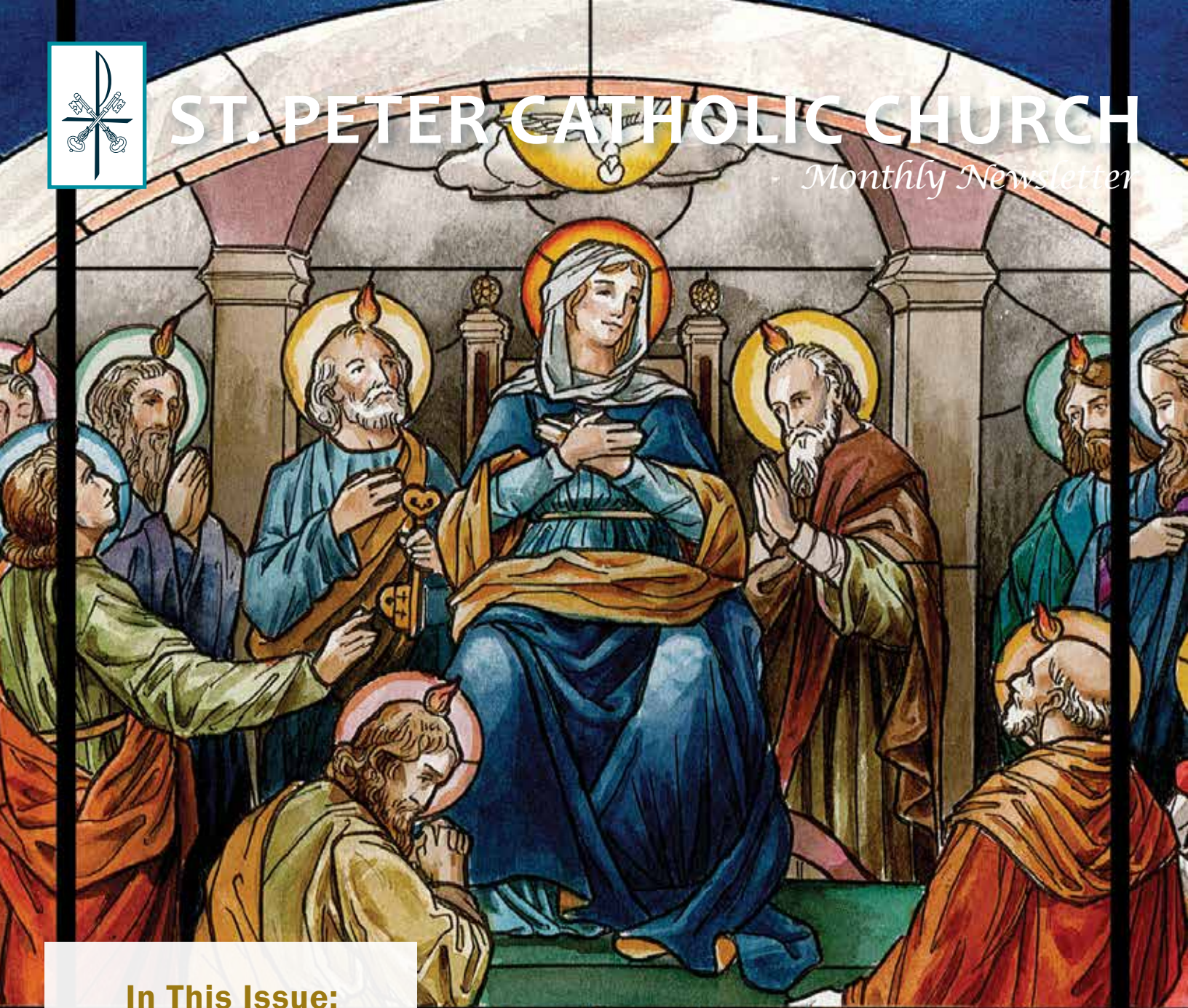




# ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

Monthly Newsletter



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ACTS 2:1-5

were all filled with the Holy Spirit

MAY 2023



# ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

## THE STATE OF OUR PARISH: REFLECTING ON OUR FAITH COMMUNITY'S COMMITMENTS AS HIS DISCIPLES "OUR VISION IS TO ABIDE IN CHRIST AND BUILD HIS KINGDOM"

