

St. Patrick Parish IN FOCUS

www.stpaturbana.org

October 2021

What do you love about St. Patrick's?

What do you love about our parish? There are so many wonderful things happening here! Asking yourself this question might be a way to start a prayer of gratitude for what God gives us through the parish. It might help you to remember the needs you have that are fed by our community. As our Keep the Fire Burning

celebration approaches, it might help you recommit to our common life. And as our annual call for time and talent nears, it might help you discern how you can help to make our parish the place that you love.

Do you love the way that we care for one another? Maybe you want to join our Ministry of Consolation to help those who have lost a loved one, or make prayer shawls for the sick, or baby blankets for our youngest members. Do you love the way we gather to pray? Maybe you can help it happen by becoming a musician, lector, or Eucharistic minister. Do you love

the way we extend welcome? Maybe the Welcome Team or outreach to immigrants and refugees touches your heart.



community? Maybe the Archives Committee or Religious Education speaks to you. Do you love the way we interact with the community beyond our walls? Maybe you can represent the parish at the Interfaith Outreach. Do you love the beauty of our facilities? Maybe you can join with our Liturgical Art & Environment Team or one of our Building and Grounds groups.

Every one of us has something to contribute. If you can't leave your home, maybe you could join the Prayer Chain to pray for people with

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All are welcome to attend anti-racism series

Are you guilty of the sin of racism? Many of us might answer "No, of course not!" Yet although we may not use racial slurs or deliberately discriminate, do we stand up to casual racism or make excuses for it? Do we question societal institutions or practices that work for us but not for our friends of another race or ethnicity? Do we question ourselves honestly when we hesitate to include someone in our group or introduce them to our other friends?

In their 2018 document *Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love – A Pastoral Letter against Racism*, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops address the sin of racism, both as a sin of commission and a sin of omission.

What we need, according to the bishops, is "a genuine conversion of heart," that only through this conversion will we be able to work for change and the reform of our society and its institutions. As we work toward this conversion, there are other actions they call for:

"We instruct our priests, deacons, religious brothers and sisters, lay leaders, our parish staffs, and all the faithful to endeavor to be

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Have you talked with your guardian angel lately?

Few aspects of Catholic piety are as comforting to parents as the belief that an angel protects their children from dangers, both real



and imagined. Yet guardian angels are not just for our little ones. Their role is to represent individuals before God, to watch over them always, to aid their prayer, and to present their souls to God at death.

The concept of an angel assigned to guide and nurture each human being is a development of Catholic doctrine and piety based on Scripture, though not directly drawn from it. Jesus' words support this belief: "See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven always look upon the face of my heavenly Father." (Matt. 18:10)

Devotion to the angels is an expression of faith in God's enduring love and providential care extended to each person, day in and day out, until life's end. You will never "be a stranger" to your guardian angel, but you can raise your concerns, ask for help in difficult circumstances, and express gratitude for God's loving gift of an angel to look after you.

As children, many of us were taught to include this invocation in our bedtime prayers:

Angel of God, my guardian dear,
to whom God's love commits me here,
ever this day be at my side
to light, to guard, to rule and guide. Amen.

On October 2, the feast day of Guardian Angels, you might give some recognition to the presence of your angel guardian and start up a conversation.

Pancakes and sausage! When? October 31!

Our Knights of Columbus are resuming their offer of pancake breakfast, long delayed due to – what else? – the pandemic. Still a bit tentative, the plan is to offer their delicious pancake breakfasts on fifth Sundays throughout the year. October 31 is first up!

Jack Parisi said pancake-hungry parishioners will be able to indulge their passion for pancakes from 8:00 to 10:00 a.m., possibly with a fruit side, in St. Brigid Hall. A free-will offering to cover expenses and help fund the KC's charitable works will be greatly appreciated.

Jack added: "As with anything in the Covid era, things could change at any moment, but as of now we'll treat this like any restaurant with parishioners wearing their mask while in line, to the table, and when they're walking around. They may remove their masks when seated at the table to eat their delicious breakfast."

Watch for updates in the parish bulletin as the time draws near, just in case!



A parish family enjoys a pancake breakfast in 2018.

