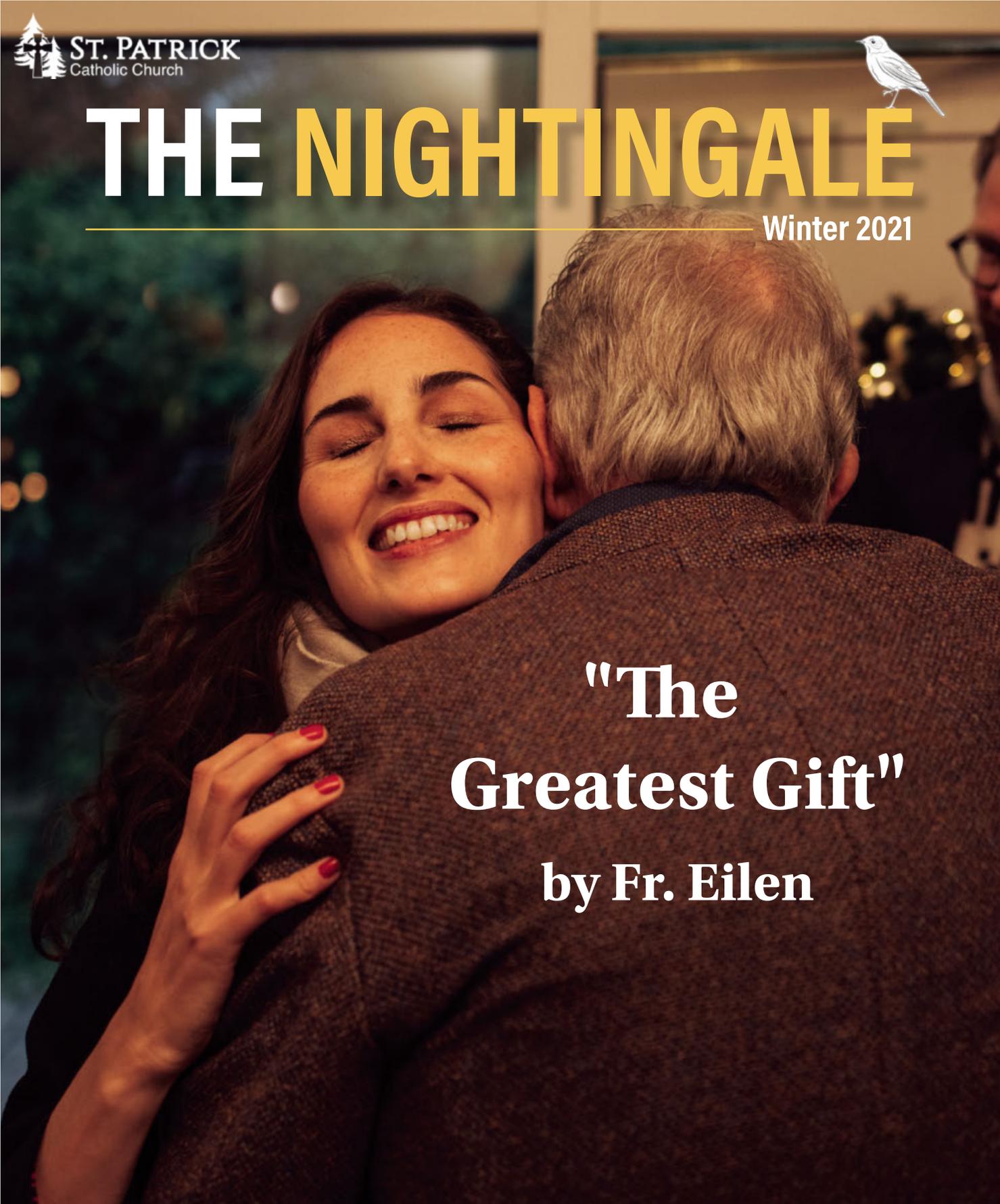




# THE NIGHTINGALE

Winter 2021



## "The Greatest Gift"

by Fr. Eilen

### "Grieving During Christmas"

For many, the Christmas Season is a time of grief and loss. Our community is here for you!

### "Where Are You, Jesus?"

Jesus desires a close relationship with you. Spend time with Him in Eucharistic Adoration!

### "Meet Pat and Everett Bourbeau"

Pat Bourbeau shares how God gave her 73 beautiful years of love with her husband, Everett.



