do it while you’re brushing your teeth or getting ready for bed, whatever helps you remember.

*It is good to give thanks to the Lord,
to sing praise to your name, Most High,
to proclaim your kindness at dawn,
and your faithfulness throughout the night.*

—Psalm 92



We did it – we’re a debt-free parish!

Years of dreaming and months of planning came to a brilliant finale when St. Patrick Parish held its “Keep the Fire Burning” Mass and outdoor party to celebrate paying off the loan from the Diocese of Peoria for the church expansion.

On a beautiful Sunday afternoon in September, approximately 300 parishioners and friends came together for the day’s events, which began with a Mass concelebrated by Fr. Anthony Co, Fr. George Remm, Fr. Joe Hogan, and Fr. Angel Sierra.



Several parish musicians, including singers and instrumentalists, offered their musical gifts, adding beauty to the Mass. The new music space was blessed by Fr. Anthony and Fr. Hogan. The music space now includes a refurbished Steinway piano, a gift from the late Graham and Kay Evans.

Following Mass, the long-awaited party began! Our Knights of Columbus were on hand to feed the hungry crowd with hot dogs and hamburgers, and the parish bakers once again came through with a table laden with tasty homemade treats.

see **Debt-free!** on page 4

All saints, all sorts



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

Ora pro nobis, pray for us, you beloved of God, that one day we too may be made worthy of the promises of Christ, may one day be reunited with you in his kingdom.



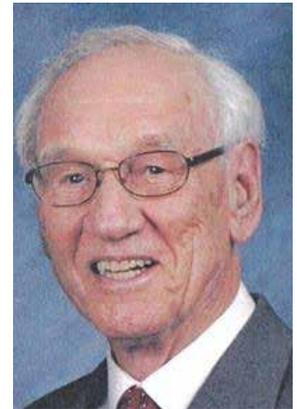
George Atkinson



Ernest Barenberg



Myron Barbee



William Basehart



Michelle Becher



Roberta Clark



James Eugene "Gene" Creek



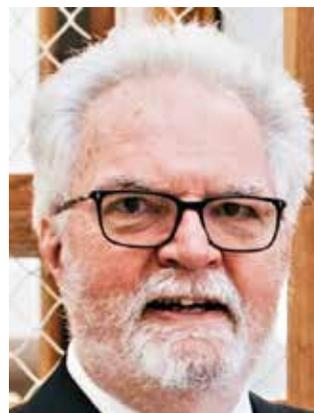
Griffith Pryce Dawson



Paul Doebel



Bette D'Urso



Graham Evans



Christine Frichtl



Meg Grady



David Hintz



Ngo Huynh



Jenny Koester



Rose Krueger



Timothy Lawhead



Woodson Edward Mabry, Jr.



Maman Genevieve Mufundu



Ruth Plymire



John Rasmussen



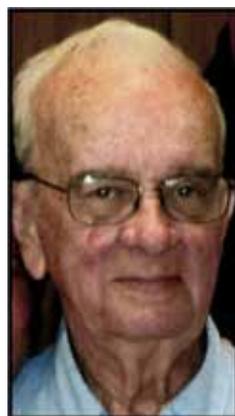
Kevin Reeder



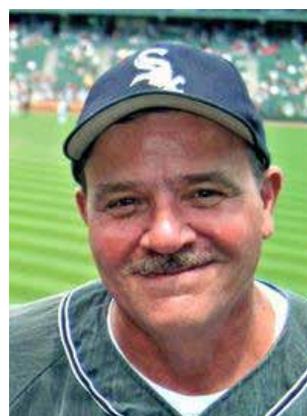
Edward Schaller



Antwan "Tony" Unander



Ray Wait



William J. Welbes



Alois Zwettler

How do you plan to observe Veterans Day this year?

Veterans Day, originally celebrated as Armistice Day, was first set forth as a national observance on November 11, 1919, by President Woodrow Wilson a year after the end of World War I. The purpose of Armistice Day was to honor the fallen soldiers of the Great War for their sacrifice and bravery. In 1926, it was made a legal holiday.

