



the Irish Review

ST. PATRICK'S PARISH & ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

VOL. 3, ISSUE 1 - MARCH 2023

Restoring the Academy Gym



THROUGH THE GENEROSITY OF SO MANY ALUMNI AND PARISHIONERS, WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO UPGRADE AND RENOVATE OUR CHURCH BUILDINGS AND ACADEMY GYM, TURNING OUR FACILITIES INTO A TYPE OF COMMUNITY CENTER!

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The success of St. Patrick's Church depends on your support and prayers. Because of you, this "Old Bordertown Parish" in the Joliet Diocese has prospered over these last 100 years. Please consider supporting our parish and help us erase our \$209,000 parish debt through your generous response. **WE HAVE REDUCED OUR PARISH DEBT THESE LAST THREE YEARS BY A FACTOR OF \$100,000!** Anything you can do to help would be much appreciated.

ST. PATRICK'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

AN OLD BORDERTOWN PARISH
119 NORTH MARKET STREET
MOMENCE, IL 60954
(815) 472-2864
FAX (815) 472-3043
VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT
STPATRICKMOMENCE.ORG
OR EMAIL US AT
STPATSRECTORY@MCHSI.COM



NEWS AND VIEWS FROM ST. PATRICK'S CATHOLIC CHURCH
BY YOUR PASTOR, FR. PETE JANKOWSKI

TURNING OUR ACADEMY GYM INTO A COMMUNITY CENTER

Adapted from Fr. Pete Jankowski's Homily at the Parish Polka Mass & Appreciation Dinner on February 11. Highlights of this Mass and Fr. Pete's Video Homily can be accessed at the parish website www.stpatricksmomence.org

Recently, I celebrated a funeral for a former parishioner named **FRANCIS "BUD" LANOUE**. He was an active member of St. Patrick's Church some years ago. Bud's family told me that he once served as a member of the Knight of Columbus and served on the Momence Gladiolus Festival Committee. I was told that Bud served St. Patrick's Church and the Academy in so many different and wonderful ways.

Bud was married to his wife Betty for almost sixty years and was father to four daughters and a boatload of grandkids, great-grandkids and great-great-grandkids. I was told as a member of the Knights of Columbus, Bud had a knack for taking things that were brand new and tearing them apart because he thought he could make them better (I kind of wonder if the Knights of Columbus had not picked up from that talent in today's age as well!).

Bud repaired a great deal of structures on this parish complex, including the outdoor **OUR LADY OF LOURDES GROTTA** that was falling apart during his era; Bud made the grotto look like new. As the family spoke to me, I had just asked our parishioners from today's era to tuckpoint the grotto the same way that Bud did some fifty years ago because, just like during Bud's time, the grotto was in a great state of disrepair. Thanks to the **CRYER FAMILY (AND MOMENCE PALLET)** as well as the family of **STEPHEN LOFTUS** (a patriarch who also died recently and was very dedicated to serving the priests of this diocese and the brothers of Good Shepherd Manor), we were able to repair the grotto today as Bud had done back then.

In fact, **RYAN LOFTUS** (Stephen Loftus' son) honored his father's memory by replacing our special needs' ramp in the front of our rectory. He also decided to donate his time to build a special needs' ramp behind our gymnasium for the benefit of those parishioners in need of this service.

As I was preparing my homily for Bud Lanoue, I received a call from a woman named **FLORENCE DENNISON**, who informed me that her brother-in-law **STEVE** had passed away some time ago in Montana. Florence asked if we could celebrate that funeral later on in the Spring. In our phone conversation, Florence shared with



Pictures from our Gymnasium Renovation... The Knights of Columbus and Van Drunen Farms donated new tables & chairs for our renovated gym floor. Bottom - four new boilers were installed in our gym basement, which upgraded our old system!