**ST. PATRICK**  
Catholic Church

## SACRAMENTS SCHEDULE

### MASS

Saturday 5:00 PM  
Sunday 9:00 AM & 11:00 AM  
Tuesday 6:15 PM  
Wednesday 9:00 AM  
Thursday 8:00 AM  
Friday 9:00 AM

### MASS LIVE STREAM

Sunday 9:00 AM

### SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Saturday 3:30-4:30 PM  
Tuesday 5:30 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

St. Patrick Catholic Church  
19921 Nightingale Street NW  
Oak Grove, MN 55011

### OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM

### CONTACT THE PARISH OFFICE

Phone: (763) 753-2011  
Email: [stpats@st-patricks.org](mailto:stpats@st-patricks.org)  
Website: [www.st-patricks.org](http://www.st-patricks.org)

## FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Instagram - @stpatrickmn

Facebook - @stpatrickmn

YouTube- [YouTube.com/stpatricksmn](https://www.youtube.com/stpatricksmn)



## "FAVORITE CHRISTMAS MEMORIES"



Below are some of the St. Patrick staff's favorite Christmas memories:

*"My favorite Christmas memory is helping my Dad make a big Christmas morning breakfast for the whole family!" - Christine*

*"In high school, my sister Lori, friend Christi, and I would play our guitars for the Christmas Eve Mass." - Linda*

*"My favorite Christmas memory is gathering as a family on Christmas Eve to sing Silent Night and the youngest family member puts baby Jesus in the manger." - Barb*

*"At my Grandma's house, before we could open any gifts, Grandma selected one of the oldest grandchildren to read the Nativity story and one of the youngest grandchildren to put the Jesus figure in the Nativity scene." - Ameer*

*"One of my favorite Christmas memories is going to midnight Mass in my pjs under my snowsuit." - Patti*

*"I enjoy going to Mass with my family and then spending the rest of the day with my extended family enjoying company and playing games." - Jeremy*

## "FUNNY FAITH MOMENTS"

Raising children in the faith can be a rewarding, and often hilarious process. Here are a couple of our favorite stories:

*My mom took my two sons to Adoration for the first time. She was explaining the names and meanings of all of the objects in the room. Then she came to the monstrance. One son said, "What? There is a monster in there?!"*

*One day I was sitting in the front row at Daily Mass with my children. My one-year-old was getting antsy so I gave him a mini box of cheerios. Instead of shaking it or eating them, to my horror, he threw the cheerios at the priest and hit him during the sermon. The priest ended the sermon quickly stating he had heard when people start throwing things at you, you should stop.*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE  
**03**

"Grieving During the Christmas Season"  
"Pray for Us"

PAGE  
**05**

"Where Are You, Jesus?"  
"Serving God and Neighbor at Mass"

PAGE  
**07**

**FEATURE ARTICLE**  
**"The Greatest Gift"**

PAGE  
**09**

"Christmas Caroling at St. Patrick"  
Stewards Among Us

PAGE  
**04**

Saint Spotlight -  
"Servant of God, Dorothy Day"

PAGE  
**06**

150 Years of St. Patrick (Part 3):  
"Financing the 2001 Church"

PAGE  
**08**

"Prayer When Life Gets Busy"  
"Care for Our Common Home"

PAGE  
**10**

Parishioner Highlight -  
"Meet Pat and Everett Bourbeau"

## PARISHIONER HIGHLIGHT - "MEET PAT AND EVERETT BOURBEAU"



Recently, I sat down with St. Patrick parishioner, Pat Bourbeau. During our time together, she shared many stories about her incredibly rich life, and the 73 beautiful years she spent with her recently deceased husband, Everett. Although I was only able to speak with Pat for this interview, this story is equally about Everett and the life they built together by the grace of God. I'm not exaggerating when I say that the love they shared is what old Hollywood movies are made of. Pat and Everett are a prime example of what happens when a faithful woman marries a selfless man and they put God at the center of their relationship. Pat and Everett's love for one another resulted in 5 children, 36 grandchildren, and 104 great grandchildren who remain very close to this day. Let's start at the beginning of our lovebird's story.

"How I met Everett is quite a story," said Pat. "My mother's cousin, Marie, came to visit us from Columbia Heights. She said, 'Do any of you girls want to meet some nice Catholic boys?' Well, I was standing right next to her so I said, 'Well, yeah I do.' And because she had no idea which girl I was, it was agreed that I visit Marie in Columbia Heights." Unbeknownst to Pat, who was just 14 at the time, Marie set her up with Everett's older brother, Harold,

who was 21 at the time. Pat shared, "Well Marie had no idea how old either of us were. When I met Harold I thought, 'Oh my goodness, he could be my father.'" Pat and Harold went to a nearby carnival together and it was quickly decided that their age gap was too significant.

At this point Pat was ready to go home, but Marie assured her that there was another boy Pat could meet who was only 17 (Everett). Pat agreed, and shortly after she was introduced to Ralph (Everett's best friend) and Everett. The boys flipped a coin to decide who would take Pat to the carnival this time. Ralph won the toss, but didn't have enough money for the date, so Everett drove Pat to the carnival. According to Pat, "He had made up his mind from the moment that we met that he was going to take care of me." At the carnival there were cables on the ground so Everett insisted on holding Pat's hand so she wouldn't trip in her heels. Pat shared, "He held my hand and he never let go of it for 73 years. That's really the story of our life. We just clicked instantly and became the very best of friends."

