

St. George Catholic Church

200 North Third Street
New Baden, Illinois 62265



Dragon Tails Newsletter

WE ARE THE BODY OF CHRIST: A Body of Diverse Cultures, Beliefs, & Styles of Living—But One Body

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In the mid 1800s, ancestors of my Neff Family crossed the Atlantic Ocean by boat (there were no airplanes) and landed on the East Coast of the United States. Making their way to Southern Illinois, they settled in the Paderborn/Smithton, IL, area. They spoke only one of many German dialects. It was a foreign land. They didn't know the people and couldn't understand their language. They came seeking a better life for their families and themselves. To this day I still remember Grandpa Neff and my dad and uncles, in the 1950s, talking to each other in a "low German" dialect. When they came to this country, they worked hard, built homes and communities, and struggled to survive. And at the center of their life as families and communities was the Church – St. Michael's in Paderborn, IL, and St. Augustine of Canterbury in Hecker, IL.

History is repeating itself. We have welcomed people from Vietnam who came to escape persecution, poverty, tyranny and loss of freedoms. They were looking for a better life. They worked hard, built neighborhoods, and have become members of their communities.

Today many of our Latino brothers and sisters from countries south of our American borders have come, and continue to come, to the United States. They come seeking a better life for their families and themselves. Many don't understand the language they find here. They work hard, and are often misunderstood. But something has changed. We, in this country, welcomed my immigrant ancestors. We opened our national doors to Vietnamese immigrants. Earlier in our country's history we welcomed immigrants from Germany, France, England, Ireland, Scotland, Lithuania,

Bosnia, Italy, Poland – every country on the planet. But those same doors aren't open as wide today to our Latino neighbors. **Why?** The words on the Statue of Liberty seem to be losing some of their impact and relevance. "...Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me..."

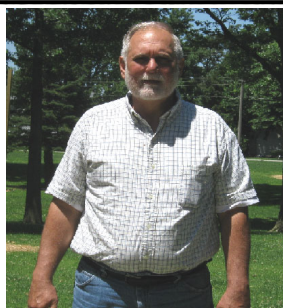


WE ARE THE BODY OF CHRIST: A Body of Diverse Cultures, Beliefs, & Styles of Living—But One Body

We as the Church of the Diocese of Belleville, welcomed the German, Irish, Polish, Lithuanian, French, Slovaks, Bosnians, and Vietnamese, and immigrants came to this country, and we opened WIDE our doors to ALL who came to us. Today they come to us from the Latino/Hispanic countries to the south. We as the Catholic Community in Clinton County, the North Central Deanery, are again striving to open our doors. As a church community, we believe that all are the BODY OF CHRIST. Diverse though we are, all gather around the Eucharist table for we are all God's people..

For this reason, the North Central Deanery Hispanic Ministry, based at St. Damian's Parish, Damiansville, IL, recently expanded to meet the growing need of our Hispanic brothers and sisters at our Eucharistic table. We have hired Brother Bob Rapp, SM. *Bro. Bob* is working with Sr. Joan Stoverink, the Diocesan Hispanic Ministry Office, and the parishes of the North Central Deanery to reach out to the Hispanic community in our midst. Our Church cares about all its members, and will continue to strive to be a source of support for those who come to us from other countries.

WELCOME BROTHER BOB RAPP, SM



The following comments are personal observations shared with the North Central Deanery priests and pastoral personnel by Brother Robert Rapp, SM after his first three months in the new Hispanic Ministry position:

- 1) The majority of the Hispanics living here are NOT here because they want to be. The economic situation in their places of origin gives few options for jobs and so the majority chooses to travel in search of a place where they can make a living to have "una vida digna". Some Hispanics residing in Clinton County are recently arrived directly from their places of origin and others have lived in other U.S. locations and have relocated here. For example, there are some who have relocated to southern Illinois from Chicago or St. Louis because of gangs or other problems in the school systems in the large urban areas.
- 2) In coming to live and work in the States they sacrifice much....their legality as persons, cultural customs, language, religious practices, and psychological way of being, therefore many immigrants are deeply grieving and are oftentimes unaware of it or are unable to name it. This results in behaviors of drunkenness, sexual promiscuity, infidelity in relationships, domestic violence, depression, sadness, poor decision making, etc. all of which I have heard recounted to me to in my role this past three months. The exception to this rather bleak assessment are the children, who seem to me to be happy, quite bi-cultural and "normal as any kids". While from some of the youth I have heard of the opportunities that exist for them, like the chances to finish high school or even go to college, I have also been told by some of the youth that they "hate" it here and want their families to return to Mexico.
- 3) In most cases when a person is deciding to migrate or not, there is a general lack of awareness or ignorance on their part, regarding what they might be getting themselves into. The focus is on their material well-being and the lack of opportunities for them to support themselves or their families in their places of origin, therefore, what this move might cost them in the spiritual/mystical part of their beings, what that sacrifice is going to demand of them doesn't figure much in the decision making process.

