

St. Patrick Parish IN FOCUS

www.stpaturbana.org

July-August 2023

Sharing our gifts

We often talk about Time and Talent in connection with activities here at St Patrick. Every fall, we are asked to consider how we are sharing our time and talents and to be open to new ways to use what we have been given. But, of course, St Patrick isn't the only place where your gifts are put to use. It's not even the primary place.



In your home, you may have talents like cooking, cleaning, organizing, or fixing things. Among your family members, you may have talents such as listening, providing a safe place, giving guidance, or making others feel loved. At work, you use the time and talents that your employer pays you for, and also your teamwork, sense of fairness, and appreciation of others. In the marketplace, you bring not only your shopping savvy, but also your awareness of ecological and social justice implications of what you buy.

In all of these (and other) areas, the time and talents that we put to use are gifts from God. In our use of

them, we are influenced by our faith. Your faith may call you to be a little more patient with a loved one, or to speak up for fair play at work

or school, or to develop your talents so you can do your best work in whatever setting you find yourself. And then your faith travels out from you like the ripples on a pond when a raindrop falls.

Sometimes those ripples travel far beyond family, work, marketplace, and parish. As active members of our community, our nation, and the larger world, we find ways to share what we have been given, influenced by our faith. In this issue of *In Focus*, several parishioners will tell how they put their faith into action in the community by sharing their time

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Meet James (Jim) Rossi!

After conducting a year-long search, St. Patrick's has chosen a new Music Director. Finding someone who embodied the traditions of liturgical music at the parish was no small feat. The search settled on James Rossi.

Having lived for seven years in Florida, James Rossi and his wife, Rita, decided to return to their native Illinois. Parents of Mary, Victoria, and Anna, and grandparents of Theodore, 3, Oliver, 2, and Maisie, 6 months, the couple wanted to extend their in-person grandparent time.



Searching for a position out of state can be a daunting task. Jim's search for a position back in Illinois, however, began fortuitously with a new *Indeed* posting for Music Director at St. Patrick's Church in Urbana.

A diverse parish with multiple vocal and instrumental ensembles,

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and talents. By making the world around them a little more fair, a little more kind, a little more healthy, they share their faith by their actions and sometimes also by their words.

This is important work. It is an essential way that God's love is made known to people who would never cross the threshold of a church. It is how the gifts that God gives us have the effect that he intends for the good of all his people. And when we work together, God's abundant gifts aren't the ripples on a pond, but rather, a gushing waterfall – water that cleanses, water that makes life possible, water that reshapes the earth!

Meet James Rossi!

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St. Patrick's features a liturgical music repertoire that weaves together traditional hymns, anthems, Gregorian chants, and an eclectic assortment of contemporary music.

Jim's background is a tapestry of experience which began with piano lessons at the age of ten. By age twelve, his lessons were held at his home parish, where he was introduced to the pipe organ and began playing for the evening Mass. During his developmental years, Jim played for each of the parishes in the Decatur community, and for six months prior to beginning his first post-college, full-time position, he was a substitute organist for St. Patrick in Urbana.

Upon finishing his degree in Business Administration at Millikin University, Jim realized that he was already doing that which he loved – liturgical music. At one point during his decades of full-time work as a music director, his official title was changed to Pastoral Associate to accommodate his growing list of responsibilities, which included liturgical music, business manager, member of the religious education team, and teacher at the parish school.

In the director's role, he conducted multiple ensembles of various styles with accompaniment ranging from pianos and pipe organs to acoustic and percussion instruments. He formed and conducted a bell choir and directed a children's choir, which famously sang selections in Swahili.

Jim's previous experiences have provided a nuanced insight into the value of each position within the parish, each member of the liturgical team, and the importance of the music ministry in community worship.

