



Alumni Newsletter

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SAINT PATRICK'S ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

JAN 2021

Dear St. Patrick's Alumni,

I wish you and your families a very blessed Advent and Christmas Season! No doubt, year 2020 has presented us all with many challenges. The pandemic seems to have taken so much away from us with shelter-in-place requirements, business closures, and various governmental restrictions. Especially challenging for me was the suspension of public liturgies in the months of March, April, and May. But, as I prepare personally and spiritually for the Christmas Season, I have tried to focus not so much on what was lost, but on what may have been gained.

I'll start with something simple. Last year at this time, I made the decision to get a puppy. I'd wanted a dog ever since I left the family farm to go to college. Throughout my 20s, however, I moved around so frequently that a pet would have been impractical. When I entered seminary in my 30s, a pet was impossible. Last December, I mistakenly believed that life—my own, in particular—was becoming more stable, so I bought a little Bichon Frisé named Starbuck. Three months later, stability shattered in a million pieces when the virus locked us all down. Starbuck became a good companion.

There is a reason why Jesus spends so much time in the Gospel teaching with parables of nature. The natural world reveals the creative mind of God and shows us the structures of life and death. Starbuck gets me out in nature every evening, and while he is sniffing fire hydrants and chasing wind-strewn leaves, I hold tightly to his leash and reflect on what Gospel truth nature presents to me in those moments.

On our evening walks, I am frequently reminded of Jesus's words in the Gospel of John: *"Truly I say to you, when you were young, you fastened your own belt and walked where you would; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will lead you where you do not wish to go. Follow me!"* I love when those spiritual and theological truths of our faith are displayed so simply and lived so effortlessly by the things and situations of nature.

In addition to the companionship of a good dog, I have also gained a greater appreciation for silence and stillness. When we received notice from the diocese in mid-March that we had to suspend public liturgies, I celebrated all of my daily masses in the small chapel in the St. Pat's rectory. Pre-Covid, almost every mass a priest celebrates is a public mass held in a consecrated church, so Fr. Thaddeus and I mostly use our private chapel for personal prayer. Rarely do we get to offer a full mass there. One of the things I learned from those quiet, whispered chapel masses is the paradox of silence in our Catholic tradition. Silence isn't really so silent or isolating.

With greater attention focused on the actions of the Mass, the prayers—both spoken and secret—I sensed the universality of what the Holy Mass truly is. It unites heaven and earth. It is the source and summit of our lives as Catholics. It is activity both visible and invisible, as we announce in the Nicene Creed.

In reality, there is a nearness we can find in the Holy Eucharist that collapses the distance between God and Man, between citizens of this world and the world that knows no end, and between shepherd and flock.

I placed the parish directories of both St. Patrick's and St. Monica's on the altar each time I celebrated Mass during those months, holding each of you up to Our Heavenly Father. I felt near to all of you during that time in spite of physical restrictions. This experience of nearness was especially meaningful to me this year, as my dear friend, Msgr. John J. Prendergast, was called out of this world and into the next. The reality is exactly as St. Paul describes: *Christ is all, and in all.*

A third gain came to me this year when we were able to begin distributing Holy Communion in the parking lots at both St. Patrick's and St. Monica's in June. It felt like a great cloud had lifted. Seeing so many of you come through the communion lanes in the parking lots was like being part of a long-awaited reunion. But, even more meaningful to me than our own encounters was seeing you receive the Holy Eucharist after so many weeks. Some of you had tears running down your cheeks. Some of you had smiles stretched from ear to ear. It was as if we had all come out from under the drifts of a terrible winter to see light and life at last. In fact, that's exactly what the Eucharist gives us: light amid encircling gloom and life in abundance.

I am so grateful to be assigned as Pastor at St. Patrick's and St. Monica's! I thank all of you who have helped keep our parishes active and alive throughout these past months, and I pray that as life hopefully returns to a Covid-free normal, we can gather fully as a family in faith. On a personal level, I pray that 2021 brings you and me more of what I have gained from 2020: the ever-present nearness of God. I also pray that you and your families enjoy health and happiness and salvation!

Merry Christmas!
Fr. John

WHO'S WHERE, DOING WHAT NOW?

Richard Hunger - 1955

My fondest memories would be the first year of St. Pat's. I was in the upstairs room of the old church. It had been used as a bedroom when St. Pat's was a mission. All the desks were in double rows and the aisles were very narrow. We even had a sink, but with all the desks, you could not get to it. I do not remember how many of us there were, but it was the 5th and 6th grade classes.

The wife and I have been retired for some time now, and we moved back to Oregon. All the family is spread up and down the West Coast. We were working in California for our last 20+ years but did not want to stay there. We travel from Portland to southern California to see family when we want to go someplace. The wife likes to sew and works with the church bazaar group. I still like to work on cars or other types of machinery. I also spend some time working with the Knights of Columbus. The yard and garden take the rest of our time.

