



# ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

*Monthly Newsletter*

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**JULY 2023**

*Last Mass in Church - May 29, 2023*



# ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

## MASS REFRESHMENTS MINISTRY

*Living the Stewardship Pillar of Hospitality with Food and Fellowship*

Opportunities to gather in fellowship are a key part of building community here at St. Peter. Even amid construction going on in our church, there is a need for hospitality in the parish community. And although numerous changes to our physical facilities are underway, the Mass Refreshments Ministry team is working hard to ensure we can continue to gather as a parish family, enjoying food and fellowship together.

“Our hope is, on nice days, we’ll do things out in the courtyard,” says Debby Rye, Mass Refreshments ministry leader. “That’s always been the favorite place for people to meet and gather. When it’s cold, we will probably meet in the gym with the little snack bar area as our kitchen. We will not be able to use the parish hall because that’s where Mass will be held.”

Once a month, the Mass Refreshments Ministry team organizes food and drink for parishioners after the weekend Masses. These refreshments at times coincide with a particular day, such as the Feast of St. Joseph or St. Valentine’s Day.

“We have a good turnout,” Debby says. “A lot of people come and enjoy each other’s company. On average we feed 800 people each weekend.”

Born out of a desire for the parish to feel a sense of community and hospitality, the ministry began in 2021 after the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions were lifted. As the first of the four stewardship pillars, hospitality is a key component of our efforts toward building stewardship in the parish. And it’s been a great experience for everyone involved.

“People love it,” Debby says. “We all hear so much that people love it, they love the fellowship, they feel like they’re part of a community. I think it’s changed our culture at St. Peter.”

Two years since the gatherings started, there are now more than 100 parishioners involved with this



*The Mass Refreshments Ministry preparing charcuterie cups for the Feast of St. Joseph*



*Becky Huebner and Debby Rye*



*St. Valentine's Day weekend*

ministry — they help with purchasing food, preparing the refreshments, setting up, and tearing down. Debby and the other leaders, Katherine Norman, and Becky Huebner, are working to get some of our parishioners to take the lead on organizing the events, while they continue helping out.

“We’re asking ministry members to take turns leading each month to help with the workload and get new ideas for refreshments. These leaders help plan the food, pick up supplies, and organize volunteers. If someone is interested in leading a month of refreshments let me know!” Debby says.

*Anyone interested in joining the Mass Refreshments Ministry may contact Debby Rye at [ryettes@aol.com](mailto:ryettes@aol.com) or 402-432-2315.*

*A Letter from Our Pastor*

## **BLESSED IS THE NATION WHOSE GOD IS THE LORD (PS. 33: 12A)**

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

**A**s we celebrate our nation with the Fourth of July holiday to start the month, it is important for us to reflect on the connections between discipleship and patriotism. The connection is highlighted in Psalm 33. The Psalmist writes:

*Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all who dwell in the world show him reverence. For he spoke, and it came to be, commanded, and it stood in place. The Lord foils the plan of nations, frustrates the designs of peoples. But the plan of the Lord stands forever, the designs of his heart through all generations. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people chosen as his inheritance.*

At the heart of discipleship is the continued petition to Jesus to “make our hearts like unto thine, meek and humble.” This prayer said at the Litany of the Sacred Heart reminds us that to be Jesus’ disciple is to set before us the Beatitudes as the vision for living as the blessed nation the Psalmist describes.

Patriotism is actually an outgrowth of the gift of the Holy Spirit. Regarding piety, St. Thomas Aquinas says, “Consequently man is debtor chiefly to his parents and his country, after God. Wherefore just as it belongs to religion to give worship to God, so does it belong to piety, in the second place, to give reverence to one’s parents and one’s country. The reverence given to our country includes homage to all our fellow-citizens and to all the friends of our country.”

To be patriotic is a recognition that we are blessed by our countrymen, rich in history and diverse in culture, and with opportunities to live out our faith in the public sphere.

It is a call to use our gifts and our resources to make our country a place where God is honored, to serve our fellow citizens, and to uphold the values that make a nation great, walking in the commands of the Lord.

At the same time, it is important to remember that patriotism is not the same as blind nationalism. We are called to love our country, but not at the expense of our faith or our commitment to justice and the common good. We must always be willing to critique our country when it falls short of its ideals and to work for change when necessary.

As we celebrate the Fourth of July holiday, let us remember that our Catholic faith calls us to be faithful disciples and patriotic Americans. Let us pray for our country, for our leaders, and for all those who strive to make it a better place. And let us commit ourselves anew to using our gifts and our resources to serve others, to work for justice, and to build up the common good.

May God bless you and your families, and may God bless the United States of America.

In His Mercy,



Fr. Eric Clark,  
Pastor





## *Catechesis of the* **BRINGING OUR CH**

As Catholics, we are likely familiar with what Jesus tells us in Matthew 19:14 – “Let the children come to me, and do not prevent them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” But do we stop to think about what this means for us and our children on a day-to-day basis? Jesus is here for them – He calls them by name and it is our responsibility to guide them to Him. This is where the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program can assist.

“The purpose of Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is to listen to God with children in a way that both the child and the adult may fall more deeply in love with God,” says Sarah Novak, Catechesis of the Good Shepherd coordinator. “We know that God is love and that the child is wired for love. What kind of environment can we provide to nurture this budding relationship between God and the child?”

With this as an aim, Catechesis of the Good Shepherd sessions – which began here at St. Peter during the 2020-2021 school year – take place in a specially prepared room known as the atrium. Each atrium is set up purposefully according to the developmental and spiritual needs of the child.