Pictures from our Gymnasium Renovation. New windows are installed in the third floor and two special needs bathrooms are being built on the first floor. Bottom - Parishioner Joe Kraus repairs the balcony wall of the church; in addition to his bathroom work in the gym.

me how Steve and his brother **THOMAS** (Florence's husband) lived across the street from the rectory in the same yellow house that stands there today. Florence told me that Tom & Steve's mother **IRENE REHMER-DENNISON** once was in charge of the funeral dinners here at St. Patrick's Church, which today is led very ably by **JUDY GALL AND JOANNE HERMANN** (the same good people who served us at our Appreciation Dinner). Irene's responsibility was to serve the meal at the funeral luncheons some fifty years ago, to help with the Council of Catholic Women from that era and to help serve at the same type of Fish Fries that the St. Pat's Council of the Knights of Columbus will offer this year.

Florence also shared with me that Irene's father **BONAVENTURE REHMER** served as the head of maintenance for St. Patrick's Academy, a position he held until retiring in 1946 [by the way, what is with the "Rehmer" family holding a monopoly at this parish for at least the last ninety years? **JOHN REHMER** currently serves as our current director of Religious Education and his mother **SHIRLEY REHMER** (who passed away last year) was an active member at the parish in so many different ways!!!]. It seems that we cannot get rid of the Rehmers at St. Patrick's Church!

Thanks to John, our numbers in the Religious Education program steadily are growing again. John might as well be seen as a volunteer at the parish, the way he handles so many tasks for us without recognition or compensation. This weekend, John brought twenty-five of our children forward to receive their first confession. Now that we actively are serving our Hispanic community (which represents 70% of our Momence workforce and the largest growing demographic in the US Church), John and a whole bunch of nice catechists have been inviting our students to invest themselves in our parish life more and more.

Concerning Bonaventure Rehmer... I asked our parishioners which pastor served St. Patrick's when this good man retired in 1946. Our current cemetery sexton **ROGER "BONES" HESS** kidded that the parish was served then by **REV. A.L. LABRIE** (1896-1923). I asked Bones how old he *thought* he was – if Bones Hess personally remembered Fr. LaBrie, that would mean Bones would be over one hundred years old! The actual pastor during Bonaventure's time at the parish was **REV. U.T. DEMARAIS** (whose name is as confusing to pronounce as the town of Bourbonnais is; Fr. Demarais served as pastor of this Momence community from 1933-1963). Father Demarais is buried in our parish cemetery with a whole bunch of other pastors that preceded him, as well as my immediate predecessor at St. Patrick's, **REV. DAN HESSLING** (2007-2019), who passed away in 2022.

Since the time of Fr. Demarais, unfortunately, the academy building was in such a state of disrepair that it was condemned and demolished in 2016. When I arrived to upgrade our facilities, I came to find out that four of the buildings under my care were degrading in the same condition; **WALLY MARTIN** (my friend and

"house flipper") was able to salvage four rectories, with the help of parish funds and my personal finances.

Nowadays, we still have work to do in the gym, as it was in the same state of disrepair as the other buildings on the property. Thanks to our alumni (thank you **RITA (ORTH) BREGENZER** and family!), the brothers from **VAN DRUNEN FARMS** and a host of others, we were able to make about a quarter million dollars of repairs for currently less than \$20,000 (the cost of three boilers we had to replace in the gym's basement; **COUSINS PLUMBING** donated the fourth). Current parishioner **STEPHEN COATS** climbed up into the attic of our rectory to redo all the wiring that was causing troubles over in that particular building. Current parishioner **JOE KRAUS** has gone way beyond the call of duty to repair our church walls and create a gym bathroom on the first floor that can serve those with special needs (thanks **NICK SKOKNA** and **JOE COHN** for their volunteer service on this project as well). So many other volunteers have donated their time and their talents and financial resources to take care of our church roof and to help redo the entire gym floor.

So we could upgrade our gymnasium, our local council from **KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS** gutted the third floor of our building and our local **ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS GROUP** has emptied and repaired a third-floor shuffleboard court that many parishioners were not aware even existed prior to that. We also were able to replace windows in our gym that also had fallen into disrepair (the Van Drunen brothers were kind enough to replace and install the first floor windows of our gymnasium, which would have cost the parish \$150,000 to do on our own!). Leaders from our local AA Group helped us upgrade all the wiring in the gymnasium and helped us with the lighting in a newly created first-floor bathroom inside the building. I told the AA Group that we were more than happy to allow them to hold meetings in our gymnasium – we will help them and they will help us upgrade and preserve our parish facilities.