My mailing address is 258 Walker Rd, Grants Pass, OR 97527. My phone number is 541-476-2096. My Email is dkhunger@yahoo.com

Mary A Nichting-Powers - 1964

My fondest memories were gathering around Fr. Menco, Assistant Pastor, on the playground and his poster contests. I was part of Sister Mary Ann's first 8th grade class. She was strict, but loveable. I was always being confused with Mary Ann Crabill. She starred in our class play, "Little Red Riding Hood" wearing my red winter coat. I remember cheerleading for basketball games and practicing with other classmates. I remember morning Mass in the basement of the school and eating breakfast after receiving Holy Communion. I was proud to be leader of one of the safety patrol groups. I was crazy for Bobbie Hartter, and Dennis Sheehan was the class "mad" scientist.

Now, I am a retired housewife. My high school sweetheart, Philip Powers and I were married at St. Pat's in 1968. We have three children and six grandchildren. My hobbies are babysitting, sewing, making and dressing porcelain dolls, gardening, knitting, crocheting, and playing on the computer. I am a breast cancer survivor and currently dealing with Parkinson Disease.

My parents are both deceased: Mom in 2012 and Dad in 2000. My sister Barb (1961) is retired and living in Redmond, OR. My brother Donald (1965) is retired and lives in Gilbertsville, KY. My brother David (1968) lives in Chicago. My little sister Carol Sue (1982) is a pharmacist practicing in Neenah, WI.

My husband and I live at 1416 New Way Dr., Beaver creek, OH 45434. My phone number is 937-286-1437 and my Email is mary.powers@ameritech.net

Linda Fuchs-Thomas - 1972

I remember selling Holy Childhood stamps to our neighbors (to save the poor pagan babies). I remember basketball games and fresh popcorn from the concession stand. I remember Mrs. Sparling reading Winnie the Pooh and Charlotte's Web to us in 8th grade. I can still hear her as Eeyore, Winnie the Pooh, and Charlotte! She had so much talent and was an amazing teacher. I am so grateful for the education I had at St. Pat's. Lastly, I remember my many friendships that I still have today with former classmates.

Currently, I manage two dental offices: one in Washington and another in Eureka. I have worked in dentistry for over 40 years now. I truly love my job and have the best co-workers. I taught Dental Assisting at Illinois Central College for a couple of years until the program ended. I was the Executive Director for the Peoria District Dental Society for 9 years and am starting my 12th year as the secretary for the Illinois State Dental Society Downstate Caucus. I am a mom to three boys Aaron, Dane, and Isaac. I have two amazing daughters-in-law and one granddaughter Lola! She's the best part of being a "Gigi" (her name for me). My husband Dan and I have been married 36 years, and I am still a member of St. Patrick's. We both serve as Extraordinary Ministers, and I am a Notary Auditor for the Diocese of Peoria. (I assist people with annulments.) I also sell makeup on the side in my free time and have been a runner for 12 years. I ran my first marathon at 60 years of age! I hope to run another one someday.

My mailing address is 104 N Market St., Washington, IL 61571. My phone number is 309-453-9301 and my Email is lindapdds@yahoo.com

A Collection of Memories

Church Bulletin April 22, 1951:

Remember our Mother-Daughter Banquet is to be held on May 3rd at the Washington City Building. Serving starts promptly at 6 o'clock. Reservations will be taken and tickets sold after all the Masses today and next Sunday, April 29th. Or you may get in touch with one of the committee members who are as follows: Mrs. John Schmidt, Mrs. James Small, Mrs. Eugene Copp, Mrs. John Heiser, Mrs. John McGlaughlin, or Mrs. Thomas Geselbracht. Reservation must be made no later than Sunday, April 29th.

Newspaper Clipping September 14, 1952:

Final arrangements are being made for St. Patrick's fall festival to be held Sunday, Sept. 21. A fried chicken dinner will be served from 12:30 until 6:30 in the school recreation room and there will be novelty booths, games and amusements on the school grounds. Chairman for the dinner is Mrs. Charles Lorengo and Co-Chairman is Mrs. Arthur Mason. Price of the dinner is \$1.50 for adults and 90 cents for children. — Mrs. Alex J. Katauskas, Correspondent.

The Mighty Midget (School Monthly Newsletter) January 1954:

There has been quite a lot of excitement in the 5th and 6th grade room since Ricky Walker, a fifth grader, won the "Space Patrol" contest for naming a fictitious planet. Among his prizes are a 35-ton space ship, a Schwinn bike, camping equipment and a space suit. Ricky said "I plan to use the space ship as a clubhouse for the club I am going to start."

The Shamrock (School Monthly Newsletter) October 1954:

Gum! Gum! Gum! Sister: Are you chewing gum? Don: No Sister, I'm Don Kelly.

Newspaper Clipping March 1965:

The St. Patrick's Parish Athletic Committee held a pot luck dinner last Sunday. Honored guests were Chuck Grant and Walter Buckley. Father Joseph Anderson presented letters to the cheerleaders and basketball players. Trophies were presented for the most free throws to Larry Bergman of the heavyweights and Tim Nauman of the lightweights. Mrs. Richard Brown and Mrs. Robert Howell were chairmen of the arrangements. Mrs. Roy Orr was in charge of decorations.

