



THE NIGHTINGALE

Summer 2021

"What is a Catholic Man?"



"150 Years of St. Patrick" (Part 1)

We're celebrating 150 years of St. Patrick this year! Discover our amazing parish origin story.

"Following St. Francis to the Bronx"

Br. Moses Pio, CFR, shares how surrendering to God's love lead him all the way to the Bronx.

"Meet the Apfelbeck Family"

Parishioner Lacy Apfelbeck shares her incredible story of resilience, overcoming, and faith.



ST. PATRICK
Catholic Church

SACRAMENTS SCHEDULE

MASS

Saturday 5:00 PM
Sunday 9:00 AM & 11:00 AM
Wednesday 9:00 AM
Thursday 8:00 AM
Friday 9:00 AM

LIVE STREAM OF MASSES

Sunday 9:00 AM
Wednesday 9:00 AM
Friday 9:00 AM

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Saturday 3:30-4:30 PM
Wednesday 7:00-8:00 PM
Friday 8:15-8:45 AM
Also available by appointment

ADORATION HOURS

Sunday 6:00 PM - Friday 9:00 AM

*Our Sacraments Schedule is subject to change.
Visit our website to learn more!*

CONTACT US

PARISH ADDRESS

19921 Nightingale Street NW
Oak Grove, MN 55011

OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Thursday 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM
Friday 8:30 AM - 12:00 PM (*Summer Schedule*)

CONTACT THE PARISH OFFICE

Phone: (763) 753-2011
Email: stpats@st-patricks.org
Website: www.st-patricks.org

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"150 YEARS OF ST. PATRICK" (PART 1 OF 3)



This year we are celebrating 150 years of St. Patrick! This article is part one of a three-part series on our parish history. Part 2 comes out this September!

Father Hennepin, a Catholic priest, was one of the first people to visit this area. Settlement after that was slow, and it wasn't until 1850 that Pope Pius IX created the Archdiocese of St. Paul. Throughout the 1840's there were only 40 Catholic families in the Anoka area. They were visited by a priest from St. Paul or St. Anthony who would say Mass in people's homes whenever he passed through on his circuit.

In the mid-1850's, settlers began arriving in significant numbers, many driven from their homes by the potato famine in Ireland. The Flaretys, Kellys, Gillis, Chamberlains, and Gallaghers all came together. They were followed by the Lees, Gilligans, Mahoneys, Greens, Flynns, and Ryans the next year. By 1857 there were 22 Catholic families in Cedar Creek.

That number had almost doubled by 1871 when 40 Catholic families were longing for a proper church of their own. They were poor but resourceful, and they were accustomed to "making do," getting what they needed from the woods and rivers. Parishioner Michael Gilligan negotiated a trade, probably with the logging camp, to trade meadow hay for \$78.00 worth of lumber. It wasn't enough, but they would make do.

Land for the site was donated by the Kelly family. It was located along the northern edge of Grow Township (Andover) west of Round Lake Blvd along the St. Francis cut-off (County Rd 58). Timber was cut and planed north of Cedar Creek, then placed on rafts and floated downstream. Rocks for the foundation were hand selected and dug from the bed of the Rum River. They were gathered at Tierney's Landing, about a mile west, and dragged by oxen to the building site. There Patrick Gallagher, who had been a stone mason in Ireland, used his skills to lay the foundation for the church. The beams were roped into position and secured with wooden pegs. Square nails were used on the roof and siding. Finally, a tall steeple was added that could be seen for miles. Pews were sturdy wooden benches painted gray. The altar was a wooden plank table, its plainness hidden under a white cloth of Irish linen. Later it was painted white and gilded with gold paint.



*Maria King,
St. Patrick Parishioner*

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PARISHIONER HIGHLIGHT - "MEET THE APFELBECK FAMILY"

Hola! We are the Apfelbecks. I am Lacy and my husband is Jason. We have four beautiful children ages 15, 11, 9, and 1 ½. We are relatively new parishioners to this vibrant community of St. Pat's. We moved here from Wisconsin in September of 2019. As you will see, most of this story is about me, Lacy, however I would not be who I am today without the support and love of my family.

Jason and I met at a mutual friend's wedding in 2002. Though we didn't know it at the time, our paths crossed many times before this: we went to the same high school and had the same babysitter from time to time when we were toddlers. Amazingly, Jason and I both started praying in the 7th grade that we would marry someone who would love us as much as we loved them. God answered that prayer for both of us. Through a crazy bunch of events that we don't have time to fully explain here, we have been married to each other twice and renewed our wedding vows at least six times.

Jason was a convert to the faith in 2008 after professing the year before he would never become Catholic. Around this time, he had just lost his job and we were in the middle of buying and selling a house. He was starving for truth. Shortly after, Jason accepted a new job with a boss who was on fire for his Catholic faith, and his joy was contagious. As Mother Teresa says, "Love without truth is not love, and Truth without love is not Truth."

