



SAINTS JAMES AND PATRICK PARISH

To remain in Christ and to reveal Christ to others

July - September 2021 Newsletter

BE NOT AFRAID

Letter From Our Pastor

Dear friends,

It's hard to believe I have been here as your Pastor for a year. I am thankful for your kindness to me and openness to some different ideas. I am excited as we open up more opportunities for gathering, learning, and celebrating. I am still trying to figure out the best way to minister to all the people in various situations. As a person who uses his cell phone regularly, I encourage you to text, email, or call me with things you may need help with. My cell is 618-798-0343 and my email is frchris@ssjpparish.com.

Although things are greatly improved, I have sensed that there are still a large number of parishioners who are not comfortable being at mass with a larger number of people. If that is true, I encourage you to come to a weekday mass where there is plenty of room for you to be socially distant from others. I also want you to know that if you haven't received the Eucharist in a long time that

you can call me to make an appointment for Communion or Confession when others are not around. I am willing to bring Communion especially to those who are homebound.

I do hope that if you feel comfortable going to the store or out to eat that you can feel comfortable coming to Church. I know God wants us to trust him and not give in to the fear that keeps us from truly living the life that God intends for us. There are always risks of going out into the world but hopefully we can realize how much we need to be with other people.

Please keep informed of the parish activities that will be starting up soon, including Choir and RCIA. Please consider being involved in more of these opportunities and ministries so that we can be the parish community God is calling us to be.

Yours in Christ,
Fr. Chris

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The Significance of Ordinary Time

The Catholic Church is in the midst of Ordinary Time until the First Sunday of Advent, and although the name 'Ordinary Time' seems generic, this liturgical season is significant for our relationship with Christ.

Christmas Time and Easter Time highlight the central mysteries of the Paschal Mystery such as the incarnation, death on the cross, resurrection, ascension of Jesus Christ, and the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. On the other hand, the Sundays and weeks of Ordinary Time take us through the life of Christ. This is the time of conversion. This is living the life of Christ.

Ordinary Time is a time for growth and maturation, a time in which the mystery of Christ is called to penetrate ever more deeply into history until all things are finally caught up in Christ. The goal, toward which all of history is directed, is represented by the final Sunday in Ordinary Time, the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe.

Ordinary Time is a specific season in the Church that focuses on the life of Christ during his three years of public ministry. That is why the start of Ordinary Time begins with the Baptism of the Lord, as that is the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. The Second Sunday of Ordinary Time follows suit, focusing on the Wedding Feast at Cana, also



known as Jesus' first public miracle.

Ordinary Time is a feature of the current (post-Vatican II) liturgical calendar. In the traditional Catholic calendar used before 1970, the Sundays of Ordinary Time were referred to as the Sundays After Epiphany and the Sundays After Pentecost.

The color for this liturgical season is green, which is most associated with growth. Therefore, let us allow the Holy Spirit to enter into our hearts as we share the Gospel with others and live as intentional disciples.

Ordinary Time is then viewed as a time of growing in our knowledge and love of Jesus. It is a time "ordered" to spiritual growth, walking in the footsteps of Jesus' public life.

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

On August 15 we celebrate the Assumption of Mary, which Pope Pius XII defined as a dogma of faith in 1950: "We pronounce, declare and define it to be a divinely revealed dogma that the immaculate Mother of God, the ever Virgin Mary, having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul to heavenly glory."

This dogma was proclaimed after a consultation of bishops, theologians, and laity, but the Assumption of Mary was already a common belief in the Catholic Church; there are homilies about the Assumption dating back to the sixth century.

Pope Saint John Paul II noted that because Mary "perfectly united with the life and saving work of Jesus, she shares his heavenly destiny in body and soul." He also wrote that although the New Testament doesn't explicitly affirm Mary's Assumption, "it offers a basis for it because it strongly emphasized the



Blessed Virgin's perfect union with Jesus' destiny." For example, some passages resonate with the Assumption, such as Revelation 12:1 and Luke 1:28.

In the words of Pope Benedict XVI, "By contemplating Mary in heavenly glory, we understand that the earth is not the definitive homeland for us either, and that if we live with our gaze fixed on eternal goods, we will one day share in this same glory and the earth will become more beautiful."