Selected as the new Music Director for St. Patrick in Urbana, Jim has almost come full circle. He looks forward to focusing on the music ministry and hopes to provide an opportunity for anyone to share their musical gifts. Embracing the diversity of St. Patrick's, he will continue to include traditional and contemporary music of various styles and genres in the liturgy. He sees a big part of his job as "helping everyone to be as successful as they can be in their music position, whether it be cantor, instrumentalist, choir, handbell, Congolese choir, etc." Additionally, he shared: "I will always listen and do whatever I can to help."

In past years, when anxiety hindered the participation of parishioners in music ministry, Jim comforted and encouraged would-be participants: "It's just church, not a performance, and all levels of talent are welcome."

Welcome to St. Patrick's, Jim!



With the assignment of Fr. Guido Gutierrez as pastor of St. Mary's parish, Fr. Anthony is now free once again to give his undivided attention to St. Patrick's. What's on his to-do list? See the Parish Council report.

Sixty years a priest!

On July 14 (Bastille Day, he wryly observes) Fr. Doug Hennessy will celebrate his 60th anniversary of ordination. Thank you, Fr. Doug, for celebrating the Mass and all those sacraments with us, and for sharing your faith with us day after day.



St. Patrick's Prayer Ninjas!



Rowan Chitambar, Olivia Dahlstrom, Sophia Hughes, Joana Alancar, Lucia Sosa-Jackson, and Nur Karam (not pictured) each received a copy of *The Bible for Young Catholics* for their memory work.

This year, St. Patrick's second-grade religious education class piloted a new program to help students learn their prayers for First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion. In past years, they would practice prayers like the Glory Be, Our Father, Hail Mary, and Act of Contrition every Sunday in class, but we never had more than a handful of students who actually memorized those prayers.

Because Father Anthony's former parishes had had much the same experience, he devised a program called Prayer Ninjas to help make memorizing prayers more enjoyable for students, parents, and teachers. He created a colorful Prayer Ninja placemat featuring ten different prayers; mastery of each successive prayer allowed students to attain that prayer's colored belt level (e.g., the Glory Be is the White Belt prayer, while the Cantic of Zechariah is the Second Degree Black Belt prayer).

Based on the success of this program in Father Anthony's former parishes, Quentin Spannagel, Deborah Robert, Miriam Arend, and Mary Kate Arend decided to incorporate Prayer Ninjas into our second-grade curriculum. Father Anthony printed placemats for each of our students, and we practiced reading the prayers together during class.

Each student received a necklace cord, and students were invited to come 15 minutes before class each Sunday to "Memorization Minutes," where they could recite prayers or selected Bible verses to earn colored beads. We held Incentive Days on the final Sunday of each month, when students received one homemade

cookie for each new prayer or Bible verse they had memorized. We also offered a special award at the end of the year to any student who could memorize seven or more prayers or Bible verses.

It was clear from the beginning that students loved the competition! Our 21 students memorized a total of 112 prayers or Bible verses, averaging to over five prayers per student! Nineteen students memorized the Glory Be, 18 students memorized the Our Father, 16 students memorized the Hail Mary, and 11 students memorized the Act of Contrition.

We are so proud of each of our First Communicants – with loving support from their parents, they invested a great deal of time and energy to master these prayers and prepare themselves to receive Jesus in the Eucharist!

Based on the success of our second-graders, we hope to begin a parish-wide Prayer Ninja program for all elementary school students. Be on the lookout for more information this fall!



Parish Council News

At their May meeting Council members concentrated on revisions to the Council's by-laws, planning for this fall's Time and Talent weekend, and their annual retreat. They also took up discussion of participating in sponsorship of Ukrainian refugees.

Members reviewed and approved suggested changes to their by-laws and deferred approval of one other for further consideration at their next meeting.

Planning is underway for the parish's annual Time and Talent weekend, intended to familiarize parishioners with the 60 or more parish ministries and encourage more widespread participation in them. Members have attempted to contact ministry leaders to discern needs and current activities following the pandemic, and a subcommittee has been formed to follow up with more detailed plans for this year's volunteer weekend.