In 1945, World War II veteran Raymond Weeks wanted to expand Armistice Day to celebrate all veterans rather than just the ones who died in World War I. With General Dwight Eisenhower's approval, he organized the first Veterans Day celebration in 1945. In 1982, he was honored by President Reagan with the Presidential Citizenship Medal, and was also named the "Father of Veterans Day" by Elizabeth Dole.

In 1954, a bill to establish the observance was signed into law. Urged by the veterans' service organizations, the word "Armistice" was changed to "Veterans," and November 11 became a day to honor American veterans of all wars.

The holiday is observed by the federal government on a Friday if the holiday falls on Saturday, or on a Monday if the holiday falls on a Sunday. Federal government closings are established by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management. State and local government closings are determined locally, and non-government businesses can close or remain open as they see fit, regardless of federal, state, or local government operation determinations.

Why is Veterans Day important?

First, it's a chance to thank people for risking their lives to defend America. An estimated 20% of veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder or major depression, according to government statistics. You'd be surprised at how much it means to veterans to feel valued by civilians for their services and sacrifices!

It's also a chance to reflect on the importance of peace. While our military is often thought of in a war context, most veterans will tell you that they risked their lives to defend our fundamental freedoms and that they value peace much more highly than war. Very few who have seen the real horror of war are anxious to rush into it. Veterans Day encourages all of us to reflect on the value of harmony in our daily interactions and lives.

Finally, it draws attention to the challenges facing many veterans today. Veterans face disproportionate rates of homelessness, deficits in educational achievement, and struggles to find employment, and they often have to deal with devastating wounds. In many cases, post-traumatic stress disorder makes it hard for them to reintegrate into regular society. With a better understanding of these challenges, we can reach across those divides and help to make sure veterans have the best possible chance of a healthy and fulfilling life after their service.

Debt-free! from page 1

The kids enjoyed the inflatable obstacle course and bouncy house, and the Women of St. Patrick helped out with carnival-style games complete with prizes and treats. A couple of fire trucks from the Urbana Fire Department provided additional entertainment for the kids. Parish ministry groups and countless individuals came together to help the Parish Council pull off this incredible event.

The emcee for the event was local radio personality Diane Ducey, who kept the crowd entertained with lively music, including several fire-themed songs. Line dancing and door prizes added to the fun. St. Patrick's own Cath'lic Boys joined in with their one-of-a-kind style of music and song.

Finally, the long-awaited burning began! Fr. Phelps arrived just in time to help the other priests set fire to copies of the loan agreement. The crowd cheered as the papers went up in flames, symbolizing the end of the debt and the beginning of a new phase for the parish. Though the flames have gone out, the parish has been challenged to keep the fire burning — the fire of faith in God and the fire of commitment to St. Patrick Parish!



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.

Beginning the journey to “open wide our hearts”

On a rainy October evening, 26 parishioners gathered in St. Brigid Hall for the first session of “Sharing Stories around the Table: An Educational and Spiritual Series about the Sin (Soul Sickness) of Racism.” Organized and planned by Stan Yanchus, Lorraine Kim, Mary Long, Kelly Skinner, and Elizabeth Hendricks, this series seeks to be a Christ-centered approach to learning about the sin of racism. It is not always easy to “open wide our hearts” as the USCCB urged us to do in their 2018 pastoral letter on racism, and the opening prayer acknowledged that, including such requests as these:

- Give us the grace to embrace the discomfort of letting go of old ways of knowing and believing and being in the world.
- Give us the compassion to fully recognize and love our neighbor as our very selves.
- Give us the imagination to pivot and adjust and live anew.

- Be with us this evening as we begin our journey together.

In this first session, “What Is Racism?” participants were given cards and asked to write their answers to three questions: What does racism mean to you? Why is it so hard to talk about racism? What question do you find yourself asking about racism as you enter this experience?

The cards were collected and some of the answers read out by the presenters, after which Kelly Skinner spoke about the power of words and how they can shape our perceptions of the world and our interactions with one another.

