

St. Patrick Parish IN FOCUS

www.stpaturbana.org

April 2022

Finding yourself in the Stations of the Cross

When you ponder the Stations of the Cross, one approach is simply to watch Jesus in your imagination as he goes



to his death for our salvation.

Another approach is to find yourself in the story. Are there times when you can identify with Jesus? Are there times when you see yourself in the bystanders? From year to year, your perspective and insights will change, making this a wonderful Lenten meditation. Here are some thoughts that may help you get started:

1. Jesus is condemned to death.
11. Jesus is nailed to the cross.

Have you ever been condemned by others? Have you

ever condemned someone? Have you felt the sour pleasure of nailing someone in an argument? Many of us push others away without knowing all the facts behind the words and deeds that lead us to reject them.

The odd thing about Jesus' condemnation is that it was, in a way, justified. Both the Romans and the Jewish leaders saw him as a troublemaker, causing division and unrest in the Jewish community. If he hadn't taught about God, if he hadn't healed, if he hadn't attracted followers, he wouldn't have caused such trouble. But then he wouldn't have been himself, he wouldn't have fulfilled his mission of enabling our reconciliation with God. If you must be condemned, be condemned for doing good.

2. Jesus carries his cross.

What are the crosses that you carry? Whose are the crosses you carry? Whose cross are you?

3. Jesus falls the first time.
7. Jesus falls the second time.
9. Jesus falls the third time.

These falls show us that Jesus was near the end of his strength. But Jesus also got up three times. Why? Was it just because of the kicks and shouts of the soldiers? Or was it for love of us? He saw going to his

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Ladies Knight Out Returns!

Ladies Knight Out (LKO), a St. Patrick's tradition that has spanned four decades, is back after a two-year break. The event will be held on Saturday, April 30. Doors will open at 5:00 p.m., with dinner served between 6:00 and 7:00 p.m. The dinner is an elegant one, with white-linen tablecloths and flowers on each table. The Knights attentively pour wine for diners during the meal, a choice of chicken breast or steak with all the trimmings, topped off with a delicious dessert.

For those new to the parish and this event, LKO can best be described as a labor of love and



appreciation for all of the women who give freely of themselves to the life of our parish. The price of the tickets for this event has yet to be determined, so watch the parish bulletin for further information.

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Stations

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death as a final act of love, one that was worth his every effort.

4. Jesus meets his afflicted mother.
8. Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem.

When you are in pain, it's so easy to turn inward, to focus on yourself and your misery, to scarcely notice the people around you. Jesus shows a better way. He still pays attention to the people around him. He consoles his mother, whom he loves. He speaks to the sympathetic women, whom he might not even know. His love leads him to pay attention to everyone around him, the soldiers, the jeerers, the ones who didn't want to get involved, and the ones who were just there for the spectacle.

5. Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus carry his cross.
6. Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.
13. The body of Jesus is taken down from the cross.
14. Jesus is laid in the tomb.

Jesus had helpers, people who offered aid and comfort, people who acted when he could not. Sometimes it is hard to accept help, but Jesus did. Sometimes it is hard to know what to say to someone who is in trouble, but it's not recorded that these helpers of Jesus said anything at all. Even when you can't see that it will change the situation, you can still offer comfort and companionship.

10. Jesus is stripped of his clothes.
12. Jesus dies on the cross.

Any parent or caregiver understands these stations. Sometimes life demands more of us than we think we can give. We may feel utterly empty, with no more resources of energy or compassion. With great courage, Jesus completed his task. When you feel at the end of your rope, know that he understands and is beside you to help you.

You can pray the Stations of the Cross anywhere, though you may find the pictorial Stations in the church helpful. You can pray them alone or with others. Stations are prayed in community on the Fridays of Lent at 5:30 p.m. and on Good Friday (April 15), at 3:00 p.m.

Come, Holy Spirit, show us your beauty, reflected in all the peoples of the earth, so that we may discover anew that all are important and all are necessary, different faces of the one humanity that God so loves.