*Written by Maria Furness*

**READ MORE ON PAGE 10**

## "GRIEVING DURING THE CHRISTMAS SEASON"



**Jeremy Weakly** - For those who have lost a loved one, or if someone you love isn't available during this time of year, it may seem like there is no place to hide from the grief. Grief is a painful emotion and with so much going on around the Christmas season, it can be tempting to ignore it. But sooner or later, we'll think of a memory that will make our loss feel new again.

I remember the first Christmas after my parents separated. We kids were a little slower getting out of bed, the house seemed silent, and less gifts were under the tree. We were sad, and that was okay. There was a reason to be sad, so we were sad. Our culture wants us to escape all feelings of pain and suffering; we have run from the cross. Feelings of depression, loneliness, and resentment may become more evident as they're contrasted to feelings of joy and peace that this time of year usually brings. In our season of grief, celebration seems out of place. But there is a light and there is a hope.

That Christmas morning, we sat a little closer together, stayed with each other a little longer, and played with our toys a little less. We wanted each other more than we wanted the things. Whether you start a new tradition, go to a social event, or if you prefer to memorialize the time on your own, listen to your heart and celebrate the holidays as you see fit.

*"Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus" (Lk 1:31).*



**Christine Kellett** - Christmas is a beautiful and joyous time, but when you find yourself in the thick of grief, the pressure to celebrate can be overwhelming. Like Jeremy above, I've experienced some painful holiday seasons. The first Christmas after the death of my youngest brother, I tried my best to be present, but I was exhausted and broken in both body and spirit. Several years later, I found myself in what felt like a perpetual state of grief as I miscarried seven babies

over the course of three years. As each holiday season rolled around, the last thing I wanted to do was celebrate the birth of a baby (even the God Child!) when all I desperately wanted was my own babies back.

The single greatest thing that helped me through these times was being in front of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, and allowing His tender mercy to envelop me. The Child Jesus came for the brokenhearted in the manger at Bethlehem, and He continues to come dwell within the manger of our broken hearts through the gift of the Eucharist. It also helped me to keep in mind that it's precisely because of His Incarnation (and subsequent Sacrifice on the Cross) that we can be reunited with our loved ones again.

If you find yourself in a time of grief this holiday season, our hearts go out to you. Please be gentle with yourself, and be assured that the community of Saint Patrick is here to accompany you with our prayers, love, and support. May the hope of Heaven carry us through each and every season of our lives!

### Helpful Resources

**Loss Ministry of Saint Patrick:** Held on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month from 7:00pm - 8:30pm (Confidential, no registration is required, and you don't have to be Catholic to participate).

**Adoration Chapel:** Open from Sunday 6:00pm - Friday 9:00am in the Chapel of the Annunciation (Walk-ins welcome from 8:00am-9:00pm).

## ORA PRO NOBIS - "PRAY FOR US"

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

*Jason Alinder, Carol Beckman, Dennis Bernstrom, Bianca & family, Ruby Bigelbach, Wendi Bigelbach, Bill Bisek, Pat Bourbeau, Dan Bratland, Vicky Carlson, Gary & Peggy Carroll, Winnie Conger, Kathy Coval, Danielle DeBiaso, Linda Dierkhising, Marie Ann Downs, Ralph Gamble, Judy Gapp, Ron "Mike" Gardas, Barbara Ingalls, Terry Iverson, Little Leo Jaeger, Ed & Bev Kirchner, Shirley Kopet, Lucas Kramer, Alan & Celine Laueremann, Joseph & Patricia Merchlewicz, George Mohs, Sam Morgan, Georgette Nadeau, Andie Oldham, Clara Olsen, Wanda Olson, Molly Parlow, Leona Penberthy, Gayle Perra, Emily Perrin, Sean Pritchard, Marge Raze, Blake Rebelein, Ron Schleicher, Joycelyn Smith, Pat Smith, Vern Suchla, Sue Swanson, 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 - "SERVANT OF GOD, DOROTHY DAY"

Dorothy Day was a well-known social activist, pacifist, and protester. She also had a troubled past. Yet Dorothy was the co-founder of the Catholic Worker and is now on the road to sainthood. This extraordinary American laywoman was complex and controversial, but her service to the poor out of love for Christ compels us to see her sanctity.

Dorothy Day was born November 8, 1897 to a nominally religious family. When the San Francisco earthquake hit in 1906, Dorothy remembers her mother helping the destitute by giving away all their extra clothes. This early experience of helping the poor made a deep impression on her.

In college, Dorothy became a social activist and communist. She protested WWI in 1916, and then marched as a suffragist in 1917, where she was arrested and beaten. She then moved back to New York to write for communist papers, living a bohemian lifestyle.