I was going through my own conversion at the same time, and really diving into the depths of my faith through attending daily Mass, Confession, and apologetics; it is where I fell in love with the Eucharist, Mary, and the saints. I finally understood why communion



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"MMMCC: MARVELOUS MONDAY MORNING CLEANING CREW"



The letters MMMCC may stand for the Roman numeral 3,200, but for me, it stands for "Marvelous Monday Morning Cleaning Crew." This group of dedicated volunteers arrive at St. Patrick every Monday morning to clean the Gathering Area, Worship Area, and the classrooms. This includes the floors, windows, pews, tables, and chairs. I want to share a behind-the-scenes look at all the amazing jobs our cleaning crew tackles every Monday morning.

The Worship Area is arguably one of the most beautiful spaces in our church, and our crew puts in a lot of time and effort to keep it looking that way. We begin the cleaning process by removing the ropes at the end of the pews. Next the pews get dry mopped and any left behind bulletins, worship aides, or other items in the pews or hymnal slots are removed. Then the chairs behind the pews get cleaned and placed over the backs of the pews; this sets the stage for the vacuuming of the carpet. Once the carpet gets vacuumed, the chairs get put back down so the pews

can be vacuumed. Once the pews are vacuumed, the ropes are replaced. Each one of these seemingly small tasks is done for one big reason: to glorify God and help our parishioners enter into a beautiful worship experience.

Next, our cleaning crew tackles the Gathering Area. This is a meeting ground for many parishioners as they greet friends and neighbors on their way into Mass. Our Cleaning Crew cleans this area by removing any unnecessary items that were needed during the weekend. The carpet gets vacuumed, the windows get cleaned (both inside and out, weather permitting), and the furniture is dusted and cleaned.

All this is done by 6-9 people from 6am to 10am on Monday mornings. Sometimes there is only one person working, while other times all 9 people are working.

I was asked 'Why do they do it?' I am a part-time paid staff member of the parish and since I have Adoration from 5:00-6:00am on Monday mornings, I

start the work shortly after 6:00am. My joke about why I do it is: I'll clean God's house so He has time to do other things. The MMMCC shared their "why" below:

- *"We are all called to serve, and what better way to serve than by keeping God's house clean and neat. No fanfare, but definitely rewarding. We're asked to join a small group and I've met some wonderful people in this service activity."*

- *"The ministry is a joy. Especially now with my ghost buster vac (we have a backpack vacuum that I refer to as the ghost buster vacuum), I'm finding more cheerios, gold fish, and crayons under the pews. We also note more nondenominational bugs attending the service."*

- *"Always nice to walk into a clean space. There are many nice people on the crew. It's a good volunteer opportunity."*

Over the years, I've been privileged to work with some wonderful people in the parish, and I've grown to appreciate our volunteers. Some of the volunteers have 'retired' and others have 'joined'; but all have been dedicated members to this ministry. So 'THANK YOU' to ALL of the MMMCC, both present and past, for all the 3,200 things you do for us! We couldn't do it without you.



*Patti Jochim,
Custodial Services*

A special "thank you" to Patti Jochim for leading this ministry. You are so appreciated by our parish!

ORA PRO NOBIS - "PRAY FOR US"

Please remember those of our parish who are ill and have asked for our prayers, especially:

Carol Beckman, Pat Bourbeau, Dan Bratland, Vicky Carlson, Gary & Peggy Carroll, Winnie Conger, Kathy Coval, Danielle DeBiasco, Linda Dierkhising, Marie Ann Downs, Anna Edeburn, Ralph & Lavonne Gamble, Judy Gapp, Matt Gilderhus, Chet Hapka, Ryan Hoberg, Little Leo Jaeger, Shirley Kopet, Kathy Johnson, Herb Kipka, Lucas Kramer, Shirley Lockwood, Sheila Lumppio, Joseph & Patricia Merchlewicz, Susie Mogdans, George Mohs, Sam Morgan, Georgette Nadeau, Andie Oldham, Gayle Perra, Emily Perrin, Sean Pritchard, Blake Rebelein, Ron Schleicher, Pat Smith, Vern Suchla, Kelly Winczewski, those who are homebound, those suffering with COVID, those on our prayer chain, those written in our Book of Intentions, and all those serving in the military.

Need additional prayer? Please contact Cathy at 763-753-2011.

"SAINT SPOTLIGHT: ST. JOSEMARÍA ESCRIVÁ"

The universal call to holiness, which is to say that all people are called to live a holy life, may seem commonplace to us today. But just 100 years ago, the laity were not generally thought of as capable of holiness. Vatican II corrected this, but we also have to thank St. Josemaría Escrivá, founder of Opus Dei (Latin for 'work of God'), who helped revive this deep and ancient truth.

