



St. Peter Catholic Church

Parish Newsletter

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APRIL / MAY 2026



ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

A Letter from Our Pastor

FATHER, KEEP THEM IN YOUR NAME

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Six years ago, I received one of the most life-changing phone calls of my priesthood. Archbishop Lucas, in Bishop Conley's absence, had assigned me as pastor of St. Peter Church. I was stunned — I had never served as a pastor before, and it felt like being called up to the major leagues.

Like the prophet Amos, I cannot claim the pedigree of more distinguished priests in the Diocese. I am simply a shepherd from a clan of shepherds (Amos 7:14). Yet over these years, I have learned what it means to shepherd a flock: to lead with wisdom (Num. 27:17; Jer. 3:15), to seek the lost (Lk. 15), to admonish and teach (Sir. 18:12), to feed those in my care (Is. 40:11), to heal the wounded (Ez. 34:16), and to lay down one's life without fear for the sake of the flock (Jn. 10:12).

When I arrived, my directives from the Diocese were clear: organize the parish, balance the budget, and evangelize. By God's grace — and through the tireless effort of our parishioners and staff — we have accomplished those goals together. And now, the time has come for me to leave you.

In February, Bishop Conley informed me that he is reassigning me as pastor of All Saints Parish in Holdrege. This news came as a genuine surprise to me, as I had not requested a change, nor has there been any disciplinary reason or complaints from parishioners or staff to



prompt it. Bishop Conley knows the needs of the Diocese, and I trust that the Holy Spirit is guiding him — even when I find myself at a loss to understand it fully.

My deepest pastoral concern is that this transition may unsettle some among the flock, as it would mean five pastors in fewer than ten years (Zech. 13:7). So I urge you:

remain faithful to the work we have built together these past six years. Through our strategic plan and the Clear Path of Discipleship, St. Peter has become one of the strongest parishes in the Diocese. Members of the Diocese's own strategic planning committee have pointed to us as a leader in carrying out the mission to make disciples. That is not my achievement — it is yours.

It has been one of the great blessings of my life to serve as your pastor. I praise God for the gift that each of you is to me and to one another. I trust deeply in His plan, even when the path is unclear, and I send you forward with the very prayer Christ offered on the night of the Last Supper: "Holy Father, keep them in your name that you have given me, so that they may all be one" (Jn. 17:11).

In His Mercy,

Fr. Eric Clark, Pastor



"SOMEONE HAD TO ASK"

HOW PERSONAL INVITATION IS BRINGING NEW CATHOLICS TO ST. PETER

This Easter Vigil, St. Peter welcomed 26 new fully initiated Catholics into the Church. Their stories all share a common thread — someone cared enough to show up for them.

They came from different places — Ohio, Alabama, North Platte, Oxford — and they arrived at St. Peter by different roads. But when you sit with the testimonies of this year's OCIA candidates, a pattern emerges that is hard to ignore: behind nearly every conversion is a person. Not a pamphlet. Not an algorithm. A person.

Archie Mullen, 19, puts it plainly. "The person who had the biggest impact on me was my best friend Kale, who decided to ask me to come to Mass." That single invitation set off a chain of questions about the Eucharist that led Archie to OCIA, and ultimately

to the Easter Vigil. His friend Kale Henn, who is also entering the Church this year, traces his own journey to an uncle — "a devout Catholic and someone I look up to, he has always done a great job of talking to me about my faith and Christ through the years."

This is the quiet logic of accompaniment: one person, faithful enough to speak, reaching another person who was ready to listen.

No Pressure, Just Presence

For many of this year's candidates, the door to faith was opened from the inside — by a spouse, a family member, a close friend whose witness was simply too honest to ignore.

Matthew and Hannah Wilson moved to Lincoln in

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THE WAY PROFILES



Hannah Wilson is a Lincoln native, while **Matthew** moved from Ohio after college; together with their son Callum, they are expecting a baby girl this July. Matthew, a software developer, was deeply moved by the Real Presence of the Eucharist, describing an experience of being brought to tears during Mass. They view their journey into the Catholic Church as a "homecoming" and a transformation into living with purpose.



