



# SAINT PATRICK PARISH

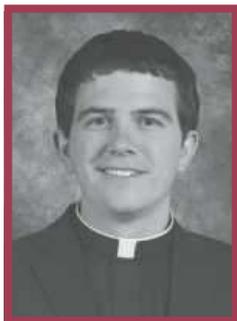
THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF HUDSON, WISCONSIN

## DAVID'S JOURNEY

By Mary Pat Finnegan

*"... Impart to everyone the word of God which you have received with joy."*

- Pope Francis speaking to newly ordained priests. April 2013



There was a time when David Neuschwander was not very interested in his faith. He described going to religion classes with the same zeal a factory worker might use in describing punching a time clock. "I went because I had to." There was no bolt of lightning, no booming voice from above, but slowly, inexplicably, when David was a freshman in high school, things began to change.

"By the Lord's grace, I found myself waiting in line for confession one Saturday morning." It had been eight years since his first and only confession. He had felt compelled to sit down and do a "big examination of conscience, ... I had a giant list." At the time, waiting for confession was like musical chairs; as each person finished, everyone got up and moved one seat closer to the confessional. David described feeling his heart pounding faster and faster as he kept moving closer, until finally it was his turn. After his confession, he vividly recalls, "I couldn't remember ever feeling that light. I felt as if a great weight - a weight I didn't even know I was carrying - had been lifted. It was so powerful and moving - I felt free."

One night soon after that, David asked his dad, Lee, if he would pray the rosary with him. David had heard of the power this great prayer had, but he had no idea how to pray it. Lee Neuschwander was successful in his search for his rosary and an old instruction pamphlet. He and David knelt by David's bed

and, referring often to the pamphlet, together they prayed the rosary.

The next year David signed up for an hour of Adoration on Wednesday nights. "The Lord brought me so much peace during this time in prayer that I even began stopping before and after school to say 'Hello' to our Lord and dedicate my day to Him ... especially the tough ones."

Through it all, David felt the Lord's presence drawing him closer. Coming home from classes one day, he told his mom, Mary Jo, for the first time that he wanted to be a priest. She replied in the same way she had when David, as a boy, had told her he wanted to be an astronaut: "That's great, David! You know your dad and I support you in whatever you choose to do." Months later, when he was still thinking about it, she started getting worried and counseled him: "Now don't make up your mind too soon, David. Don't close the door to all the other options. You have so many talents and you could do so many things. Keep an open mind ... and I really want grandchildren, David."

But as time went on and his desire did not change, she realized that perhaps this really was God's call for her son's life.

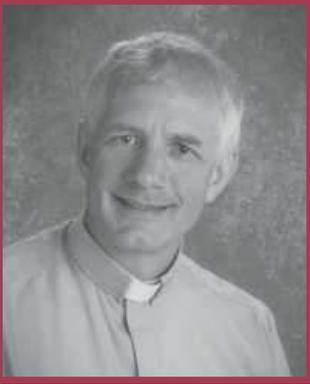


The Neuschwander Family, left to right, Patrick, Lee, Mary Jo and David

While still in high school David visited the the Saint John Vianney Seminary on the

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## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK



A few weeks ago, when Bishop Christensen was celebrating the Sacrament of Confirmation with us, he mentioned at the end of mass that he had good news to share with us. The news he shared was that the Vatican had announced that Pope Francis would be traveling to the United States and making a visit to Hudson, Wisconsin, and Saint Patrick Parish.

Unfortunately this is not true, but Bishop Christensen simply wanted to make a point. What he wanted to remind us is that if such news were real, we would certainly greet it with great excitement and anticipation. But he went on to say that isn't it true that one even greater than the Holy Father himself is with us each time we gather for the Eucharist? Thus, should not our excitement and anticipation be even greater as we gather for the Eucharist?

This is a wonderful little challenge to us all, to reflect and consider the manner in which we approach the Eucharist. This spring we welcomed, for the first time, three adults to the table of the Eucharist at the Easter Vigil. We also celebrated First Holy Communion with over 100 children. And finally on June 2, we celebrate the Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ (Corpus Christi). For all of us, that it is not a question of what we truly receive in the Eucharist, but whom we receive.

While the news of Pope Francis traveling to Saint Patrick Parish may not have been true, Bishop Christensen did share with me something wonderful. He mentioned that his intention is to keep Fr. Patrick McConnell at Saint Patrick Parish for two more years. This certainly helps us as a parish to plan and it will allow Fr. Patrick to continue to embark on new projects knowing he will see them to completion.

Speaking of new initiatives, our Pastoral Council is hard at work formulating a strategic plan for our parish. Such an initiative will give us direction, help us in making decisions as we direct our time and energy, and guide us in our financial decisions.

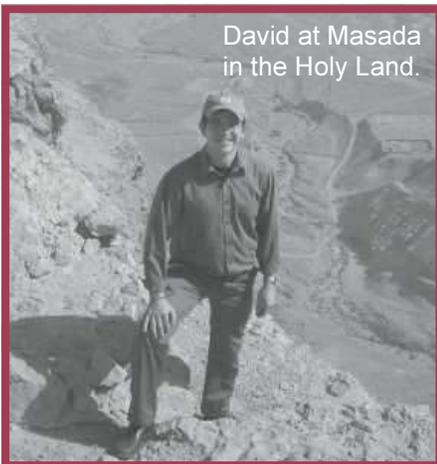
The Parish Finance Council has overseen the refinancing of our mortgage. Our debt is now down to under \$1.2 million and our interest rate has been lowered to 3.5%. This will save us more than \$40,000 over the next three years alone. Furthermore, paying off our loan in the next three years will save us several hundred thousand dollars in interest.

As we enter into the summer months, often parish life will slow a bit. However, there could be nothing further from the truth as we enter this summer. Here is a list of what we have scheduled: Vacation Bible School, Summer Stretch for middle school students, a mission trip for high school, and Totus Tuus for grade school and middle school. We also are in the process of hiring a new youth minister and some teachers for our school, completing security upgrades at our school, redoing our high school faith formation program for incoming freshmen, and planning for the fall activities and the future of Saint Patrick Parish. In addition to all of this, we, of course, are welcoming the greatest guest we could to the parish each and every Sunday (in fact, each day).

Have a wonderful summer, Fr. John

*Continued from page 1*

University of Saint Thomas campus in Saint Paul. He laughs now at his pre-conceived notions before that visit. He thought he would show them what a normal guy was like because he expected to find "really holy and kind of weird guys" there. What he found were normal young men that were fun to hang out with. He returned there month after month and found the visits inspiring. "To me it was something completely new to think about the priesthood. None of my friends were thinking about it. It's something I never really heard about, and almost all the priests I knew had gray hair,



David at Masada  
in the Holy Land.

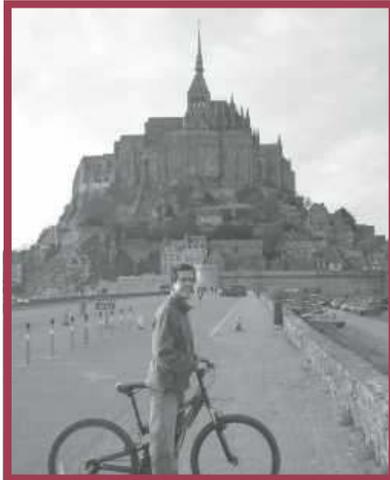
so I thought, 'Ah well, priests are old.' The fact that there were young guys my age thinking about the priesthood really helped me, because something in me was pulling me toward the priesthood, even though I didn't know how to explain it."

After high school, David enrolled in the seminary, where he found that all the young men were seeking an answer to the same question: "Is the Lord calling me to be a Catholic priest?" David explained that many people suppose that you have to know you are becoming a priest before you enter the seminary, but the seminary is actually where you go to find out whether or not the Lord is calling you to become a priest through a process known as "discernment."

During his four years at the seminary, David had the opportunity to study in Rome for a semester through the Saint Thomas study abroad program. This proved to be another pivotal point in his journey to become a priest. He was among 30 students who traveled, as a group, to Rome. It was an eclectic

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*Continued from page 2* group that included fellow seminarians, as well as a mix of young men and young women, some of whom were also contemplating their vocations. While in Rome they all lived near the Vatican at Saint Thomas's Bernardi house. Life in Rome revolved around study, attending mass, and visits to famous churches and landmarks throughout the city, but equally important was the time they spent together. David reminisced, "It was a household filled with different personalities. I had been living in a



seminary with guys, and suddenly we had a bunch of girls around who were so amazingly thoughtful in ways that would never cross guys' minds. It was such a rich community and a rich time in my life. It was definitely my favorite semester." They called themselves "the Bernardi community" and they forged life-

long friendships. "Those friends are the ones I still stay in closest contact with."