“The atrium is one of the most important elements of our program that help the relationship between God and the child to flourish,” Sarah says. “The moment you set foot in an atrium you are aware that you have entered a space that is uniquely different than a classroom. The lights are low, voices are a whisper, and



*A child extinguishes candles at the model altar.*

there is a slower pace to physical movement.”

The physical elements of the atrium stand apart, as well. These items include topographical maps of Israel, miniature environments representing elements of parables and historical events, and much more. The materials are all displayed in such a way as to invite the children to interact with them – to touch them, to hold them, to explore them. Catechesis of the Good Shepherd offers the children an opportunity to encounter Jesus, the Good Shepherd, in a very hands-on and age-appropriate manner.

“The children have a desire to draw near to God,” Sarah says. “This world is loud, fast, and busy. The atrium is quiet, slow, and peaceful. This program gives

# *Catechesis of the Good Shepherd:* **CHILDREN TO CHRIST**

the children a space and a time to intentionally listen to the voice of the Good Shepherd speak to them. It is an invaluable gift.”

Yet, as Sarah says, even the adult catechists who serve our Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program experience personal encounters with Jesus while doing so.

“Catechesis of the Good Shepherd has had a great impact on my spiritual growth,” Sarah says. “I didn’t know I was supposed to have a personal relationship with Jesus until I was an adult, and I rarely opened my Bible. Now, because of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd method, I can feel myself resting in the arms

of the Good Shepherd while reading His Word and participating more fully in the Liturgy.”

All children in preschool through second grade at St. Peter are automatically enrolled. But even if your children do not attend St. Peter, they are welcome to take part in Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, and we would love to have them do so. And, as Sarah notes, catechists are needed and welcomed.

“The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few,” she says. “Catechesis of the Good Shepherd needs more volunteers to serve the children. Please prayerfully consider being one”



*A child and an adult catechist ponder the parable of the Good Shepherd.*



*The atrium is a room prepared for the child to grow in relationship with Jesus, the Good Shepherd.*

*To enroll your children in Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, visit [saintpeterslincoln.com](http://saintpeterslincoln.com).  
To serve with this program, contact Sarah Novak at [sarah-novak@cdolinc.net](mailto:sarah-novak@cdolinc.net).*



## *“At the Feet of Peter” Capital*

### **A Generous \$8.7 Million Plan**

*“The parishioners can expect a place of worship that is safe, functional, and beautiful. Artistically speaking, it will be the most decorative parish west of the Missouri River with the number of murals and stained glass windows.” — Fr. Eric Clark*



The goal was to raise \$8.5 million. The purpose was to glorify God. To date, the former has been exceeded with a collection of \$8.7 million in pledges. The latter has been achieved through the generosity of so many but is yet to be completely satisfied — as all of us know, the physical upgrades and renovations are just underway, and the true glorification of God happens within the heart of man as he responds to God in love.

The “At the Feet of Peter” capital campaign was a bold initiative put in place by pastor Fr. Eric Clark and the campaign team to make St. Peter Parish a true spiritual home for all of our parishioners and visitors. To achieve this, the money raised by the campaign will be used to address the longstanding maintenance issues, increase security, beautify the church building, and create an endowment for future upkeep and facilities costs.

The swiftness by which the capital campaign was conducted is a testament to your generosity. Before the official campaign kickoff took place last October, Fr. Clark and the campaign team met with 60 prospective donors in 60 days and collected over \$6 million in pledges. Since then the giving continued to increase and culminated in exceeding the initial goal.

“The campaign has been amazing,” Fr. Clark says. “We had nearly 600 pledges and received an overwhelmingly positive response.”

Fr. Clark and the campaign committee members are excited and confident that once all the work is completed, St. Peter’s will be a worthy place of worship and an inspiring spiritual home.

“The parishioners can expect a place of worship that is safe, functional, and beautiful,” Fr. Clark says. “Artistically speaking, it will be the most decorative parish west of the Missouri River with the number of murals and stained glass windows.”

Now that the money has been raised, the capital

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# *Campaign an Instant Success*

*Completed in Matter of Months*



campaign has accomplished its part of the process and the renovations got underway in June.

“The church nave will be closed starting June 1 and will continue through the spring of 2024,” Fr. Clark says. “The narthex will be closed for three weeks in July, but access to the parish will still be available either through the school or side doors.”

Despite the construction, the parish will do everything it can to continue to conduct itself on a normal basis.

“We will have to be more creative with our meeting space,” Fr. Clark says. “But the parish will function as normal with all its sacraments and programs.”

During this period of construction, many of the regularly scheduled liturgies and sacraments will be held in new locations.

“Mass, confessions, and Baptisms will be held in Bishop Vasa Hall,” Fr. Clark says. “Perpetual Adoration will be in the St. Mary Conference Room.”

Once the work is all said and done, Fr. Clark looks forward to uniting as the Mystical Body of Christ in the celebration of the sacraments.

“I look forward to seeing how our minds and hearts may be united as one in a foretaste of the beauty of heaven,” Fr. Clark says.

Since the beginning of the capital campaign, it was clear to many that St. Peter Parish needed a renewal. Over the past few years, there was a tangible stirring of the Spirit within the parish community. The money raised in the campaign is a witness to this, and the resulting renovations will be a physical reflection of the spiritual renewal of our parish.



# 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., 5:30 p.m.

Saturday: 8:15 a.m.

## CONFESSION

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

Friday: 7:00 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.

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

Sunday 30 minutes before each Mass



## Welcome Fr. Shravan Raminedi

*Fr. Raminedi was a priest for 19 years with the Diocese of Nalgonda and has been in the Diocese of Lincoln for the last six years. He is now Assistant Pastor at St. Peter Parish, with nursing home outreach and serving as chaplain at Bryan West Hospital in Lincoln.*