After long nights of drinking, however, she would attend Mass at a nearby church. She had no intentions of joining, but found the ritual comforting, writing in her journal: "There is nothing as beautiful as the *benedicite* or *te deum*." Yet her life was far from beautiful. In 1920, she discovered she was pregnant and her partner demanded that she have an abortion. Desperate to save the relationship, Dorothy consented. After dropping her off, he promptly disappeared. Later calling it "the great tragedy of my life," Dorothy became depressed and attempted suicide.

She later found solace in a new relationship with a man named Forester. Although he was an anarchist and refused to marry, Dorothy was in love. "I have always felt that it was life with him that brought me natural happiness, that brought me to God." She became pregnant again, and her daughter, Tamar, was born in 1926. The pregnancy was the catalyst that prompted Dorothy's conversion. "I wanted to die in order to live. I wanted to put off the old and put on Christ. I wanted to love. And like all women, I wanted to be united to my love." Dorothy decided—

against Forester's wishes—to baptize her daughter into the Catholic Church. Dorothy delayed her own baptism for more than a year, hoping to save her relationship with Forester. In the end, she made the painful decision to leave him, writing, "I loved the Church more." At her baptism, she made personal vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, promises which she kept until her death.

Dorothy later described her conversion as a "revolution of the heart." Still, she suffered embarrassment and doubt. Not only did she lose Forester and many friends, but other Catholics were also suspicious of her, given her history. "I thought of myself not as a Catholic Convert, but as someone who had been looking for God all those years without really knowing it, and had now begun to find Him, but had a long way to go. The long loneliness."

The Great Depression heightened Dorothy's sensitivity to the poor. While covering a hunger march in Washington D.C. for a Catholic newspaper, Dorothy saw the communists serving the poor and speaking in their defense, but did not see any Church officials present. Feeling dismayed, she went to the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, and "I offered up a special prayer, a prayer which came with tears and with anguish that some way would open up for me to use what talents I possessed for my fellow workers, for the poor." It was December 8, feast of the Immaculate Conception.

The following day, she returned to her

daughter in New York, and a stranger named Peter Maurin showed up on her doorstep. He became her mentor, teaching her how to apply the Catholic faith in serving the poor, following the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7), Romans 12, and St. Therese's "little way." From then on, Dorothy became a force for good, serving the poor, and advocating for them on a national level.

"The mystery of the poor is this: That they are Jesus, and what you do for them you do for Him. It is the only way we have of knowing and believing in our love. The mystery of poverty is that by sharing in it, making ourselves poor in giving to others, we increase our knowledge of, and belief in, love."

Before her death in 1980, a Times article called her a living saint, to which Dorothy quipped, "Don't call me a saint. I don't want to be dismissed so easily." She felt she was not worthy of such an honor. Moreover, she knew that saints were once sinners and struggled like anyone else. In 2000 the cause for canonization for Dorothy Day was opened, thus granting her the title "Servant of God." The canonization process is ongoing, which, God-willing, will eventually culminate in her recognition as a saint.

Servant of God Dorothy Day shows us how to put off the old, and put on Christ, which will impel us to live radical lives of service to others.

*Written by Tom Schulzetenberg*



Mother Teresa and Dorothy Day,  
New York, 1979  
Photo by Bill Barrett

## "WHERE ARE YOU, JESUS?"



Pope St. John Paul II teaches us in the encyclical *Ecclesia De Eucharistia* (#1) that “the Church draws her life from the Eucharist.” He also says that the Eucharist is “the source and summit of the Christian life.” The Eucharist is the source and summit because it contains Jesus Himself. With that said, we can understand why we should strive to not only go to Mass, but also to spend time with Jesus in Eucharistic Adoration.

Eucharistic Adoration is when you come to sit with Jesus in His Eucharistic presence. This could be done in a time of Exposition or when you simply sit before the tabernacle. He waits for you. He longs to see you. He loves you. He wants to spend time with you. He knows everything going on in your life, all the joys and struggles, and He says these words to you from the Blessed Sacrament: “Come to me all you who are weary and tired and I will give you rest” (Mt 11:28). This is a reality that I am more and more convinced of every day. The reality that Jesus wants an intimate relationship with me. He also “THIRSTS” (as Mother Teresa would say) to have that with you, His beloved daughter or His beloved son.

After my conversion, I had a great desire to spend time with Jesus in the chapel, before the Blessed Sacrament. It was in this place I was able to bring everything on my mind to Him, to speak to him “face-to-face, as one man speaks to a friend” (Ex. 33:11), and honestly to fall deeply in love with Him. Today, I truly would unravel and probably turn into the Hulk if it wasn’t for the Holy Mass and Eucharistic Adoration! These two things are at the heart of our lives as Franciscan Friars of the Renewal (CFR’s). In closing, I want to encourage you to schedule an hour, or at least 30 minutes, to go to St. Patrick’s and spend time with the One who loves you the most.

For additional reading I recommend: *Jesus Our Eucharistic Love* by Fr. Stefano M. Manelli, FI, or simply to do a Google search on the Eucharistic Miracles from around the world (the Eucharist turning into literal flesh, etc.)