David graduated from the seminary with a double major in Philosophy and Classical Languages, and a minor in Catholic Studies. He was enrolled to continue with graduate studies at the Mundelein Seminary in Chicago, but after graduation he came home seeking his parents' advice: "I'm your son. You know me, probably better than I know myself. What do you think I should do? Do you think this is the path for me or not?" He recalls that their response was always (sometimes maddeningly) the same: "David, we love you and we'll support you in whatever you decide, and we know that you'll make the right decision."

David has now completed his third year at Mundelein, and on June 2nd he will stand before Bishop Christiansen, priests from throughout our diocese, and family and friends and profess his vows.

Studying at Mundeleine, he once again had the opportunity to travel. This time he spent five weeks traveling throughout the Holy Land with 26 fellow seminarians, priests and teachers.

"I felt like Rome was really a connection with the beauty of our Catholic Church, and our Catholic Faith. Rome is just saturated with the Catholic faith. The Holy Land provided a deep connection to the Bible and our biblical faith. He was struck by

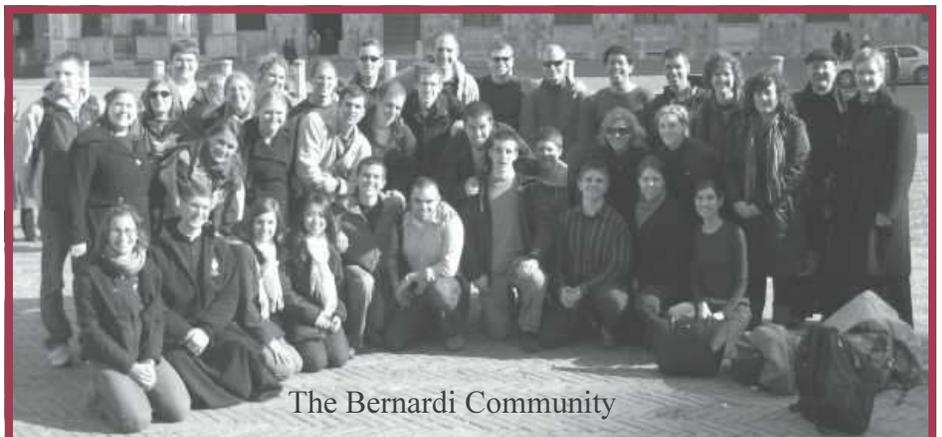
not only the rugged beauty and history but also by the ordinariness of the Holy Land. He noted that Jesus was born in a small town and went and preached around in small towns. He traveled to Jerusalem, but it was still a small city when compared to Rome at that time. "He [Jesus] was in podunk towns....that's where he preached, but out of that came everything we have."

David is very pleased that his ordination to the Transitional Diaconate will take place in his home parish. "It's really encouraging to have it here where so much of my faith has taken place ... to be surrounded by so many people that I know and so many people that I love ... the people here have made me who I am today."

After his ordination, David will spend a month helping our old friend Fr. Gene with the cluster of parishes near Ladysmith. Then he'll head to Creighton University for a thirty-day silent retreat. In the fall, he will resume his studies at Mundelein, where, in addition to his coursework, he will also be helping out at a yet-to-be-determined, Chicago area parish on weekends.

If all goes as planned, by this time next summer he will have graduated with a Masters Degree in Divinity. It will mark the final leg of his journey before his ordination as a priest of our diocese. To be sure, his journey began with some trepidation, and there have been questions along the way, but it is clear, that since he was a teenager in high school, God has had a plan for him and he has, as Pope Francis proclaimed, received the word of God with joy. Praise God.

**Mark your calendars for the ordination of David Neuschwander. David will be ordained at Saint Patrick Parish on Sunday, June 2, at 4:00 PM. All are invited to the Mass that will be presided at by Bishop Christiansen. Following the ordination all are invited to attend a buffet dinner that will be served in our parish hall. No reservations are needed for the dinner.**



The Bernardi Community

# STEWARDSHIP IN ACTION



Sheila (front row, second from the right) is pictured with members of the Praise Company Choir and renowned singer/songwriter/musician, Steve Angrisano (front, center).

## Choir Director Sheila Pelzel Retires

Sheila Pelzel wears many hats: mother, wife, nurse practitioner, singer, musician... For twenty-one years, she has been an active, trusted and vibrant cantor, and leader of choirs at Saint Patrick parish. She will be going back to school soon to obtain a family practice certification as a Nurse Practitioner. On Pentacost Sunday parishioners stood and applauded as she led the Praise Company Choir for the last time at 9:00 mass. A reception organized by Carol Landry and hosted by our Parish Council of Catholic Women (PCCW) was held in her honor after mass.

Thank you, Sheila—you have been a blessing!



## ALUMINUM CAN UPDATE

In 2012 we sold 1,800 lbs. of cans for a profit of \$900.00. This represents 54,000 aluminum cans or 67 barrels full. Last year's average price was 55 cents per/pound. This brings the total for the end of 23 years to 127,237 pounds of cans, total number of cans crushed being

3,812,594. Total cash collected to date is \$59,787.26.

**Many Thanks** to Dan Schwab and the dedicated group of volunteers who have worked so hard on this successful program! They embody the spirit of stewardship in our parish—freely giving of their time, and talents.

Thank you, too, to all the parishioners who contributed their aluminum cans to our cause! YOU are good stewards to the earth! Please drop your bagged cans by the garage doors at the lower level of the church.

## MISSION OF SAINT PATRICK CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

Our mission is to celebrate, support and share our Catholic heritage in such a way that through Word and Sacraments we may be formed into a servant people who reach out to one another spiritually and physically from conception through death.

## CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE

THANK YOU for your continued commitment to our Foundation for Our Future at Saint Patrick. Because of your gift commitment and the commitments and gifts of so many generous members, our campaign is on track to be a tremendous success.

Payments are coming in as scheduled; however, I would like to especially remind those who chose to pledge quarterly or semi-annually, those pledged amounts are now due. Please make these payments at this time, so we can continue to meet our needs as projected.

If you have any questions as to what your balance is or how you pledged, i.e., weekly, monthly, annually, semi-annually, please call me and I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

You may still choose to contribute via electronic giving; funds are drawn on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> of each month. Forms are available in the church office as well as on our church web site; [www.stpatrickofhudson.org](http://www.stpatrickofhudson.org).

To date, \$2,359,851.84 has been pledged, cash, \$839,075.80 deposited.

Sincerely,  
Barbara Kaiser, Finance Director



## WORLD VIEW

Betsy Huffman, a 2003 graduate of St. Patrick School, recently returned from her fourth trip to Rome. She had traveled to Rome for Holy Week with a group of graduate students and young professionals from Madison. The trip was sponsored by the St. Paul University Catholic Center, the Catholic church presence on the UW-Madison campus. Their pastor, Eric Nielsen, whom Betsy refers to as "an amazing spiritual father," is an inveterate traveler. His familiarity with Rome benefitted all of the travelers. They saw the best view of the Vatican in the entire city and visited the gelato shop with the most unique flavors. Members of the group had a week-long itinerary of visiting churches, attending Triduum liturgies at the Basilica of St. Peter, praying as a group, and visiting other great places as part of our shared faith.

Betsy loved the opportunity to travel with friends who were not only excited about traveling and seeing the Eternal City, but were also thrilled about participating in all of the Holy Week liturgies at the center of the Roman Catholic Church.

Unbeknownst to her when she booked the trip, she would be visiting Rome while history was being made. "We were extremely surprised by the turn of events... We were not even sure if there would be a new pope by the time we got to Rome. It made all of the events surrounding the papal election even more exciting, knowing that we would be seeing the new pope upon our arrival."

While there her group was able to see newly elected Pope Francis on several occasions. "I think the biggest impression he gave me was one of truly caring for the people. He stopped the pope-mobile several times to kiss babies and to embrace children with physical disabilities -- it was a humbling display of love."

Going to Rome during Holy Week was especially poignant. Betsy noted that the whole city seemed to stop for the large papal liturgies. Many of the tourists during Holy Week were there on pilgrimage, and, therefore, everyone was very friendly. "You end up talking to other travelers from all over the world."

Betsy found it very special to have the opportunity to see Pope Francis in person so early into his papacy. She noted that having that personal experience strengthens her ability to pray for him and his ministry.