Fr. Eric Clark will give the State of the Parish Address on May 16. The presentation will include lots of information regarding where we have been, where we are now, and where we are going. We will hear about the current state of the parish, such as statistics on our demographics and the Stewardship Renewal for the last five years, as well as information regarding our numbers for the sacraments, Mass attendance, and so on.

"Our vision is to abide in Christ and build His kingdom," Fr. Clark says.

After this presentation, Fr. Clark will announce our slogan for the upcoming year and discuss the vision moving forward — from a maintenance mode to a mission mode.

"We're going to have a three-year goal of making intentional disciples in the parish," he says.

This goal will be based upon the Scripture passage in Acts 2:42, which says, "They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers."

With the main church building being shut down for at least 10 months, Fr. Clark says our parish will go through the anticipation, similar to a pregnant mother preparing for the birth of her child. During this time, the sacraments will be celebrated in Bishop Vasa Hall, which Fr. Clark says will be renamed to the "catacombs" in an effort to "go back to what it means to be an early Christian."

"The essential part is to gather together for prayer and the sacraments, so the emphasis on Acts 2:42 is helping people form fellowship through small groups, and have them in their homes — and have a lot of different ministry

meetings in people's homes if need be," Fr. Clark says. "Go back to the basics of Christianity for this time period, people opening up hospitality in their homes."

Fr. Clark will also provide an update on our capital campaign, examining where things stand from a financial point of view.

"The Capital Campaign was done in-house," he says. "In order to be good stewards, we didn't have a consulting firm — the Capital Campaign was really in large part done by many volunteers and parishioners who helped out."

There are four areas of improvement that our parish has been examining, either already complete or to be completed in the coming years. These also were largely led by volunteers in our parish. The projects include deferred maintenance, increased security, beautification of our church, and starting an endowment for long-term sustainability.

"This isn't just about Fr. Clark and my ideas," Fr. Clark says. "This has really been a collaborative effort of many parishioners, meetings, and committees."

Fr. Clark says he looks forward to our community going deeper in relationship with God and one another. With so many things going on in the parish, there is an opportunity to lean into the virtue of hope and return to the basics.

"My prayer and my hope is that we learn how to be disciples, that we learn and we hear the invitation of our Lord to come and follow, that we choose to be His disciples, and we grow as His disciples during this period," Fr. Clark says.

*A Letter from Our Pastor*

## HONORING OUR LADY IN MAY

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

May is Mary's month. For centuries, Catholics throughout the world have included special devotions to the Blessed Mother in their activities during May. Best known, I'm sure, is the widespread and ever-popular practice of crowning an image of Our Lady with flowers during the month.

May is a beautiful month, full of renewal and hope. This is why we also celebrate Mother's Day in May. A mother may live the rest of her life with cells in her body that are not her own, but her baby's. This phenomenon, later coined as "fetal microchimerism," was first discovered in the late 19th century. This is why some mothers have a Y chromosome in their bodies for years after the birth of their sons.

In her blessed womb, Mary received the blood of Jesus into her body. She carried His blood her whole life. As Jesus saves and redeems us by His blood, so too does He do to Mary in the womb. This is why she had to be assumed body and soul into heaven.

Historians and archeologist search for the Holy Grail, the chalice of the last supper which contained the blood of Jesus, but have failed to find it. That is because Mary is the Holy Grail! As science has proven, then Mary had the Y chromosome, not passed on by his earthly adopted father, Joseph, but by the Heavenly Father by the power of the Holy Spirit.

This sheds new light on the Gospel verse which states, "Mary kept all these things and reflecting on them in her heart" (Luke 2:19). The blood of Christ was preserved and kept in her.

