



ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

Monthly Newsletter

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NOVEMBER 2023



THE “THANKSGIVING SPIRIT” DOESN’T HAVE TO END AT THANKSGIVING

The origin of the first Thanksgiving feast is a matter of some debate among historians. But since 1863, Americans have annually set aside the fourth or fifth Thursday of November to give thanks to God for a bountiful harvest. The holiday became a matter of federal law in 1941, as President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a joint congressional resolution to observe Thanksgiving Day on the fourth Thursday of November. Even as our society has become less agrarian, families continue to gather each November to give thanks to God for each other, and for the many blessings they have received throughout the year.

Most people associate this “spirit of Thanksgiving” with the fall holiday and its many recognizable symbols – brisk weather, cornucopias, family gatherings, and plenty of delicious food. But giving thanks to God in gratitude for the gifts we have received isn’t an attitude we should save for this annual holiday alone. When we live lives of discipleship – sharing of our time, talents and treasure in thanks to God and at the service of others – we can sustain life in the Thanksgiving spirit throughout the year.

The Church teaches that this daily response of gratitude is an important element of living the life of a Christian disciple. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

states, “Indeed, in the work of salvation, Christ sets creation free from sin and death to consecrate it anew and make it return to the Father, for his glory. The thanksgiving of the members of the Body participates in that of their Head” (CCC, 2637).

And how can we express this spirit of thanks? We can serve others, living the virtue of charity by reaching out to our brothers and sisters in need through acts of kindness. We can give back to God from our “first fruits,” sharing of our treasure in thanksgiving and recognition of the need to return a portion of our gifts to God. We can utilize our unique talents to make our parish and local communities better places. And, as the *Catechism* also points out, we can even express thanks through prayerfully offering up our daily activities to God – “Every event and need can become an offering of thanksgiving” (CCC, 2638).

This Thanksgiving, take a moment to think of ways that you can live in the “spirit of Thanksgiving” on the fourth Thursday of November, and every other day throughout the year. Living the discipleship way of life may not always involve a precisely carved turkey, decorations or a family viewing of *It’s a Wonderful Life* – but it will provide lifelong fulfillment and joy rooted in an attitude of perpetual thanksgiving.

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A Letter from Our Pastor

CHRIST THE KING, THE PERFECT EXAMPLE OF DISCIPLESHIP

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

May the grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

With the liturgical year ending soon and Advent and Christmas close behind, I want to share with you the profound significance of the Solemnity of Christ the King on Nov. 26. This feast holds a special place within the heart of the Catholic Church and shows us what true discipleship is all about.

The Solemnity of Christ the King, observed on the last Sunday of the liturgical year, invites us to reflect on Christ's universal kingship and reign over all creation. In a world often focused on power, control, and self-centeredness, this feast presents a countercultural message. It reminds us that Christ's kingship is marked by self-sacrifice, humility, and service. Our Lord's throne is not one of worldly grandeur but of the Cross, where He gave His life for our salvation.

This feast is a powerful reminder of the core values of Catholic discipleship. Discipleship means recognizing that everything we have is a gift from God – our time, talents, resources, and even our very lives. Just as Christ, the King, entrusted His life for our sake, we are called to be faithful stewards of the gifts He has bestowed upon us. We are caretakers of His creation, called to use our resources wisely, generously, and in ways that bring about His kingdom on Earth.

Christ's kingship and discipleship are deeply intertwined. By recognizing His authority over our lives, we acknowledge that our role as stewards is to use our gifts in accordance with His will. This means serving others, working for justice, promoting human dignity, and caring for the Earth and its resources. Our actions as faithful stewards should reflect the self-giving love that Christ displayed during His earthly life.

The Solemnity of Christ the King is an important



day in the Catholic Church because it brings our focus back to the heart of our faith. It reminds us that Christ's reign extends beyond the confines of time and space, touching every aspect of our existence. This feast challenges us to evaluate our lives in light of His kingship and to ask ourselves whether our choices and actions align with His teachings.

As we approach this solemn feast, let us take the opportunity to recommit ourselves to Christ and the principles of discipleship. May we strive to be faithful stewards of His

grace, using our gifts to build a more just, compassionate, and harmonious world. Let us remember that Christ, the King, calls us not to a life of privilege but to a life of service, solidarity, and sacrificial love.

I invite you to join us in celebrating the Solemnity of Christ the King with hearts full of gratitude and reverence. Through our worship and reflection, may we be renewed in our dedication to Christ's reign and to the active discipleship and discipleship He calls us to embrace.

In His Mercy,

Fr. Eric Clark

Fr. Eric Clark,
Pastor



EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION TO THE HOMEBOUND: BRINGING CHRIST TO THOSE IN NEED

A missionary is someone who brings the Good News of Christ to another. When Mary visited her cousin Elizabeth in the Gospel of Luke, she became the first missionary because she literally brought Jesus with her to share with her cousin. Elizabeth was filled with joy as she replied, "Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb" (Luke 1:42).

The Eucharistic Ministers who bring Holy Communion to the homebound are similarly serving as missionaries in the church as they literally bring the Body of Christ to those who cannot come to receive Him. These ministers seek to bring the Holy Eucharist to those who are unable to leave their homes or assisted living facilities to attend Mass.

Michael Hayes has been serving in this ministry for over 30 years and has been the coordinator for the past five years.

"It's important to bring the Eucharist to the homebound," he says. "We also grow relationships with the people we serve. They are so grateful that we are there and they can't say 'thank you' enough. Our priests do bring Holy Communion to the homebound on First Fridays, but it is important that we are able to bring them Communion every Sunday."

There are 24 devoted Eucharistic Ministers. Having the opportunity to share the Body of Christ with others is a special gift. At the end of 9:30 a.m. Sunday Mass, the priest gives pyxes containing the Blessed Sacrament to four ministers. After the priest's blessing, they leave on their individual routes to bring Communion to

those who are unable to join us at Mass. It usually takes the ministers about 45 minutes to one hour to complete their route.

When the ministers visit an assisted living facility, those who are there to receive Communion have been gathered in a chapel or conference room. They have a small prayer service, receive Communion, and have a final prayer. The process is the same for those in their own homes.

This beautiful act of service to the homebound evangelizes by physically bringing Christ to the homebound and sharing the faith and love of Jesus with any others who may be present. The Eucharistic Ministers are on a rotation and serve about every six or seven weeks. Being a missionary and bringing Jesus in the Holy Eucharist to those who are unable to attend Mass is a beautiful gift. This also provides a connection to the parish so the homebound feel that they are still an important part of the community.



*(Front) Joe Barneson and Lavonne Coashi;
(back) Mary Clark and John Clark*

Those interested in serving with this ministry may contact Michael Hayes at michaelhayes7@gmail.com. If you or a loved one needs to receive Communion at home, please contact the parish office at 402-423-1239.

CSS FOOD PANTRY COLLECTION: FEEDING THE HUNGRY AND NOURISHING OUR COMMUNITY

In the Gospels, Jesus teaches us how we should serve others. He teaches us to respond to physical needs with charity, as though we are helping Christ Himself. The Church calls these acts of service the Corporal Works of Mercy, the first of which is to “feed the hungry.” Feeding the hungry is exactly what the CSS Food Pantry Collection Ministry here at St. Peter does.

This ministry collects food, cash, SCRIP, and coupons that go towards helping the families supported through Catholic Social Services. Members help collect food and monetary donations during the St. Peter Food Drives. In addition, they take food donations to CSS to help unload and sort.

“I got involved because I knew I was helping those in need,” says Bonnie Damrow, CSS Food Pantry Collection Coordinator. “By being involved in the food collection process, and spending time before and after the Masses, I also have the opportunity to meet many of our beloved St. Peter parishioners.”

To prepare for the semi-annual food drives, members

help staple envelopes for cash donations to the bulletins, tape a “Need List” to grocery sacks, and distribute sacks to parishioners. During the drives, they collect the food donations on a CSS truck or trailer, unload the food at CSS, weigh the donations, check the shelf life, and help place the items on the shelf.

Bonnie believes that this ministry is important because it helps support community members who may not be part of the St. Peter Parish family. For her, this ministry is an opportunity to provide for a wider community of people who are in need.

In addition to the food drives, there is a Food Pantry box available at St. Peter. On Mondays, the donations are picked up by Bonnie or another volunteer and taken to CSS. Bonnie shares that there is always food in the box, which is a testament to the continuous support provided by St. Peter.

“Seeing the smiles on the children’s faces as they bring their food to the CSS truck brings joy to my heart,” she says. “I would love to see children’s artwork on future Food Drive posters during the Food Drives.”

If you are interested in getting involved with the CSS Food Pantry Collection Ministry, complete the 2023 Discipleship Renewal and turn it into the parish office, or submit the form online at www.saintpeterlincoln.com.





ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

ALL SOULS DAY: A REFLECTION OF CATHOLIC DISCIPLESHIP AND REMEMBRANCE

In the tapestry of Catholic tradition, few days hold the same depth of significance as All Souls Day, observed on Nov. 2. This solemn occasion, rooted in both faith and compassion, offers Catholics a unique opportunity to intertwine their beliefs in discipleship and remembrance, creating a powerful link between the living and the departed.

All Souls Day is a day of profound reflection and prayer for the souls of the departed who are believed to be undergoing purification before entering the eternal embrace of heaven. This belief rests on the concept of Purgatory – a state of cleansing and transformation where souls are purified of their remaining imperfections. As Catholics, this doctrine emphasizes the enduring connection between the living and the deceased. By offering prayers, Masses, and acts of devotion on this day, Catholics hope to assist the souls in Purgatory on their journey towards heavenly glory.

Catholic discipleship is founded on the principles of giving of our time, talent, and treasure back to God and the parish in gratitude for the gifts God has given us. It extends not only to the Earth and its resources but also to the spiritual realm and the souls of those who have passed away. All Souls Day embodies the essence of discipleship by underscoring the responsibility Catholics have towards their fellow human beings, even beyond the threshold of death. Discipleship, in this context, signifies an active commitment to caring for the spiritual well-being of others. By praying for the souls of the departed, Catholics are fulfilling their discipleship duty by interceding on behalf of those who cannot pray for themselves. This act of compassion and selflessness exemplifies the core values of discipleship and resonates deeply with the Catholic teachings of love, charity, and empathy.

There are many ways to honor and pray for the deceased in our parish community and our own families. Attending Mass on All Souls Day is one of the most powerful ways to honor the deceased. Offerings of prayer, often in the form of the Requiem Mass, are customary on All Souls Day. These prayers are not only for the souls of specific individuals but also for all departed souls. The Catholic tradition of lighting candles serves as a symbol of hope and remembrance. Visiting the graves of loved ones, cleaning tombstones, and leaving flowers are poignant ways to connect with the departed. It serves as a reminder that life is fleeting and encourages the living to cherish their time and relationships. Performing acts of charity in memory of the deceased is another meaningful way to honor them. Donating to a cause they cared about or volunteering in their name reflects the Catholic spirit of selflessness and compassion. And families can come together to share stories, memories, and prayers for their departed loved ones. This fosters a sense of unity and ensures that the memories of those who have passed away remain alive in the hearts of the living.

All Souls Day bridges the gap between the living and the departed, weaving together the threads of Catholic faith, discipleship, and remembrance. By dedicating time to prayer, reflection, and acts of compassion on this day, Catholics honor the souls in Purgatory, demonstrating their commitment to the principles of discipleship and their unshakeable belief in the eternal connection that transcends death. In this way, All Souls Day becomes a powerful reminder that Catholic discipleship encompasses not only the tangible world but also the realm of souls – a testament to the depth and richness of Catholic tradition.

LEGION OF MARY: COMING TO KNOW JESUS THROUGH OUR BLESSED MOTHER

We are all called to lives of holiness and prayer. Even in the seemingly ordinary aspects of our lives, holiness can be found. It is through the holiness and prayer of its members that the Legion of Mary seeks to give glory to God.

The Legion of Mary is a worldwide lay apostolate that consists of men and women who strive for holiness through prayer and active cooperation in Mary our Mother's and the Church's work. The Legion of Mary serves under the spiritual guidance of a priest.

"I got involved with the Legion of Mary because it gives me opportunities to work at saving souls," says Mike Davis, who has been part of the St. Peter Legion of Mary for seven years. "I get to evangelize by bringing people to a relationship with Our Mother, the Virgin Mary. I have grown in my faith through retreats, daily Mass, holy hours of adoration, reading the Bible and spiritual books, and working to evangelize inmates in the county jail."

Prayer and action performed for Jesus through Mary is the simple, but powerful foundation for this apostolate. St. Peter Legion of Mary meets every Wednesday from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. in the Lincoln Right to Life's Pro-Life Center. The meeting is a mix of prayer and discussion about the works done over the past week.

"We start by praying the Rosary," Mike says. "Then we have a spiritual reading, roll call, minutes, and the treasurer's report. Each member reports on the works they have done over the past week. A reflection is made over the spiritual reading, and we participate in more prayers and a reading from the handbook."

Members are asked to participate in the life of the parish and to perform weekly apostolic work in the spirit of faith and in union with Mary. Some examples of works that St. Peter members perform to serve their brothers and sisters include leading Bible or book studies, attending Baptisms and giving gifts to the parents, visiting the sick and shut-ins, taking Holy Communion



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— Mike Davis

to shut-ins, teaching inmates how to pray the Rosary and the Divine Mercy Chaplet, repairing rosaries, welcoming new parishioners, and many more.

"Our pastor says the Legion of Mary is 'the evangelizing arm of the Church,'" Mike says. "All the actions show others that we care, and it demonstrates God's love. This work also helps each of our members to grow in their own faith."

The Legion of Mary is open to any member of St. Peter Catholic Church who is 18 years or older.

If you would like to join or would like more information, contact Mike Davis at davism72@gmail.com or 402-480-0404.



ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH



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402-423-1239 | www.saintpeterlincoln.com

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

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



ST. PETER CATHOLIC SCHOOL PRE-KINDERGARTEN & PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS



2024
DEPENDENT
CARE
SPENDING

SCHOOL OFFICE HOURS MONDAY-FRIDAY 7:45 AM - 3:45 PM **CALL WITH QUESTIONS #402-421-6299**

The Dependent Care Spending Account allows you to use pre-tax dollars to pay for eligible Dependent Care Expenses. Our pre-kindergarten and preschool program qualify as an eligible expense. Enroll through your employer's benefits.
2024 Maximum Election: \$5,000