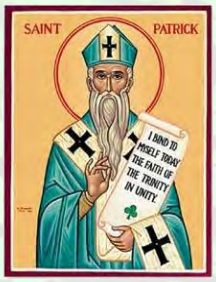
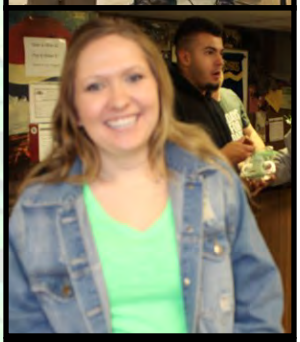


the Irish Review

St. Patrick's Parish & Alumni Newsletter

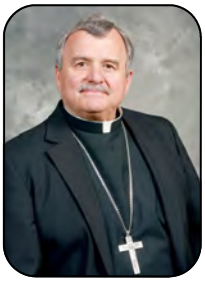
Vol. 6, Issue 1 - March 2026

We Have Eradicated Our $330,000 Debt and the Parish is Growing! The Future is Bright!



News and Views from St. Patrick's Catholic Church
By Your Pastor, Fr. Pete Jankowski

I Made a Promise to Stay - I Need Your Promise to Help!



For those of you who have listened to me tell this story more than once, I made a promise to an auxiliary bishop of Chicago who passed away three years ago (Most Rev. John Manz) that once I was assigned to this parish community, I would not leave voluntarily. Bishop Manz (1945-2023) knew the value of this community - he had visited it often and knew that the Border Town Area is not a great stop for someone who wants to climb the company ladder. I came to realize that the purpose of this exercise is to get to heaven and St. Patrick's holds the key to that door.

I made the same promise to my country pastor (Fr. Thomas Kane) about fifty years ago and he encouraged me to enter high school seminary. Fr. Kane knew that the initial years of my priesthood would be occupied in the larger parishes of the diocese. Despite the hardships in ministry (he was once a prisoner of war in Korea), Fr. Kane still loved his priesthood and the people he served. He made me promise to end my days of ministry serving the same types of good souls as he was doing at the end of his days.

When I first arrived for my permanent duty at St. Patrick's in 2019 (I briefly covered the parish while a priest was away in 2005), I inherited four houses that looked like "Sandford and Son" on acid, a $330,000 debt that was growing and very few people attending any given Mass, weekday or weekend. The task was daunting to renovate the houses, a dilapidated gymnasium, a grotto that was crumbling and a faith life that desperately needed a "shot in the arm."

Through all of us working together, we were able to renovate our buildings (I paid for half the repairs out of pocket - mind you, I have to show you I am a good steward!), we began a Hispanic Ministry that started with less than twenty-five souls and numbers more now than all the other weekend Masses I celebrate... COMBINED! With all the

In This Month's Irish Review...

Notes from Fr. Pete 2
A Letter from Our Viewers in Australia! 6
Starting a Foundation for St Patrick's 11
Support Your Local Parish! 12

Please Remember St. Patrick's in Your Will or Estate Planning!

As our diocese prepares to receive a new bishop (because our last one got promoted to the Archdiocese of New York!), we continue to upgrade and maintain what we have and welcome new members to our community so that we can grow and thrive. All of this depends on us working together! Much thanks to all of you who "get" what we are trying to do and support us through time, talent and treasure.

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YouTube Station
Border Town Parishes

Pictured is the Dining Room of St. Patrick's Rectory in 2019 just before my arrival and seven years later on March 4, 2026 (every room in four different houses were in the same condition as this one). Ann Hall (pictured) said that her father's insurance agency in Matteson, IL donated this table back in the 1990s and was the only salvageable piece of furniture left in the rectory. We have renovated four houses in the Border Town area at a cost of $60,000 from which Fr. Pete paid half from his own resources.

Missions, Novenas, Prayer Nights and such, the three greatest complaints I get at the parish is that 1) there are too many candy wrappers on the property BECAUSE WE HAVE TOO MANY KIDS! 2) we do not have enough parking on the property BECAUSE WE HAVE TOO MANY CARS AT MASS (note: make sure that Joe Meyer gets his car out of our parking lot before the noon Spanish Mass…) and 3) we need to build a space for Religious Education because WE HAVE TOO MANY KIDS RECEIVING SACRAMENTS! What terrible dilemmas to have! (by the way, I am leading a couple Confirmation Retreats at our parishes for over one-hundred kids total because the religious education directors asked us to do this.)