Josemaría Escrivá was born in Spain in 1902. The second of six children, he grew up in a devout Catholic family. Josemaría was ordained to the priesthood in 1925, and then studied canon law in Madrid. While deep in prayer in October 1928, he received a vision from God, in which he "saw people of every nation and race, of every age and culture, seeking and finding God right in the middle of their ordinary life, their work, their family, their friendships." This became the impetus to found a lay movement, later known as Opus Dei.

In 1936, the Spanish Civil War broke out. Religious persecution was severe, and thousands of nuns and priests were murdered. To nurture the growth of Opus Dei, Fr. Escrivá operated in secret, despite the constant fear of capture and death. By God's grace, he survived, and moved to Rome in 1946, establishing Opus Dei's headquarters there. He died in 1975 and was canonized by Pope Saint John Paul II in 2002. Josemaría Escrivá's feast day is June 26.

It was in the crucible of that terrible war that Fr. Escrivá restored an idea old as Christianity itself. Although Jesus taught us to "Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48) and St. Paul wrote that "For this is the will of God, your sanctification" (1 Thessalonians 4:3) the universal call to holiness was forgotten in later centuries.

Fr. Escrivá wrote, "For those who knew how to read the Gospel, how clear was that general call to holiness in ordinary life, in one's profession, without leaving one's own environment! But for many centuries most Christians did not understand this: there was no evidence of the ascetical phenomenon of many

people seeking sanctity in this way, staying where they were, sanctifying their work and sanctifying themselves in their work. And soon, by dint of not practicing it, the doctrine was forgotten."

Opus Dei and Fr. Escrivá were viewed with suspicion by many in the Church, but his work was later validated by the Vatican II document, *Lumen Gentium*, on the role of laity in the Church, declaring that "all the faithful, whatever their condition or state, are called by the Lord, each in his own way, to that perfect holiness whereby the Father Himself is perfect (see also Catechism of the Catholic Church, #2012-2016). The council thus codified what Fr. Escrivá had been preaching for decades.

The heart of Opus Dei, St. Josemaría taught, is the principle of "divine filiation." Through our baptism, we recognize that we are sons and daughters of God. This simple, yet profound concept is the key that opens up the door to the universal call to holiness. We confidently address God as Father (St. Josemaría would often pray, 'Abba' or 'daddy'), and identify fully with His Son, Jesus Christ, united to Him through practicing charity and accepting sufferings with a sacrificial spirit.

To put this into practice, St. Josemaría said (echoing St. Therese of Lisieux) we do small things with great love: "Do you really want to be a saint? Carry out the little duty of each moment; do what you ought and put your heart into what you are doing."

Since God is found in the ordinary circumstances of life, we take the ordinary and turn it into something extraordinary. Instead of resenting chores such as washing dishes, we do them out of love for Jesus, and for those in our family. In our job, we not only work to the best of ability, but we

offer that work to God our Father. Our work thus becomes a prayer, which not only makes us holy, but has a sanctifying effect on others, too.

Of course, our journey to heaven is not accomplished in one day; it takes a lifetime. But let's get started today! To be a saint is nothing but extraordinary—yet, completely accessible to all of us living an ordinary life.

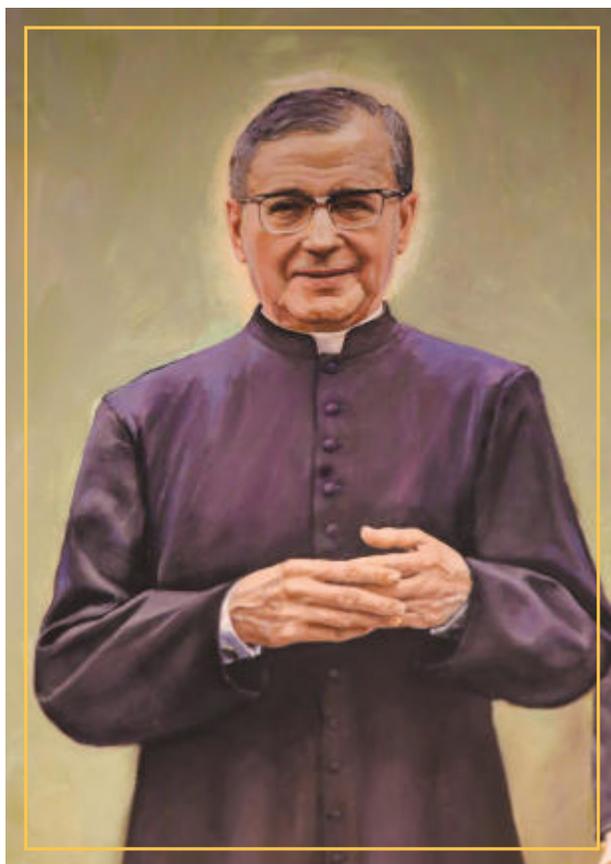
St. Josemaría Escrivá, pray for us!