Then participants watched three short videos, including one that featured Kennedy Mitchum, a young African-American woman who persuaded Merriam-Webster to revise their dictionary’s definition of racism. Afterwards, Kelly invited people to call out words they associated with discussions of race and racism. Some terms were defined, others

will be addressed in future sessions.

The group broke up into pairs, or dyads, for an exercise in deep listening. After several people shared insights gained from their dyads, the group spent time in contemplative prayer. To close, the entire group read together from a prayer card inspired by Servant of God Sister Thea Bowman, a Black Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration, who was an educator, missionary disciple, and advocate for cultural awareness and racial harmony until her death in 1990.

Many attending were excited about the series and declared their intention to return for the next session, “The Impact of Racism,” which will take place from 6:30 to 8 p.m. on November 4 and will feature a speaker from the Champaign-Urbana community telling her story. Watch the weekly parish bulletin for more detailed information.

“Sharing Stories around the Table” meets once a month from now through May. Everyone is welcome. There is no commitment or required reading. Come as you are interested or able. Each session will be recorded and the video subsequently made available on the St. Patrick YouTube channel for those unable to attend in person. Sign up for the email list to receive reminders of upcoming sessions, prayers, and links to resources.

If you have questions or want to sign up for the email list, please contact Stan Yanchus (family4yanchus@comcast.net) or Elizabeth Hendricks (elizabethwahlhend@gmail.com).



Participants talking in well-spaced dyads.

Vocation Prayer

Loving Father, you sent us your son to redeem us and to build your kingdom on earth. Please give us the wisdom and strength we need to follow his call. Grant us a spirit of generosity, that we may be effective signs of your kingdom and draw others to your son.

Thou who hast made
“a time for everything,”
grant me a sense of time
so that my choices prove
its priceless worth.
Giver of every good and perfect gift,
shepherd my time on earth.
—Ruth R. Rains

Did you know . . .

Once a month weekday Mass-goers are invited to come together after Mass for lunch and fellowship in St. Brigid Hall. Nothing formal, not a banquet, just a pleasant time with others over a pick-up meal of whatever food shows up. The next lunch will be on Tuesday, November 19. Come and enjoy.

Women of St. Patrick collect items for St. Nicholas on Wheels

The generosity of St. Patrick's parishioners made the October collection for St. Nicholas on Wheels a rousing success! St. Nicholas Charity on Wheels is a ministry of Catholic Charities serving those in need across the Diocese of Peoria.

Bishop Jenky requested that the Diocesan Council of Catholic Women assist in collecting items to help stock the St. Nicholas van. The Women of St. Patrick organized the collection for our parish, and the parish food pantry contributed items as well.

Our parishioners filled the donation cart to overflowing during the weeks of September 24 through October 4, and Eileen Schmidt, board member of The Women of St. Patrick, coordinated the pick-up with Sr. Michelle Fernandez, SCTJM, on October 5. The items requested for our collection included laundry soap, dish soap, hand sanitizer, toilet paper, paper towels, razors,



cleaning products, and gift cards for Visa, Walmart, or gasoline.

The St. Nicholas van visits sixteen communities in the diocese, including Champaign, on a regular schedule. The vicariate that includes Champaign-Urbana has been as-

signed October as its month for collections, and a specific list of new items needed was provided. The list will vary each month.

This project is a way for all parishes in our diocese to participate in helping people in need, im-

migrants, and others throughout the Diocese of Peoria to make ends meet, care for their families, and learn more about the Catholic faith through Catholic Charities.

The ministry also has a spiritual dimension. Recipients will always receive a religious item such as a Bible, a rosary, or a holy card. The ministry will also offer prayer in the form of praying a rosary, a chaplet, or a vocal prayer with the recipient.

Individuals wishing to donate to

the mobile pantry may contact Sr. Michelle Fernandez, SCTJM (sr_michelle@ccdop.org or 309-409-5092). Monetary donations may be mailed to Catholic Charities, Spalding Pastoral Center, 419 NE Madison Avenue, Peoria, IL 61603. Those in need must fill out a monthly application at www.cdop.org/catholic-charities/.

