



St. Peter Catholic Church

Parish Newsletter



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OCTOBER / NOVEMBER 2025



ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

A Letter from Our Pastor

MADE FOR RELATIONSHIP

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

At the heart of our faith is this truth: we are made for relationship. The very word relationship comes from the Latin *relatio*, meaning “to bring back.” In God’s design, our relationships are meant to bring us back—to Him, to one another, and to the deepest truth of who we are.



A parish family can only thrive when its members feel they belong. The survey revealed that 44% of parishioners are still searching for a stronger sense of belonging. Belonging leads to believing, and believing leads to discipleship. As Acts 2:42 reminds us, the early Church devoted themselves to “the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers”—showing that fellowship is at the heart of Christian life.

Thank you to all who completed our parish relationship health survey this summer. Your responses highlighted areas of strength in our community, as well as places where marriages and families need more support. We are blessed to have strong families in our parish who bring stability, love, and faith into their homes. At the same time, 13% of men and 20% of women said they’re struggling in their relationships, and 40% of married couples reported feeling isolated or lacking companionship—loneliness that research shows carries the same health risk as smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

A practical step toward this kind of belonging is the Called and Gifted discernment process, which shows how God has uniquely equipped you and how you fit within the Body of Christ. Using these gifts helps us experience belonging in a deeper, richer way.

We also learned that 58% of parents are not regularly encouraging the faith with their children. Parents are the “first heralds of the faith” (CCC 1656), and small practices—praying together, talking about Sunday’s Gospel, sharing gratitude—make a real difference. To support you, we’ve begun Family Confessions in the school, giving parents and children a chance to experience God’s mercy together.

Friends, the family is the first school of love. When marriages are strengthened and parents live the faith, children learn what it means both to belong and to believe. Let us renew our commitment so every household in our parish becomes a place where Christ’s love is encountered and shared—and where each of us is “brought back” to God through the grace of our relationships.

In His Mercy,

Pastor

WITNESS TO LOVE A NEW PATH FOR MARRIAGE PREPARATION

What if your marriage could inspire the next generation? What if the lessons you've learned—both the joys and the challenges—could help a young couple build a lifelong, Christ-centered marriage? That's the vision behind *Witness to Love*, a dynamic Catholic marriage preparation and renewal model that has been underway at St. Peter for the past few months. Parishes that have implemented *Witness to Love* have seen extraordinary results: the divorce rate among participating couples drops from the U.S. Catholic average of 23% to just 6% after five years, and church attendance among newlyweds increases by 70–90% as couples become more deeply involved in parish life.

What sets *Witness to Love* apart is its mentor couple format. Each engaged couple prayerfully selects a mentor couple from the parish—someone they admire and see as a source of faith, guidance, and encouragement. Through the trusting relationship that develops, engaged couples gain not only preparation for married life but also ongoing support as they enter parish life after their wedding day.

One of the first mentor couples at St. Peter, Nate and Heidi Shaddick, shared why they said “yes” to this call: “After the invitation to be mentors we prayed about it and decided to go for it. We believe in marriage and if we can come alongside others who are beginning that journey and encourage them then we want to do that!”

Their own marriage has shaped their faith in powerful ways. “As we all know, life has seasons of joy and suffering. Our marriage has been a gift from God in both the joy and suffering as we've really leaned on God first and then one another,” they explained. Their hope for the couples they mentor is simple yet profound: “Having a strong connection to your faith individually and as a

couple will enhance your marriage. The Church helps us to know what God intended for marriage and to build our marriages with that design in mind.”

The first years of marriage are critical, yet few parishes offer consistent ministry for newlyweds. *Witness to Love* addresses this gap by pairing preparation with ongoing support. After their wedding, couples are invited into small groups that continue to provide encouragement, faith formation, and practical tools for thriving marriages.

We are thrilled by the early impact of this program at St. Peter and invite the parish to continue supporting these couples in prayer, mentorship, and encouragement. Serving as a mentor couple is a powerful way to witness to the faithfulness of Christ in your own marriage while shaping the future of families in our parish.





ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

MARRIAGE ROOTED IN PRAYER AND SERVICE *THE JOURNEY OF DERRICK AND ASHLEY*

Derrick and Ashley's love story began at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where they first met. Their connection, rooted in shared values, quickly blossomed, and they were married at the Newman Center soon after graduation. Over the past 15 years, their family has grown to include six children, ranging in age from 14 to 2. Five of their children are currently students at St. Peter Catholic School, a place that has become a second home for their family. For 12 years, they have been parishioners at St. Peter, a community they describe as a true source of comfort and belonging.

Their marriage, like any other, has been shaped by a variety of experiences, both challenging and enriching. One of their earliest and most formative experiences was the Engaged Encounter retreat they attended before their wedding. It was a profound and memorable event that laid a strong foundation for their life together. As the years have passed and their family has grown, the demands of a busy life have often pushed their marriage to the back burner. However, they remain keenly aware of the sacred importance of their vocation as husband and wife, trusting in God's grace to provide them with the strength and wisdom they need to thrive.