The Assumption completes God's work in her since it was not fitting that the flesh that had given life to God himself should ever undergo corruption. The Assumption is God's crowning of His work as Mary ends her earthly life and enters eternity. The

feast turns our eyes in that direction, where we will follow when our earthly life is over. The Assumption looks to eternity and gives us hope that we, too, will follow Our Lady when our life is ended.

Parish Community Tithing Replaces ACSA

In July 2021, the Annual Catholic Services Appeal was replaced by the Parish Community Tithe to fund the Diocesan mission and ministries.

Parishes will be asked to contribute 10% of parish general support, excluding revenue from Cemeteries, Schools, or Bishop Approved Capital Campaigns. These gifts will ensure the ministries of the Diocese, in support of the universal church, will continue to share in the goodness and growth of discipleship and stewardship throughout the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois.

Here are the highlights of this significant change:

- 1) The Annual Catholic Services Appeal (ACSA) no longer exists
- 2) Parishes will support the Diocese of Springfield mission and ministry offices through a monthly tithe (10%) from parish support.
- 3) An individual may choose to continue supporting the Bishop's Gift Society or a particular diocesan ministry office, however these donations are not credited back to the parish in any manner.
- 4) The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Diocesan, and Parish Second Collections will remain in place through June 30, 2022.

Due to this change, we recommend all parishioners add your previous ACSA donation amount to your general parish offering so we can make our monthly tithe.

Our parish is grateful for your good stewardship during the challenges of this past year, and we hope to continue growing deeper in our relationship with Christ through discipleship and stewardship. We are all in this together, and together we will set a course for a renewed and revitalized church. Thank you for your generosity toward this effort!

Donate Online via QR Code

Our parish has added a unique QR code that makes it more convenient to access our online donation page and make a contribution. Donating via QR code is simple and safe, and here are the steps:

1. Open the camera app on your phone
2. Hover the camera over the QR code below
3. A notification pop-up will appear on your phone. Click the link to be taken to our online donation page.



This QR code is on Page 3 of our weekly bulletins, and it can be found on Page 6 of our quarterly newsletters. Thank you for your continued support of our parish!

THE PARISH COMMUNITY TITHE TO DIOCESAN MINISTRIES

*The Parish Community Tithe is the **new** method of support for the ministries and mission of the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois. The Annual Catholic Services Appeal (ACSA) no longer exists after June 30, 2021.*

Tithing is a great spiritual practice! As you consider your household tithe to the parish, the parish will contribute a tithe contribution (10%) each month to support the ministries of our diocese on your behalf.

Thank you for your generosity!



To remain in Christ and to reveal Christ to others

St. Patrick School Welcomes New Teachers

Two new teachers are joining the St. Patrick School staff for the upcoming school year. Lisa Cervantes is the second grade teacher and Megan Hull is the fourth grade teacher, and both are excited for their new role.

Lisa has lived in Decatur for 13 years after moving from Miami, and she's looking forward to being part of the St. Patrick School team.

"When I met them, it felt like family," she said. "I can't wait to meet the students and watch them grow and learn."

She also knows the importance of in-person learning and is happy the students will experience that again this year.

"We build better relationships when we're face to face, and it really helps our students," she said.

Megan was born and raised in Decatur and has been a Saints James and Patrick Parish parishioner for nearly four years. Her mother-in-law Pam Martin-Hull is the third grade teacher at St. Patrick School.



"I got to see through her eyes her passion for teaching at the school, and I felt like one day I could hopefully work at St. Pat's," Megan said. "When the opportunity arose, it felt like a calling."

Megan comes to St. Patrick School after teaching special education in the Decatur Public School system, and she already feels part of the school family.

"I really love the close-knit community of the school, and they've opened their arms to me," she said. "I'm super passionate about teaching, and this opportunity will allow me to challenge the students in a new way and to have them test me in a new way too. I can't wait to get started and to build awesome relationships with the students and their families."

Please give a warm welcome to Lisa and Megan when you see them at school or church!

Families of Faith Preparing for Sacramental Prep

Families of Faith is our religious education program that provides sacramental preparation for families with children needing to receive First Penance, Confirmation, and First Eucharist. Sacramental preparation is a three-year process and commitment, which is detailed below:

First Graders - Learn prayers and some Bible stories while gaining an understanding of God, Jesus, and the Trinity.

Second Graders - Learn the sacraments and some parts of the Mass, in addition to making First Penance.

Third Graders - Focus on the sacraments of Confirmation and First Eucharist. Children will receive these sacraments from Bishop Paprocki at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Springfield, IL.