—Pope Francis

Have you noticed the new paintings in the church?

“To help with our Lenten reflection, the Art & Environment Team has placed some original artwork in the church. Two of these inspirational paintings, by local parishioners, are on loan from them.”



Crucifixion by Jenny Chi

Jenny is an art teacher at EIU. She is also very excited to see a painting of hers at her hometown church. She would love to see our churches follow the European tradition of displaying original art works.



Pieta by Kinsey Fitzgerald

Kinsey is a member of the adult choir. She is a private artist, doula, and teacher. She is very excited to have one of her paintings displayed at her church.

See **New Paintings** on page 4

Tom Costello would have been pleased!

On a lovely sunny February morning, many St. Patrick's parishioners and guests enjoyed the first Tom Costello Mardi Gras Breakfast Extravaganza. Eggs, ham, bagels, pastries, biscuits and



gravy, fruit, and coffee were eagerly consumed. The Knights of Columbus and other volunteers outdid themselves with cooking, serving and laughing for the



capacity crowd in St. Brigid Hall. All free-will donations supported the Fr. Charles Martel Scholarship Fund.



News from The Women of St. Patrick

Christmas Cookie Sale: The WSP's annual Christmas cookie and basket sale brought in \$1578! This year's addition of crafts and other handmade gifts to the lineup of home-baked goods and gift baskets was quite popular. Many thanks to everyone who donated, baked, crafted, or shopped!

Cellar-to-Garret Sale: Planning is beginning for the 2022 Cellar-to-Garret sale. Sale dates are planned for August 11, 12, and 13. Donations will be accepted beginning July 31.

This will be the first Cellar-to-Garret sale since 2019, so there is a lot to do! WSP Board members Anna Connor and Bernadette Nelson have graciously agreed to take on the task of being general co-chairs of the sale, but volunteers are needed to chair or co-chair the following committees:



- Set-up
- Volunteer recruitment and signup
- Food for workers
- Publicity
- Cleanup and removal of unsold items

Can you help? If being a chair sounds daunting, why not team up with a friend, a spouse, or your mature teenager who needs service hours? In any case, you won't have to figure things out on your own. In May, Anna and Bernadette will provide a brief training session and information about what your committee needs to do.

This is the WSP's major fundraiser, and the money it brings in makes it possible for the WSP to make big purchases that enhance parish life. The Cellar-to-Garret sale is also a service project, providing a source for people in our parish and surrounding community to buy needed household and personal goods that they might not be able to afford otherwise.

New Board Members: WSP needs your minds, hands, and spirits! Come join us in planning for and carrying out activities that help to fill spiritual, service, and social needs in our parish.

Remember, if you are a woman and a St. Patrick's parishioner, you are a Woman of St. Patrick! There are no applications or dues. Contact womenofstpatrick@gmail.com to be added to the WSP mailing list to receive monthly emails about upcoming events.



Vespers, our evening prayer

The peaceful chanting of Psalms filled the church on February 26, following the 4:00 p.m. Mass. It was the celebration of Vespers, also called Evening Prayer.



Many priests and nuns pray the Psalms at intervals during each day and, of course, anyone can join them. This pattern of prayer is called the Divine Office, or the Liturgy of Hours, and it is part of the official prayer of the Church. The service includes 3 Psalms, Mary's Magnificat, a short scripture reading, a few prayers, and a hymn.

We've had a public celebration of Vespers at St. Patrick's several times recently, usually during Lent and Advent on a Sunday evening. This time, it was held after Mass on a Saturday evening to make it easier for people to attend. Fr. Anthony happened to be pulpit-swapping with Fr. Alex Millar that weekend, so Fr. Alex presided, assisted by Frank Gallo as cantor.



The singing was unaccompanied. The simple chant tones for the Psalms and the Magnificat made it easy to focus on the words. Our prayers rose to God like the smoke of the incense. It was a lovely, quiet service.