Council members traditionally retreat to get to know one another better, for a better understanding and appreciation of their own ministry as a parish council, and for their own spiritual growth. This year's retreat was proposed for August, with discussion indicating preference for a one-day retreat, perhaps on a Saturday

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Parishioners making a difference



In this issue of *In Focus* and the next, several parishioners tell how they put their faith into action in the community by sharing their time and talents. By making the world around them a little more kind, a little more healthy, they share their faith by their actions and sometimes also by their words.

CREW: The mission and the trip

By JP Childers



Andrea and I started leading our teen youth group – called CREW – a few years ago. Our mission and purpose is simple: to create opportunities for encounter with Christ and to help teens learn to express their faith in the public square as adults.

We work together with parents and parishioners to build these opportunities. The annual Mission Trip is our biggest event. The Catholic Heart Work Camp mission trips *“provide opportunities for our teens to restore homes, feed the hungry, lift the spirits of children, bring joy to the elderly and disabled, and offer assistance to social agencies. It is truly a life changing week where we get to be the hope in the world.”**



And, most importantly, to an encounter with Christ!

The trips are usually in the summer. Last year we were in Champaign; this year we will be in Huntingburg, Indiana, from July 9 to July 15.

*“You will work tirelessly, think deeply, celebrate Mass, and build relationships. You will dance, laugh till your side hurts, pray, change on the inside, and be a part of transforming lives and communities for Christ!”**

CREW would love to add participants in the coming years! If you or your teen are interested in joining us for the full CREW during the school year, or

even just for the Mission Trip, contact us through the CREW website (StPatricksUrbanaCrew@gmail.com).

*From heartworkcamp.com

Feeding the hungry . . . and more

By Bob Goss



About 25 years or so ago I visited the Catholic Worker House in Champaign and was immediately put to work in feeding the men who came looking for, hoping for, food. I kept going back to help. But the numbers of people seeking their daily bread became too many for the House to care for.

Seeing the need and hoping to find a way to address it adequately, some of us split off and found temporary



quarters for our common cause, feeding the hungry, at New Covenant Fellowship, which kindly let us use their facility to provide sack lunches – and later, cooked food – to all who came.

Even that facility eventually turned out to be inadequate, and so the Daily Bread Soup Kitchen came into being – not by magic, but by the grace of God and with the help of lots of people eager to help. Every day we feed 400-800 hungry people with a hot meal at noon and a take-away sack meal for later, giving sustenance for good health, for a job, for energy to deal with what the day brings. We also try to provide a little extra help with bus passes, a visit to the dentist, and other measures.

Why do I do this? Because it’s the right thing to do. My family was marginalized in my growing-up years and so I know what it means not to fit in, not to have everything I needed.

Can you join us in this effort? Of course! Simply go on-line to dailybreadsoupkitchen.com and find out what it means to be a volunteer. Then come along and offer to help – we’ll put you right to work!

Baptism Preparation

By Shirley Splittstoesser



Baptism is a sacrament of initiation through which we become members of the body of Christ and of the Church. It is significant among the seven sacraments because it is the first sacrament that must be received before any of the others. It is the gateway to life with Christ. The sacrament of Baptism leaves an indelible spiritual sign on the soul; it can be received only once.



Baptism preparation classes are held from 7 to 8 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month (except July). Parents and others attending are asked to call St. Patrick's office (217-367-2665) ahead of time; however, all are welcome to

come whether or not they have called. Parents, godparents, and other interested parties are invited to gather in St. Patrick's church, where Deacon Cliff Maduzia and I conduct the classes. Upon request, parish secretary Patricia Fowler will assist parents with forms that need to be completed.

We begin by inviting parents to select a blanket for their baby. The blanket has been made by members of St. Patrick's Baby Blanket Ministry. Then I give the PowerPoint presentation outlining the Church's teaching on Baptism, with input from Deacon Cliff. Those attending enter into the conversation with questions and comments.

