



ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

Monthly Newsletter



In This Issue:

- 2** Spontaneous Prayer
By BLAKE VAJGRT,
Catechist
- 3** A Letter from
Our Pastor
- 4** Upcoming Lenten
Retreat
Conversion Moments
*Parish Welcomes
Fr. Jay Buhman on
Feb. 17*
- 6** St. Peter Catholic
School Fulfilling Mission
to Grow Our Children
Academically and
Spiritually

XII

FEBRUARY 2024



SPONTANEOUS PRAYER

BY BLAKE VAJGRT, CATECHIST

Recently, a coworker came into my office to discuss scheduling conflicts arising from the need to comfort and be present to her grandmother, who is nearing the end of her life. We talked about her condition and shared the joys of her life. As we finished our conversation, she asked for prayers for her grandmother. Seeing the longing and compassion on her face and being moved by the Holy Spirit, I asked if we could pray for her grandmother then and there.

Have you been in that situation before? “I’ll pray for you” or “Would you pray for this?” are common expressions in our lives as disciples, as they should be! Jesus tells us to be persistent in asking, seeking, and knocking. Turning our hearts to prayer is efficacious, regardless of when we do it. But maybe you’ve been in a situation before where you sensed that “I’ll pray for you” just wasn’t enough. Or maybe you’ve been asked for prayer but also realized you needed a spiritual/physical hug too.

Spontaneously praying with others for our needs takes vulnerability. It can be awkward, especially because it is not something we typically do. I am confident that this prayer of petition is something that all our hearts desire. Do not be afraid to make this normal because you have an advocate, the Holy Spirit, to help you.

My invitation to you this Lent is to step out of the boat to be a source of healing to others. My challenge to you is to stop me, one of our priests, or staff members and

ask us to pray with you. We want to teach you to also be a source of balm of the Holy Spirit. Another great place to become more comfortable with this type of prayer is by becoming a part of St. Monica’s Ministry.

Here are just a few suggestions to help overcome the obstacles of knowledge and fear to give you the confidence to bring others to encounter Jesus:

1. As you listen, drawing inspiration from empathy and feeling called to pray, ask if you could pray together then and there.
2. Ask the Holy Spirit (silently or out loud) to give you the word to pray. You may or may not receive direct words.
3. In faith, making your petition known you can follow this general formula:
 - a. Address God, and you can be specific: God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit.
 - b. Acknowledge feelings, situation, needs, and ask for intercession.
 - c. Close the prayer by asking in the name of Jesus.

It can sound like this for example: “Lord Jesus, Jack is hurting right now as he watches his wife struggle in pain after her knee surgery. We ask that you visit Jill and give her peace and healing. We ask for the loving care of our Father for them in your most holy name.”

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A Letter from Our Pastor

CELEBRATING VALENTINE'S DAY THROUGH ACTS OF DISCIPLESHIP



Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I hope this letter finds you well as we approach a unique and spiritually significant moment in our faith journey. Feb. 14 not only marks Valentine's Day, but also Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, a time of reflection and renewal. As we navigate this intersection of love and penance, I want to shed light on the Catholic teachings behind Valentine's Day and how we can celebrate it with a focus on discipleship.

Valentine's Day is named after St. Valentine, a third-century Roman martyr who upheld the values of love, self-sacrifice, and Christian faith. He defied the Roman Empire's ban on marriage for young soldiers, believing in the sanctity of love and the Sacrament of Marriage. His devotion to love, even in the face of persecution, serves as an inspiration to us all.

This year, Valentine's Day coincides with Ash Wednesday, a day of fasting, prayer, and repentance. We can celebrate this unique alignment of love and devotion by embracing Catholic discipleship. Here are ways to do so:

- **Lenten Sacrifice of Love:** Instead of traditional Valentine's Day gifts, consider giving something more meaningful. Make a Lenten sacrifice, such as giving up a favorite treat, luxury, or habit, and donate the money saved to a charitable cause. This act of almsgiving, rooted in love, reflects St. Valentine's commitment to those in need.
- **Acts of Love and Kindness:** Throughout Lent, perform daily acts of love and kindness. These gestures need not be grand; a simple act like calling a friend in need, helping a neighbor, or showing appreciation to a family member can be a profound expression of love and discipleship.
- **Prayer and Reflection:** On this Ash Wednesday, attend Mass and receive ashes as a visible sign

of your commitment to repentance and renewal. Dedicate time to prayer and reflection, considering the ways you can deepen your relationship with God and with one another.

- **Service to the Community:** Serve our community by participating in charitable activities or volunteering your time. Lent is a time for selflessness and giving. Join initiatives in our parish or engage in community service to extend your love to those in need.
- **Marriage and Family Enrichment:** On this day of love, focus on enriching your marriage and family relationships. Attend marriage counseling, pray together as a couple, or engage in family activities that promote unity and love.
- **Renewal of Discipleship Commitments:** Use this time to review and renew your discipleship commitments of time, talent, and treasure to our parish community. Reflect on how you can contribute to the growth and vibrancy of our faith family.

By celebrating Valentine's Day on Ash Wednesday through acts of discipleship, we can infuse this day with the deep love and commitment that our faith encourages. This unique confluence reminds us that love and self-sacrifice are at the heart of our faith, as exemplified by St. Valentine's dedication to love and Christian values.

May this Valentine's Day be a profound and spiritually rich experience, allowing us to renew our love for God, one another, and our commitment to discipleship as a way of life.

In His Mercy,

Fr. Eric Clark,
Pastor





UPCOMING LENTEN RETREAT

CONVERSION MOMENTS

God created us out of love. He created us for a life of unity with Him – He who is Love itself. Until we know true unity with God, until we seek Him as the fulfillment of our every desire, we will continue to feel some measure of discontentment and dissatisfaction. The more we turn to God, the deeper a relationship we have with Him, the happier and more fulfilled we will be.

As we begin this year’s Lenten journey, we ought to take the time to re-evaluate our relationships with God. Where does He stand in order of priority in our lives? How deep are our personal relationships with Him? Surely it is true that every one of us has a relationship with God that, no matter how deep it may be, could be deeper. We are humans living in a fallen world, too often turning to worldly things for fulfillment or comfort. Yet, Jesus is here, and He is calling us to turn our hearts to Him. In a word, He is calling us to conversion.

On Feb. 17, we will welcome Fr. Jay Buhman, Pastor of All Saints Catholic Church in Holdrege, as he conducts a one-day retreat during which he will direct our hearts and minds in conversion to Christ.

“Oftentimes we have an aversion to the idea of conversion,” Fr. Buhman says. “We think, ‘I’ve already converted to the faith’ or that the need for conversion indicates that ‘I am an evil person who needs to become good.’ But the reality is that the need for conversion applies to all of us, as we can always go from good to better when it comes to our prayer life and



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Fr. Buhman will give a series of talks throughout the day helping us connect with God on a deeper level.

“It is my hope that through this retreat, people will come to an understanding of conversion that calls them into a deeper relationship with God,” Fr. Buhman says. “There is a deep element of prayer that involves being in a friendship with the God who made us.”

In addition to Fr. Buhman’s talks, the retreat will also include small-group discussions, time for prayer, breakfast, and lunch. It will be a full and faith-strengthening

“Instead of just riding the wave of life, Lent gives us the opportunity to be more intentional with our life and our relationships. It is the perfect time to re-assess the nature of our relationships — with God, with your spouse, and with others.”

— Fr. Jay Buhman

Abide in Christ and build His kingdom

PARISH WELCOMES FR. JAY BUHMAN ON FEB. 17

day – the perfect way to kick off Lent.

“Lent is a time that allows us to be more intentional with our prayer life,” Fr. Buhman says. “Instead of just riding the wave of life, Lent gives us the opportunity to be more intentional with our life and our relationships. It is the perfect time to re-assess the nature of our relationships – with God, with your spouse, and with others.”

This retreat is our chance to do just that!