Church Bulletin January 19, 1968:

The Annual Valentine Dance sponsored by the Athletic Committee is Feb. 1st. Music is furnished by the Eldon Herstein Orchestra, 9:00—1:00. Tickets are only \$2.00 a couple. Profits go to pay for new bleachers. If you wish to help sell tickets and bring some friends, call Marty Chasco at 283-2810.

Church Bulletin October 17, 1971:

The Annual Chicken Dinner was a grand success thanks to all members of the parish who helped out. Total income = \$6074.83. Expenses = \$1519.97. Total cleared = \$4554.86. This includes quilt money (\$582.18) chances etc. The winner of the yellow cross-stitch quilt was Mrs. Jim Burroughs. Other winners: car—Marilyn Marchesi, Toluca; Blender—D. Ragan; Bond—Ed Gleason; Case of the Month—Judy Dailey. Thank God for success. Please return all quilt books to Mary Salemi, 104 Brief St. Please pick up your pie plates in the vestibule of the church.

The Irish Star (School Newspaper) January 1973:

The level twelve reading group presented a play called The Reluctant Dragon. It was about a reluctant dragon that was nice and could talk. All the people in the village thought he was mean because all dragons are. When St. George comes, the dragon is the villager's friend. The names of the people who acted in the play are: Barbara Fuchs, Carmel Tenuta, Jennifer Johnston and Brenda McClone are villagers. Laurie McDonough was the mother. Jean Mahony was the father. Mark Boehle was the boy. Julie Crawford was St. George. Angie Mall was the head of the dragon. Karen Opsomer was the right paw. Lisa Landry was the left paw. Dawn O'Dea was the tail. The play worked out fine and it took a lot of "effort". Sure enough, it was successful.

Church Bulletin July 12, 1981:

The Parish Picnic-Pig Roast Pot Luck will be August 22 at Kennel Lake. Mark your calendars! Tim Sponsler, Jim Ksycki and their fearless crew have quite a day planned. More later!

If you have had an address change, please complete and return this form to St. Pat's School, 100 Harvey, Washington, IL 61571.
You may also email the information to: alumni@stpatswashington.com.

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**ALUMNI
NEWSLETTER
JAN 2021**

Dear Alumni,

I hope this letter finds you all well and safe. The Coronavirus really turned our world upside down. As a result, we have had quite an unusual turn in how we deliver education to our students. During the last quarter of 2019-2020 school year, we began remote learning due to the “shelter in place” order requiring the temporary closure of schools. Our students missed all of the spring events such as May Crowning, First Communion, Awards Nights, State Track Meet, and other traditions that have become an integral part of St. Patrick School. We held Graduation at the end of July with only parents and the graduates attending to keep within guidelines from the State and the Diocese of Peoria. Fortunately, we were able to be back in school in-person for thirteen weeks this school year before being required to return to remote learning. We have put in place many safety measures and precautions to keep our students and teachers safe. We hope to be back in-person full time again in mid-January. It is hard, as students miss their friends and their teachers. Planning e-learning lessons require so much more work, and our faculty has been real troopers.

Fortunately, we had the technology available so that we could provide students help with the challenge of remote learning. St. Patrick School has 1:1 technology available to students for this school year. However, our new challenge is to keep this program going in the years to come. When the 2021-2022 school year begins, the majority of our Chromebooks will no longer be able to accept the updates requiring us to replace them. This will be a major expense. Technology is so integral in the curriculum of today’s education including some of our textbooks that are completely online and Smart Boards in the classrooms. Students use the Chromebooks daily in school or remote learning.

We continue to work hard to provide top-notch education for our students in academics and faith formation. Four of our alumni placed in the Top Ten at Washington Community High School this past school year; and many of our students were inducted into the National Honor Society at WCHS, Peoria Notre Dame, and high schools elsewhere. How wonderful is that! St. Patrick School is a great school! We love our students and families! We will continue to provide the best for our students. Please keep us in your prayers, and keep healthy and safe!

Peace and Blessings,
Doreen M. Shipman, Principal

Please keep in your prayers those who have recently died: Mrs. Marti Dubois, Mrs. Mae Coovert, Mr. Bud Schone, Mrs. Margie Toon, Mrs. Marge McNally, Mr. Joe Crumrine and Mrs. Barbara Crumrine, also alumni Rosalee Scherer (1973), Jim Theine (1971), Tom White (1961), Joan Miller (1971), and Susan Gavin (1960). Also remember Paul Hendricksen, brother to Carl (1970). We also lost two of our religious pass this year. Sister Guistina Zanin helped in the school cafeteria from 1979-2005. She always had a smile and a Magic Slate Board to communicate with. Monsignor John Prendergast was pastor at St. Patrick’s from June 2011 until July 2013. May these families find peace in God’s grace.