Knights

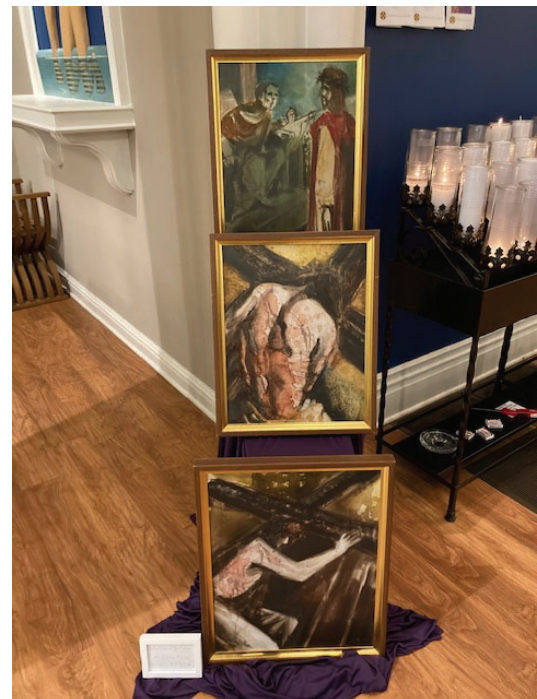
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The theme for this year's entertainment is "Any Dream Will Do!" As usual, the Cath'lic Boys will perform a variety of tunes to support the theme – drawing from musical genres like Gospel, Folk, Broadway, Country, Rock, and Jazz – and will strive to add equal measures of love and comedy to the mix. A cast of eight singers will be backed by a full band of musicians on piano, guitar, bass, drums, and synthesizer.

All women of the parish are invited to attend, to enjoy an evening of good food, good fellowship – and zany musical entertainment!

New paintings

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You will also find some of the Stations of the Cross that hung in the church before we enlarged it. They are by Chicago artist Richard Benda (1934-2016). Fr. Gene Kane bought these paintings and gave them to the parish.

Talking to children about racism

How should we talk to and with children about race and racism? What is the appropriate age to start? The March session of the parish anti-racism program, “Sharing Stories,” featured local educator Melissa Shungu, addressing this subject.

A reading interventionist and teaching coach at Kenwood Elementary School in Champaign, Melissa has degrees from Oberlin and Tufts, and has worked in a number of different kinds of schools as a first grade teacher. In addition to her professional knowledge, she has her personal experience of having been a biracial child attending Champaign schools, as well as now raising her own children who are starting to attend school in Champaign.

If a child is old enough to notice race, they are old enough to talk about it, Melissa said. A very basic conversation might come

when a child remarks on someone’s skin tone. There is nothing wrong in noticing a person’s skin tone, what is wrong is saying negative things about it and making assumptions about someone based on their skin tone.

Contrary to the concerns of some white parents that white children will feel bad or guilty by learning about racism and past racist events, Melissa found in her teaching experience that white students saw those things as problems that needed solutions, and they were interested in learning about solutions. Young children have a strong sense of justice and fairness, she said.

After groups of three discussed questions posed by Melissa (such as “What are your earliest memories of thinking about race?”), the session continued with an extended Q & A and discussion.

The USCCB’s pastoral letter against racism, “Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love.” can help inspire us for how to talk to children about racism. For instance, the bishops write that “racism shares in the

same evil that moved Cain to kill his brother. It arises from suppressing the truth that his brother Abel was also created in the image of God, a human equal to himself. Every racist act—every such comment, every joke, every disparaging look as a reaction to the color of skin, ethnicity, or place of origin—is a failure to acknowledge another person as a brother or sister, created in the image of God. In these and in many other such acts, the sin of racism persists in our lives, in our country, and in our world.”

As Melissa said, young children have a strong sense of fairness and justice. It should make sense to them that if we are all created in the image of God, we should all respect and treat one another fairly and justly.



