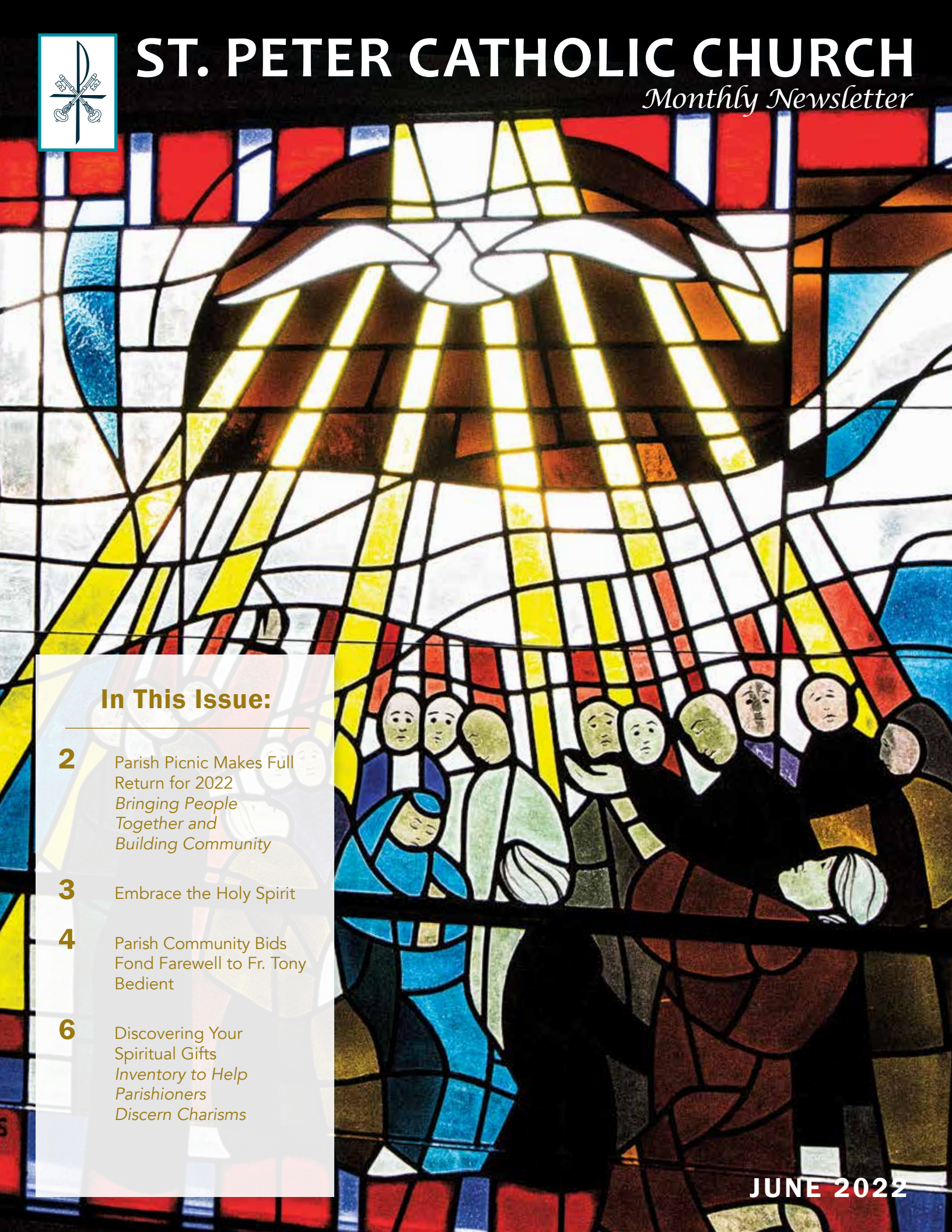
ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

Monthly Newsletter



In This Issue:

2 Parish Picnic Makes Full Return for 2022
Bringing People Together and Building Community

3 Embrace the Holy Spirit

4 Parish Community Bids Fond Farewell to Fr. Tony Bedient

6 Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts
Inventory to Help Parishioners Discern Charisms

JUNE 2022

PARISH PICNIC MAKES FULL RETURN FOR 2022

BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER AND BUILDING COMMUNITY

It's time again for the annual parish picnic! The Knights of Columbus are kicking off the summer with this fun event for the whole family on June 5 following the 11 a.m. Mass. There will be food and games for the family to enjoy as they spend time in fellowship.