Up in the attic of our gymnasium, parishioner **DIANE MARCOTTE** found old signs that the kids made for academy events. She and a bunch of others came across boxes filled with old rummage sale clothing from times past, which were in desperate need of incineration! We also found old clothes, track hurdles and such from the church's history. We also were thankful for alumnus **"CRANKY" MIKE DOUD** (the current proprietor of a local popcorn shop), who helped us scrap so much of the refuse we found on the parish campus, including rust-infected water boilers and old ice coolers that were collecting more dust and rust.

I think that as we repopulate our Church with wonderful souls from today's age (over two hundred wonderful parishioners attended our Mass and Appreciation Dinner and another two hundred attended the Spanish Mass the next day), I think to myself, how many good people have filled these pews and helped us maintain the blessings this church campus has offered for over one hundred seventy-five years. I have heard so many wonderful stories about our church history and the faith that has inspired those in the past and



Above... Diane Marcotte showcases some of the posters she found in the gym attic; Maddie Meyer and son Beckett James play on the newly renovated gym floor. Fr. Pete takes pictures with some of our altar servers (and dog Gabby) for the upcoming Parish Photo Directory, which currently is in production.



This year's First Confession Class and our baptisms on Epiphany Sunday have resulted in a spike of over 100% growth in our sacrament programs and full houses during our Spanish Masses (which did not exist in 2019). Thanks to the parishioners and St. Pat's CCW for providing food, toys and knit blankets from grocery bags to the needy institutions in the area, including the Centro Vilaseca Daycare Center in Joliet, IL (who serve the needy families in Will County). Thanks to all who contribute to the Manteno Veterans Home and the Harbor House Services for needy families in Kankakee.

present (and hopefully future!) to allow these communities to grow and prosper.

What I am discussing very much is in line with what we read from the sixth chapter of St. Matthew's gospel. We are covering these few weeks prior to Lent up to Ash Wednesday what scripture scholars reference as "The Sermon on the Mount" (Matthew 5-7). On Ash Wednesday, we listen to words that very much are illustrated by what these communities have offered our faithful today. To paraphrase the Ash Wednesday gospel, "When you do something, when you pray, when you fast, when you give alms, do it in secret so that when God sees what you are doing, he knows what you are doing in secret and he will repay you."

There are a whole bunch of people sitting in this prayer space right now who have done so many things for these parishes, wonderful acts of grace of which you probably are not aware. God knows what these good souls have done, and only because I happen to be serving here at this time, I know what good has been done. In my heart, I know of these wonderful examples of faith that have inspired me to live the same way, to honor God and the parishioners from St. Anne's and St. Patrick's who model this faith in such a positive and holy way.

I can only imagine how much good took place prior to my arrival in 2019. We thank the faithful who have sustained the St. Anne Novena, who took care of the Fish Fries at both parishes. We thank those who have put forth their time, effort and financial resources. We thank those who helped us preserve the buildings through which thousands of souls have desired to enter to ask for God's healing and grace during their joys and trials. The people who have gone through both academies of St. Anne's and St. Patrick's, the good souls who prayed in the Our Lady of Lourdes grotto and our St. Anne's Pavilion (whom a few parishioners just donated resources for a new outdoor sound system), the people who have sat in the pews of our respected churches (and whose parishioners have helped us upgrade, most recently with new LED lighting fixtures) have served as models of faith. I truly mean this – your faith inspires my own faith from which I can learn so that I can serve as a better priest and as a better Christian.

I have learned that the success of these parishes is not just the result of the work of faithful stewards like Bud Lanoue and the Dennison Families. These parishes are not just the result of wonderful souls in today's age offering their time, talent and financial resources. The success of these parishes is not just about our wonderful anonymous donors from today who have provided resources for the major projects that we have undertaken and a debt we have reduced by one-third since 2019 (our current debt stands at \$209,000).

