

# PARISH PROFILE



S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer  
Left, Father Emmett Halloran, (back right) pastor of St. Patrick's Church in Macedon, during the April 27 Mass blesses tablecloths that were created by first Communion students. The project, which has become a tradition at the parish, "brings together the table of the Eucharist and the table of the home," said Elaine Doyle, religious education coordinator. Above, Father Halloran greets parishioner Kevin Austin after the Saturday celebration of the Eucharist.

## Walk right in — St. Patrick's family welcomes all

### Parish Profile

St. Patrick's,  
Macedon



By Kathleen Schwar  
Staff writer

**MACEDON** — When Bridget Blanchard of Long Island moved to this Wayne County town with her husband Al in 1968 and joined St. Patrick's Church, "I thought my husband had brought me to the end of the earth and dropped me off. ... There was a cow on our front lawn the first morning I woke up."

And eight years ago when Father Emmett J. Halloran came to St. Patrick's Church, he declined a reception — parishioners had just thrown an elaborate celebration for Father Eugene McFarland, his predecessor, and he didn't want them to go to the trouble.

"I said, 'No, I'd just say hello at the door.' I thought if I stood at the door I'd get to know everyone," he said, believing at that time the parish was small enough for him to do so.

"But it's getting harder and harder with all the new faces," he said.

Macedon is changing. And as the population expands, along Route 31 and beyond, so does St. Patrick's programming.

In recent years, the church has taken on Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, Martha Ministry to offer funeral luncheons, Child Church at two Masses, a children's choir, a folk choir, a Bible Sharing Group for all ages, teen socials and service-type events, Shared Warmth clothing donation program, and "Garden Angels" to care for the landscaping.

When these and ongoing programs — such as the food pantry and its "unsung heroes" — were mentioned, Deacon Dan Abballe laughed, "I'm tired. I didn't realize we did all those things."

Deacon Abballe came from St. Christopher's Church in North Chili eight years ago as deacon. Being new and not knowing who to ask to join the new RCIA team, he gravitated to those who smiled.

"No one said no," he recalled. "It's that kind of attitude and that kind of commitment in the parish that has been con-

sistent."

His wife Joan Abballe, pastoral minister, described a warmth and friendliness "from the day you first walk in." St. Patrick's is the kind of church, she said, where an older woman sitting next to a young family will offer to hold the baby.

St. Patrick's earliest communicants included many Erie Canal builders, and many Gaelic-speaking Irish among them. The first church building was consecrated in 1857, at 110 Main St., on property Route 350 now cuts through. It was a mission of St. Anne's Church in Palmyra, to which early communicants had walked four to eight miles for Mass, according to church historian Alice Hosenfeld.

In 1958 the new brick Georgian colonial-style church was dedicated down the road at 52 Main St., during Father Bernard Hanna's pastorate. A larger-than-life oil painting of St. Patrick stands out from behind the altar — some children mistake him for God. A pillared, pre-Civil War house next door serves as the rectory and office.

Today, parishioners — from Macedon, Palmyra, Farmington, Gananda, and Walworth — travel in opposite directions to work, and the children attend six or seven different school districts. The weekend, most often, is when they come together as a parish.

"We are a community that is really formed around the Mass itself," Blanchard, Parish Council chairperson, said. "We all get together for the weekend liturgy."

Much of the community consists of young families with two or three children. Father Halloran said he's never seen so many children carried into church, and he welcomes them.

The recent population growth is little surprise to Elaine Doyle, religious education coordinator for 17 years. She sits on the village planning board charged with

overseeing development. While she's seeing a boom in youngsters, she also foresees an increase in senior citizens and in middle-aged adults, because of pending housing developments.

The church is keeping pace with the growth — its Synod work revealed priorities of adult education and youth ministry, and the parish is responding. Over Holy Week, in particular, Doyle was pleased to see the younger and older parishioners working together, when youth served as readers, lectors, and in other key roles.

"The experience was so positive and went so well," she said, "that we have talked about focusing more on that."

It used to be that Father McFarland, pastor for 23 years, was the only one who could get people to teach, Doyle said. But she doesn't have to worry about the 350-400 students in grades 1-12, she said, thanks to numerous willing volunteers, including 30 career school teachers.

"Since Father (Halloran) came here, people have been coming out of the woodwork," Doyle said. "I think he's an enabler."

The enabler, however, will retire in June. The parish, with St. Anne's and St. Gregory's in Marion, conducted an intensive vitality study last fall, and agreed on two major points: that the primary focus "has to be our combined efforts at building and supporting our new faith community toward a common path" and there be a collaboration "at all levels," their report stated.

However, their recommendation for now, for a full-time priest for St. Patrick's, as well as St. Anne's/St. Gregory's cluster,

### SNAPSHOTS

St. Patrick's Church  
52 Main St.

Macedon

Phone: 315/986-5671

Registered families: 1,200

Ministerial staff:

Pastor

Father Emmett J. Halloran

Deacon/adult faith formation coordinator:

Deacon Dan Abballe

Pastoral minister:

Joan H. Abballe

Religious education coordinator:

Elaine Doyle

Religious education secretary/youth minister:

Mary Ann Hanna

Organist:

Monica Milliman

Choir director:

Julie Tay

Parish council chairperson:

Bridget Blanchard

was honored. Father Robert S. Bourcy, parochial vicar at St. John the Evangelist Church on Ridge Road in Rochester, will serve as St. Patrick's pastor.

"It's been a difficult year because of things we've gone through," Blanchard said, "and members of the church have become stronger for it."

"It was the first time we had a role in deciding what we are going to do," she added. "You realize the future of the church is in your hands."

### Best Wishes to St. Patrick's from the following businesses

Canaltown Travel Agency, Inc.  
101 Mill Street, Palmyra  
315-597-2121

Macedon Auto Parts  
1950 Rte. 31, Macedon  
315-986-2500

Chase Manhattan Bank, N.A.  
1890 W. Wayne Plaza, Macedon  
716-242-7335

Walworth Insurance Agency  
Ron Buyck  
2100 Penfield Rd., Walworth  
315-986-1622

Denniston Welker Realtors  
73 W. Main St., Macedon.  
315-986-3200



**Your Car  
Is Our  
Specialty**

127 Main St., Macedon  
**JEFF BECKENBACK**  
315-986-4434  
24 Hour Towing