The next session of “Sharing Stories” will take place on Saturday, April 4, from 9:00 until 11:00 a.m., in St. Brigid Hall. Local real estate professional Matt Difanis will talk about issues of racism and housing, including the history of redlining in Champaign County, sundown towns, the impact of zoning, and other issues.

Everyone is welcome! You don’t need to have attended previous sessions. If you would like to see previous sessions, all have been recorded and most are available on the St. Patrick Urbana Youtube channel, which you can access through the parish website (www.stpaturbana.org). If you have trouble accessing them, have questions, or want to be added to the reminder email list, please contact Stan Yanchus (family4yanchus@comcast.net) or Elizabeth Hendricks (elizabethwahlhend@gmail.com).

St. “Faithful”

If a poor man needed some clothing, Fidelis (“faithful”) would often give the man the clothes right off his back. Complete generosity to others characterized his life.

Born in 1577 in Sigmaringen, Germany, Mark Roy (Fidelis was his



religious name), studied at the University of Freiburg. After finishing, he taught philosophy and became known for his preaching, penitential practices, prayerfulness, and humility. He also wrote a book of spiritual exercises that was translated into several languages.

He became a lawyer who constantly upheld the causes of the poor and oppressed. Nicknamed “the poor man’s lawyer,” he soon grew disgusted with the corruption and injustice he saw among his colleagues. In 1612, at the age of 35, he dropped his law career to become a priest, joining his brother George as a Franciscan friar of the Capuchin order, taking the name Fidelis. His wealth was divided between needy seminarians and the poor.

As a follower of Francis, Fidelis continued his devotion to the weak and needy. Once, during a severe epidemic in a city where he was guardian of a friary, Fidelis cared for and cured many sick soldiers. He was known for his charity and prayerfulness, and many in the local area returned to Catholicism as a result of his influence. Those who observed the mission felt that success was more attributable to the prayer in which Fidelis spent his nights than to his sermons and instructions.

He was appointed head of a group of Capuchins and was sent on a mission to Zwinglians in an attempt to reconcile them to the Catholic Church. Almost certain violence threatened. He was accused of being an opponent of the peasants’ national aspirations for independence from Austria.

While he was preaching at Seewis, Switzerland, where he had gone against the advice of his friends, a gun was fired at him, but he escaped unharmed. Austrians offered to shelter him but he declined, saying his life was in God’s hands. On April 24, 1622, he was set upon by a group of Calvinists and was murdered when he refused to renounce his faith. He was canonized in 1746, and his feast (observed on April 24) was extended to the universal Church in 1771.

His prayer against apathy and his concern for the poor and weak make him a saint whose example is valuable today. The modern Church is calling us to follow the example of “the poor man’s lawyer” by sharing ourselves and our talents with those less fortunate, and by working for justice in the world.



Q: Why does the Easter Vigil begin with a bonfire?

A: In the days before electricity, the lighting of fires and, later, lamps was important. It made us safe from the dangers of darkness: falling, getting lost, becoming prey to thieves and animals. For our Jewish ancestors in faith, nightfall was a holy time, marked by the lighting of candles to bless the God who gave us light to protect us from the darkness.

At the Easter Vigil, lighting a fire has many rich shades of meaning. It gives us a place to gather, so that we experience that the Easter mysteries are not for us alone. The first reading of the Easter Vigil is the story of creation. We can see in the lighting of a fire an echo of the Big Bang, the great burst of creativity by which God began the work of creation.

On this night, Jesus overcomes death by rising to life. He overcomes sin by reconciling us to his Father. He overcomes evil by using the cruelty of his death to give us a tremendous gift of love. The light of the fire pushes back the darkness around us.

The world lay in darkness while Christ’s body lay in the tomb, and Christ, our Light, rose from the dead, bringing Light to the world. As the many candles, lighted from the new fire, spread their light in the once darkened church, so does the Light of Christ spread throughout the world. The Easter Candle, lighted from this new fire, stands beside our altars as a sign of the risen Christ, the Light of the world.

We proclaim that Christ is our Light. He is our guide, our warmth, our Savior, our safety. Thanks be to God!