WELCOME BROTHER BOB RAPP, SM

As Abraham Maslow expresses in his "*Hierarchy of Values*", when someone is hungry or struggling just to feed their family from day to day they cannot get to those deeper needs, or values or the place of love and even God in their lives.

4) Externally I observe a certain happiness and joyfulness displayed but I am also struck by the underlying sadness expressed on the part of so many. The longing for their homes, su tierra, sus ranchos runs deep. Being illegal, they cannot readily visit family members in their places of origin, not even in moments of serious illness or death. At the Mother's Day celebration three different persons shared with me their pain of not being able to see loved ones who are currently ill. Folks go for years and years not being able to visit loved ones because of the difficulty in their being able to come back. And then to add insult to injury they are classified here by many as "criminal".

5) Another category that some of our undocumented folks fall into is that they were brought here many years ago by their parents and are still illegal. They have finished grammar and high school in Clinton County, have married, begun their own families and yet have no legal status in this country to buy a home or have a blessed drivers license. They have become persons without countries, as one told me, "I left Mexico when I was 8 years old, today I am 28, and if they deport me I will be sent to a place that exists only vaguely in my childhood memories". In another conversation some time back one of the folks expressed to me, Roberto, we are not persons here in Clinton County, we are "sombras", which means shadows.

My Conclusions:

The Catholic Church is one of the only official places in the larger society which gives the Hispanics their place, their dignity as persons. They even are given stamped and signed documents when they receive a sacrament, thus the importance that "we" as Church, be present, that we be on "their side" and that we stand with them. The word ACOMPANAR is so important for a Hispanic...in our USA culture we tend to buy things to show our support, we send flowers when someone is sick or dies. For poor people, they often don't have the economic solvency to purchase flowers, but what they can give is their presence and thus it is for the Church, we need to learn from the poor which means to ACCOMPANY them.

Other institutions I have heard named where they have felt welcome is St. Joseph's Hospital in Breese, the local schools, other social/medical institutions and the local food pantries.

There are other long time Clinton County residents in our communities who go out of their way to make the Hispanics feel welcome: from visiting them when there are sick, checking on them in the winter to see that their furnaces were heating properly, to many kindnesses to the children through the schools, school projects, sporting events, etc. And then, unfortunately, at the same time, there exists the reality of racism and our need as Church to challenge and when necessary confront these negative attitudes.

In my opinion the work done by Fr. Jim Jeffrey, Sr. Joan Stoverink and the other ministers has fed and sustained the Hispanic folks well. But as their numbers increase I hope to see us perhaps use some other methodologies to confront the above described reality of spiritual poverty which is at the base of most of these above named issues.

My personal suggestion is that we form some small groups, faith based communities to give the folks a more tangible support network. I am still in the process of meeting and knowing who folks are, but by the Fall I would like to begin inviting some individuals to participate in groups for women and groups for men in which we break open together and share the Scripture of the day and the realities of our daily lives as a basis of our sharing. This is just one suggestion as we try together to meet the needs of our Hispanic brothers and sisters.

THANK YOU!!



On June 5, I celebrated the *40th Anniversary of my Ordination*. It was a great day. **Thanks to all** who had anything to do with the day. It was truly a celebration of priesthood and life.



CEMETERY INFORMATION

Improvements at both cemeteries have continued into 2011. At Resurrection Cemetery, two additional strips of concrete have been poured that will serve as footing for future tombstones.



At St. George Cemetery, Marvin Spaeth has repaired the base of the Crucifixion Monument. He has begun the process pouring strips of concrete footings, similar to those at Resurrection Cemetery. This process will take a number of years to complete, but when finished all the stones will be on a solid footing. Leaning and collapsing



of grave monuments should be a thing of the past – assuming there is no vandalism. **Thanks to Marvin Spaeth for his tireless efforts to beautify our cemeteries. What a tribute to the lives of those buried there, and gift to our community!!!**

And some additional cemetery news...

The proceeds from the first day of our annual parish picnic, **Friday, August 12**, will support our two cemeteries. Funds received will help the Cemetery Endowment Fund and current and future maintenance.

... Later this Fall, after work is complete on a computer program that will maintain all our cemetery records, we will begin the work of transferring the cemetery records into the new computer program.

E-Newsletter Available

Some parishioners are currently receiving “Dragon Tails” Newsletter electronically. **Please notify the parish office at 588-4323 and leave your name and e-mail address, or e-mail us at saintcatholicchurch@gmail.com.** This will help us cut down on printing, paper, secretarial, and postage costs and save trees! **Thanks!**

YOUTH MINISTRY

HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP

HELP WANTED

We are in need of one or two adult moderators for our **High School Youth Group**. Tony Parr has been the moderator of this ministry for a number of years. Since the last of his children will be attending college this Fall, and because he is now the president of the Parish Council, Tony has asked that someone else be found to be the moderator of the Sr. High Youth Ministry. If you are interested, contact Tony Parr (588-2234) or Fr. Neff (588-4323).



In June, the **High School Youth Group** enjoyed assisting Fr. Neff with the **Annual Elderly Picnic** held at the Pastoral Center in Belleville. They participated in doing the chicken dance with Fr. Neff (photo on the left). Spent a day at **Holiday World Water Park** in Indiana (photo on right). In July, they had a wonderful time **Water Rafting** down the Meramec River and also stopped for some



cold treats at **Ted Drewes** on the way home. All students in high school can participate in the High School Youth Group.

JR. HIGH YOUTH GROUP



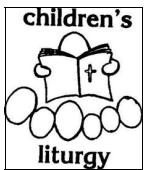
The **Jr. High Youth Group** is for all students in grades 6th-8th. A meeting/activity night is held on the **second Sunday of the month** (except in March, November and Holidays) **from 6:00-8:00 pm** and a dance is held twice a year. If interested in participating in the Jr. High Youth Group, please contact Angie Oelrich at 588-2750.

PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION (PSR)

Parish School of Religion (PSR) is for students in grades K-8th. Classes begin promptly at 10 am and end at 11 am on Sunday mornings beginning in September. A registration form is required for each student, the cost is \$35.00 per student with a cap of \$70.00 per family. No one will be turned away because of an inability to pay. For more information, please contact John Fridley at 588-4805 or the parish office at 588-4323.



CHILDREN'S LITURGY OF THE WORD



Children's Liturgy of the Word is held during the 9:00 Mass on Sunday morning throughout the school year and coincides with the Parish School of Religion (PSR) Schedule. Children's Liturgy of the Word is more age appropriate and to their level of understanding. Teaching material is provided and a few volunteers are needed to instruct the children. If interested in teaching or for more information, please contact John Fridley at 588-4805 or the parish office at 588-4323.

FRIDAYS OF FAITH

Do you have children Kindergarten through 5th grade? Do you know what Fridays of Faith are? Fridays of Faith are held the **second Friday of each month from 6:30 to 8:30 pm** in the meeting room at the school. They are fun filled evenings designed to teach the children various aspects of our Catholic Faith with stories, games, crafts, songs, dress up, movies, skits and more. In the past, we celebrated the Church's birthday with a piñata, had a spouting whale to teach about Jonah, went fishing for apostles and visited the Church for prayer and a tour! We even provide a snack. So please, bring your children out for the fun! If you have questions, contact Vivian Bossler at 588-4644 or Teri Gregory at 588-7238.



Community Outreach

Meat Voucher Program - The need continues to grow. We ask your generous support of this program. Many come to the rectory door seeking food, rental and utility assistance, and gas for their car. A major source of assistance that we use to help those seeking assistance is the Diocesan Christmas Collection for those in need. There are a couple of other programs we refer people to, but there are still many who have a need for the basic services of life. Please use the Meat Voucher Quarterly Envelopes, and the canisters at the church entrances to support this outreach service.



Community News - Earlier in 2011, the *Congregate Meal Program* of the regional Senior Center based in Trenton expanded its service to the New Baden Civic Center on **ALL Wednesdays** of each month. We strongly urge persons 60 years and older to make use of this service. The meals are great. A \$4 donation is suggested. RSVP by 9am the day of the meal at 224-9913. Lunch is served at noon.



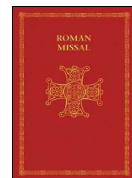
Season of Advent

Zion United Church of Christ & the Parish Life Committee of St. George Catholic Church will be sponsoring the *Giving Tree Program* providing Christmas presents to children in our community. The recommended spending limit is \$40-\$50 per child. Look for the tree in the entrance of church for suggested gifts. Cash donations are always welcome in any amount and the shopping will be done for you. Envelopes for your cash donations *will be available at all entrances of church.*



Church Decorating for Christmas - You are invited to help decorate the church and "Angel Grotto" for Christmas on **Sunday, Dec.18** immediately after the 9 am Mass. Refreshments and "munchies" will be available for the workers. "*Many hands make work light.*" Come join us for an enjoyable time.

New Roman Missal will be implemented on the **first Sunday of Advent**. While the basic format of our Mass remains unchanged, there will be a number of changes in language. There will be an explanation of the changes prior to the changes. Watch the bulletin for a bulletin insert from Catholic Update.



The Dignity of Life

From time to time Sunday bulletin inserts address the topic of respect for life. Catholic social teaching includes opposition to abortion, euthanasia, assisted suicide, and capital punishment. We do have a right to defend ourselves and protect our freedoms. A preferential option for the poor, the rights of workers, and respect for our environment are also part of what we believe as Catholics. If we "*want peace, act with justice.*"

So the next time we include an insert in the bulletin, please take a few extra minutes and read it. If action is called for, do what you can. We are a community that preaches respect for life, and the dignity of all creation. *Let's practice what we preach.*

A Short Review of the Major Funeral Rites of the Catholic Church

Vatican II and the Order of Christian Funerals (OCF) have brought about several variations to the Funeral Rites of Christian Burials. The official rites remain the same (Vigil/Wake, Funeral Mass, and Burial/Committal) but three others are optional. They are **Prayers after Death**, **Gathering in the Presence of the Body**, and **Transfer of the Body to the Church or Place of Committal**. Though secondary, these rites are helpful in accompanying the mourners at times of transition and through the various stages of facing the reality of death.

Prayers after Death is a model of prayer, consisting of a brief reading, the Lord's Prayer and some concluding prayers. A priest, deacon, or trained layperson may preside at this rite.

Gathering in the Presence of the Body. As the family gathers for the first time, the pastoral minister is present to offer prayer and support. This rite consists of a short passage from Scripture, a psalm, sprinkling with holy water, and the Lord's Prayer. A priest, deacon, or trained layperson may preside at this liturgy.

Transfer of the Body to the Church or to the Place of Committal. This rite supports the family and friends as they prepare to take the body to the church. It consists of a brief Scripture verse, litany, the Lord's Prayer and a concluding prayer. A priest, deacon, or trained layperson may preside at this liturgy.

It is not surprising that if baptism is a communal event, so too is the funeral. Having first received the life of Christ in the waters of baptism, the life that unites and gives the Christian community its identity, the Christian is born into the fullness of that life in his or her own death. At the death of one of its members, the church that welcomed the new Christian in baptism gathers again to bid farewell and to hand the deceased back to God. It does so as a community united in baptismal faith.

We as baptized Christians in the Church can take a more active role in the in the Order of Christian Funerals. If you want more information or are interested in assisting in this important ministry, please contact John Fridley at 588-4805 or Jeanne at 588-4323.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Zion United Church of Christ - *Donut Dash* a 5K & 1 Mile Fun Run on **Saturday, September 17 at New Baden Park. *Sponsored by Berkemann's Baker's Dozen & New Baden Market Center.* Visit www.zion-ucc.net for registration forms and other details.**

Catholic Ministry to Sick & Aged - *26th Annual RAUCHENFEST* on **Thursday, September 22 with *Cocktails* at 6:00 pm; *German Buffet* at 6:30 pm; "*Waterloo German Band*"; *Attendance Prizes-Raffle*; *Silent & Oral Auction*. To be held at the Diocesan Pastoral Center - 2620 Lebanon Avenue - Belleville, IL. Cost is \$70 per couple, \$35 per person before Sept. 15 and \$40 per person after Sept. 15.**

Christian Home Care Services, Inc. - *ALL THINGS Chocolate Benefit* on **Sunday, September 25 from 12:00 - 4:00 pm at the Hidden Lake Winery with *Silent Auction* at 2:30 pm and *Live Auction* begins at 3:00 pm. Ticket Prize is \$20.00 per person. For additional information and directions, visit www.chsinc.org under "What's Happening" or call 618-537-9590.**

ST. GEORGE CATHOLIC CHURCH
200 North Third Street
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Welcome

WELCOME

Fr. Joe Rascher, pastor at St. Mary Parish in Trenton.

Fr. Jack Joyce, pastor of St. Bernard Parish in Albers, and
St. Damian Parish in Damiansville.

We welcome them to our cluster, and as our neighbors.

CHANGES

Hours of Operation: Administrative Assistance hours:

ALL Day Tuesday (8:30 - 5:30 pm) & Thursday (8:30 am to 12:30 pm).

There will be NO office hours on **Wednesday**.

Phone: (618) 588-4323 † **Fax:** (618) 588-2413

Email: saintcatholicchurch@gmail.com (**Notice change of email address**)

Website: stgeorgefamily.org