Tom Schulzetenberg,
St. Patrick Parishioner

"Do you really want to be a saint? Carry out the little duty of each moment; do what you ought and put your heart into what you are doing."

- St. Josemaría Escrivá



"PEOPLE WILL FORGET WHAT YOU SAID"



I was 15 when my dad was diagnosed with terminal cancer. His exact timeline was unknown, but we knew it was short. Definitely shorter than the dreams I had of him seeing me graduate college, or walking me down the aisle on my wedding day.

I was walking through my high school hallway and ran into "Coach" as we referred to him—one of my teachers and the football coach for my hometown. We didn't have to exchange words, he just knew. I looked up at him as the tears built in my eyes, and in his, and he gave me a hug and choked out, "I'm here for you Miss Banana." I didn't have the words to reply back and I knew he didn't expect any. In fact, I'm not sure he would have been able to get them out either as he held me in that hallway while my classmates passed by.

To the average person, this may not seem like a big deal, but it was an incredibly impactful moment in my life. In a time when I felt so heartbroken, powerless, and grief-stricken, Coach made me feel seen. And feeling seen meant I wasn't alone. He couldn't fix my problem, he couldn't take it away. The results were going to be the same regardless.

And yet, this is exactly what seems to be fleeting in our human experience.

Empathy is the ability to experience what someone else is feeling, even if you haven't gone through it yourself. Imagine if in our conversations with people, especially when we disagree, we remembered that a human person, a human heart, a human soul is involved. What if regardless of our views on "X" controversial topic, we took a minute to consider the pieces of the story we might not know. And what if we allowed ourselves to be just a little more gentle? Maybe even allow our heart to hurt a bit for someone else. Our world today is as broken as ever, and even if you can't fix or take away the problems, that doesn't mean you don't, or can't, have an impact. As Maya Angelou says, "People *always* remember how you made them feel."



Written by
Anna Trana

"150 YEARS OF ST. PATRICK" (PART 1 OF 3)



That next summer a festival was held at Cedar Creek to help defray the cost of the building. It was very successful and netted about \$200, a small fortune in 1872.

It was the only such festival to happen for a long time because St. Patrick's was a mission of St. Stephen's in Anoka and all festivities happened there. Weddings, Confirmations, and funerals were usually held there as well. St. Stephen's was a mission center, and Father McDermott was its full-time pastor. He had three missions in Wright County, three more in Sherburne County, and one in Mille Lacs. His circuit ran from Waverly, through Maple Lake, down to the Elk River and Monticello communities, and back to Anoka. Then north to St. Patrick's and on to Princeton. Despite the huge geographic area, and the hardships of transportation, Father McDermott offered Mass about once a month at St. Patrick's.

Father William McGoldrick was appointed to St. Stephen's in 1877 during the height of Anoka's grasshopper plague. He blessed the fields and distributed holy water as a defense against the hungry insects.

It wasn't until December 26, 1893, that Bishop John Ireland and his Vicar General, Louis Caillet, signed the articles of incorporation, making St. Patrick's a legal entity, as opposed to an extension of St. Stephen's. The document was signed by trustees Thomas Kelly and John Martin, who signed with an "X". In the early days of the new century, St. Stephen's pastor, Father Dolphin, drove out to St. Patrick's in a Stanley Steamer, the first "horseless carriage" that many of the locals had ever seen. Cedar had grown into a small village with a railroad depot where dairy and cattle and potatoes were shipped.

In the middle of Father McCarthy's pastorate, in 1929, the stock market crashed and it was up to him to hold the community up spiritually, while people who had little to begin with lost everything. The Farmer's State Bank of Cedar was the only bank in Anoka County that never closed its doors during the Great Depression. It was run by parishioner Walt Zubrzycki, who was also St. Pat's treasurer.

While the country wrestled with the Depression, the folks at St. Pat's formed a choir and held their first Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve. **Check out part two in September!**

Written by Maria King

"FOLLOWING ST. FRANCIS TO THE BRONX"



Hello Parishioners of St. Patrick's Church,

My name is Br. Moses Pio and I'm a religious brother in Community of the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal (CFR), and I'm also the brother of your new Pastoral Care and Outreach Coordinator, Jeremy Weakly. It does my heart good to be able to write to my fellow Minnesotans! I'm writing to you from the Big Apple—in the Bronx to be exact. My hope with this short letter is to tell you something about the CFR's and how God led me to where I am today.

First, I would like to tell you about the religious order. Fr. Benedict Groeschel was the primary founder who got the little reform off its feet. With God leading them, the friendship of St. Teresa of Calcutta, and the inspiration of St. John Paul II (who at that time was encouraging religious communities to go back to the original charism of their founders), Fr. Benedict and seven other friars left the Capuchins and founded the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal in 1987.

As religious, we take vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience; and as Franciscans, we seek to follow more closely in the footsteps of Jesus through the way of St. Francis. Our charism is also shown through our life of prayer, fraternity, evangelization (while supporting the work of those who serve parochially), and service of the poor.

Before my conversion, I never saw this vocation coming. Nor did I ever think about becoming a "monk" (as many of our neighbors call us). My dream was to be an occupational therapist, have a family, etc. But God had other plans for me, my life, and my heart. His plans have turned out to be the greatest joy of my life and the fulfillment of the deepest longings of my heart.

I grew up in Ramsey, MN with my parents, my older sister, and my older brother. Growing up, we were Christmas and Easter Catholics. Personally, I didn't practice my faith, although I did believe in God. I spent a lot of my time outside with my friends, playing sports, going fishing

with my family, and all sorts of fun stuff. I had a good childhood, but it drastically changed when my parents decided to divorce when I was about 12 years old. I felt a deep restlessness in myself at that time and almost as if a hole was in my heart. It took me the majority of my life to finally fill that hole with the One who could, Jesus Christ. It was a God-sized hole, and until my conversion at 19, I felt as if I was never truly happy or at peace. I would try to fill it with the things the world could offer me but it never satisfied. I can surely understand, as maybe you can too, St. Augustine who says: "O Lord, our heart is restless until it rests in You."

My conversion happened in college. I was feeling very broken and empty and so, for the first time, I brought my problems into the chapel. I went before the tabernacle and said, "Lord, for 19 years I have tried it my way but nothing has ever worked, but if You are who You truly say You are, then I'll try it Your way." After praying this prayer, for the first time I felt God's presence and His overwhelming love for me. I exclaimed, "This is what (Who) I've been searching for! This is the way I want to feel for the rest of my life!" After this, I followed Jesus. I became affiliated with FOCUS and they helped me learn about the Catholic faith, mentor others, pray,

evangelize on campus, and ultimately, to discern a desire that came up in my heart almost a year later—a desire for the priesthood. This desire eventually led me to discern religious life with the CFR's my senior year of college.

When someone is discerning religious life they go on a "come and see" (John 1: 39) and visit with the order. I loved the visit and, despite being in NYC, it felt like I was at home. In my first year with the friars, I remember saying to Fr. Angelus: "I never knew a life like this was possible. I never knew someone could be this happy." I am now extremely happy living a life of intimacy with Jesus, serving the young people in the area, the addicted, the homeless, and those who are searching for Christ.

Thank you for allowing me to write to you all. It is truly an honor for me to witness to what God has done for me. God-willing, I'm preparing to renew my vows in July. Please pray for me and I will be sure to say a prayer for you.

In Christ, Br. Moses Pio, CFR

"Behold, I make all things new."
- Rev 3: 16



Left-to-right: Br. Moses' brother (Jeremy), dad (David), sister (Sunnie), mom (Julie), and Br. Moses.
Photo taken in 2019, before Br. Moses was a religious brother.

FEATURE ARTICLE - "WHAT IS A CATHOLIC MAN?"

Life gets busy, and at times, complicated and stressful for men. We have several different roles: husband or boyfriend, father, grandfather, son, uncle, brother, friend, employee, supervisor, volunteer. Like most men, I feel this great sense of responsibility to each of these life roles. For example, as a husband, I feel responsible for paying proper attention to my wife, planning our financial future, and taking care of our home and cars. The same goes for the other roles. They're all important to me, and I would hate to fail at any one of them, or let down those who I care about, or be viewed as "weak." So how does a man overcome these hurdles?

My answer comes in two different forms: how I used to handle these pressures versus how I handle them today.

There was a good share of my adult life where, though I was a practicing Catholic, I lacked a deep relationship with and understanding of Jesus Christ. I lacked discipleship—modeling Jesus. In those times, the pressure of life's roles would manifest itself through pride, arrogance, blame, and denial; all to avoid the perception of failure or weakness. I didn't want anyone to know I made a bad financial decision, or made a mistake in my work, or handled a child discipline issue poorly. So I relied on defense mechanisms to protect me from failure and weakness.

As a Catholic man, I didn't always see the Church as a place where my masculinity really fit. It seemed like the Church was more geared to femininity. I don't mean this in a derogatory way, I simply mean that it seemed difficult for a man to fully enter into the life of the Church. It didn't feel masculine to sing, or for that matter, to participate in the liturgy at all. I viewed certain volunteer roles to be acceptable to me as a man, but there were others that just weren't for me. I didn't mind helping with a facility project, but I didn't want to work in the kitchen or bring Communion to the homebound. I don't know why; it's just how I viewed certain things.

As I've matured spiritually, I now participate in my faith much more actively. Today, I love to sing and participate fully in

the Mass. I volunteer for a variety of roles in and outside of the Church. Heck, I love my faith so much, I chose to work in the Church. Today, when I come to church, I'm here for one reason: to worship Jesus. Until we as men learn this basic principle about the Mass, we'll continue to lack participation and authenticity. Another challenge I had was praying. The idea of talking to a supernatural being like God was sometimes difficult. The idea of love—Christian love, love for Jesus—used to be difficult to wrap my head around. As men, we have to overcome these basic obstacles that keep us from expressing our masculinity in a way that resembles Jesus.

Speaking of love, in a recent conversation with another Catholic man, he said something very profound to me. "I'm interested in learning about Jesus, praying to Jesus, and really knowing Him. But I find it extremely awkward to love another man." We as men can sometimes get hung up on this love thing. Love, to a lot of men, is a word reserved for our wife or children, maybe our mother, too. But unlike women, we don't use that word as freely, because in many cases, we misunderstand love. We sometimes associate the word "love" with lack of masculinity, but that's inaccurate.

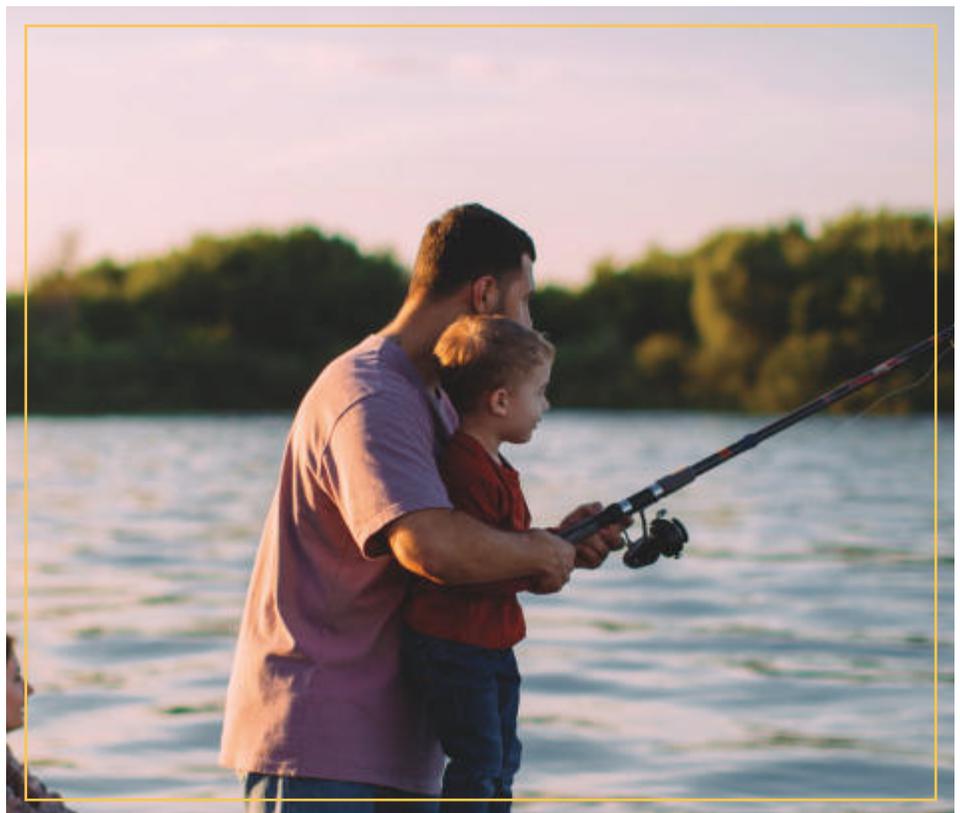
Love is the ability to be authentic. It's expressing ourselves the way Christ did, with tender, yet firm masculinity.

One of the best things I've done lately is began some one-on-one ministry with other guys, where we get together and talk about life, as well as spiritual matters. This Christian accountability has really helped me in my path to holiness, and my ability to identify what a real Catholic man needs to look like. Within this parish community, I've managed to find several great role models for holiness, and the world needs more holy men!

I invite all men to lean into this topic, and really embrace a new worldview of masculinity. St. Patrick Church has so many opportunities to engage in these topics, from our Watchmen ministry, Knights of Columbus, Men's Retreats, and bible studies. In addition, I would suggest reading a book titled "Wild at Heart" by John Eldredge. Whatever you decide to do will hopefully transform your heart in a way that moves us closer to Jesus.



*Dan Jaeger,
Business Administrator*



"ENTERING THE JOY OF DAILY SILENCE"



When I enter prayer, I try to remember the phrase, “In the silence, God speaks,” as a reminder for how God desires to encounter me daily. In 1 Kings 19, the Lord reveals Himself to the prophet Elijah in a “still small voice” (verse 12), rather than in a crushing wind, a violent earthquake, and a raging fire. God curiously speaks in humble silence to prove that He doesn’t need mayhem to reveal Himself to us. In fact, He wants to be present to us especially in our daily, “ordinary” moments!

We live in a loud world filled with distractions and other “noises” that seek to snatch our interior peace. The clamor is so common that, oftentimes, people say the possibility of silence is uncomfortable or even deafening. Certainly with our daily necessities and responsibilities, it can be difficult to physically retreat from that exterior noise. However, day by day, lessening the extra “sound” in our lives will help form a habit of being aware of God’s presence. Offering up something relatively small, like listening to music while doing tasks or even using our devices at certain parts of the day, can be a strong act of love for God, trusting that He can be present in the stillness.

The Christian view of silence isn’t simply the emptying of sound, though. Inner tranquility is an invitation for Jesus to make us more ready to receive His peace, grace, and joy. Sometimes we are uncomfortable with silence because we fear being left to deal with our true thoughts, feelings, and desires. When those come to the surface, our reaction might be to push them aside because we think God doesn’t care to see them. In the tender light of His mercy, though, God wants us to confront the very reality of our lives and let Him speak truth and healing into them! If we faithfully devote ourselves to daily silence, welcoming the Lord’s still, small voice to penetrate our hearts, in big and small ways, He can lovingly transform the noise of our lives all for His glory and praise!



Randy Skeate,
St. Patrick Parishioner

"God curiously speaks in humble silence to prove that He doesn't need mayhem to reveal Himself to us."

"CHOOSE GOD AND CHOOSE JOY"



Uncle John (left) with Rachael's dad (right)

It was late November of last year when I heard the news that my Uncle John passed away from ALS. For as long as can I remember, my uncle had been a kind, energetic person. He was never brought low by the troubles in his life. Instead, he made the most of every moment and appreciated the blessings God gave him. Even after his diagnosis of ALS in the spring of 2017, he remained strong and optimistic. He made it his mission to serve God and make others happy.

My Uncle John’s death opened my eyes to the truth that life can be short. I began to see the shortcomings in my own life. I saw the areas where I had failed to trust and follow God. Why did I allow myself to become so fixated on every little problem? When did I stop living and embracing every moment?

The pandemic has only made it more obvious to me that we live in a culture that fears death. We’re afraid of dying, so we distract ourselves with temporary things. We make it our goal not to be forgotten and to avoid suffering at all costs. But God wants us to be bold and follow Him.

Watching my Uncle John battle this debilitating disease taught me what it means to live courageously. He had every right to complain about his diagnosis with ALS, but he didn’t. He had every right to be upset with the fact that his life was being cut short, but he never was. My Uncle embraced each and every day that was given to him. He smiled and hugged everyone he saw. My uncle’s diagnosis didn’t stop him from living, it is what pushed him to search for God—an unexpected grace in a way. God, as usual, had a bigger, better plan that is still unfolding.

A year ago, I was wrapped up in the fear of what this pandemic might bring. Now I realize the importance of living in the present moment. Life cannot be predicted or controlled. Sometimes the best thing to do when life is stressful is to meet God in those moments of chaos, to allow Him to begin to mold and change us. This is not the time to turn inward. Life is too short to be indecisive. Choose God and choose joy. That is how you conquer the fear of death, and that’s just what my Uncle John did.



Rachael McCallum,
St. Patrick Parishioner

"THE CATHOLIC PUZZLE"



Every winter, usually during Christmas break, my husband Jim and I take out a 1000 piece puzzle to work on together. We both go to work on the puzzle, but with different strategies. My husband's strategy is to work on it continuously through the night to complete it, but I find it easier to tackle it a little at a time. Both strategies are effective, but one gets to the finished product faster than the other!

Putting the many puzzle pieces of our Catholic Faith together comes with the same challenges. Prayer, Life in Christ, Sacraments, and The Creed are all part

of the puzzle and it can become quite overwhelming, so we need a strategy to complete, or at least tackle, the "Catholic puzzle."

For example, when I was younger, I didn't fully understand or agree with the Church's teaching on contraception. So I set down that puzzle piece and worked on other pieces of my faith life. It wasn't until years later, as I grew closer to Christ and a deeper understanding of His Word, I became open to the teachings of contraception. Through the many resources in the Church—priests, videos,

formation training, etc, I was able to find where that piece fits into my spiritual life. That's just one example of many for me.

The Catechetical Institute (CI) is a great resource for solving the faith puzzle. In fact, it's probably the most thorough resource available to us. CI uses the Catechism of the Catholic Church, along with engaging and knowledgeable Catholic presenters, to foster a greater knowledge of the faith and deeper spiritual life with Christ so we can embrace it, love it, and live it to the fullest.

Don't let the word "Catechetical" discourage you! It can be a hard word to pronounce or even remember! Catechetical means "religious instruction by means of questions and answers." And we all have questions and need answers, right?!