Quick fixin's from the kitchen of . . .

Pat Doebel



Chunky Veggie Chili

- 1 T olive oil
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 cans diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1/3 c hot salsa
- 1-1/2 t chili powder
- 1-2/2 t ground cumin
- 2 cans red kidney beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 large red pepper, chopped
- 1 large zucchini, cut into 1/2-inch chunks
- 1 medium yellow squash, cut into 1/2-inch chunks

In a large saucepan, heat oil over medium heat. Add onion and sauté for 2-3 minutes. Add tomatoes, salsa, chili powder, and cumin. Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer for 10 minutes. Add remaining ingredients, cover, and simmer for 20-25 minutes, or until veggies are tender.

*

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, 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.

*Christ, sole coherent light –
 God's point of view –
 re-create us
 so that we
 no longer seem
 but be,
 as You . . .*

—Ruth R. Rains

Welcoming the stranger among us

In our world full of strangers, estranged from their own past, culture, and country, from their neighbors, friends, and family, from their deepest self and their God, we witness a painful search for a hospitable place where life can be lived without fear and where community can be found.

Although many, we might say even most, strangers in this world easily become the victim of a fearful hostility, it is possible for men and women (obligatory for Christians) to offer an open and hospitable space where strangers can cast off their strangeness and become our fellow human beings.



The movement from hostility to hospitality is hard and full of difficulties. Our society seems to be increasingly full of fearful, defensive, aggressive people, anxiously clinging to their property and inclined to look at their surrounding world with suspicion, always expecting an enemy to suddenly appear, intrude, and do harm. But still, that is our vocation: to convert the *hostis* into a *hospes*, the enemy into a guest, and to create the free and fearless space where brotherhood and sisterhood can be formed and fully experienced.

Henri J. Nouwen

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.

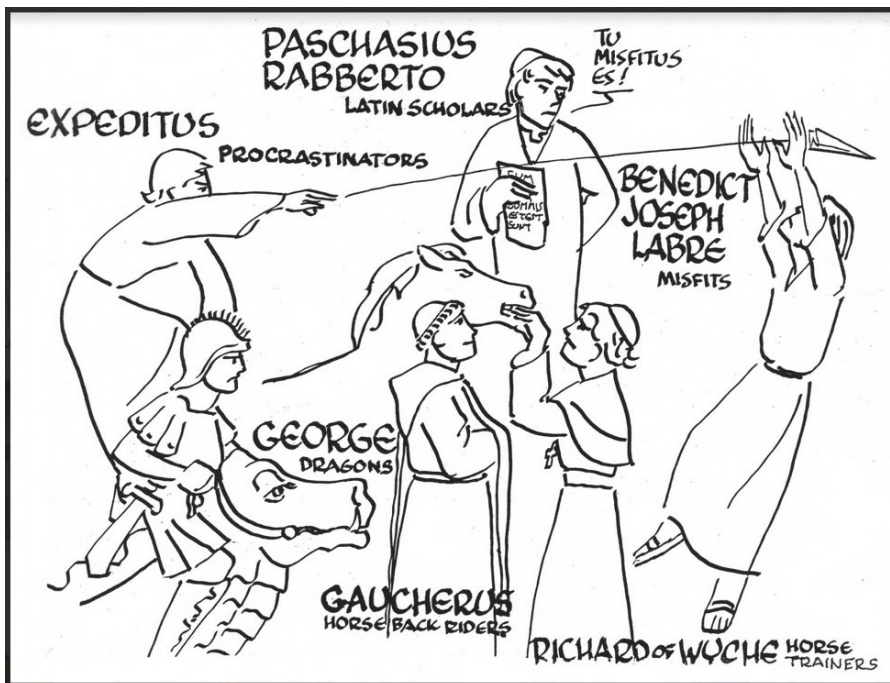
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The deadline for submitting articles and news items for the next (May) issue of *In Focus* is **Sunday, April 3**.



April Saints by Fr. George Wuellner