Bishop Paprocki's post-synodal pastoral letter in 2018 reminds us of the importance of the Restored Order of the Sacraments, which moved Confirmation to third grade.

"To promote discipleship and stewardship as a way of life from an early age, those who are baptized as infants are to receive the Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist at about the age of reason, which in this diocese will normally be in their third grade of elementary school, after they have



been properly prepared and have made sacramental confession," he wrote.

Frances Sperry - director of Families of Faith - invites you to a Families of Faith Input Night on Wednesday, August 25 at 6pm in the St. Patrick Church basement.

"As we move forward from the pandemic, we need to regroup and discuss how we move forward," she said. "This meeting is for all parents, kids, catechists, and anyone who may be interested in helping with Families of Faith. It's an opportunity for adults and children to learn more about their faith and meet with other parish families."

Pizza will be provided at the meeting. For more information or to let us know how many are attending, please contact the parish office at (217) 429-5363 or office@ssjpparish.com.

Diocese Honors Women of Distinction

Congratulations to Mary Jean Bauer (2020) and Karen Redden (2021) for being named Saints James and Patrick Parish Women of Distinction. This Diocesan award is given out once a year. Due to Covid, both ladies were honored this year.

The Diocese of Springfield hosted the 10th annual Women of Distinction Celebration in June. This annual event celebrates one woman from each parish in the diocese for her service to God, parish, and community. The honorees attended a special Mass at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Springfield, and the Bishop Paprocki presented each person with a WOD Certificate.

"I never thought I was doing anything out of the ordinary," said Mary Jean Bauer, who is involved in various ministries such as preparing funeral luncheons and greeting people before Mass. "It's important to make people feel welcome, and perhaps they'll be more apt to come back. I enjoy all that I do, and it's well worth it."

Karen Redden enjoys volunteering at our parish as a sacristan and Eucharistic Minister, and she also takes turns cleaning the altar linens. She served as parish secretary for many years prior to her retirement at the end of 2018.



Mary Jean Bauer (left), Karen Redden (right)



Mary Jean Bauer (second from left)

"I was surprised when I heard about the award, and my first thought was there are so many other women who do more than I do," she said. "It's just good for the Diocese to acknowledge that people do a lot of things to help the parishes even if no one knows who they are. Every job is important and it's nice to be recognized for that."

Mary Jean Bauer and Karen Redden - we appreciate all you do for our parish. Thank you!

Photo Collage



Fr. Chris 25th Anniversary Celebration



Confirmation & First Eucharist



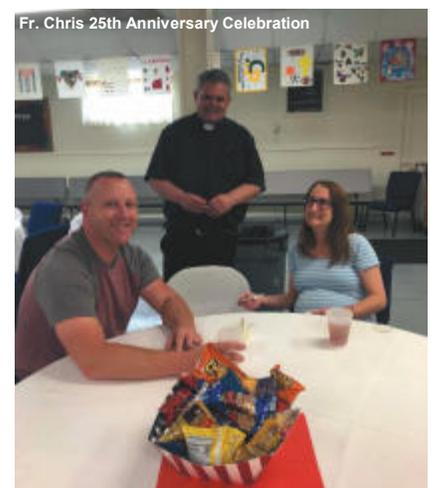
New mural on outside wall at St. Patrick School



Fr. Chris 25th Anniversary Celebration



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Welcome Back to Mass

It's exciting to see so many parishioners attending in-person Mass again - welcome back!

"It is good that our churches can again be opened to full capacity," Bishop Paprocki said. "In fact, we have already seen increasing numbers in our churches over the past couple months, as the public health threat has receded. I pray that those who have not done so will return to full, active participation in the Mass. It is essential to be physically present celebrating with the community of faith and receiving the real presence of our Lord into our hearts in the holy Eucharist."

Earlier this summer, Bishop Paprocki announced that all Catholics across the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois are now obligated to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. We look forward to seeing you at Mass in our beautiful churches, and as a reminder, our Sunday Mass at St. Patrick is now celebrated at 10:15am.

You can read Bishop Paprocki's entire letter on the diocesan webpage: www.dio.org/communications/press-releases.html



Mass Times

Saturday
 4:00pm: St. James
 5:30pm: St. Patrick
 Sunday
 8:30am: St. James
 10:15am: St. Patrick

Contact Us

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Hover your phone's camera over the QR code (right).

Click the notification that pops up, and it'll open our online donation page.