In Christ,  
Br. Moses Pio, CFR



*Br. Moses Pio is a religious brother in the Community of the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal in Bronx, New York.*

## "SERVING GOD AND NEIGHBOR AT MASS"



My first ‘job’ at Mass was as an altar server. Being up close to the action is how I fell in love with the Liturgy, and thanks be to God, serving the Liturgy is a full-time gig for me now!

At any given weekend Mass, there are 20-50 volunteers serving in a ministry role. “Liturgical Ministry” is an umbrella term for all the ministries at the service of the Mass. Here’s a broad overview of what they do:

- Sacristans carefully prepare books, hosts, wine, and more.
- Lectors proclaim the Word of God that will be planted in each heart.
- Altar Servers reverently assist the Priest and Deacon.
- Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion bring Jesus to everyone.
- Ushers help people know where to go and have what they need.
- Rosary ministry leads prayers of intercession for all.
- Music ministry leads the congregation in singing God’s praises.
- Live stream team makes the Mass accessible to the homebound.

There are even more ministries that have an impact on our Worship experience, such as people who wash the linens used at Mass, Art and Environment, Information Station, and our Fellowship Teams.

It’s important to note that Liturgical Ministry isn’t about being a “holy roller” with flashy talents. God has given all people unique gifts to be used for the service of His Kingdom. Some of these roles are more “up front” than others, but don’t be turned off by doing liturgical ministry because you don’t think you have the right gifts. Some roles require important gifts like a cheerful personality, time, organizational skills, etc.

The reward is great as well. Most of these ministries don’t require much more time than you would already spend coming to Mass. Most volunteers find that it is so gratifying to know that you are glorifying God by making Worship possible, and have a front row seat to see how Mass is changing people’s lives.

If you’re interested in serving God and others in simple ways at Mass, please contact me at [aheadl@st-patricks.org](mailto:aheadl@st-patricks.org). I’d love to discuss where you’d best fit!

*Written by Amee Heigl*

## 150 YEARS OF ST. PATRICK (PART 3 OF 3) - "FINANCING THE 2001 CHURCH"

Northern Anoka County experienced exponential growth during the 1990's, so St. Patrick's 1976 church building quickly became inadequate. A space assessment study in 1997 made clear what everyone already knew: that a new church was needed, that it would need to be BIG, it must happen soon, and that there was not enough money to do what must be done.

The options were to proceed, or postpone until more money could be gathered, knowing that building prices were skyrocketing. Multiple committees were formed engaging the largest possible number of parishioners. From their input, a three phase plan was developed. Phase one was planning, research, and fundraising. Phase two was the actual building. Phase three was another building project to take place in about five years to increase the size of the morning chapel and add educational space. Phase three never happened.

Demographic data was compiled in order to project future growth and income. The numbers revealed that income was not keeping pace with the ever increasing number of families registered in the parish. So Hal Johnson, a professional fund raiser, was hired to run the capital campaign. Meanwhile, the committees assessed the need for each kind of space and drew plans in a dozen different configurations; then whittled them down to three plans they brought to the architect.

In March of 2000 a meeting of the entire parish was held. Father Michael Kennedy reported that the price tag would be six million dollars. The Capital Campaign had raised only half a million dollars. The Archbishop and the Vicar General had granted their proxy, which meant that Father was empowered to borrow the necessary money. The building loan was negotiated at 4.5%, and required interest-only payments until 2007 when the rate would be reset. A higher rate was anticipated, so fundraising was most vital early on. Everyone got involved with "Fun Raisers," dinners, rummage sales, and auctions. CountryFest became "BuildingFest." The children filled a big acrylic box with change, and Father

Kennedy and his musician friend, John Evans, performed a concert.

Ground was broken that spring. The footprint was outlined in yellow crime scene tape secured from the police department. It was enormous—nearly 30,000 square feet. Once the hole was dug for the foundation, each family was invited to bring a small rock from home to toss into the hole as a symbol that we, the people united in Christ, are the foundation of the Church.

The architect selected was Hammel, Green and Abramson. The general contractor was Adolfson and Peterson, the same contractors who had successfully built the 1976 church, the education wing, and the cemetery.

There were setbacks, as with any project, including a shortage of steel and a labor strike, but the builders forged ahead. The old church was remodeled into a fellowship hall and a sizable kitchen was added to the back. The only disappointment was that the new space was substantially over budget, especially in the technology areas, adding up to over 7 million dollars.

Finally, in early September, everything was ready for the first Mass in the new church. Then the unthinkable happened, robbing parishioners of their joy. The

Tuesday before was September 11th, when the Twin Towers in New York City had been attacked by terrorists. The folks at St. Pat's gathered to pray for the souls lost in the attack, and for courage to face the uncertain future.