What we have accomplished is the result of *all* the members of our community who make up the Body of Christ and work together in a united effort to show God we care as a community of faith.



Letter from Rita (Bregenzer) Orth to the St. Patrick's Community

Rita was kind enough to gift the St. Patrick's Community a sizable gift for the purpose of our gym renovation. Fr. Pete received a letter from Rita in January 2023, which inspired him to visit her family in Sugar Land, TX and learn a bit about her life and the five wonderful sons that live near her in Texas. This was the letter Rita sent to accompany the gift...

Dear Fr. Jankowski

Finally handwritten greetings from Rita (Bregenzer) Orth in Sugar Land, Texas. Just so you'll know a little about who is writing to you... I am 87 years old. My wonderful husband of 64 years (William) passed away on July 10, 2021. We were the parents and now I am still the mother of five spectacular sons and daughters-in-law who have given me 16 grandchildren and 12 adorable great-grandchildren, all of whom live quite close to me here in Texas. I am still living in my long-lived and great big house, only now I have as companion my "Help! I've fallen and I can't get up" dealie around my neck and the very real presence and company of God whom I've com closer to than ever before in my life. I feel very safe and protected. I am so grateful for the life I have lived, all of it, and I still am living it.

Part of my wonderful life was lived in Momence, IL. I was born in Kankakee but when I was entering the fourth grade, my father (Henry Bregenzer), a pharmacist, bought what was then Murphy's Drug Store, located at 15 Dixie Highway in Momence. My parents, little sister and I move to a house at 426 E. Second Street when I was beginning fourth grade. I have a very Catholic background. All four of my grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins were Catholic.

My sister and I both attended the academy for grade school and then St. Patrick's High School (now McNamara) in Kankakee. The Academy and St. Patrick's parish in Momence were so much a part of my early happy life. I received the sacrament of confirmation and was married at St. Patrick's on August 24, 1957. Three of my sons were baptized there.

The article in **THE MOMENCE PROGRESS REPORTER** about the renovation of the gym is what prompted my donation (towards the gym renovation). I just wanted to contribute something in thanksgiving



for the "Momence" part of my life. I sent the money in memory of my father and mother (Henry & Evelyn Roach Bregenzer), my years at the Academy and St. Patrick's church and the town of Momence... all of which contributed to my very happy life.

I have never met you but feel like I know you... and that is thanks to the COVID experience. My husband and I took advantage of the televised Sunday Masses here at the Texas parish. One day, someone told us we could tune into any Catholic parish that offered a televised Mass. How we appreciated that opportunity. We loved your Mass and your pastoral personality. My heart was so happy, knowing that my old parish was in such good spiritual hands. I know that everyone enjoys a compliment; I can tell that your priesthood in general and your liturgies in particular must be a delight in God's eyes... they certainly are in mine!!! I am a good "pray-er" and you and your spiritual hopes and dreams will certainly be in my prayers. Rita Bregenzer-Orth

Last Year, the Golf Outing Made Over \$20,000 for our Academy Gym!



Save the date for Saturday - June 24, 2023!

St. Patrick's Golf Outing

**Oak Springs Golf Course
6740 E 3500s Road - St. Anne, IL 60964**

St. Patrick's Golf Outing

Saturday - June 24, 2023 - \$100 per Golfer (Up to Teams of Four; Singles, Doubles and Trios are all Welcome!)

Price Includes Cart, 18 Holes of Golf and Dinner

Shot Gun Start at 12:00 Noon

Raffles & Drawings for Gift Baskets will also be Available.

We are looking for Hole Sponsors, Raffle Prizes or Whatever You Offer

Contact Rick Preston for Details at ☎ (815) 370-9617

Contact Mary Jo Boicken for Details at ☎ (815) 592-0614

St. Patrick's Golf Outing

Saturday - June 24, 2023 - \$100 per Golfer (Up to Teams of Four – Singles, Doubles & Trios are all Welcome!)