Need a new strategy in putting the pieces to your faith puzzle together? Prayerfully consider registering for the CI this fall at St. Patrick. Applications can be found at the Information Station or on our website. **Join us for our CI Open House on Sunday, June 27.** Contact me or visit our website for more information.



*Linda Abel-Thomas,
Community Life
Director*

STEWARDS AMONG US - "PRESS ON UPDATE"

Stewardship Tithing Through 5/18/2021	
\$1,024,076	\$1,084,240
	
GOAL	CURRENT

The immediate and most visual part of our new strategic plan is the construction remodel of the Office, Lobby, and Education area. With the project kicking off on April 19, the first few weeks were quite chaotic. Staff moved out of the office, formation classes had to juggle rooms, and ministries were disrupted. The demolition happened within two weeks, and as of early May, it's starting to resemble our new vision for the future.

Speaking of our vision, the remodel is only part of it. When we talk about our vision—PRESS ON—we're talking about growing closer to each other and to God. Our three-prong approach is Spiritual Growth, Community Building, and Pastoral Care & Outreach. We're going to grow together as Disciples, participate in Small Groups, and serve those in need in and around our community. This is where our focus will lie over the next several years, and we'll continually invite you to be part of this vision! Visit st-patricks.org/press-on for regular updates on our new strategic plan!



*Dan Jaeger,
Business Administrator*

PARISHIONER HIGHLIGHT - "MEET THE APFELBECK FAMILY"

at other churches did not satisfy me. We have the True Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, I can't love Mary more than Jesus did, and the saints weren't perfect. We don't worship them, but it's a guiding light as to what my life could look like. My conversion is where I went from being a pro-choice to a pro-life kind of girl. I forced myself to read what really happens in an abortion. I was mortified to learn about the "silent scream."

I currently am in lay faith formation with the Franciscan Congregation of Divine Mercy and receive regular spiritual direction from them. Our children would describe my ongoing lifelong conversion as, "Mom used to be more focused on doing, rather than being. She'd get angry at our messes, but as she healed, the family became more peaceful and level." There has been a lot more laughter and joy, and in turn, our family has an anointing it didn't have before.

We've all learned that hurt people hurt people, but more powerfully, healed people heal people. In our family, no one gets to play the victim, martyr, or scapegoat. We all get to call each other out on each other's stuff, and it is appropriate for anyone to have a time out, including mom. We know love and logic works best in our family for disciplining. We've learned the importance of taking time to be truly present to one another. We've learned that we will forever be learning. We all make mistakes, and it's important to clean them up as soon as possible. At the end of the day, Mom and Dad still have authority over their children and their say goes, but not without first taking into consideration the voice of the whole family.

Our story is one of resilience, overcoming, enduring, persevering, trusting, and not simply surviving, but thriving. Our story is one of moving from spiritual and emotional imprisonment and captivity to freedom.

Our story is a messy one; a painful one. One filled with trauma, hopelessness, and confusion. I know first-hand what it's like to survive other people's addictions, priest clergy sexual abuse, and the debilitating physical and emotional effects of Lyme disease. I know what it means to get

wrapped up in the New Age movement. I know from experience what it is like to face depression, suicidal thoughts, and PTSD. We know what it means to regret missed opportunities of parenthood through chemical abortion.

Praise God! He made me and us for more. God is a God of grace, mercy, and healing. He did not leave us to be washed up. Just like so many of the stories in the Bible, over and over God does not call the equipped, He equips the called. I feel that is exactly what He is doing in my life, and in our family life.

If I had to pick one scripture to sum up my life at this point in time it would be: "My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind consider it nothing but joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance; and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete lacking in nothing" (James 1:2-4).

One of my favorite sayings is, "God changes caterpillars into butterflies, sand into pearls, and coal into diamonds, using time and pressure, and He's working on you and me too!" This is exactly what He

has done in my life—He is molding me, creating me, changing me. It's for His Glory, not mine.

In Malachi 3:2-3, there is the story of the goldsmith and the refiner's fire. In the story, the goldsmith continually places his gold into the fire and pulls it back out. The refiner knows his gold is rid of all impurities and purified once he can finally see his own reflection in the gold without any specs. The gold represents us, and the goldsmith represents God. God wants to be able to see His reflection in us. Again, another incredible story about how God desires more for me and you. This is a reminder that if we are willing to co-create with God, He WILL use evil for good (Gen 50:20); He is a God of Justice and Mercy. He can and will transform us. There is no task too big or small for God. Nothing is wasted in God's economy! God has made all of us for more and He calls us all to be overcomers. He has given us the grace to heal and move through our pain. Not over or around it, but through it. Do we humble ourselves and invite God in? Are we willing to step out in faith and allow God to lead us through the thicket?

Written by Lacy Apfelbeck





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