In November 2003, Father Kennedy suffered several strokes, rendering him unable to return to work, so St. Patrick's became a ship with no captain at the helm. Fundraising stopped, but the debt accumulated as we struggled to make the interest-only payments on our mortgage. In May of 2006, God sent Father David Blume to our parish. With his background in business and accounting, he had the skillset to manage St. Pat's financial woes. The monthly payment doubled from \$29,000 (interest-only at 4.5%) to \$60,000 (principle and interest at 7.1%) on \$7.12 million. Another fund drive netted \$700,000. By June of 2012 the payment had been reduced to \$45,000 per month at 5% on \$5.6 million.

On May 17, 2020 the final payment was made on the mortgage, leaving our parish justifiably proud of our achievement and of our beautiful church.



*Maria King,  
St. Patrick Parishioner*



## FEATURE ARTICLE - "THE GREATEST GIFT WE CAN GIVE OR RECEIVE AT CHRISTMAS"

News reports are saying that we need to be prepared for shortages of material goods and increased consumer costs due to significant raw material, shipping, and supply chain issues as we close 2021. In fact, one headline warns: *"Christmas at risk as supply chain disaster only gets worse,"* as if the season is all about giving material gifts and/or hosting parties, rather than preparing for the birth of Christ.

And while there is nothing wrong with giving material gifts to family and friends and receiving the same in return, little or nothing about the *"reason for the season"* is actually about you and me. Christmas has always been about the birthday of Jesus and what He wants to give us and what He wants for us to both receive and share.

So, what exactly is it that Jesus yearns to give us and for us to receive and share? **His Christmas gift of forgiveness.**

In reality, forgiveness doesn't come wrapped in pretty little packages. It's often uncomfortable and messy. It's a lifelong process that we need to keep choosing over and over again. Why? Because Jesus keeps forgiving us—if we humbly ask for His forgiveness—over and over again. After all, isn't that the very meaning of Christmas—*God becoming man to redeem us from our sins*—so we can all receive and share the "good news" of His unconditional love and forgiveness to others?

For this reason, holidays are not only a blessing, but a stressful time to reengage in family dynamics. They are a time for God to heal and strengthen family bonds. Otherwise lingering resentments, if not faced as Christians (WWJD), can sow further division.

For me, family gatherings became more complicated as changes in faith/marriage amongst siblings presented challenges to sharing the joy of Christmas. Sound familiar? Still, for all claiming to be Christian, the holidays are our opportunity to shine, since marriage and family are the very first schools of love and forgiveness. Thus, if you're really interested in making

this the best Advent and Christmas ever, I exhort you in your prayer time to look inside, to ask yourself and the Holy Spirit if there is any un-forgiveness in your heart toward anyone or any circumstance. For this roadblock will prevent you from truly loving God and your neighbor as yourself.

So, how can we begin to love those we don't get along with, those who've hurt us (real or perceived), and those we consider our enemies? Only by meditating upon the reason why Jesus was born and what His dying on the cross means for you and me can I open myself to receive such an undeserved gift of His merciful love.

Did you know that God's law of love is inscribed on every human heart via the Ten Commandments? And just as sin begins in the heart, so does love. And just as Jesus gave His whole life in loving us to the end, so forgiveness costs us as well. For nothing good comes without the cross: the glorious instrument of our salvation.

In the remaining days of Advent, as you prepare to get-together with family, friends, and co-workers, be honest about

your relationships with God, neighbor, and self. Set aside 5-minutes of silent prayer each day to humbly examine your conscience, and begin to ask God for the grace to forgive that one person who wounded you.

If safe to do so, write the person a note, send them a card, give them a call, or pay them a visit. Afterwards, bring your own sins to the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession), so that Jesus can reveal His unconditional love for you. Only then will you be prepared to praise and proclaim the wonderful things God has done for you in calling you out of darkness into His own wonderful light.

When all is said and done, sharing the peace of Christ's forgiveness is not only the *"reason for the season,"* it's the greatest gift we'll ever give or receive at Christmas. **God forgives—can I?**



Fr. Eilen,  
Pastor



## "PRAYER WHEN LIFE GETS BUSY"



As we approach a new year, our resolve to grow closer to God might fizzle out early on like some other resolutions, not necessarily by our own fault, but due to the inevitable busyness of life. Indeed, we can't control the majority of life's demands. Most of us don't live in monasteries, devoting most of our days to hours of silent, contemplative prayer—and that's okay! The Lord has called each of us to the situation of our lives at this very moment and He dwells here, not stuck in the past, and not in some vague future. He has chosen us to be spouses, parents, workers, students, and loving servants, and He certainly knows and blesses our many responsibilities.

The fundamental question isn't about what we can do to accomplish magnificent spiritual results based on some "formula," but whether we engage with Him in a deeper relationship. Prayer is always a movement of the heart, a gift from God who is a living Person. He's always the active one; we simply respond in faith by coming into His presence. The more we think that prayer is entirely based on our own effort, the more we doubt, lose peace, and look upon ourselves with shame when our fidelity to spiritual practice errs. Jesus didn't reprimand Peter for his holy desire to step out of the boat and walk upon the water with Him, even though his faith faltered!