Mary is not only the Mother of Jesus but our Mother also! As we receive the body and blood of Christ at each Mass, she keeps us in her heart. This is why the oldest prayer dedicated to Mary is the *Sub Tuum Praesidium* which is translated as "We Fly to Thy Patronage." The prayer is "We fly to thy patronage, O holy Mother of God; despise not our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us always from all dangers, O glorious and blessed Virgin."

As we intercede for Mary's protection we remember her faithfulness to God's will throughout her life. Indeed, she can be viewed as the model Christian steward. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops pointed to her in its pastoral letter on stewardship: "After Jesus, it is the Blessed Virgin Mary who by her example most perfectly teaches the meaning of discipleship and stewardship in their fullest sense" (*Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*, 41).

Let us follow her example of total dedication to God as we rejoice in the blessings He gives us this month!

In His Mercy,



Fr. Eric Clark,  
Pastor





## TOTUS TUUS RETURNS TO C UNIQUE EVENT FOR KIDS TO



**T**otus Tuus, the phrase totally “totally yours,” was the motto of Pope St. John Paul II and the inspiration behind the memorable summer camp program that comes to our parish each year. Children are never too young to begin learning what it means to give themselves wholly to Jesus Christ through His Mother Mary, and Totus Tuus unites valuable lessons in the faith with unforgettable fun.

Two energetic college student teams will lead the program – a day session for first through eighth grades, and an evening session for high school students. Last year, registration was limited, but this year the program is back in full swing. Blake Vajgrt, Parish Catechist, is looking forward to offering Totus Tuus to more families this year.

“Everybody looks forward to Totus Tuus,” Blake says. “I start getting emails in early January asking about the dates. Last year we had a waitlist and had to turn people away.”

All ages will hear witness talks from the Totus

Tuus team. Each day will lead the students through a theme that draws them deeper into their experience of the faith and their relationship with Jesus Christ. Younger students will have plenty of silly songs and fun games. High school students will have time to socialize as well as an opportunity for Eucharistic Adoration and Confession.

“It’s covert Gospel preaching because it’s truly a fun week,” Blake says. “It’s not something you can do with your regular Religious Education program – but for a week, the kids are so receptive because of the fun and being together. They come away having learned these great gems and coming to know Our Lord better.”

Our two Totus Tuus teams rely heavily on parish volunteers to pull the program together. We’ll be looking for help in a number of ways. Parishioners can volunteer to provide meals for the teams as well as lodging for the week.

“It’s a very real extension of the Gospel,” Blake

## OUR PARISH THIS SUMMER D SHARE IN FAITH AND FUN

says. “The teams get sent out, and while they have a little more than one tunic and pair of sandals, they don’t have much. We will need families to serve by hosting a boys team or girls team.”

We’ll be looking for extra help with program administration – and this year, we’ll also have the unique challenge of our upcoming church renovations. Mass and activities will be held downstairs and extra help will be needed to make it run smoothly.

Totus Tuus has been a staple at our parish for many years, giving students of all ages a chance to combine their summer fun with a deepening of faith. Blake expects to have at least 130 students register this year. Registration is open and families can register through the link on the parish website. Anyone available to volunteer is invited to contact Blake to sign up.

*“It’s not something you can do with your regular Religious Education program – but for a week, the kids are so receptive because of the fun and being together. They come away having learned these great gems and coming to know Our Lord better.”*  
— Blake Vajgrt, Parish Catechist



To register for Totus Tuus, visit [www.saintpeterlincoln.com](http://www.saintpeterlincoln.com). To volunteer or learn more, contact Blake Vajgrt at [blake-vajgrt@cdolinc.net](mailto:blake-vajgrt@cdolinc.net) or 402-423-1239.



## FIELD TRIP PROGRAM — ENHANCES AND EXPANDS



*Visiting the state capitol*



*Visiting the Roca Berry Farm*

Our students at St. Peter Catholic School undoubtedly receive an outstanding classroom education grounded in our Catholic faith. But there is much to be learned beyond the classroom. That's why the St. Peter Catholic School Field Trip program makes sure our students enjoy educational experiences and all the advantages they bring.