"Going to Rome always opens my eyes to the depth of tradition and universality of the Catholic faith. It is so inspiring to see all of the beautiful churches, but it is even more stunning when you realize the reason behind the existence of each and every church. They are all a testament to the faith of the martyrs and to the holy men and women who have gone before us — shining examples of faithful lives dedicated to serving God. Each of their stories is so unique and they help me see how we are each called to follow the Lord. My travels remind me we need to stay close to Him to hear how He is calling each of us to be a saint."

Although she doesn't speak Italian, Betsy found that in the more touristy areas, almost everyone speaks English. When they didn't, she found that a really big smile and her few Italian phrases got her fairly far. "At the end of the day, those interactions where you can barely communicate are usually the ones I enjoyed the most. You feel victorious that you overcame your challenge and you made a new friend along the way."

Betsy's advice to young people about finding a faith group when they go off to college is, "Don't be shy... As scary as it might sound, -- GO on a retreat! You will form deeper friendships in one day on a retreat than you would make in a year. I've met so many of my closest friends at my campus church and I can't stress enough how fantastic it is to have friends who share your faith, especially during those first few months away from home."



## IN THE KNOW



Find us on Facebook at:  
**Saint Patrick Parish School, The Catholic Community of Hudson, WI.**  
It's a great place for family, friends and alumni to see what's new at our school.



Don't miss out on the latest alumni news.  
Sign up today at  
[www.stpatrickofhudson.org](http://www.stpatrickofhudson.org)

**[www.stpatrickofhudson.org](http://www.stpatrickofhudson.org)**

Your source for Saint Patrick parish, school and faith formation news.

# KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

## KNIGHTS BRING HOME THE HARDWARE

For the eighth time since 1999 and the fourth year in a row, the Knights of Council 1762 were recognized with the State Deputy Trophy signifying they are the “Best of the Best” for Large Councils in the State of Wisconsin. The award is determined by a point system for the history books turned in from Councils, which chronicle the activities of the various Councils throughout the state. The St. Croix Council currently has over 300 members and holds monthly officer and Council meetings on the second Tuesday of every month in the Council Chambers in the lower level of Saint Patrick Church.