Deacon Cliff brings the group to the baptismal font, where Baptisms are held. He shows and explains the significance of the symbols that will be present at Baptism: water, the Paschal Candle and baptismal candle, the Oil of Chrism, and the Oil of Anointing, a white garment (made by St. Patrick's Baptism Garment Ministry as a gift to the child), and the words of Baptism: "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

Parents and godparents nurture the child's growth in faith and at the same time, they grow and strengthen their own relationships with God. While most children baptized into the Catholic faith are infants, children of

any age may be baptized. St. Patrick's is seeing an increase of youngsters from preschool through high school coming to these preparation classes.

I feel that Baptism is an important way to draw people to Jesus. The Lord himself affirms that Baptism is necessary for salvation: "No one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit" (Jn 3:5). Christ commanded his disciples to preach the Gospel, to draw people to faith in him, and to baptize those who come to conversion. By engaging in this ministry, I feel I am cooperating with Jesus in something he has asked us to do.

If you'd like to become engaged in this ministry, you could expect to be trained in using PowerPoint and other materials in a short session. If interested, please call St. Patrick's parish office (217-367-2665).

Baby Blanket and Baptismal Garments Ministries

By Bernadette Nelson



Our church's Baby Blanket Ministry was started when Fr. Joe was at St. Patrick's (2004-17). Originally it was a way to greet new parents and bless them with a small gift from the parish. Now the blankets are distributed through the baptism preparation classes. The blankets range from simple hemmed flannel blankets to more elaborate double-sided, knit, or crocheted ones. For older children who are baptized, the church distributes fleece blankets.

When the blankets are finished, I sew a special label on them, and the parish staff prays over them. Parishioners can sign up during our Time and Talent event in September if they would like to sew, knit, or crochet the blankets, but artists are welcome at any time!

Parishioner Shirley Splittstoesser heads our church's Baptismal Garment Ministry. This ministry began when Fr. Luke made the request several years ago. The garments are placed on the infant or child during the portion of the baptismal service which calls for a garment of white.

Ministry members work as a team in the production. Members purchase the fabrics, cut them, and then distribute them to other members who do the sewing. I embroider the church logo on the finished garment.

Parishioners who would like to share their sewing talent can volunteer for this ministry during the fall Time and Talent weekend but are always welcome to join at any time. Simply call the parish office (217-367-2665) to let them know of your interest.

Tutoring with Project READ

By Cathy Salika



I am a volunteer tutor for Project READ, which is part of Parkland College. Project READ helps adults who want to learn English or need help with

reading or math. Some learners come, when they can, to one of the drop-in sessions. Some are taking GED classes and need extra help. Some meet a tutor one-on-one because they can't get to a drop-in session. But in every case, tutors and learners meet in a public place.

The Project READ staff do a great job of keeping things running. They provide training for new tutors. They assess learners and determine how the tutors can best help them. They pair tutors with learners. They provide a wide variety of resources, such as books, objects that promote discussion, and games. And they have a wealth of knowledge about services that are helpful to newcomers and low-income people.



My "thing" is math, so I get mostly math learners. I love the variety of people that I get to meet in this work. It reminds me of the tremendous diversity among God's children, and how difficult some of their lives can be. Right now, I have one learner who received very little math when she was home schooled and wants desperately to catch up to young people her age. I have one learner at the Champaign County Jail. I have had several learners who had advanced degrees and careers in their former countries but need to start over here in the U.S.

Here is a picture of me with one of my learners, Dili Agu. A few weeks ago, Dili asked me how I can stay interested in doing math over and over with different people. I replied, "You're here for the math. I'm here for the light in your eyes." I love watching my learners grow in knowledge and confidence. I love watching them work to achieve their goals and get into career training at Parkland.

The English language learners at Project READ get much more than language study. They make friends. They learn about the C-U community. They learn how to talk to a doctor, or get a library card, or ask for help in a grocery store. They learn not to be afraid when the sirens sound on Tuesday mornings, and what to do when bad weather is coming. They learn about the farmer's market and summer programs for their kids.

Project READ can always use more tutors. The needs are so great! There are opportunities to tutor in the daytime or evenings. Training is provided, so all you need is a working knowledge of English, reading, or math, and a desire to help. If you're interested, start here: www.parkland.edu/ProjectREAD, or phone the Project READ office (217/353-2662).

Graduates and scholarship recipients honored at Mass

Summer and graduation season are upon us. At the May 6 Mass, religious education director Jon McCoy recognized our graduating parish high school students and their plans for this fall:

Alyssa Acton, St. Joseph-Ogden High School, will attend Danville Area Community College where she will play softball and study occupational therapy.

Miriam Arend, University Laboratory High School, will attend the University of Illinois, majoring in plant biotechnology. She plans to complete a Ph.D. in plant pathology or genetics.

Aidan Beckett, the High School of St. Thomas More, will major in economics at the University of Illinois.

Jose Beuschlein, Champaign Centennial High School, will enter the Parkland Pathways program, studying psychology.

Ava Borberly, Champaign Central High School, will study nursing at Loyola University in Chicago.

Will Childers, St. Joseph-Ogden High School, will major in business at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville.

Maria Rebecca Gayatri, Urbana High School, plans to enroll in college this fall.

Melissa Huanca-Camargo, Champaign Centennial High School, will attend nursing school at Illinois Wesleyan University in Bloomington.

Carter Logsdon, Mahomet-Seymour High School, will continue training as an electrician with CU Construction.

Jack Minor will attend the University of Illinois this fall.

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Graduates

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Jack McMillan, the High School of St. Thomas More, plans to study computer science at Parkland College.

Christiana Pembele, the High School of St. Thomas More, will study political science at the University of Illinois.

Lukas Grosse Perdekamp, University Laboratory High School, will study economics at the University of Minnesota.

Hadley Peters, Urbana High School, will attend Indiana State University and study chemistry with a specialty in forensics.

Kirsten Schaefer, St. Joseph-Ogden High School, will major in biochemistry at the University of Illinois.

Johanna Schmitz, St. Joseph-Ogden High School will attend the University of Illinois, majoring in animal sciences with a focus in pre-veterinary medicine.

Patrick Sweeney, Urbana High School, will attend college and major in history or anthropology and archeology.

Jasmine Waite, the High School of St. Thomas More, will study communications at the College of Charleston in South Carolina.

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Our Holy Cross eighth-graders also took a step into their future, moving to the next level of their preparation for life as an adult. **Gabriel Donnelly** has enrolled in Champaign Central High School, and **Miles Hamby**, **Ephraim Kumpi**, **Love Samu**, **Emily Surratt**, and **Prunella Tembo** will be attending The High School of St. Thomas More.

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We have been fortunate as a parish to have donors who wish to award parish students for excellence in their studies.

Through the generosity of **Vincent O. Greene**, we were able to award 26 scholarships totaling just over \$105,000 this year. **Vincent O. Greene** scholarship recipients are:

Alyssa Acton (Danville Area Community College)
 Joseph Acton (Illinois State University)
 Lisa Altaner (University of Illinois)
 Miriam Arend (University of Illinois)
 Aidan Beckett (University of Illinois)
 Vigo Etshitshi (Carthage College)
 Austin Ford (University of Oregon)
 Abigail Goad (Southern Illinois University)
 Emily Goad (Richland Community)
 Dawson Magrini (Parkland College)
 Jack McMillan (Parkland College)
 Conrad Miller (Iowa State)

Erin Minor (University of Illinois)
 Jack Minor (University of Illinois)
 Jemima Nzeza (Parkland College)
 Syntyche Nzeza (University of Illinois)
 Christiana Pembele (University of Illinois)
 Lukas Pederkamp (University of Minnesota)
 Malorie Sarnecki (University of Indianapolis)
 Kirsten Schaefer (University of Illinois)
 Evan Schmitz (University of Illinois)
 Grace Schmitz (University of Illinois)
 Johanna Schmitz (University of Illinois)
 Molly Sweeney (Augustana College)
 Patrick Sweeney
 Jasmine Waite (College of Charleston)

The **Jerry McArthur** family has awarded his namesake scholarship this year to Ava Borbely.

Two **Deacon David Zola** namesake scholarships have been awarded to Johanna Schmitz and Patrick Sweeney.

Lastly, the Knights of Columbus were pleased to announce the **Fr. Charles H. Martell** scholarship recipients: Miriam Arend, Ava Borbely, Johanna Schmitz, and Patrick Sweeney,

Congratulations to all!

Parish Council News

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to conclude with Mass. A subcommittee was formed to work out details for this event.

Fr. Anthony presented his ideas for a more active role in the Council, such as helping to set the meeting agendas, promoting his vision of the direction to be taken by the parish, suggesting follow-up on the Eucharistic Revival, and creating a safe outdoor play area for children on the lawn outside the parish center.

St. Patrick's youngsters will not be able to enjoy Totus Tuus or Vacation Bible School here this year. Instead, parents may enquire at Holy Cross or St. Mary's about sending their children to participate in the programs at those parishes. Religious Ed director Jon McCoy will be working with a group of students this summer to prepare them for First Reconciliation and First Communion. Stay

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 the first weekend of the month for an upcoming 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 any Communications Committee member (listed with contact information below). All submissions are subject to review and/or editing by the committee and staff. By-lines are generally omitted.

Editorial board:

Connie Bell-Mayers,
cbmayers@gmail.com
Judy Fierke, 217-352-7670,
j-fierke@comcast.net
Elizabeth Hendricks, 217-328-2184,
elizabethwalkend@gmail.com
Mary Lou Menches, 217-344-1125,
mmenches@illinois.edu
Alia Rdissi, 281-382-1623,
aliardissi@yahoo.com
Cathy Salika, 217-367-7861,
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 Mary Kate Arend, Connie Bell-Mayers, JP Childers, Judy Fierke, Patricia Fowler, Bob Goss, Elizabeth Hendricks, Roxane Lowry, Jon McCoy, Mary Lou Menches, Susan Nagele, Bernadette Nelson, Carl Nelson, Alia Rdissi, Cathy Salika, Shirley Splittstoesser, Mary Tate, and Cecelia Weir. Patron Saints by Fr. George Wuellner. This issue was edited by Mary Lou Menches; page layout was prepared by Shirley Splittstoesser.



The deadline for submitting articles and news items for the next (September) issue of *In Focus* is **Sunday, August 6.**

Quick fixin's from the kitchen of . . .

Cecelia Weir

Pizza Roll-ups

1 c grated cheese
1/4 c tomato sauce
1/2 c chopped ripe olives
1/8 t crushed oregano
10 bread slices, crust removed
melted butter



Mix cheese, tomato sauce, olives, and oregano. Roll each slice of bread with rolling pin to flatten. Spread with mixture. Roll up and brush with melted butter. Cut into thirds and place on cookie sheet. Bake at 400 degrees for 15 minutes. (May be frozen and brushed with melted butter before baking.)

*

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!



Q: I've recently moved to C-U. How do I find out what parish I belong to?

A: For starters, you might call the church closest to your home to find out. If you live in Urbana or St. Joseph/Ogden, your parish church is St. Patrick's in Urbana. But if you live in Champaign, your parish church may be Holy Cross, St. Mary's, or St. Matthew's. Each parish has a territorial boundary established by the diocesan office (all of these parishes are part of the Diocese of Peoria).

Church law defines a parish as a "specific stable community of Christian believers." If that means anything, it is that every parish is a fellowship of believing Catholics who help one another and the rest of the community to live out the Gospel of Christ together.

As a member of the faith community, moreover, you take on some responsibilities, assisting in the necessary works of the Church – its worship, apostolic mission, charities, care of its ministers, and care of the poor. In other words, you enjoy all the benefits of belonging and are expected to respond by generously using your God-given talents and abilities for the welfare of all.

For all these reasons it is important – for you and for the other members of the faith community – that you register in a parish.

If you wish to register at St. Patrick, you may do so online: www.stpaturbana.org/register-as-a-member.