Taking place in the Bishop Vasa Hall, the retreat

begins with Mass at 8:15 a.m., followed by a continental breakfast. Then, Fr. Buhman’s talks will begin. He will give a series of three talks, and small-group discussion and/or time for prayer will follow each talk. Then, lunch will be served. The day will conclude with adoration and benediction of the Blessed Sacrament and will end at about 3 p.m.

It is bound to be a day full of spiritual growth and many blessings. We encourage everyone to make it a priority to come!

CONVERSION MOMENTS

WITH FR. JAY BUHMAN

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17TH

8:15AM - 2:30PM

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH ARE INCLUDED, THERE IS NO COST TO ATTEND.



**Scan Here
to RSVP**





ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

ST. PETER CATHOLIC SCHOOL

FULFILLING MISSION TO GROW OUR CHILDREN ACADEMICALLY AND SPIRITUALLY

For an example of a strong and faith-filled Catholic education, you need to look no further than St. Peter Catholic School. Our parish school has been serving families of the parish and broader community since 1991. About 300 students – from preschool to eighth grade – attend the school, and they are guided in their studies by 30 teachers and staff, including four sisters from Christ the King.

Principal Curt Feilmeier invites all parish families to learn more about the school and its mission.

“Our school’s mission is to build a Catholic culture where families and children can grow spiritually, academically, and in service of neighbor to prepare for the Kingdom of Heaven,” he says.

Families are encouraged to take a tour and have their child or children do a shadow visit, which gives potential students the chance to meet teachers and students and see what a typical day is like at St. Peter.

Students can shadow their current or future grades or mix the two.

“Many people tour the school, and they just fall in love,” he says.

Mr. Feilmeier wants families to have all the information they need to discern the best choice. In turn, he encourages families to come to get firsthand experience.

“Don’t let the finances stop you without learning more,” Mr. Feilmeier says. “We have scholarship opportunities that may be an option for you.”

Enrollment is ongoing through spring, but the scholarships have deadlines, so consider setting up a tour soon. The Good Shepherd Scholarship is based on finances and family size. Tuition assistance is also available to those who qualify financially. The St. Peter Catholic School Discipleship Scholarship is not income-based – it is available to parish members who give their time, talent, and treasure. The new

continued on page 7



ST. PETER CATHOLIC SCHOOL



Nebraska Opportunity Scholarship is another option for new school children facing some kind of barrier – learn more at www.nebraskaopportunity.org.

Prospective families can meet with Mr. Feilmeier to review the program overview and an academic review of the student. Average class sizes are about 25-30 students per section, but each grade is a bit different – there is a unique retreat program for junior high students, and the Christ the King sisters assist with sacramental preparation for the second and fifth grades.

“It’s the faith formation that we have here that stands out,” Mr. Feilmeier says.

This is Mr. Feilmeier’s 31st year in Catholic

education. He loves having the opportunity to walk students through not only academics but also their faith.

“I enjoy partnering with students to identify, develop, and share their God-given talents and gifts – that’s my philosophy. It’s to realize opportunities that come before them and take advantage of those opportunities. We want to define their successes, ultimately to reach the Kingdom of Heaven through salvation,” he says. “My role is in partnership with the parents. We want to continue to enhance that partnership by inviting parents to come volunteer.”

This is Mr. Feilmeier’s second year at St. Peter Catholic School. His three children attend the school, and his wife, Nikki, is the school’s reading specialist.

For scholarship information, contact Brenda Shields at Brenda-shields@cdolinc.net. To learn more about the school or to schedule a tour, contact Principal Curt Feilmeier at Curt-Feilmeier@cdolinc.net or 402-421-6299.



ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH



4500 Duxhall Dr. | Lincoln, NE 68516
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

JOIN US



FRIDAYS DURING

Lent

Daily Mass at 6:30am, 8:15am and 5:30pm

Stations of the Cross at 2:30pm and 6:00pm

Boy Scout Spaghetti Feed - February 16th at 6:30pm

Knights of Columbus Lenten Meals - March 8th and 15th at 6:30pm

**On March 22nd; no 5:30pm Mass or Stations of the Cross*