



JULY 2020

ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

Monthly Newsletter

TAKING RELATIONSHIPS TO THE NEXT LEVEL:

“MEN ON FIRE” CONFERENCE COMING TO ST. PETER IN OCTOBER

While the women of our parish will have the opportunity to grow in faith and fellowship during the September conference called “Undone,” we certainly won’t be overlooking the spiritual needs of the men in our parish! All men are encouraged to attend the men’s conference “Men on Fire,” hosted at St. Peter by the John Paul II Healing Center on Oct. 17.

After Mass and an opening prayer, this conference will feature talks by presenter Bart Schuchts and small-group discussion sessions, as well as times for fellowship and worship.

As Allie Moroney with the John Paul II Healing Center points out, the opportunity for men to gather for a conference tailored to their spiritual needs and desires is priceless.

“A lot of ministries are directed to the feminine heart, and the beauty of this conference is that Bart is a

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The John Paul II Healing Center’s “Men on Fire” conference will be held at St. Peter on Oct. 17.



“MEN ON FIRE” CONFERENCE COMING TO ST. PETER IN OCTOBER

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man and able to discern the Holy Spirit’s presence and let men encounter the Lord in a very authentic way,” Allie says. “This conference seeks to help men step into their own personal Pentecost, to get in touch with their passion and their convictions, to live fully the resurrection glory that was won for them on the cross, and then bring that home to their wives and children.”

As with all conferences led by the John Paul II Healing Center, “Men on Fire” focuses on an inner healing that brings God’s people into intimacy with Him. And when we forge a deeper relationship with our heavenly Father, the many ripple effects are witnessed in our earthly relationships as well.

“In the restoration of our identity as children of God, we see that fatherhood is so important in the life of the Church,” Allie says. “So I think in this time when the family of God is kind of scattered and in need of the Father, if we see that the first place we encounter the Father is through our earthly fathers, we realize the vital role that only men can play in helping set up our children to flourish and be free. ‘Men on Fire’ equips men to live the life that God intended for them to be leaders in the Church and in the domestic church.”

With plenty of time for small-group discussion and fellowship over the midday meal, men can also expect to create lasting connections with one another during this special conference.

“Relationship is so important to the life of the Church,” Allie says. “As we go through life — whether we are single or married — we can get so caught up in our daily lives that we don’t have a lot of space to talk about the deeper things going on in our hearts and minds. This conference allows men to be real about the struggles they encounter. This is a great way to give men

permission to take relationships to the next level in a way that will pave the way to deeper intimacy with Christ.”

Any man looking to deepen his relationship with the Lord, with his family, and with other like-minded men is greatly encouraged to attend the “Men on Fire” weekend here at St. Peter!

“I attended the Healing the Whole Person conference last year and found it to be a very deep and moving experience,” says parishioner John Kuchta. “I could see and feel the Holy Spirit working in our parish — and in me. I strongly recommend you set aside time to attend.”

Early registration is available now on the John Paul II Healing Center website June 29th, with regular registration starting July 20th. Come set your hearts on fire!

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If you would like more information on the “Men on Fire” conference, the John Paul II Healing Center and conference registration, please visit www.jpuihealingcenter.org/tc-event-category/men-on-fire/. You can also find out more about the conference on our St. Peter website, or call the Parish Office, Nancy Alder, at 402-423-1239.



A Letter from Our Pastor

WELCOME BACK... WELCOME HOME!

Dear Parishioners,

To those of you who have been actively participating in the life of our parish but have been forced to stay away due to the COVID-19 pandemic, welcome home!

To those of you who haven't been to church in years and decided to renew your faith, welcome back, and welcome home!

During these past few months, we have experienced some of the most challenging and unnerving times in the history of our nation and Church. As we start to emerge from the darkness of this crisis and return to Mass and parish activities and ministries, I feel blessed and excited.



thirsts for God, the living God. When can I go and see the face of God?" (Psalm 42:3) I hope you find a welcoming parish family here to greet you, overjoyed by your return.

As Christ tells us, from Matthew's Gospel, "For I was a stranger, you welcomed me" (Mt. 25:35).

The truth is, there really are no strangers at our parish. So as you come back home to our parish, I hope and pray you experience that same spirit of kindness and hospitality from all your fellow parishioners.

Whether you're a longtime parishioner, or someone who fell away from the Catholic Church and are now

ready to become renewed in the faith, let us all remember to welcome all who enter our parish doors with open arms, smiling faces and a servant's heart.

Excited to see some familiar faces.

Excited to see many new faces.

Excited to see faces of those we haven't seen in a while but decided to come back!

In times like these, when nothing seems to make sense, I am so very glad you are here. The timing of your return is perfect, because the truth is we need Christ now more than ever.

Whether you have simply been forced to stay away while public Masses were canceled, or if you have been away from the Church for many years, this crisis has changed us.

All of us.

We have had some extra time lately for introspection. For personal reflection. And for prayer. And perhaps during this era of isolation and social distancing, you have found yourself yearning for Christ more than ever before in the hopes of finding some meaning to all of this.

You have come to the right place.

As you walk through our doors for the first time in months – or perhaps even years – I hope you see the face of Christ in myself and in all those around you. At mass, we experience the desire of our heart in seeing Christ in the Eucharist and each other as the Psalmist writes, "My being

As our Lord had promised, "In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If there were not, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? (Jn. 14:2)" We here at St. Peter are preparing a place for you at the Eucharist banquet this coming Sunday. Every great home has the fellowship of a meal, we would like to provide you the necessary spiritual nourishment to walk as a disciple of Christ.

By living out our calling as Christian stewards, we will all emerge from this dark time as a community of faith that is stronger than ever – together.

Welcome back. And welcome home.

In His Mercy,

Fr. Eric Clark,
Pastor



WE THANK YOU



Fr. Doty has been assigned the Pastor of St. Mary Church in Denton. Fr. Doty reflects on his time at St. Peter as a time filled with many blessings: "I want you to know that I have been extremely blessed and happy to have been the Pastor and Chief Administrative Officer of St. Peter Church and School over these past couple of years. While I was very much looking forward to being a part of the great things God has in store for St. Peter Parish in the coming years, I also know that my life is not my own."

On behalf of the St. Peter Parish community — we thank you, Fr. Doty! We have been blessed and happy to have you as our Pastor! We will miss you. These are a sample of messages of gratitude to you as you go to your new assignment.

"Thank you for your leadership and vulnerability to our parish family. Your strength and witness were inspiring during these trying times and we wish you the best of luck at your new assignment." — Zachary Kane

"Fr. Doty has been a spiritual giant for me in these short two years at St. Peter's. If I had to sum everything he has taught us in a few short phrases, it would be: 1) Take it to prayer — don't just think about things, but actually pray about it, and 2) All I can be is authentically who God made me — stop comparing to others, and be grateful for the gifts He has given me. If every human being followed those two basic principles, our world would be a much





U, FR. DOTY!

different place. Thank you Fr. Doty for your ceaseless sacrifices on behalf of our parish." – Mary Odgaard

"You have been a blessing to St. Peter Church. Thank you for your service, and for leading and guiding us with great faith." – Lori Matthiessen

"Getting to know Father, his care of the flock, especially the wounded and those in greatest need, it has been easy to find not only a good shepherd in him, but it has been easy to see the Good Shepherd. The Church calls her priests to act 'in persona Christi' – in the person of Christ. That has been very easy to see in Father, especially as he prays the Mass, and in his willingness to go after the wounded.

Father stepped into a tough situation when he arrived short of two years ago. I recall his first words in his first homily, 'I'm glad to be here...' There's a Good Shepherd going into a flock of wounded and mad sheep. Spiritual triage. And he sincerely said, 'I am glad to be here.' That's a shepherd who knows the flock needs him, and he is glad to be amidst them." – Sister Mary Michael

"God always provides us with what we need, and we needed Fr. Doty when he became our Pastor almost two years ago. Thank you Fr. Doty, for the healing you brought to our community. You exemplify respect and genuine compassion to all. You are so Christ-centered and have inspired us to pray more. I have been blessed to serve our Lord on your staff and I am extremely grateful!" – Sue Ray





THE TRAITS OF THE CHRISTIAN STEWARD

Each day, we strive to live stewardship in our lives, recognizing our roles as “God’s co-workers” in His creative, redemptive and sanctifying work. But in our quest to live as disciples of Christ, many obstacles often arise.

One of the most prevalent roadblocks in living stewardship is understanding the traits that make up a good Christian steward. Surely, it would be much more convenient if we had some sort of “stewardship list” that could lay out the necessary steps to becoming a good steward. Unfortunately, it more often feels like living stewardship is a lifelong journey that we will never fully comprehend.

Fortunately, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ pastoral letter on stewardship, *Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response*, gives some insight into the characteristics that make up a good Christian steward.

The Christian steward should display some of the following traits:

Insight — Before the disciples could live what we know as the stewardship way of life, they needed a flash of insight, or a certain way of viewing the world and their relationship to it in a fresh light. This “divine grandeur,” more than anything else, is often what sets people on the path to Christian stewardship (*Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response*, 39).

Conscientiousness — Stewards are fully conscious of their accountability in sharing of their time, talent and treasure. As caretakers of the gifts that God has given them, they have the opportunity and responsibility to use them to their fullest potential to spread God’s Kingdom on Earth (40).

Generosity — Christian stewards are generous out of love as well as duty. They should display a desire to share with and care for others based on the sacramental graces they have received. And

they are also cognizant of the many warnings that the New Testament presents to those who fail in charity and authentic love (40).

Joy — Christian stewards are often presented with difficult obstacles, but they should remain joyful in the face of challenges to their lives of stewardship. Like Paul, the good steward is able to say, “I am filled with encouragement, I am overflowing with joy all the more because of all our affliction” (2 Cor. 7:4). Only by serving with a joyful spirit will stewards fully reap the rewards of their service, both in this life and the next.

Indeed, living as a Christian steward is a lifelong journey with many ups and downs along the way. But if we strive to consciously incorporate each of these characteristics into our giving of time, talent and treasure, we will find that the responsibilities of a good Christian steward will become much clearer with each experience of service.





CATECHESIS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

HELPING CHILDREN ENCOUNTER THE LOVE OF CHRIST

Though mentors and religious education programs can help us along the way, a person's stewardship journey remains a deeply personal one. Ultimately, it's about our relationship with God – a relationship that begins with the gift of sanctifying grace at the baptismal font, and blooms gradually as we come to know and encounter our loving Father. This is why lead teacher Colleen Smith is so excited about the parish's new Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program.

"Jesus tells us we must become like little children to enter the kingdom of heaven," Colleen says. "One of the distinguishing characteristics of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is its call to us adults to look at and listen to the children and allow them to lead us to God. As the catechist, I am especially excited to enter into the relationship with the children and step back to observe how they receive and respond to God's gifts of love."

Applying the educational philosophy of Maria Montessori, Catechesis of the Good Shepherd takes on a very hands-on, experiential approach to faith formation. This cultivates a nurturing environment known as the atrium where children and adults can live out together the religious experience. Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is designed to facilitate a listening stance in both children and adults, entering more deeply into the mysteries of Christ's Word, the liturgy and, ultimately, our Catholic faith. This is done, however, in an organic, child-led manner that allows the children to utilize handmade objects and interact with the faith, drawing meaning from it in their own personal way.

"Every item in the atrium aids the child in their relationship with God," Colleen says. "Materials are handmade by the catechists and relate directly to Scripture. This catechesis respects the mystery of the religious experience of children. Children gather, a

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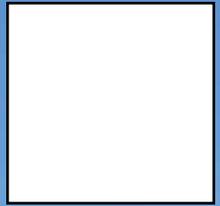
Young children have a natural ability to enjoy their relationship with God in a very deep, rich way.



Catechesis of the Good Shepherd adopts a child-led catechetical approach, allowing the children to encounter and explore the faith.



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

Saturday: 3:00 - 4:00 p.m.

CATECHESIS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD *continued from page 7*

candle is lit, and Scripture is read slowly and solemnly from the Bible. There is time for the children to respond and contemplate on the Word they have heard. The post-proclamation work the child chooses is a natural entry into contemplation and contemplative prayer. Sometimes, it gives rise to spontaneous celebrations closely modeled on liturgical forms."

"This way, children are free to choose a friendship with God," adds school Principal Sr. Mary Michael. "It's not imposed on them, but rather is something

they discover and that develops organically."

The program will be formally launched at St. Peter Catholic Church this fall for both parish and school children 3-6 years of age. Morning sessions will take Monday-Friday from 9-10:30 a.m., with Monday and Tuesday being reserved for school children, and Wednesday-Friday being available for preschool-age children not enrolled at the school. There will also be an afternoon session from 4-5:30 p.m. on Wednesdays.

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If you would like to learn more about Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, please contact Colleen Smith at 402-250-5087, Colleen-Smith@cdolinc.net or call the school office at 402-421-6299.