The mission of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Peoria states: "Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Peoria, inspired by Christ, respects and defends the dignity of each person; empowers individuals, families, and communities; advocates for a just and compassionate society; and encourages all people to join us in fulfilling our mission."

The Women of St. Patrick will continue to work with Catholic Charities to serve those in need.



Singing helps keep your brain in tune!

Change the lyrics of "There is nothing like a dame" to "There is nothing like a choir," and you've summarized the findings of an on-going study on healthy aging.

Begun in 2001 and cosponsored by George Washington University and the National Endowment for the Arts, the study follows folks aged 65 to 100 who participate in community arts programs. Comparing a group of choir members with a control group of seniors who aren't involved in choir singing, the study found that choir members are not only physically healthier — including fewer doctor visits and falls — but also more involved socially, less depressed, and in better spirits overall.

An 81-year-old baritone says he really enjoys the stimulation of learning new music and that he finds himself breathing more deeply and sitting up straighter since he joined his choir a year ago.

Other studies have found that making music — singing or playing an instrument — can reduce the risk of dementia as well as lessen the pain and stiffness of ailments such as arthritis. It's the multiple dimensions of music making — combining intellectual, physical, and social aspects — that appear to set it apart from other cognitively stimulating activities (like crossword puzzles, for instance) that also can help keep us mentally alert even as we age.

Our parish's Adult Choir and the Funeral Schola would love to have you test these results for yourself. Just give a call to our music director, Frank Gallo (217-367-2665 or franklin.gallo@stpaturbana.org); he'd be delighted to hear from you. And the study suggests that you'd be happier — and healthier — too!



Q: I've been told that Halloween's tricks and treats, ghosts and goblins, and carved pumpkins have something to do with All Saints the next day. Is there really something religious about it?

A: Halloween does have a connection with All Saints Day. "Halloween" (once "Hallowe'en") is a shortened form of "Hallow-Even," with "hallow" meaning to make holy or consecrated, and "Even" a shortened form of "evening" — thus, the evening before the remembrance of all the saints.

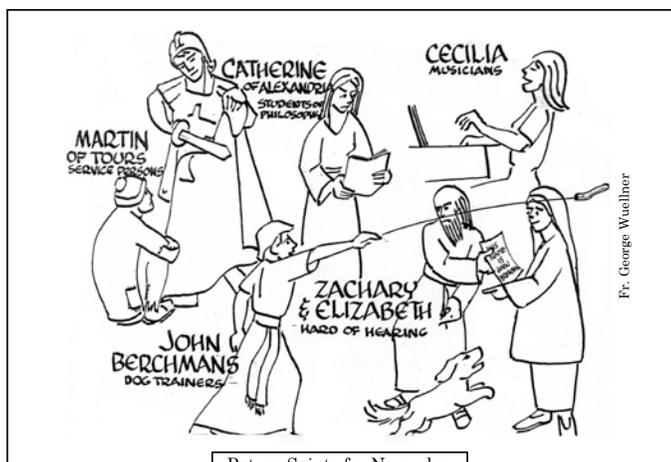
How did Halloween become the night of ghosts and goblins? Some lay it to the Irish back in the day of the ancient Celts, who ushered in their new year with a night of revelry; Halloween became "the carnival time of disembodied spirits." In more recent times Halloween has also been connected with the next day's feast, but in this case with All Saints, a time for remembering and honoring the "disembodied spirits" we know as the saints, the followers of Christ who have preceded us into eternity.

Among many Catholics, even to this day, especially in countries of Hispanic tradition, the evening before All Saints Day is a full night of remembrance and prayer at the graves of their beloved dead. In a beautiful and thoroughly Catholic way, in touch with their respect for ancestors who have gone to God, they praise the "hallowed" ones who have gone before us with the sign of faith and rest in the sleep of peace.