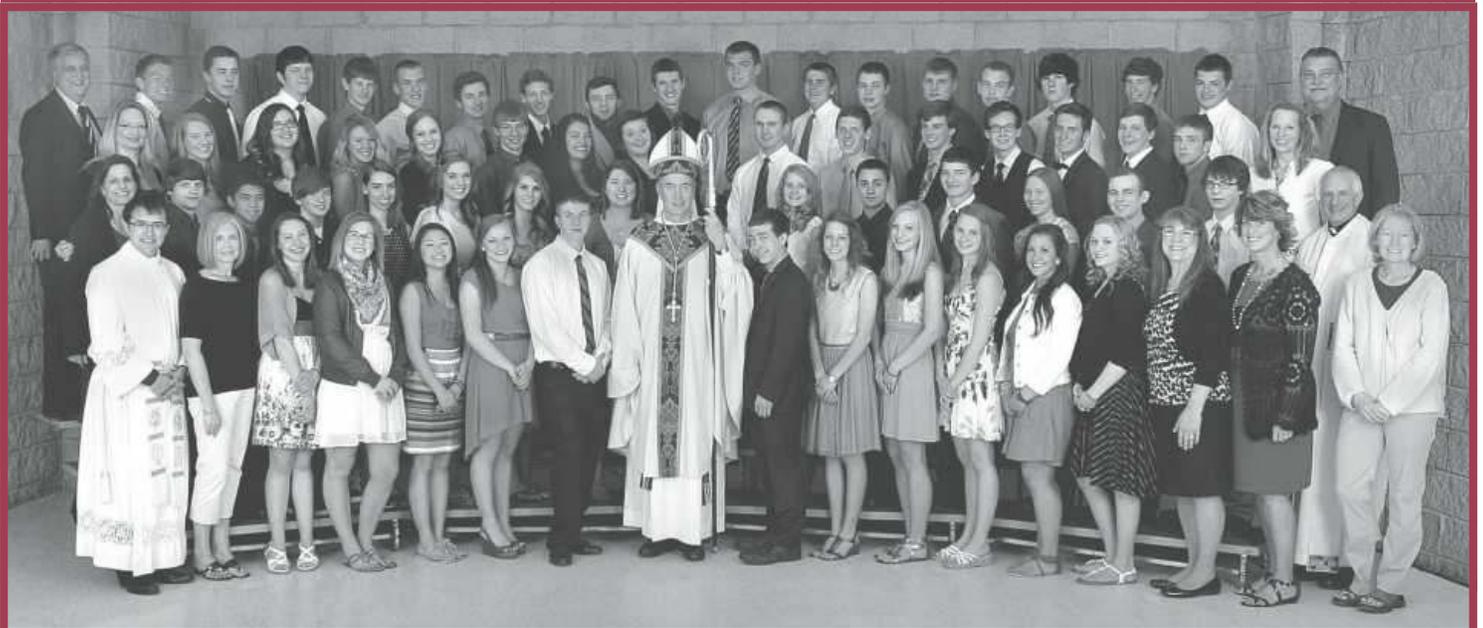


The Roger and Sheila Pelzel family was chosen as the Diocesan Family of the Year from nominations from

all Councils in the Superior Diocese. Roger and Sheila, along with their three children, have been very active members of Saint Patrick Church. The entire family is involved in the Music Ministry, with Roger and Kevin handling sound technician duties, to Sheila directing the Praise Company Choir for more than 20 years, to Kristin and Kari being involved with cantering in various groups. Roger and Sheila have also taken the lead role as the Fall Festival chairs for the last three years with record-setting financials for the benefit of our parish.



## Congratulations Saint Patrick Confirmation Class of 2013



## SCHOOL NEWS

Scenes from the  
2013 Saint Patrick  
School Gala  
*An Evening at the  
Captain's Table*



## FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK



We are nearing the end of another successful school year at Saint Patrick School, and what a year it was, a year filled with learning, exploration, discovery, friendships, and achievements. We welcomed Fr. Patrick as associate pastor to Saint Patrick Parish and he quickly became a great friend to the school. He went on field trips, presided at masses, taught 5<sup>th</sup> grade religion, and introduced our students to Eucharistic Adoration.

We introduced Ipads that were purchased with money raised at last year's Gala. Students have used them for research on many subjects. They have reinforced good teaching through apps used in music, religion, language arts, math, drawing, Spanish, and science.

Students continued celebrating weekly mass at school and at church. Fr. John and Fr. Patrick celebrated mass with individual classes as well.

Saint Patrick School is proud to carry forward the tradition of quality Catholic education in the Hudson community.

**We are now enrolling students in all classes from 3 year-old Preschool – 8<sup>th</sup> grade.**

For the coming school year we have added **Extended Day Care** for all students age 3 – 5, Monday – Friday 11:30 am – 3:30 pm. We have also added **School Age Care** for all students age 3 and above. Before School Age Care will be available Monday – Friday 6:00 am – 8:30 and After School Age Care will be available Monday – Friday 3:30 pm – 6:00 pm.

We encourage you to visit our school and meet our staff. Please consider scheduling a tour with our school principal.



### **Scholarships**

We offer faith-based learning, small class sizes, an excellent athletic program for students in grades 5-8, proven academic success, and affordable tuition rates. We also offer scholarships and tuition assistance. We have had some very generous donations to our scholarship funds, including an anonymous foundation that has pledged their continuing support. We want to make sure that finances are never a barrier to Catholic education in Hudson. Please call Principal, Mary Piasecki for information.

To celebrate our year, all are invited to attend our annual Summer Send-off Party on Friday, May 31 from 5pm – 8 pm in front of Saint Patrick School. This annual block party caps another successful year at Saint Pat's. Please join us.

-Mary Piasecki, Principal





**SAINT PATRICK PARISH**

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Thank you very much to Mr. Ron Gagnon for his generous donations to cover mailing costs for this newsletter.  
Thank you to Angie Kondrasuk for her patience, and exceptional proofreading skills.

## COMING THIS SUMMER



### Totus Tuus "Totally Yours"

Totus Tuus helps young people strengthen their faith and grow in the understanding of Jesus Christ.

**Grades 7 – 12**  
August 11<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>  
7:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.  
Saint Patrick Parish

**Grades 1 – 6**  
August 12<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup>  
9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.  
Saint Patrick Parish



At this summer's Vacation Bible School, children will learn how God's love gives us strength and courage!

**July 15<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup>**

**9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

**Saint Patrick Parish**

**For children entering Pre-K through 6<sup>th</sup> grade**

**\$30.00 per child**

\*Please note: VBS will be held at the church this year, not at Saint Patrick School.

**For more information on either of these programs, call our Faith Formation Office 715 386-3941 (opt. #2)**