One of the reasons all of this works is because WE WORK TOGETHER AS A BODY OF CHRIST! Last August, members of our Knights of Columbus worked in tandem with a core group in Hispanic Ministry to teach them about the famous "Bratwurst Sale" at Glad Fest. Towards this cause, about thirty new faces helped us sell the corn on the cob (love the fake butter!), the dogs and brats slathered with grilled onions and peppers and a new seating area from the tents we recently purchased for the parish (Van Drunen Farms often allows us to use their 100-Foot "rented" tent for our picnics… at a rental cost of almost $3,000 a week!!!). In addition to the normal fare, our Hispanic friends also provided fruit cups, horchata (a Mexican rice drink) and elotes (the corn in the cup with mayonnaise and chili powder– it always tastes good to me at first but the after effects are not so good…).

As a result, this year our Hispanic Community is helping the Knights of Columbus at their annual Fish Fry events, as Jim Meyer and the gang work with Freddy Franco and our Hispanic friends to help promote the Knights and get our friends to work together as well.

Write pjankowski@yahoo.com to Receive Weekly Correspondences about the Parish!

We are Looking for Members from Our Academy to Help Coordinate Our Golf Outing This Year! Make It a Reunion Event! Call our Office at ☎ (815) 472-2864 for More Information

At our Parish Appreciation Dinner on February 14, we served the most number of volunteers we have had since I arrived permanently in the area back in August 2019. One of our country friends named Andy Paquette was so impressed with what we have been doing that he donated *a black angus cow* to the parish to raffle off, specifically raffling ten prizes of FIFTY POUNDS OF FROZEN BLACK ANGUS HAMBURGER as a type of fundraiser for the parish. I have come to find out that this kind of generosity has taken place in other parts of the country and world, but this was a first for us!

Highlights from St. Patrick's Parish Appreciation Dinner on February 14, 2026

As was the case last year, we are so grateful for the Poor Clares of the Annunciation Monastery in Minooka as well as Nick Skokna and his friends from Costco and other Food Organizations who have delivered hundreds of cases of food to the needy in our area. Between Baker & Taylor and Momence Packing shutting down as well as a local Chocolate Factory burning down, that and other causes resulted in a loss of over five hundred jobs in our area. So many good people have reached out for help, so we have done what we can to get the families through difficult times. We also have been blessed that our Momence Police Department and other institutions of care have worked with us to provide emergency shelter for those in need.

Towards that cause, we are in the process of installing generators throughout our campus to keep the power flowing in our buildings. One anonymous donor provided us with a $25,000 gift to install a generator at our Academy Gymnasium; the estate of Greg & Sandra Gelino provided the $60,000 for the other two generators on our campus (Greg & Sandy died within months of each other, two holy souls who loved this community with all their hearts).

Thanks to the kindness and skills of our octogenarian contractor Joe Kraus, he was able to teach Robert Piquet (from Vista Painting) the manner in which Robert could tear down two sanctuary walls that were water-damaged by a leaking roof (which we fixed) and showed Robert how to stucco the walls and paint them as if the walls were not damaged at all. Joe had accomplished this same task a few years ago with the upstairs balcony wall of the church; Robert was able to do the same for our sanctuary walls for the ridiculous price… of $550!!! What should have cost us thousands was done for a fraction of that amount by members of our parish who understand how important this Church is to the community!

From Top to Bottom: The Chavez Family from Joliet joined the Hispanic Community for Mass on December 21, 2025; Members of our Parish (including our former secretary Ema Elvir - GOD BLESS YOU IN MEXICO! - as they bring in yet another haul of food for the poor; Our 2025 First Communion Class; Roger "Bones" and Gayle Hess celebrate their 60th Wedding Anniversary; a Scene from Our Outdoor Picnic Mass on September 14, 2025; Wally Martin installing new Rectory Windows.

We also were blessed that various donors (including Van Drunen Farms) were able to create a "warming kitchen" in our gymnasium to help those who need that service. Antonio Elvir (the husband of our secretary Ema, who left for Mexico last October to spend time with her mother) renovated the old shower room of our gymnasium to yet another meeting room on our campus (which Phyllis Burrell and our 4-H Group constantly use!!! Yay!!!). We have improved the security at the gym by purchasing video camera systems. Outside of a much-needed parking lot (and a much-cringing price tag of $275,000), we pretty much have done what we could to upgrade the gym - now we have to maintain it! Considering its condition from six years ago, we have come a long way!