Like many resolutions in life, we should make gradual, patient steps in our willingness to be drawn into the most important thing in life: deeper communion with the living God. We should be determined to meet Him in daily prayer, but at the end of the day, even if we fail to fulfill a spiritual commitment, Jesus still delights in our weakness and the littleness of our gaze toward Him. Simple, unsophisticated dialogue with the Lord can suffice.

As a loving Father, the Lord doesn't call us failures, but His beloved. Like little children, let's simply ask God to increase our desire for more of Him alone.

### Simple Ways to Pray Each Day

- Rely on God's Word by having "go-to" bible passages readily available on your night stand to read at the end of the day.
- Pray with images of Jesus' life and the lives of the Saints.



*Randy Skeate is a St. Patrick parishioner in his first year of seminary at the St. Paul Seminary.*

## "CARE FOR OUR COMMON HOME"



With all the conversation regarding the environment and our future, now is a good time to look at Laudato Si'. Laudato Si' (Latin for "Praise Be to You") is an encyclical written by Pope Francis that invites people to protect God's creation for future generations and care for our common home (the earth) and the most vulnerable.

Every day, our human impact on the environment, often simply referred to as climate change, is in the news. Often the focus is on the problems caused by our human impact on the earth rather than proposed solutions. Why? Solutions are not obvious and those that are proposed are not simple. Thus, Laudato Si' is an invitation to ponder not only where the world is going, but to invite contemplation on our individual impact on the world.

Laudato Si' calls us to live within our environment as ambassadors for life, who live stewardship in word, sacrament, and service. To answer the call as individuals, we must recognize the seriousness of the declining environment around us and realize caring for our common home starts with us.

How will this happen? Laudato Si' centers on an integration of science and religion regarding our common home, the earth. The impact of borrowing from future generations to meet our own needs in this generation is revealed. The ultimate objective is to seek balance within our own life through evaluating individual needs and leaving our common home in a better state than what was given to us.

The process involves personal reflection and group discussion of consumerism, lifestyles, government, land, plant, animal, energy, water, air, wellness, culture, and spirituality. As we journey and our focus becomes more refined, our individual gifts will become clearer as we develop a better understanding and personal commitment to the care of our common home.

My prayer is to bring the message of the Gospel to the struggles of the earth. Look for ways to get involved in this movement, to explore and expand Laudato Si' as a parish. Details to come. "All it takes is one good person to restore hope" (Laudato Si 71).



*Deacon Kris Ringwall*

## EVENT HIGHLIGHT - "CHRISTMAS CAROLING AT ST. PATRICK"



church about two weeks before Christmas. When we arrived we said a little prayer and then Fr. Blume/Fr. Eilen took the North team, I took the South team, and one of our seminarians took the East team. Each team sang a couple of Christmas songs at their assigned homes and then Father, the seminarian, or myself would say a prayer and then leave the homebound individuals some freshly baked Christmas cookies and depart singing "We wish you a Merry Christmas." It was a great evening of sharing time and fellowship with these parishioners. Just seeing the smiles on their faces and hearing them sing with us was so rewarding. This is why it has become an annual tradition.

Let us keep the joy of Christmas in our hearts as we sing, "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel!"

I was unaware of the tradition of Christmas Caroling until my senior year in college when my friends suggested the idea of going Christmas Caroling at some nursing homes in St. Cloud. About 10 of us gathered together to sing Christmas songs one evening at a few local nursing homes. It was so rewarding to see the smiles on the residents' faces and hear their voices as they joined us in singing the Christmas songs.

Barb, former music coordinator, Kyle, and myself were on a walk around the church property. A discussion came up about Christmas Caroling to our homebound parishioners/widows. We felt that the homebound/widows may enjoy a visit during the holiday season to raise their spirits and be assured that the Saint Patrick community was thinking of them. The idea was born, and we started planning how we could implement it for that Christmas Season.

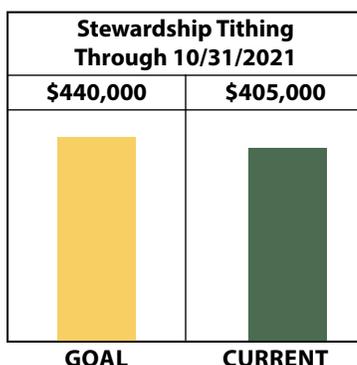
Did you know we have an annual Christmas Caroling event at St. Patrick? It began in 2011 when our former receptionist,

For our first ever St. Patrick-sponsored Christmas Caroling event, we met at



*Deacon  
George Stahl*

## STEWARDS AMONG US - "HELP US HELP MORE"



2021 is over! We can be people of hope in times of trial, and we can also be people of gratitude! Many of us are blessed with wonderful lives and all of our basic needs are met.