Kale Henn is a 19-year-old from Lincoln who felt a profound awakening to put Christ before worldly matters after reading John 6. Despite facing some challenges for his decision, he describes his journey as "challenging" and is eager to receive the sacraments of First Communion and Confirmation. He is particularly excited to participate in the life of the Church and the beauty of sacred tradition.



A Lincoln native, **Archie Mullen's** Catholic journey began with an invitation from his friend, Kale. Moving from a Methodist upbringing to a deep appreciation for the Eucharist, Archie describes his transformation as "complete." Through The Way, he moved from prayerful uncertainty to seeing God's presence in daily kindness, now eagerly awaiting full communion.



Originally from Odell, Nebraska, **Andrea Skaleski** found a spiritual home at St. Peter's. Her journey through "The Way" helped her navigate life's challenges by relinquishing worries to God. Now, she is eager to join her family in full communion, looking forward to the Eucharist as a profound encounter with Christ.

August 2025 with a fifteen-month-old son and a baby on the way. They weren't sure what kind of church they were looking for. What they credit most is the example of friends — a Catholic couple whose faith was never pushy, only genuine. "They always made it a point to bring up their faith," the Wilsons wrote, "not in an annoying kind of way, but in a genuine way."

Holley, who is engaged to a lifelong Catholic, describes the path similarly: they wanted to go to church together, attended Mass at St. Peter a few times, and something clicked. "After realizing my values aligned more with the Catholic faith, I decided I wanted to become Catholic." No pressure. Just presence.

David Lopez, a Lincoln Police Department sergeant, tells perhaps the most dramatic story of the group. Married to his wife Katie in the Catholic Church in 2022, he carried what he calls "several anti-Catholic views" into the marriage. Katie never pressured him. She simply loved him and shared her heart. It wasn't until their daughter Natalie was born that something shifted. "Holding her for the first time awakened a deep sense of responsibility — not just as a father, but as a spiritual leader in our home." He began researching the Church quietly, not telling Katie at first. Reading the early Church Fathers, he found their beliefs "unmistakably Catholic." Slowly, curiosity became conviction. "There came a point when I could no longer deny what I had come to believe in my heart."

What They Found When They Walked In

Accompaniment gets people through the door of the Church. Community is what keeps them there.

"I didn't know anyone at the time," Archie recalls of his first Mass. "But the first time I walked into St. Peter's I instantly knew that I liked the church." Reagan Bennett, 23, who is being baptized this Easter after her Catholic grandparents' faithful marriage planted a seed years ago, says she now talks to her non-Catholic friends regularly about The Way. "Our classes are so interesting and you get so many new perspectives from people of all walks of life."

Matthew Ratliff, who married into a Catholic family fifteen years ago and is finally completing his own initiation, says the Thursday night classes became

something he genuinely looked forward to. "I feel so at peace and love being in the room every week."

Andrea Skaleski, who has moved across the country multiple times — Texas, Utah, Maine, and now back to Nebraska — found her way to St. Peter after her family's time in Maine showed her how much the Church mattered to their marriage. "We discovered how important getting back into the Church was for our family and how important God was in our marriage."

An Invitation Worth Extending

When asked what advice they'd give to someone wanting to invite a neighbor or family member to explore the faith, the candidates speak with a practical wisdom worth taking seriously.

Matt and Hannah Wilson wrote, "Meet people where they are at, and ask how you can help them," "Offer to go to class together. Having someone — or a group — with you can be a big help." The couple said.

Kale describes the atmosphere of The Way as something that does its own convincing: "It's amazing to see Father Tines pace around the room with a big smile, excited to teach people about the Catholic faith. This has an effect on people and plays a role in conversion."

David Lopez, whose journey began in private research and ended in public profession of faith, says simply: "I cannot recommend this class enough."

This Easter Vigil, 26 people were received into the fullness of the Catholic faith at St. Peter. Each of them was, at some point, on the outside — curious, skeptical, or simply unaware. Each of them needed someone to make an invitation.

The question the Church has always had to answer is not whether the faith is compelling. These testimonies make clear that it is. The question is whether we are willing to be the person who asks.

Do you know someone who might be open to exploring the Catholic faith? The Way begins again this fall. Talk to the parish office to learn how you can invite and accompany someone on the journey.

THE WAY PROFILES



Matthew Ratliff, a Student Success Specialist at "The Bay," has been married to his wife Annie since 2011 and is the father of three children. His journey is centered on setting a faithful example for his kids and deepening his relationship with God through daily prayer and the sacraments. He has already begun his mission of accompaniment, recently inspiring a friend to take the first steps toward joining the Church.



A Lincoln local, **Holley Reichenbach** began her journey at St. Peter in the fall of 2025 alongside her fiancé. Originally from a Christian background, she felt a profound draw to the Catholic faith after realizing how deeply its values aligned with her own. Through The Way, she moved from having no relationship with the Church to finding it essential, gaining the tools and community to fully embrace Christ's sacrifice.



A sergeant with the Lincoln Police Department, **David Lopez** is the husband of Katie and father to Natalie, with a second daughter arriving in June 2026. Though he initially held misconceptions about the faith, the birth of his daughter awakened a spiritual responsibility that led him to study early Church history. He now looks forward to leading his family on a strong spiritual foundation and being united with the whole Church through the Eucharist.



Originally from Oxford, Nebraska, 23-year-old communications student **Reagan Bennett** moved to Lincoln seeking a deeper connection to her heritage and her future. Inspired by her late grandparents' devoted Catholic marriage, Reagan found that attending Mass brought her closer to them while building a spiritual foundation for her own future family. Through The Way, she has moved from a place of control to one of peace, trusting more deeply in God's plan.

AN HOUR WELL SPENT

THE FRUITS OF PERPETUAL ADORATION AT ST. PETER



In a world that rarely slows down, our parish is blessed with something quietly extraordinary: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, the Blessed Sacrament is exposed for adoration. Week after week, parishioners slip away from the noise of their lives to spend an hour in His presence. Some come carrying heavy burdens; others simply come to sit. But nearly all of them say the same thing: they cannot imagine their week without it. We asked some of them to share what that hour has meant to them. Their words speak for themselves.

A Simple "Yes" That Changes Everything

For many adorers, the decision to sign up was anything but dramatic. Todd Heyne admits his first commitment came more from obligation than spiritual hunger. "My first 'yes' to a weekly adoration hour was more from a sense of obligation than a deep spiritual calling," he writes. "I was nervous about the weekly commitment and wondered if I would feel out of place or unsure of what to 'do' for a whole hour."

That hesitation is now a distant memory. "The quiet

hour has become the cornerstone of my week," Todd says — "a guaranteed moment of peace and conversation with Jesus, away from the noise and stress of daily life." It has also changed the way he shows up for the people around him: "I hope it has helped me become a better husband and father."

Neil Grubaugh, who has been attending for 10 to 15 years, describes a similar beginning: "I don't recall a dramatic thought or feeling; more like a quiet nudge. Something simple and persistent. I needed a fixed place to land each week, and this hour became it."

His advice to anyone on the fence is straightforward: "Don't overthink it. You don't need to know how it will change you — just be willing to show up. The hour meets you where you are, not where you think you should be."

The Anchor of the Week

Again and again, adorers describe their holy hour not as one more item on a packed schedule, but as the thing that makes the rest of the schedule possible. Neil puts it beautifully: "This hour is the still point of my week. It's where I reset. Where I bring everything — gratitude, grief, stress, clarity, confusion — and don't have to filter any of it."

For Suzanne Vandenhul, a busy physician who spends her days caring for patients with medical and mental challenges, Thursday morning adoration is essential. "This hour every Thursday morning is my time to bring my concerns for my family, my patients and the world to my Lord and Counselor," she writes. "He has spoken to me so clearly on many decisions in my life, and the peace I feel after an hour with Him physically present in the church is well worth the hour of sleep I lose."

Neil also notes the way adoration spills into the rest of life: "Problems don't disappear, but they're held differently. Decisions feel clearer. There's more peace, more perspective, more trust."

Jim Bertrand, who has been attending since 1992, frames it as a matter of spiritual logic: "Once a person has become convinced in their mind and their heart that Jesus is truly present in the Blessed Sacrament, any objections as to 'why I can't do a Holy Hour' melt away." He and his wife managed to make it work even while raising six children. "We make time for things which are important to us."

Sacrifice as Gift

Not every holy hour is at a convenient time. Kellan Niewald chose a 2 AM slot. "I asked myself this past year what I could do to show my love for Christ even in a small way," he writes, "and doing a holy hour at 2 AM kept tugging at

me — so here I am!" He acknowledges the cost: "Sacrificing sleep is very hard... once I am up for my hour, I am up for the day." But the reward is worth it. "I smile every time I walk into my hour because I am greeting a friend."

Kellan's challenge to those who feel they can't manage it is direct: "Why not? Is it because it is too hard to wake up at 1:45 AM or whatever time it is? Do you really not have just one hour to give to God?"

Discovering Adoration — Sometimes by Accident

Resa Helikar came to adoration through an unexpected path. After a devastating eighteen-month illness in 2018, she began walking 10,000 steps a day and found herself simply thinking — alone with her thoughts. "I did not realize I was even starting a conversation with God, but this is what happened!" Eventually, someone told her this kind of prayer had a name, and a home. "I later learned you can do this in the church — called 'adoration'!!!!"

For Resa, the beauty of our church building itself is part of the gift. "To have this time to be quiet, and be surrounded by the beauty of the church, and the smell of incense, and to be able to look upon the altar and just think with God — it is a special treat." She adds that as faith deepens, adoration stops feeling optional: "As you come to know who God is, it is a necessity."

An Invitation

If you have been thinking about signing up for a holy hour, the message from your fellow parishioners is unanimous: let your yes be reluctant if it has to be. Come tired, come unsure, come not knowing what you'll do for a whole hour. As Neil Grubaugh puts it, adoration is "steady, faithful, and life-giving. And in a noisy, demanding world, that kind of constancy is a gift." As Todd Heyne promises, "You may be surprised at how powerfully Jesus meets you in that quiet space, turning a simple commitment into a profound and life-giving gift."

Contact the parish office to learn about how to sign up for an hour. The Lord is waiting to spend time with you.

Scan the QR Code to Sign Up for a Holy Hour or go to our website at <https://adorationpro.org/schedule.php?org=peterlincoln&languageMain=english>





ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

4500 Duxhall Dr. | Lincoln, NE 68516
402-423-1239 | www.saintpeterlincoln.com

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

APRIL & MAY SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Sunday, April 12, 2:30 pm

Divine Mercy Sunday Holy Hour

Monday, April 13, 7:00 pm

Confirmation

Thursdays, April 9, 16, 23, 30 & May 7, 7:00 pm

Reach One More

Tuesday, April 14th, 7:00 pm

State of the Parish

Friday, April 24, 6:30 pm

First Penance

Saturday, April 25, 10:00 am

First Communion

Friday, May 1, Afternoon

Parish Date Night

Saturday & Sunday May 2 & 3, ALL Mass times

May Mass Refreshments

Thursday, May 14, 6:30 pm

New Parishioner Barbecue

Sunday, May 24, 4:30 pm

Fr. Peter Foley's First Mass

Saturday, June 5

Annual Parish & School Fundraiser