We also wish to thank alumnus Valerie Szopinski for gifting us with $10,000 on behalf of her husband Hank, who passed away last year. Very quietly, Valerie has been supporting our community as so many others have done - Valerie reminded me that she was one of the "boarders" who lived at the academy over sixty years ago and still communicates with another pillar of our community on a regular basis, Joanne Hermann. I promised Valerie that I would dedicate a pew for Hank and her and constantly keep them in prayers.

While I was on vacation in Antarctica last January, I received a call from the parish that our church boiler finally met its end. With the help of John Cousin and parishioner Todd Clark from Cousins' Plumbing, we were able to install a rental unit during the frozen tundra of a really bad cold spell while John and Todd assembled a new boiler for us... at the cost of $40,000. We kept a $100,000 "rainy day fund" (in this case, a "snow day fund") for just an emergency and we were blessed that no permanent damage or harm was caused because of this calamity.

As we have spoken on staff, the need to maintain what we have becomes a daunting task. Attendance at Church throughout the country is now on an "up-tick," with our Hispanic and Traditional Catholics filling the pews and

To Learn More about Online Giving and Supporting St. Patrick's from Your Computer, go to www.stpatrickmomence.com

To Learn More about El Cerrito de Camino y Esperanza Retreat House, Check them out on Facebook or Call (219) 306-0124

supporting our communtiies (in addition to everyone else!). The collection over the last few years increased from $1,200 a week in 2019 to over $3,000 a week today. This is necessary - the bills don't get cheaper and we need to maintain what we have. We have come to realize that if we can upgrade our parking lots ($100,000 for the Church and just under $300,000 for the gym, which has no space for parked cars except the grass), the other project we need to address is a "foundation" that we need to establish so the parish can remain strong for years to come.

If we can find a way to establish a $3,000,000 foundation whose interest would be used to support this Church, then at least we might be able to help future generations at the parish maintain what we have upgraded in today's generation. We have been pushing for Estate Planning and Foundaiton opportunities among the faithful, including you! Last year, I was able to find over $70,000 in outside sources (over $83,000 in 2024) because I really do care about all of you. All of this makes a difference - I cannot say I am a "good shepherd" of the communtiy unless I do my part. I do the best I can with my limited talents - we just ask that you might consider helping with yours.

Pictured: Bill & Mary Davey from Whittlesea, Australia who visited both St. Patrick's and St. Anne's Churches to attend our Masses. They told us that of all the places they visited in the United States (Hawaii, New Mexico, the Mississippi River and the Chicagoland Area), the Border Town Communities was their highlight for the trip!!!

Our YouTube Border Town Channel now has over 550 Subscribers and almost ONE THOUSAND VIDEOS that we have uploaded these last seven years for your benefit. Last summer, we were blessed that Mary & Bill Davey from Whittlesea, Australia have been watching our videos from the other side of the world and decided to visit us last August for a week long visit. Mary told me that throughout their anniversary journey (from Honolulu to Albuquerque to Chicago to Minnesota to New Orleans), her favorite stop was in... Momence, IL? We have such a welcoming, loving community. This is what Mary wrote us from the other side of the pond...

Dear Father Pete and the Border Town Parishes in Illinois... Thank you for your online Masses. I am from a rural part 50 km (about 30 miles) NNE of Melbourne, Australia. We live on 11 acres that I am trying to turn into a big garden. Melbourne is now the most locked down city in the world . This has included little 'in person' church attendance for the best part of 2 years.

I accidentally found your masses in early 2020 and have been 'attending' ever since. This was a happy mistake when I tried to find our local services on a Saturday, when I thought it was Sunday. Of course there were none of our 'live' services but my googling happened upon yours.

I belong to the "Christ the Light" parish, which takes in the small cities of Mernda, Whittlesea and the very rural Kinglake. We

As part of his responsibilities for the University of St. Francis (Joliet, IL), Fr. Pete has been asked to teach a course in "Business Ethics" for 117 Vietnamese Students in Hanoi, Vietnam. The salary that Fr. Pete makes at the university goes back to the parishes he serves. In 2025, Fr. Pete was able to give over $70,000 of these resources to the parishes; in 2024, Fr. Pete was able to get more than $83,000 in resources. It's all about God, it's all about the parish... AND IT IS ALL ABOUT YOU!!!

brought up our children in the potato growing district around Kinglake.