Interestingly, Derrick and Ashley have found that their marriage has flourished most during times of service to others. Five years ago, they served as leaders for the "GodTeen" program, a weekly commitment that required them to work together as a team. This shared mission became a powerful way to deepen their own relationship with God and with each other. They found that in the act of helping others encounter the Lord, they were simultaneously drawing closer to Him themselves. As the saying goes, you cannot give what you do not possess, and they believe that in committing to lead

others to Christ, God poured extra graces into their hearts, giving them the wisdom and strength to share.

Last year, they were given another opportunity to serve when they became a mentor couple for one of their former GodTeens, who was preparing for marriage through the "Witness to Love" program. Walking with this young couple through their preparation was a massive blessing, and it became a unique chance for Derrick and Ashley to reflect on their own journey. It prompted them to look back on where they had been and to prayerfully consider where they wanted to go in their own marriage.



Abide in Christ and build His kingdom

When reflecting on the elements that have most enriched their relationship, Derrick and Ashley agree that prayer is the most vital component. They have found that whenever they make a conscious effort to open their hearts and pray aloud as a couple, it fosters an intimacy that is otherwise absent. They emphasize that spousal prayer must be a continuous process. The intimacy and grace they seek cannot take root if they only pray together occasionally. Instead, it is the formation of a consistent habit that allows them to truly be vulnerable and open with both God and each other.

Praying together, they explain, is like a therapy session

where they pour out their hearts to God and to one another, allowing their true selves to be seen and known. This intimacy, born from shared prayer, makes them more attuned to the needs of their spouse and children. It becomes easier to appreciate the small moments and to recognize unspoken cues in their daily interactions. This, in turn, allows them to respond with kindness and compassion rather than with frustration or a short-tempered outburst. While they admit they are not perfect and go through periods where the busyness of life pulls them away from regular prayer, they are always reminded that their lives are infinitely richer when their prayer together is strong and consistent.





ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

BUILDING UP THE DOMESTIC CHURCH *MAKING MARRIAGE JUST AS IT OUGHT TO BE*

At St. Peter, we believe that strong marriages and families build a strong parish. That's why we are excited to announce our new partnership with *Communio*, a ministry dedicated to equipping churches to share the Gospel through the renewal of healthy relationships.

This partnership is helping us take practical steps to support couples, strengthen family life, and foster deeper belonging in our parish. Rather than leaving relationships to chance, we want to be intentional about giving couples and families the tools to thrive in faith and love. Here are some of the initiatives we're launching in the coming months:

- **Date Night Challenge (Oct–Dec):** Couples are encouraged to set aside intentional time together each month for a date with their spouse.
- **Baking Class (October 18):** A fun evening to learn, laugh, and share a sweet treat with other couples.
- **Hoedown Dance (Jan 10):** Celebrate the end of the Date Night Challenge with other couples while showing off your dance moves at this parish social.
- **Marriage Retreat (Lent 2026):** A weekend away to step back from daily routines and rediscover joy in your vocation through prayer, conversation, and renewed connection.

These opportunities aren't only for couples who are struggling. Just like an athlete trains to grow stronger, healthy marriages and relationships also need practice, attention, and encouragement. Every couple—whether newly married, married for decades, or somewhere in between—can benefit from investing in their relationship.

Our long-term goal is to grow a parish culture where every stage of life is supported: singles seeking connection, engaged couples preparing for marriage, families raising children in the faith, and marriages that need renewal. When relationships flourish, discipleship takes root—and the whole parish is strengthened.

We are excited for this next chapter with *Communio* and grateful for the ways God is already at work in our community. Together, let's continue building St. Peter into a place where relationships are nurtured, families are supported, and every person can encounter the love of Jesus Christ.

FALL IN LOVE AGAIN: JOIN THE PARISH DATE NIGHT CHALLENGE

Strengthening your marriage doesn't have to be complicated—it can even be fun! This fall, St. Peter is launching a Date Night Challenge for couples of all ages. From October through December, simply commit to one date per month. At the start of each month, we'll send you an email with creative date ideas and meaningful conversation starters to help you connect. After your date, snap a quick photo together and send it in to be entered into our monthly prize drawings.

We'll wrap up the challenge with a lively Date Night Hoedown on Friday, January 10, where we'll celebrate the end of the challenge and award the grand raffle prize. Whether you've been married for months or decades, this is a fun and joy-filled way to grow closer to each other and to Christ.

Take the first step toward a fun fall together—sign up online at <https://bit.ly/lincolndatenights> OR scan the QR code to join!

Date Night CHALLENGE
October - December

GO ON A MONTHLY DATE SEND A PICTURE ENTER TO WIN PRIZES

Scan the QR Code to Sign Up!

Baking Class
OCT 18

Hoedown Dance
Hosted by the PCCW St. Therese Circle
JAN 10

Marriage Retreat
LENT 2026



ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH



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MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday: 4:00 pm

Sunday: 8:00 am, 9:30 am, 11:00 am

DAILY MASS

Monday-Friday: 6:30 am, 8:15 am, 5:30 pm

CONFESSION

Wednesday: 4:30 pm-5:30 pm

Friday: 7:00 am-8:00 am

Saturday: 3:00 pm-4:00 pm

Sunday: 30 minutes before each Mass



St. Peter K of C
Council 10510

TRUNK OR TREAT



OCTOBER 24

Scan the QR code or
see the website to
volunteer or provide a
trunk & treats



Set up from
5 - 6 PM

4500 DUXHALL DR. ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH PARKING LOT 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM