

Why is Fr. Joe going on sabbatical?

What will he do on sabbatical?

Imagine if you were the head of not one but 1200 families, the approximate number of families at St. Patrick's. Think of all the joys and sorrows and daily minutia you would have to respond to each day. Fr. Joe firmly believes that priests need a sabbatical to help them focus spiritually and, in turn, help their parish families to focus spiritually. A priest's educational and spiritual growth will benefit his congregation. And so he's going away on sabbatical for three months.

He will be away during February, March, and April. His first month will be spent at the Jesuit Retreat Center in Los Altos, California. There he will be on a month-long silent retreat based on the Spiritual Exercises created by St. Ignatius Loyola in the 16th century. The only person with whom Fr. Joe may speak during this time is his spiritual director, who will guide him through this Ignatian retreat each day by giving him four Scripture passages and exercises that accompany each.

The Ignatian retreat is divided into four weeks or movements. During the first week one considers Scripture passages concerning God's generosity and mercy and the complex reality of human sin. The second week examines the life and public ministry of Jesus. The third week concentrates on the last days of Jesus, ending with his crucifixion and death. The final week explores Jesus' resurrection and ascension, the pouring forth of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, and Christ's continued life in the world today through the Holy Spirit.

Fr. Joe will spend March and April at St. Patrick's Seminary and College in Menlo Park, California, only a few minutes from the Jesuit Retreat Center. There he will do an independent study on spirituality with the dean of the college. He will also attend seminars on different subjects (he's bringing 25 books along with him).

We all pray that the head of our parish family at St. Patrick's will complete an inspiring and renewing



sabbatical, and we look forward to his return to continue to inspire and renew us.

Who will stand in for Fr. Joe during his time away? Fr. Luong, of course, will remain during his absence, but a different priest will be sitting at the pastor's desk. The initial plan was that Fr. Julbs Adator, from an order of African missionary priests sent around the world to serve, would stand in for Fr. Joe, but as of this writing he has not yet received his visa. If the visa comes through, Fr. Adator will spend all or part of the three months of Fr. Joe's sabbatical with us.

In the interim, another priest from the same order, Fr. Michael Adrie from Ghana, will come to St. Patrick's. He has been serving since 2007 at St. Thomas in Peoria Heights and hopes that one day he will have his own parish in the Diocese of Peoria.

Fr. Mike will spend four days here with Fr. Joe to learn the daily routine of our parish. Equipped with many lists from Fr. Joe and assisted ably by our parish staff, he should experience a smoothly running parish.

Check future issues of In Focus for more information about Fr. Mike and Fr. Julbs (if he is able to make it here), and help them know just how welcoming our parish can be!

Journeying to Jerusalem with Jesus

You are invited to journey with Jesus to Jerusalem as presented in the Lenten Sunday Gospels. The Servants of the Holy Heart of Mary are offering the opportunity

- to participate in a one-day retreat on Feb. 13, the Saturday before Ash Wednesday
- to listen with an open heart to the Word of God as found in this liturgical season
- to journey with Jesus to Jerusalem through the Sunday readings

This is an opportunity for you to make a spiritual commitment to draw closer to the Lord. Come away to a place of prayer, silence, reflection, and faith sharing:

Mercy Community
301 North Wright Street
Champaign, IL 61820
Feb. 13, 9:00 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.
Lunch provided
Donation: \$25 (or free-will offering)
Deadline for registration: Monday, Feb. 8
Number of participants limited to 30

To register, contact Sr. Charlene Cesario, SSCM (217/841-2916 or charlenemec@sbcglobal.net).

Participants are invited to return for optional weekly sessions from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on the Tuesday evenings of Lent: Feb. 23, Mar. 2, 9, 16, and 23.