"St. Peter Catholic School offers faith, academic, and community-building field trips or a combination of those," says Principal Curt Feilmeier. "The most unique feature of St. Peter Catholic School's field trips that sets us apart from the public schools is the opportunity to take religious-based field trips and/or incorporate our faith into the field trip. For example, we include having Mass and/or conducting outreach community service or including a religious location as a part of the field trip agenda."

Due to restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic, the program was at best very limited, but now it looks to return to a full schedule.

Our students in kindergarten through eighth grade take part in the Field Trip program, with some trips having grade levels attend together. The trips are spread out throughout the year, but most take place in the Fall and Spring months of the school year.

"Some of the advantages of our Field Trip program include the opportunity for our students to put their faith into practice," Mr. Feilmeier says. "They also can have real-world experiences that provide for enhanced creativity. The students are able to strengthen their communication skills and positive behaviors in public settings. Not only that, but during the trips the students build community and form

## ON STUDENTS' CLASSROOM EXPERIENCES

*"The students are able to strengthen their communication skills and positive behaviors in public settings. Not only that, but during the trips the students build community and form lifelong friendships."*

*— Curt Feilmeier, Principal*

lifelong friendships."

Students have enjoyed numerous locations and opportunities, such as the kindergarten and first-grade trip to the Roca Berry Farm. The first grade also visited the Lincoln Children's Museum, as well as the Prairieland Dairy, while our second grade visited, among other trips, the Chet Ager Nature Center at Pioneers Park, as well as the Villa Regina Mother House. The third grade visited the UNL Planetarium at Morrill Hall, and the Strategic Air Command and Aerospace Museum, while the fourth grade visited the Heritage School, as well as the Homestead National Monument in Beatrice. Our fifth grade attended the Plum Creek Literacy Festival and the Lewis and Clark Center. Sixth-grade students visited the Holy Family Shrine, the Newman Center and the Synagogue. Seventh-grade trips included a tour of the Governor's Mansion and the Edgerton Explorit Center. Our eighth-grade class toured the Cathedral and the Great Platte River Road Archway Monument, among other locations.

"During the eighth-grade trip to the Archway Monument, the students learned how the pioneers traveled the Oregon Trail and the technology that led up to what we have today," Mr. Feilmeier says. "They experienced the Nature Trail and sodhouse. During a trip to the Bickford Retirement Village in Lincoln, the fifth-grade students made cards for the residents, shared Christmas cookies, and sang Colonial Christmas songs as part of our



*Visiting the Villa Regina Mother House*

History class learning about Colonial life. The fifth grade also visited the Arbor Day Farm in Nebraska City and observed nature close-up after learning how to see God's nature and to look for details of patterns in His design.

"When our third-grade students visited the Strategic Air Command and Aerospace Museum in Ashland, they were able to relate their studies in science," he adds. "Their visit included taking part in interactive exhibits, and a unique experience for them was being able to feel like they were stepping into the solar system. They took part in educational sessions on a gravity well and asteroid impacts."

*Parents are always welcome to contact St. Peter Catholic School to learn about the opportunities for their children. For more information, please call 402-421-6299.*



# ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH



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## **MASS SCHEDULE:**

*Saturday: 4:00 p.m.*

*Sunday: 8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m.*

## **DAILY MASS**

*Monday-Friday: 6:30 a.m., 8:15 a.m.,  
5:30 p.m.*

*Saturday: 8:15 a.m.*

## **CONFESSION**

*Monday & Friday: 7:00 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.*

*Wednesday: 4:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.*

*Saturday: 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.*

*Sunday 30 minutes before each Mass*

# STATE OF THE PARISH ADDRESS

MAY 16TH @ 7:00 PM

BISHOP VASA HALL

*All parishioners are encouraged to attend.*