In cities and towns across America, on Halloween youngsters don the likenesses of favorite saints, ghosts and goblins, fairies and pirates. They promise no tricks if treats are given, and may carve scary faces into pumpkins to display in windows or on front stoops, with no thought for the morrow — or yesteryear.

* * *

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



Patron Saints for November

St. Martin de Porres, volunteer servant

Martin de Porres was born December 9, 1579, to a Spanish nobleman and a free Black woman in Lima, Peru. Like most illegitimate and mixed-race people in colonial Peru, Martin had a difficult and impoverished childhood. He was apprenticed to a barber-surgeon and healer. As a young man, Martin frequently gave away what little he had to sick paupers before spending hours in prayer.

At age 15 Martin joined a Lima Dominican priory as a *donado*, or volunteer servant. Colonial laws forbade mestizo brothers, nuns, and priests so this was his only way to join a religious order. His piety, humility, charity, and work in the infirmary, kitchens, and laundry so impressed the abbot, that at age 24, in 1603, Martin officially took vows with the Dominicans in defiance of the law.

During epidemics Martin de Porres nursed many ill people and was seen walking through locked doors and being in two places at the same time to care for dozens of patients. His healing miracles, rapport with animals, and ecstatic prayers made him respected and beloved among his contemporaries. Martin founded an orphanage, a hospital, and a shelter for the indigent.



Martin de Porres died on November 3, 1639. Already honored as a living saint, thousands attended his public wake and funeral. Witnesses recorded that many persons snipped a small piece of his Dominican habit as a relic. The body was redressed three times to accommodate the faithful paying their respects.

St. Martin de Porres is the patron saint of people of mixed race, innkeepers, barbers, public health workers, and social justice advocates. On his feast day, November 3, take time to help someone in need to honor St. Martin as a fellow *donado*.

A VIVO moment

By Frank Rosser

I am honored to co-teach middle-school children in the VIVO program with Roxanne Munch. Teaching religious education has different challenges at different grade levels. Middle school (6th, 7th, and 8th grades) is a time of change in young people's lives on many levels.

Parents and teachers probably often share the same frustration in trying to get young people of this age group to open up and discuss what is on their minds. This year, however, I had a moment where a student not only said what was on her mind, but did so with such amazing clarity and spirituality that it put a big smile on my face.

When we were discussing types of prayer (adoration, thanksgiving, intercession, supplication, and repentance), I stated that often people spend all their time in supplication, asking God for help and favors, and little time in the others. A student raised her hand and, when acknowledged, proceeded to state with strong sincerity her outrage at such a "poor friend to Jesus."

To paraphrase her argument: "What kind of friend would act this way? How would you like it if all your friend ever did was come to you asking for things? True friends must share good times and bad, cheer each other on, thank each other for favors, and say they are sorry when needed. If all you do is come to God when you want something, then don't be surprised if you don't get it!"

I hope there are more moments like this to come. It left me feeling that the Holy Spirit is alive and moving in our middle-schoolers!

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. 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 (elizabethwalkhend@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 Frank Gallo, Denise Green, Elizabeth Hendricks, Pat Justice, Mary Lou Menches, Roxanne Munch, Frank Rosser, Cathy Salika, and Mary Tate. 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 . . .

Joy!

Here's something a bit different for dessert on Halloween. It's not really quick, and maybe not easy, but your children might enjoy turning ice cream cups into ghosts for Halloween, and it will make a fantastic and tempting display on the dinner table!



Halloween Ghosts

Ice cream cups or gluten-free cake cups
1 pkg white fondant
Chocolate icing

Smooth out the white fondant enough to cover the ice cream cup (follow directions on the fondant package). Place the cup so the rim is facing down on a cookie sheet. Cover it with fondant, pinching the fondant towards the top of the cup and working your way down the sides to make the formation of a ghost. Dip a tooth pick in chocolate icing to form the eyes and mouth.



* * *

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!



Deadline for submission of information, articles and news items for the next issue of In Focus is

Sunday November 7.