Make Checks Payable to "St. Patrick's Catholic Church"

**Send Checks to Rick Preston - 11815 E 3500N Rd
Mokenca, IL 60954 - you can call Rick at ☎ (815) 370-9617
or Mary Jo Boicken at ☎ (815) 592-0614**

☐ Add me (us) to a foursome

☐ I want to sponsor a hole (\$100)

☐ I want to contribute raffle prizes or donate cash for prizes

Name:
(Captain)

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Name:

Address:

Name:

Address:

Name:

Address:

2-Piece
Fish Meal
\$12

3-Piece
Fish Meal
\$14

**St. Patrick's Church
Knights of Columbus Fish Fry**

**Fridays (February 24 - March 31)
from 5:00-7:00 p.m.**

**119 N. Market St. Mokenca
Courtesy of the Knights of Columbus**



St. Patrick's Catholic Church

AN OLD BORDER TOWN PARISH IN ILLINOIS

119 NORTH MARKET STREET - MOMENCE, IL 60954-1415

☎ (815) 472-2864 - FAX (815) 472-3043 - WWW.STPATRICKMOMENCE.ORG

Upcoming Church Projects

Parish Debt - \$209,000

Pave Parish Parking Lot -
\$75,000

Create Gym Parking Lot -
\$150,000



Join Our St. Patrick's Mailing List!!!

If you know of someone who does not get our yearly newsletter or wishes to be on our mailing list, please contact us by phone or contact Fr. Pete at pjankowski@yahoo.com. Fr. Pete also puts out a weekly "News & Notes" concerning activities that take place at the parish; you are most welcome to contact Fr. Pete to be included on that mailing as well.

As is the tradition at St. Anne's Church (and now St. Patrick's!), the Service Commission at St. Anne's is collecting new towels, hand towels and wash cloths for Harbor House. New toiletries are also appreciated. The collection will take place from Ash Wednesday through Holy Thursday. Harbor House is always grateful for your donations.



St. Patrick's Golf Outing

Sponsor Registration

\$100 per hole sponsorship.
Make & Mail Checks Payable to "St. Patrick's Catholic Church c/o Golf Outing"
119 North Market Street
Momence, IL 60954

Sponsor Registration

For more info, contact Rick Preston at ☎ (815) 370-9617 or Mary Jo Boicken ☎ (815) 592-0614. If you are a new sponsor and have a business card or company logo you would like printed on the hole signage, please include a copy with your registration.

Name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

☐ I want to contribute raffle prizes or donate cash for prizes



St. Patrick's Progressive "Split the Pot" Raffle

First Prize: Half the Pot, minus \$750
Second Prize: \$500 ♦ Third Prize: \$250
Drawing at Parish Picnic - September 2023
Check www.stpatricksmomence.org
for Current Prize Totals
Winner Not Be Present for Drawing

**\$10 a Ticket
6 for \$50
All Proceeds Go
Towards Campus
Renovations.
Thanks for
Supporting Our
Church!**

Fellowship, food & fun **CHURCH** *Picnic*



PLAN ON JOINING US IN SEPTEMBER 2023 FOR OUR ANNUAL PARISH PICNIC, STARTING WITH A 10:30 OUTDOOR BILINGUAL MASS, AUTO SHOW, VENDOR FAIR, FOOD, MARIACHI MUSIC AND SO MUCH MORE. TO HELP SPONSOR THIS EVENT, PLEASE CONTACT THE ST. PATRICK PARISH OFFICE AT ☎ (815) 472-2864



Thanks to those who have donated to the St. Patrick's Cemetery Fund. In 2022, our good parishioners have donated almost \$5,000 towards this important cause!



**Parish Hall
Dedication -
\$1,000,000 -
Help Us Renovate
Our Parishes and
Secure Our
Church's Futures!!!**



AT ST. PATRICK'S OUTDOOR GROTTO

For \$100 a brick, you are invited to dedicate an outdoor brick on behalf of a loved one. For more information, please contact the parish office at ☎ (815) 472-2864 or email us at pjankowski@yahoo.com.