When we moved to 'the big smoke' (about 1,000 in Mernda1996) the church was a small 'bluestone' church. (bluestone is sometimes called Basalt). The church held about 80 people and so this was a very close community. The church was built by workers from the local Yan Yean reservoir being constructed in the 1800s. Workers of all faiths used their day off to build it.

The origins have meant that Ecumenical services have always been a part of the church. This includes a combined Stations of the Cross through local streets on Good Friday. Our health officials have decided we will not be allowed out until 80% have been double vaccinated. The population of the area is now in excess of 16 thousand. At this stage we are told we will be allowed 30 inside for Church or 100 outside for Christmas.. As the Parish has

wide use of pumpkin (outside roast dinners) including Pumpkin Paste and pumpkin and ginger jam which tastes like apricot jam means we grow heaps each year and keep most of the neighbors well fed for the eight months or so that our Jarrahdale pumpkins last.

We are 'Springing' into Summer here. The highlight for the Grand kids is picking our cultivated blackberries. The 10 year old likes the thornless varieties, but I think he may be biased by the lack of thorns!

Thanks for the "Gilligan's Island" Homily - that got a good laugh here. My 95 year old friend missed the point as they did not have TV until the late 70s, but the discussion of deadly sins brought back memories. The one that sticks with me is when her truck broke down miles from anywhere. A linesman stopped to help and climbed the pole to connect to the phone lines to call the husband. He used his pushbike to come out several miles to clean the fuel filter and get the truck home. What a world we live in where you can just use a mobile phone anywhere!

Thanks again for your sermons. As the Bishop stole our priest and the online service is very late in the morning you have become my temporary parish priest. Online Masses have made me realize how important the sermon is. Your sermons with practical application appeal to me. I think this may be because you are talking to a rural audience, or perhaps just talent. I also like the fact you can pause and look up a reference during an online sermon. This Sunday there will be at least one Aussie sitting in your congregation.

Mary Davey

Check Out Our YouTube Station (Border Town Parishes) to Watch Online Masses from Your Home Church!

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 2026
Check www.stpatrickmomence.org
for Current Prize Totals
Winner Not Be Present for Drawing

$10 a Ticket
6 for $50
All Proceeds Go Towards Campus Renovations. Last Year We Made Over $12,000!!!

Help Us Establish a Border Town Foundation! We have come this far in helping out our parishes, between paying off our $330,000 debt, creating new meeting rooms, kitchenettes, bathrooms and internet services in our Academy Gymnasium. We still need to upgrade our parish parking lot and create one for the gym. Our three biggest complaints at the parish are that a) too many kids are throwing too many candy wrappers on the property; 2) we do not have enough parking space for those coming to Mass and 3) we need a larger building for Religious Education. Fr. Pete led two Confirmation Retreats at our parishes this March where over ONE-HUNDRED TWENTY STUDENTS from around the area attended. Thanks to the Estate of Greg & Sandra Gelino, we are installing generators in our church and rectory buildings to go along with the one recently installed in the gym! We are doing well but we need your help!!!

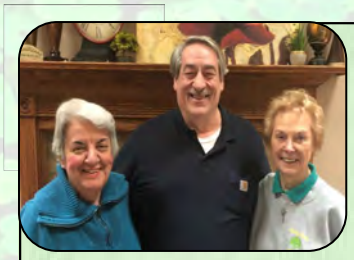
Please Help Us Upgrade Our Parish Campuses!

St. Patrick's Church
119 N. Market St.
Momence, IL 60954
☎ (815) 472-2864

St. Anne's Church
230 N. 6th Avenue
St. Anne, IL 60964
☎ (815) 472-2864

Upcoming Church Projects

St. Anne Foundation - $2,000,000
St. Patrick's Foundation - $3,000,000
St. Anne's Building Generators – $50,000
Paving of St. Pat's Church Parking Lot – $100,000
St. Pat's Academy Gym Parking Lot – $275,000



Help us Bring the Faith of St. Pat's to the Next Generation!

Because of your generosity from, we have been able to reduce our debt from $330,000 in 2022 to $34,000 today. In addition, we have been able to upgrade our campus significantly at a fraction of what it normally would cost. We ask you to help; please call ☎ (815) 472-2864 to discuss helping St. Pat's through **Will or Estate Planning**.

- **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.

Much thanks to all who helped us create a "Warming Kitchen" in Our Academy Gymnasium for Your Benefit!!!