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special needs, or sew baptismal garments. If time with your children is at a premium, find something you can do together, such as raking leaves or planting flowers. If you think you just don't have time to spare, consider becoming an usher, a lector, or a Eucharistic minister. After your initial training, your preparation could enrich the time that you already spend in prayer at Mass. If you want to meet people and think a regular time commitment would help, why not join a choir or a bible study?

St. Patrick Parish is not something that some people do. It's what we all do together, each of us in our own way. The things that we love about our parish happen because God draws us together and gives us gifts that we can share. Because God knows us so well, our sharing is often a source of joy and an opportunity to grow in faith. Please consider prayerfully and creatively about how you can take part.

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missionary disciples carrying forth the message of fraternal charity and human dignity. We ask them to fight the evil of racism



by educating themselves, reflecting on their personal thoughts and actions, listening to the experience of those who have been affected by racism, and by developing and

supporting programs that help repair the damages caused by racial discrimination."

To answer this call, a monthly anti-racism series, *Sharing Stories around the Table: An Educational and Spiritual Series about the Sin (Soul Sickness) of Racism*, is being offered at St. Patrick from October through May. The first meeting, *What Is Racism?*, takes place on Thursday, Oct. 7, from 6:30 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. in St. Brigid Hall.

Most meetings will include personal stories from our sisters and brothers of color; all will include short educational videos, reflection, meditation, prayer, and conversation.

All are welcome to attend. There is no sign-up, no commitment, and no required reading. If Covid-19 precautions require, the sessions will be moved to Zoom. Each session, whether in person or on Zoom, will be recorded and posted online for those who cannot attend in person or on the scheduled date.

Join us on this journey of conversion. Come with a willingness to listen, to learn, to reflect, to pray, and to seek a more open heart.

For more information, please contact Stan Yanchus (family4yanchus@comcast.net) or Elizabeth Hendricks (elizabethwalkend@gmail.com).

Q&A **Q: A friend told me she'd just received a prayer request through something she called a prayer chain. What is that?**

A: The Prayer Chain at St. Patrick's is made up of about a hundred parishioners who have offered to pray for the requests that others have made. Because there are so many pray-ers, a few of them forward prayer requests to the others so that requests can be responded to promptly. Hence the term Prayer Chain.

Prayers requested may be for God's help with a coming test, for a father who has lost his job, for a niece who is expecting to deliver her first baby soon, for a friend undergoing treatment for depression, for patience in a difficult and trying situation. You get the idea. They come most often to the parish office and are sent on then to the Prayer Chain.

Would you like to join the Prayer Chain? You'd receive forwarded prayer requests, some with names and some without – all of which are to be kept confidential. There are no meetings to attend, no prescribed prayer or time for prayer. Some say a quick prayer upon receiving each request, or you might do as one of our pray-ers does: she gathers all of them at the end of the day and prays the rosary for them at her kitchen table.

You can contact the parish secretary, Patricia Fowler (217-367-2665), to request prayer for a special intention She will promptly pass it on to the Prayer Chain, no questions asked.

If you'd like to join the Prayer Chain to pray for others in need, please contact Mary Lou Menches (mmenches@illinois.edu or 217-344-1125). She will put you in touch with someone who will be happy to forward prayer requests to you as they are received.

Our parish becomes a powerhouse of prayer for one another! A parishioner who suffered broken ribs and more in an auto accident is convinced that the prayers of others pulled her through a very tough time of healing, for which she will always be grateful beyond measure!

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

St. Patrick parishioners show resilience

Over the past 20 months, pandemic restrictions and health concerns slowed us down but we worked to adapt and persevere. We couldn't do everything we wanted to do but we still found ways to worship, to celebrate the sacraments, to serve our community, and to have fun together.



Holy Cross Happenings

The new Holy Cross school year is underway. In some ways, it resembles last year more closely than we dared to hope: masks are required indoors, and outside visitors to the school (parent helpers for class parties, for example) still aren't allowed.

However, in other ways it is markedly different: a full fall sports schedule is underway, students are allowed to enter the building without first getting a temperature check, and cleaning protocols have been somewhat relaxed.

Planning is also well underway to celebrate feast week for the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, September 14. (Of course, this will have passed by the time this issue of *In Focus* goes to print!) Although not all of the activities from years past are on the schedule for the 2021 celebration of feast week, there will still be opportunities to safely gather in celebration of this profound feast.

Please keep up your prayers for COVID numbers to dwindle (even to nothing!) so that upcoming issues can be full of information about all of the wonderful activities Holy Cross does best to help our students grow in mind, body, and – most importantly – soul.

Interested in having your children attend Holy Cross School? Schedule a tour of the school by calling Principal Greg Koerner 217-356-9521. Financial help may be available; contact St. Patrick's parish office (367-2665) for details.

See Photos on facing page

Holy Cross Happenings

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The first day of school looked a bit more typical than last year's.



Outdoor band class promotes safety and takes advantage of glorious weather.



Members of the cross-country team pose for a pre-meet photo.



Baseball is back!



The soccer team, highlighted by our cool school awning!

Co-ed soccer in action – Holy Cross with a good scoring opportunity!



Food Pantry update

Eighteen months in to the pandemic and the Food Pantry gang is still healthy, happy, and committed to serving those in need in the community. The generous support of St. Patrick's parishioners has been a blessing and an encouragement to us all! Your packages with garden produce, personal hygiene supplies, food, and your well-loved suitcases have been a great find on the tables near the pantry!



Food pantry volunteers ready to sign in and serve guests

We have moved our distribution days to Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. in order to provide more consistent service by avoiding all the Monday holidays. We have also moved back to distributing on the south side of the building, remaining outside to provide a Covid-safe environment for our volunteers and guests.

Our guests are compliant with our repeated requests to make sure their masks cover their mouth and nose, and they are grateful for the assistance we provide.

We have been partnering with the Channing-Murray Foundation to provide food for a distribution program they have set up, working with caseworkers at Cunningham Township and other agencies in Champaign-Urbana. We are happy to have the resources to share with other agencies in our community.

Due to the pandemic, we have kept our volunteer numbers to a minimum since we work in close contact in small spaces to prepare for distribution. At this time we are unable to take more volunteers, but we hope to expand in the future, welcoming new volunteers.

We are grateful for the bountiful produce from the SVDP garden and the workers who tirelessly toil, weed, harvest, and deliver fresh produce for our guests – a

record year for sure! As of early September, the garden has provided over 200 lbs. of vegetables, including tomatoes, peppers, zucchini, green beans, eggplant, collard greens, and lettuce.

Again this year we will not have our popular Friends Dinner due to Covid-19. Parishioners and pantry guests alike have always enjoyed this meal, and we hope to have it as soon as it is safe to do so.

We really miss our pre-Covid pantry and the volunteers who have had to step back for reasons of health and safety. We look forward to “missing” our masks and welcoming our friends back!

RCIA process is changing this year

After many years of RCIA ministry, St. Patrick's RCIA Team, Denise and Chris Freidhof and Frances Drone-Silvers, discerned that it was time to step away. Over the past several years, there has been discussion of local parishes combining for RCIA and other ministries. This year, St. Patrick's is working with Holy Cross for RCIA. Inquirers will attend sessions at Holy Cross, and receive Sacraments at St. Patrick's.

Can you help inquirers / seekers feel comfortable with St. Patrick's? Can you accompany them to the sessions at Holy Cross and to Mass and other events at St. Patrick's? You don't have to be an “expert Catholic” – just be willing to share your love of St. Patrick's and the Catholic faith.



Prayerfully consider this option and call the parish office (217-367-2665) if you can be a companion on their Journey.

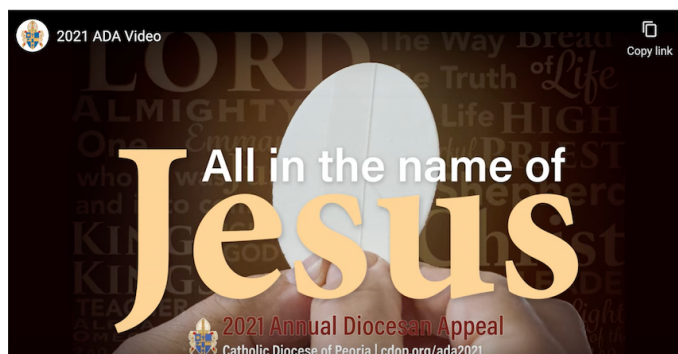
The Adult Choir is back!

Oh, it has been a very long time since the Adult Choir was able to sing together! We met via Zoom a few times after the pandemic set in, but we haven't been able to join our voices in God's praise. And now we can. For the present, the choir is singing at the 10 a.m. Mass each week, though that might change as time goes on.

Join us! No experience is necessary, just a desire to sing. Rehearsals are on Wednesday from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. in the church. Enter through the Main Street door. Feel free to drop in, or contact our Music Director, Dr. Frank Gallo, at the parish office with questions.

It's not too late

If you haven't yet responded to the Annual Diocesan Appeal (ADA), which is intended to support the programs, operation, and parishes of the Diocese of Peoria, it's not too late to do so. You will have seen a brochure – and perhaps a video -- describing these in some detail. It is helpful to realize that income from the ADA supports many programs that benefit not only the Diocese of Peoria but the diocesan parishes (including ours) through grants that enable special projects.



The pandemic threw many of us a curve last year, affecting our ability to contribute to the ADA. Can we do better this year?

Quick fixin's from the kitchen of . . . Connie Knake



Easy Brownies

1 stick margarine
1 c sugar
4 eggs
1 c plus 1 T flour
1 t vanilla
1 can chocolate syrup

Frosting

6 T butter
6 T milk
1-1/2 c sugar
1/2 c chocolate chips
1/2 c nuts

Beat together margarine, sugar, and eggs. Add flour, vanilla, and chocolate syrup. Mix well. Place in greased and floured 9 x 13-inch pan and bake at 350° for 30 minutes. For frosting, mix butter, milk, and sugar in a pan and bring to a boil for 2 minutes. Add chocolate chips and nuts. Spread on warm brownies. "These are so good, they are sinful!"

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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!

Vocation Prayer

Loving Father, open our hearts that we may discern your will for us, that we may understand how best to follow in the footsteps of your son, Jesus. Inspire in us a desire to give ourselves to the service of others in his name, to reveal your great love for all your children.



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.

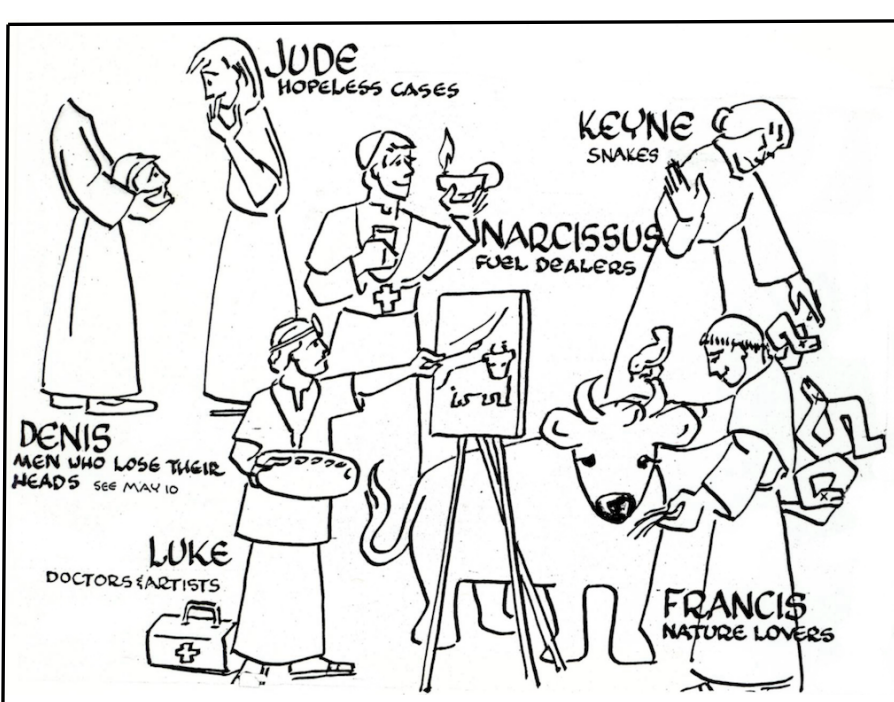
Page Layout: Three or four times a year, you would receive files of edited articles and photos, lay them out using whatever software you prefer, and create a pdf.

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.

My Father has been glorified
in your bearing much fruit
and becoming my disciple.

John 15:8



October 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. 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, October 11.**