For only \$25, you can dedicate a Journeysongs Pew Book from either parish. Please call ☎ (815) 472-2864 for more info.

\$2500 ST. PATRICK'S PEW DEDICATION PROGRAM

Over \$100,000 has been donated since 2019 for the plaques that adorn the church pews at St. Patrick's Church. These donations are necessary for the betterment of our church - and to honor so many good souls!

IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW WISHES TO NAME ONE OF OUR FOUR BUILDINGS ON THE PROPERTY (\$1 MILLION EACH), ST. PATRICK'S ELIMINATES HER DEBT AND PAVES THE WAY TO SERVE THE KANKAKEE BORDERTOWN CITIES FOR GENERATIONS TO COME!!!

If you are interested in learning more about the dedication program, contact the parish office at phone ☎ (815) 472-2864 or email us at the address pjankowski@yahoo.com.

PEWS MOST RECENTLY DEDICATED TO THE FOLLOWING...

Roland & Eileen Blanchette
Edwin & Darlene Bull
Earl & Edna Clark
Joe Cohn Family
Bill & Suzanne Cotter
Antonio & Adrienne Gallinaro
Christopher Green
Katherine Green
John & Joanne Hermann
Knights of Columbus
Joe Kraus Family
Novelli & Petrecca Fams.
Virgil & Betty Langhorst
The Marcotte Family

Jack & Peggy Noonan
Therese Anne Panzica
Richard & Carol Preston
Delmar & Evelyn Provost
The Rademacher Family
The Rios Family
St. Patrick's CCW
Dr. Hermila Ramirez
John & Shirley Rehmer
Martin Sanders
Nick Skokna Family
Anthony Philip Surprenant
Jack & Marcia Tedford



St. Patrick Project Updates

RUDY BAUER ASSOCIATES helped us tuckpoint our grotto, allowing us to install our security system and replace our grotto statues. Thanks to the Loftus & Cryer families who helped us with this project!!!

Thanks to a donation by **RICHARDS BUILDING SUPPLY** for all the shingles necessary to repair our church and rectory garage roof. The conventional estimate for fixing our roof and replacing the shingles should have cost us in excess of \$60,000; because of many donations of materials and service, that cost was cut to less than half! Thanks to all who helped us!!!





IT'S ALL ABOUT OUR FUTURE

AT ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH!

For over 100 years, the faithful of St. Patrick's Church have dedicated themselves to serving the folks of our community in God's name. We ask you to consider the ways listed below that can help our parish. If you would like to discuss how **ESTATE PLANNING** can be used to make a gift to the parish, please contact us at ☎ (815) 472-2864.

- ♣ **BEQUESTS** - Through your will you can bequeath to St. Patrick's a fixed amount, a percentage of your estate or the remainder after other choices have been made. Example language might be: "To St. Patrick's Church of Momence, I leave the sum of \$XXX to be used at the discretion of the recipient." Any bequest to St. Patrick's you make will reduce the size of your estate and could reduce the estate taxes that may be due.
- ♣ **LIFE INSURANCE** - By naming St. Patrick's as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy your premiums may be tax deductible and it will help ensure the future of St. Patrick's Church.
- ♣ **TAX DEFERRED SAVINGS PLAN** - Money in an IRA or other similar plan is subject to income tax when withdrawn. If left in your estate, they may be subject to estate taxes. If you make St. Patrick's the remainder beneficiary, neither of those taxes may be paid.
- ♣ A variety of **CHARITABLE TRUSTS & ANNUITIES** - There are a variety of giving options that can provide you or future generations' income, rights to property or assets with tax savings and generous support to St. Patrick's.

Remember St. Patrick's Academy in Momence is now on... facebook



**We also have an Academy Page on the Parish Website.
Please send your photos to pjankowski@yahoo.com**

Check out the NEW St. Patrick's Website!

We now have a three parish website at www.stpatrickmomence.org (which also serves St. Anne's Church) find out what is happening at the parish, watch online Masses, read Fr. Pete's homilies and much more! Fr. Pete's educational materials (from his television show to classroom lessons) are also accessible from the parish website.