At St. Patrick, we serve hundreds of people that lack basic needs, and many struggle with addictions or mental illness. When these barriers are removed, people can begin to hear the words of Jesus—through us.

Please consider supporting our outreach efforts. Help us help more! An end-of-year gift of \$50 can help one person dress for a job interview, get simple car repairs, or buy meals for the week. If you're able to do more, think of how many more lives will be impacted! You can mail your gifts to the parish office, or go online to [st-patricks.org/donate](http://st-patricks.org/donate).

Thank you for including St. Patrick in your charitable giving during 2021, and we gratefully accept your continued support.



*Dan Jaeger,  
Business Administrator*

## PARISHIONER HIGHLIGHT - "MEET PAT AND EVERETT BOURBEAU"

Because Pat was only 14 when she met Everett, they couldn't date right away. Instead, they focused on building a strong friendship. During this time Everett spent a lot of time with Pat's family who immediately fell in love with him. Pat shared, "My mother just adored Everett. She considered herself his second mother. Everett took care of her so well, and it was a total act of love. He never once complained. My mother eventually started calling him St. Everett."

Finally when Pat was 17, Pat and Everett started dating and things really took off from there. "By the time I was 17, we had our whole lives planned out, right down to the names of our children. We talked about everything and didn't do anything without talking to the other person. That stayed consistent throughout our entire marriage." Pat and Everett got married the following year when she was 18 and Everett was 21-years-old.

Pat's eyes lit up as she said, "We had a beautiful life together. There's nothing like it. I don't regret a minute of it. He was really a man of strong faith. I couldn't ask for a better person. He just loved helping people. Everything was beautiful in his life and he was always so grateful."

Everett was an exceptionally generous man who spent his life caring for others. When Pat and Everett were married for ten years, Pat went to work nights at UNIVAC to build computers. During this time, Everett continued to work during the day and looked after the kids at night while Pat was at work. Pat shared, "I never worried about the kids while I was at work because I knew Everett was there. He took care of everything. He made sure the kids never went to bed without praying the Rosary. He even taught religion classes to one of our neighbor boys and helped him get Confirmed." In addition to taking care of his own kids, Everett wanted to take care of the other kids in their neighborhood. He told Pat, "In every neighborhood there's one house that every kid feels comfortable in and that's going to be our house." So Everett decided to build a baseball field in their backyard, and all the neighbor kids would come by and ask if "Mr. Bourbeau" could come out and play. The baseball field stood in their

backyard for 10 years. Amazingly, some of the boys who grew up playing baseball in the Bourbeau's backyard were present at Everett's funeral years later.

Pat tried her own hand at "community outreach" when she started holding religion classes for her son, Mike, and his friends in their living room. It only grew from there. Pat shared, "Before we knew it, we had neighbors of all faiths who were coming into our house. They were all different ages, from first grade all the way up to ninth grade. We started with talking about who God is and we taught them how to pray the Rosary." Even Pat's doctor, who was a well-known Catholic doctor in Coon Rapids, sent his kids to Pat's religion classes.

Undoubtedly Pat's willingness to share her Catholic faith had a huge impact on others, but she didn't realize the true weight of it until years later when she ran into one of her former "students." He walked up to Pat and said, "I want to be the first to tell you that the faith you installed in me as a child carried me through life." Shortly after, another former "student" of Pat's chimed in and said, "I want to be the second one to congratulate you for the work you did for me when you taught me my religion. You were always really busy, but whenever I had a question you would find a quiet place in the house and explain it to me, step-by-step." Pat was deeply moved by their words. "That was probably the

greatest compliment I ever received in my life," said Pat. It's amazing to see what an impact you can have on another person and not even know it.

Pat and Everett clearly built a beautiful life together and I was dying to know the secret behind their success. Thankfully, Pat read my mind. "I truly believe the reason our life was so beautiful was because of God. On our wedding night, Everett and I knelt by our bed and consecrated our marriage to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. We wanted God to be the head of our family, and Mary to be the arms. I think that's what made all the difference. If you want to build a strong relationship, God has to be at the head of it." Gratitude also played a huge role in Pat and Everett's relationship. "We thanked God everyday for the many blessings He gave us," shared Pat.

Towards the end of our time together, Pat shared one final key ingredient in her relationship with Everett. "We had a terrific friendship. That's so important. You have to learn to know people before you can love them. It's the same thing with God. You can say 'Oh I love God,' but those are just words because you don't know the person. You get to know the person you love, and that's what happened with me and Everett. We had such a close relationship from day one. That's what true love is all about."

*Written by Maria Furness*





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*Christmas*



**CHRISTMAS EVE**

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24

VIGIL MASS - 4 PM  
CANDLELIGHT MASS - 11 PM

**CHRISTMAS DAY**

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 25

MASS - 10 AM