PLEASE REMEMBER... In order to keep our parishes open and serving the needy, we need to average $3,000 a week at St. Patrick's and $2,000 a week at St. Anne's. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

The 4th Annual St. Pat's Golf Outing was held on Saturday, June 21, 2025 at Oak Springs Golf Course where 90 St. Pat's Academy alums, family, and friends came together to enjoy a day filled with laughter, memories, food, fun, and of course, GOLF!

A huge THANK YOU to all special event & hole sponsors, and to all our amazing volunteers! The golf outing raised a net $16,125 for ongoing renovations of our gymnasium community center.

2025 Golf Planning Team Members: Mary Jo Boicken, Mike & Sally Fuhrman, Bob & Sandy Malpasuto, David & Diane Marcotte, Jaeson Munyon, David & Terri Parmely, Rick Schopf

Getting ready to tee-off are… Jason Cross, Todd Sherwood, David Marcotte, Eric Hagenow

The Gelino family and friends enjoyed the day together!

Save the Date
St. Patrick's Momence
GOLF OUTING
Saturday, June 20, 2026

First one to putt their ball in the hole (or closest) wins this fun contest!

Fr. Pete welcoming the golfers and giving a blessing (with added humor, of course!).

Winners of the Cubs/Sox Crosstown Classic Raffle (that took place at the golf outing) are at Rate Field on game day...Terri Parmely, Nicole Parmely, Adrianna Jones, and Hunter Shadden.

The Malpasuto foursome cooling off in the shade.

5th Annual

St. Patrick's Momence GOLF OUTING

Saturday, June 20, 2026

4 Person Scramble
Winner Prizes Top 3 Teams
Raffles, Raffles, Raffles

OAK SPRINGS GOLF CLUB
St. Anne, IL
11:00 am - Registration and Lunch
12:00 noon - Shotgun Start
5:00 pm - Dinner (approximate)

Proceeds Dedicated to Improvements for St. Patrick's Academy Gymnasium and Community Center

See Reverse Side for Event Day Registration and Sponsorship Opportunities

5th Annual

St. Patrick's Momence Golf Outing

Saturday, June 20, 2026

Oak Springs Golf Club
11:00 am - Registration and Lunch
12:00 noon - Shotgun Start
5:00 pm - Dinner (approximate)

EVENT DAY REGISTRATION

Please select your registration option

$100 PER GOLFER REGISTRATION
Includes Lunch, Green Fee,
Cart, Select Beverages, and Dinner
(Must be 21 Years of Age)

Total Number of Golfers:

$30 PER PERSON DINNER ONLY
Not a Golfer, Come for Dinner!
Includes Dinner and Select Beverages

Total Number of Dinner Guests:

All Golfers and Dinner Guests Must Be Pre-Registered with Payment

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Please select your sponsorship choice(s)

Business or Family Name on Signage

$100 REGULAR HOLE SPONSOR
Name on Hole Sign

$200 CONTEST HOLE SPONSOR
Name on Hole Sign

- Men's Longest Drive
- Women's Longest Drive
- Men's Closest to the Pin
- Women's Closest to the Pin
- Putting Contest Sponsor

$250 LEMONADE STAND SPONSOR AT THE HALFWAY HUB
Signage at the Hub

$250 GOLFER SNACK BAGS
Name on Each Snack Bag

$300 BEVERAGE CART SPONSOR
Signage Placed on Beverage Cart

$500 "BIRDIE" EVENT SPONSOR
Banner by the Clubhouse
2 Golfer Registration Fees

$1,000 "EAGLE" EVENT SPONSOR
Banner by the Clubhouse
4 Golfer Registration Fees

$1,500 "GREEN JACKET" EVENT SPONSOR
Banner by the Clubhouse
4 Golfer Registration Fees
4 Extra Dinner guests

Any Questions, Contact Sandy at (815) 263-2120 or sandymalpo1@gmail.com

SUBMIT THIS FORM WITH PAYMENT BY JUNE 10, 2026

If paying by check, make payable to St. Patrick Church and note "Golf Outing" in the memo.
Mail to St. Patrick's Church - 119 Market Street - Momence - IL - 60954,
Drop off at the Rectory, or Venmo Sandy @ Sandy-Malpasuto

Name:	Total Amount Enclosed: $
Phone:	Email:

If you do not have a complete foursome, we will pair you up with others:

Player 1:	Player 2:
Player 3:	Player 4:

If you are a Sponsor in any Category, Please Indicate your Business OR, Family Name for Signage: