

Dear Parish Family,

I am honored and grateful to serve as your pastor and witness the love of God each day in our parish community. As our parish mission statement reflects, it is our responsibility to recognize the many gifts that God has given to us, and to share those gifts freely to build up His kingdom and to help others.

On January 27th and 28th, we will be celebrating Commitment Weekend. I invite you to prayerfully consider how you are able to respond to the call to live and share God's love by making a commitment to financially support our parish through our **Rooted in Christ: Growing Together** program.

God has blessed our parish in many ways: the number of people attending Mass continues to rise; we welcomed over 115 new families last year; and we are financially secure. Your sacrificial giving has allowed us to create and fill the position of Director of Evangelization, appropriately compensate our wonderful staff, and adequately support our many ministries.

Our financial security also allows us to dream for our future, and to continue to provide a place of opportunity. This year, our parish benefitted from our ability to welcome seminarians. One of our dreams, to expand the rectory, would increase those opportunities.

I am excited about the many good things happening at St. Patrick Church of Merna. Stating our mission in the simplest of terms, **we are called upon to love God, and love others.** I sincerely thank you for letting your love shine through by sharing your treasure through sacrificial giving.

Gratefully yours in Christ,

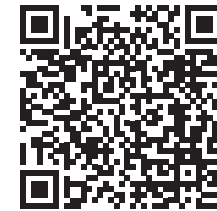
Fr. Dustin Schultz
Pastor



Rooted in Christ: *Growing Together*

Making Your Commitment

Fill out the enclosed Commitment Card and
bring it to Mass next weekend
or
scan this QR code with your smartphone to fill
out your Commitment Card online.



Fulfilling Your New Commitment

*Three simple and secure
ways to do so:*



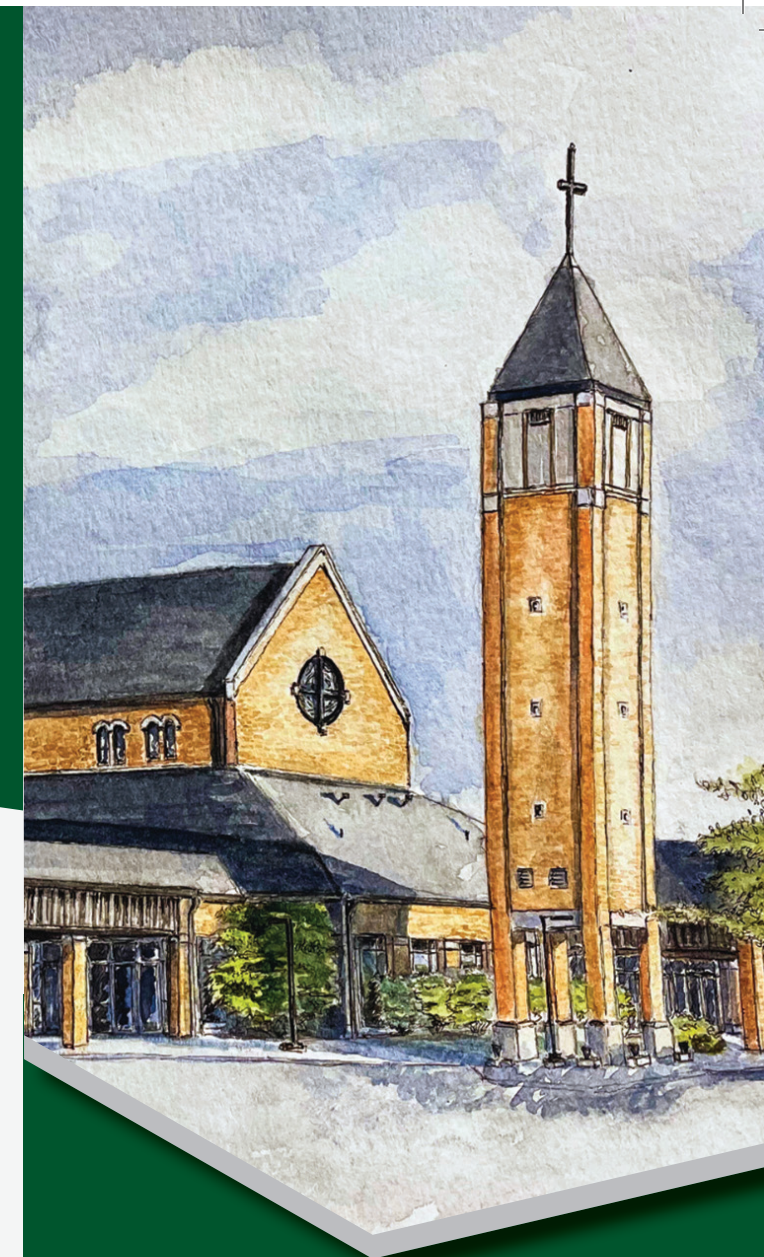
Sign up for **Online Giving** or update
your current online gift amount at
[www.stpatrickmerna.org/
online-giving](http://www.stpatrickmerna.org/online-giving)



Use your **offering envelope**
and bring it to Mass each
Sunday or mail it to the parish office.



Explore using **tax-advantaged
charitable gifts** such as IRA
Distributions, Gifts of Stock, or
remembering the parish in your will
by contacting the parish office at
(309) 662-7361.



Rooted in Christ: *Growing Together*

St. Patrick Church of Merna
Bloomington, IL

Connect with us!

www.stpatrickmerna.org
(309) 662-7361

office@stpatrickmerna.org

Subscribe to receive text/email notifications by texting **spm-join** to **55321**

Cover painting by parishioner Elyce Bishop.



@stpatrickmerna



We are transforming lives *together!*

Know Him

Christ engaged people through stories, teachings, and parables and in the process challenged them to think about what they believed to be true about life, forgiveness, each other, God, and so much more.

- **RCIA** - Full initiation into the Catholic faith
- **Adult Faith Formation** - Equip people to live as disciples of Jesus
- **Religious Education** - Education for children in grades 1-8
- **Vacation Bible School** - Summer program for kids in pre-k through 6th grade
- **Totus Tuus** - Summer program for kids in grades 1-12
- **Bible/Book Study** - Studies are offered year-round to grow in faith

Love Him

Christ's relationship with the Father was deeply rooted in prayer and from this relationship flowed His whole life and ministry.

- **Altar Servers** - Children in grade 4 and older assist with Mass
- **Master of Ceremony (MC)** - High school age servers that lead and guide younger altar servers
- **Music Ministries** - Serve God and others in His name through music
- **Lector** - Prepare and proclaim God's Word for assigned liturgies
- **Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion** - Assist priests in the distribution of the Eucharist
- **Eucharistic Adoration** - Adore and honor the Eucharistic Presence of Christ

Serve Him

Christ renounced power and glory for a life of service - through His healings, miracles, comforting words, and heartfelt compassion, He served people and their deepest needs.

- **Parishioners Helping Parishioners** - Donate to help those in need in our parish family
- **Homebound Eucharistic Ministry** - Bring Communion to the sick and homebound
- **Funeral Luncheon Ministry** - Prepare and serve food for grieving families
- **Parish Hospitality Directors (PHDs)** - Help to provide comfort and peace at funerals, plan events for seniors in our parish, and help provide food and service for other parish events
- **Reverse Collection** - Christmas time collection of items and monetary donations for various ministries in our community
- **BeFrienders** - Volunteers listen to parishioners with compassion in difficult and transitional situations such as illness, loneliness, or loss of a loved one

Making Faith Grow *(Working to meet the needs of our parish)*

Creating a Welcoming Environment

- Replaced carpeting in the Gathering Space and Sanctuary
- Trained many new Ministers of Hospitality to help all feel welcome
- Created a New Parishioner Committee

Maintaining a Safe Environment

- Resurfaced the parking lot
- Parish staff trained in CPR and First Aid

Evangelize and Make Disciples

- Hired a Director of Evangelization
- Expanded our Totus Tuus summer program for kids in grades 1-12
- Our Faith at Home: Liturgical Living Ministry continues to grow and offer new events

Anticipating Future Needs

- Expansion of the rectory to be able to welcome visiting priests and seminarians
- Purchase of land to the north of the parish to avoid becoming "land-locked" in anticipation of future growth and expansion