Michael Creager, Grand Knight, who has helped with this event for the last few years, is looking forward to having the full picnic event back this year. While it had to be canceled due to COVID-19 in 2020, the parish offered a scaled-down version last summer. This year, Michael and his fellow Knights are planning to have this great event back to normal. The Knights will be barbecuing hamburgers and hot dogs for all.

"It's important to build the community and bring people together for a fun event," Michael says. "It's a great way for the kids to get together and hang out. There's no pressure, it's just a fun social event."

There are about 300 members of our local Knights of Columbus Council, and Michael estimates that about 30-40 of them usually show up to help put on the picnic, helping to grill and serve the food. The Knights are experienced at bringing the parish community together for fun and fellowship. They often offer their service to provide the parish with memorable get-togethers.

The Parish Picnic is a great opportunity for the parish to come together to enjoy one another's company. There will be outdoor games available, such as bean bag toss. Michael enjoys watching the enthusiasm in our parish family.

"It's great just to see the excitement of the kids and parents," Michael says. "It's fun just seeing everyone and how much fun they're having. It's a great time to have food and hang out."

The Bike Rodeo component of the Parish Picnic will be moved to this fall when the planned parking lot improvements will be completed. Children will be able to compete in obstacle courses and races on their bikes with opportunities to learn more about bike safety. A date for the Bike Rodeo will be set this summer.

"It's important to build the community and bring people together for a fun event. It's a great way for the kids to get together and hang out. There's no pressure, it's just a fun social event." — Michael Creager, Grand Knight

The Picnic has been a parish tradition for at least the last five years, bringing our community together, united in faith, enjoying the summertime together. Bring the whole family out for the Picnic on Sunday, June 5! The annual Bike Rodeo will be held this Fall.

A Letter from Our Pastor

EMBRACE THE HOLY SPIRIT

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

You've all heard homilies about Pentecost, which comes on June 5 this year. Pentecost was the day when the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles while they were gathered for prayer in Jerusalem.

Coming 10 days after Jesus' Ascension into heaven, the descent of the Holy Spirit turned the apostles from a collection of fearful followers looking for some direction into a band of courageous witnesses ready to declare their faith in Christ to the whole world.

You've heard that Pentecost is the birthday of the Church because that was the day when newly filled with the Holy Spirit, St. Peter preached the first Christian sermon, inviting his hearers to turn to Jesus as their Savior and their Lord. Those who accepted the invitation were baptized and "were added" to the Church (Acts 2:41). That day marked the beginning of the Church's public mission, which continues to the present.

But the Holy Spirit's actions in the Church were not limited to the apostles in an ancient time. He remains active down to the present, guiding the pope and the bishops as they go about their work of sanctifying, teaching and ruling in the Church. The Holy Spirit acts in the sacraments to make them effective signs of grace. We see the Holy Spirit's work in the witness of the saints through whom He continues the work of salvation.

The Spirit, moreover, acts not only in the Church as a corporate body, but also in the lives of individual Christians. We become temples of the Holy Spirit at our Baptism. Then at Confirmation, which is our own personal Pentecost, we receive the seal of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit unites us more closely to Christ, increases the spiritual gifts we have been given, and strengthens us to spread and defend the faith.

Ultimately, Pentecost is more than simply a feast celebrating something that happened a long time ago. Of course, the coming of the Spirit we read about in Acts 2 took place just once. But the Holy Spirit remains active today, guiding the Church as a whole, but also working in the life of each individual Christian to make us holy.

Maybe you don't feel as if the Holy Spirit is working in your life. Well, God the Father gave us free will, so we can choose whether or not we'll obey Him. And God the Holy Spirit, being united in the one Godhead with the Father and the Son, honors that freedom. He'll never force us to turn away from sin or compel us to obey God's commandments. The Spirit offers us grace. He will beckon us toward heaven, and occasionally we may feel Him nudging us along, but we always have the freedom to choose God or to reject Him.

Perhaps you've made a commitment to worship at Mass at least weekly and spend some time each day in prayer. Maybe you have promised to use some of your talents in parish ministries and service to the community. You may even have turned in a card at our last renewal to indicate your pledge of a portion of your treasure to be used in God's service.

I hope you've done all of these. If so, both the Holy Spirit's grace and your response were involved in your decision. And the Holy Spirit will give you the strength to fulfill your commitments.

This Pentecost, make the Gradual verse we'll sing just before the Gospel your personal prayer:

> *Alleluia. Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful; and kindle in them the fire of your love. Alleluia.*

If you do, you'll find the Holy Spirit working even more strongly in your life. You'll be happier, and the world, at least your little corner of it, will be a better place.

In His Mercy,

Fr. Eric Clark

Fr. Eric Clark,
Pastor

PARISH COMMUNITY BIDS FOND FAR

Our St. Peter parish community extends our heartfelt gratitude to Fr. Tony Bedient for his service to our faith family as Assistant Pastor. This month, as we bid farewell to Fr. Bedient, he shares his reflections on his time here at St. Peter and where God is taking him next on his vocational journey.

How did God "surprise" you as an Assistant Pastor here? Anything unexpected?

Probably everything.

Before you become a priest, you have to sign this letter from the bishop that says you are fully aware of what you are getting into. I remember signing it and thinking to myself, and maybe laughing and saying, "Who in their right mind ever really knows what they are getting into?" Whether it is marriage or priesthood, there are just so many unknowns.

What is one of your favorite memories of your time at St. Peter?

There are too many great memories to just try and say one. The greatest memories are with the people. If I had to pick one I would say, I will remember the gift of bringing you the Mass. As a seminarian, you always desire to bring Christ in the world. You often wonder how you were called by Him and you often think, "Will I ever get there?" So to have my first experiences in the priesthood of saying the Mass here, yeah, that is what I will remember.

What will you miss the most?

Hands down, the people. I only wish I could explain how much you all mean to me. In some capacities, you

EWELL TO *Fr. Tony Bedient*

all have changed my life as a man and a priest. When I was in the seminary, they told us how hard it would be to move parishes because of the relationship you develop. As a priest, you get the incredible gift to be with people in the most important parts of their life. And it's in these moments that we get to share the love of God with them.

In a special way, I will miss you because of what you have done for me. Your faith has inspired me to be a better man and priest. Your love for God, your love for God's Church, your love for service have always inspired me to be better.

What have you learned from your time here as a priest?

I guess I learned pretty much everything! Anything I do right, I will give credit to you — and anything I do wrong, I will blame on you!

Where is your next assignment?

Plattsmouth, Nebraska

What are you looking forward to on this new adventure?

It brings great sorrow in my heart to leave and I will look forward to my new assignment when I get there. But if I had to answer this question, I look forward to doing the will of God and sharing God's love with those that I will meet.

Any last comments?

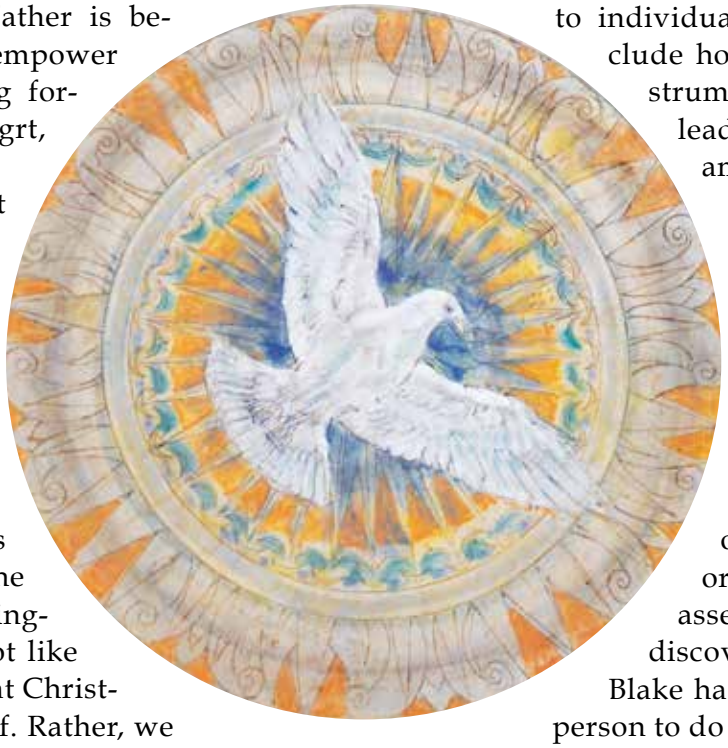
Thank you. I love you. And know you will always have a special place in my heart. God Bless you all.

DISCOVERING YOUR

INVENTORY TO

What gifts do you possess? Each and every one of us has been given gifts from God that we can use to build up His Kingdom. But sometimes, it can take effort to explore and learn about what gifts we personally can offer. Here at St. Peter, we want to help you discover your spiritual gifts.

"We want to help you see, discern, and receive the gifts the Father is bestowing on you, and empower you to use them going forward," says Blake Vajgrt, our parish catechist.



During Pentecost weekend, we will have available our new Spiritual Gifts Inventory for parishioners to complete as we encounter the Holy Spirit in a new way. Spiritual gifts, or charisms, are gifts that God has given to each of us for the building up of His Kingdom. These gifts are not like something you receive at Christmas to keep for yourself. Rather, we are given these gifts to develop and grow in them, giving them to others out of love of God.

"What we really want people to do is realize these gifts flow from God the Father," Blake says. "He gives each person a particular gift that's a manifestation of His love for the world that we are to share with others. He gives them to us so we can give them away."

Blake, along with parishioner Thomas Lally, developed the Spiritual Gifts Inventory we will see in our parish at Pentecost. The inventory builds upon a previous version from the Diocese of Cleveland but adds a component wherein parishioners may have their loved ones also fill out the inventory. There are many gifts given to individuals, some of which include hospitality, vocal and instrumental music, writing, leadership, and mercy, among others.

"Blake and I have met monthly, initially brainstorming what this would look like," Thomas says. "We have reworked some of the original inventory that we were given and rewrote some of the questions. The original had a person assessing themselves to discover his/her own gifts. Blake had the idea for a second person to do the evaluation, the reasoning being that another person will be able to view the external manifestation and fruits of one's spiritual gifts."

The inventory asks a series of questions that parishioners will answer in order to identify where to start the investigation of what gifts they have received. Then, there is a second inventory

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

HELP PARISHIONERS DISCERN CHARISMS

that a loved one — spouse, friend, etc. — can opt to fill out. The inventories will be easily accessible online through the parish website. Paper copies will also be available during Pentecost weekend. Ultimately, the hope is we can all grow in knowing God's love for us and understand a bit better how we might offer this love to others.

"The charisms really bond us together as a community of believers," Blake says. "I might be gifted in an area that's really going to help someone else out while another people might be able to reach another with his/her gifts. We have to do it together — we are the Body of Christ. The charisms call that out and identify that we can't do it alone, we have to do it together as a community."

After Pentecost weekend, Blake and his team will present a formation series this summer to continue our growth in this area of learning more about the charisms. The series will be held at the parish from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. on June 15, 22, 29 and July 6, 13, 20 and will include sessions on the topics of the Father's love, the Holy Spirit, how the Holy Spirit equips us as disciples, and how to continue this process of discerning and growing in our charisms.

"Finding out your spiritual gifts is not an endpoint, but the beginning," Thomas says. "We want to help parishioners grow their charisms."

Begin to discern your spiritual gifts by taking the Spiritual Gifts Inventory through this QR code

"Finding out your spiritual gifts is not an end point, but the beginning. We want to help parishioners grow their charisms." — Thomas Lally

All are invited to attend. For more information please contact Blake Vajgrt at blake-vajgrt@cdolinc.net.

ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

4500 Duxhall Dr. | Lincoln, NE 68516
402-423-1239 | www.saintpeterslincoln.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.
Saturday: 8:15 a.m.

CONFESSION

Monday & Friday: 7:00 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.
Saturday: 3:00-4:00 p.m.

St. Peter Summer Youth Mass

Join us for 8:15am Mass on Wednesdays at St. Peter

"It would be easier for the world to survive without the sun than to do without Holy Mass," said St. Padre Pio. Something has to get children out of bed on summer mornings, so why not a daily Mass? All the joys of summer cannot compare to the joy of assisting at Holy Mass.

The 8:15am Mass on Wednesday mornings will be a "Youth Mass". All youth are welcome to participate in Mass in a very special way. Use the QR code to sign up to read, serve, sing or bring up gifts. And after Mass, stay to socialize and enjoy a delicious donut!

We pray that your family will take advantage of this opportunity to receive the Eucharist and spend time with the Lord, as well as each other.

June 15, 22, 29 - July 6, 13, 20, 27 - Aug 3, 10