



NOVEMBER 2020

ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

Monthly Newsletter

USHER MINISTRY CARRIES OUT THE MISSION OF HOSPITALITY

BUILDING COMMUNITY AND FOSTERING FRIENDSHIPS IN OUR ST. PETER FAMILY

When you walk into our parish, you can't help but feel God's love, alive in the warm smiles and helpful assistance of our ushers.

"Our mission is to make all those who come to our parish feel welcome," says Chuck Hiller, who coordinates our Usher Ministry. "We want to put them at ease and make them feel that they are part of our parish family. We want them to know that people are happy to see them."

Their job may be simple, but it definitely isn't insignificant. In fact, it is a beautiful way to help build up our parish community and foster friendships.

"I usher regularly at the 8 a.m. Mass, so I usually see the same people coming into church," Chuck says. "I know where they prefer to sit, and that helps. I have gotten to know them over time."

In addition to serving as greeters, the ushers open the parish doors, help seat people and take up the collection. In light of the Coronavirus pandemic, the ushers are currently seating parishioners in a way that maintains social distancing between families. They are also leaving the collection baskets in the back of



the parish, and not letting people out of the pews to receive Holy Communion as usual, but allowing them to do so themselves. Furthermore, the ushers have been sanitizing the pews, doors, and restrooms after Mass.

"Although the attendance isn't what it was before the pandemic first hit, there are more and more people

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LIVING OUT GRATITUDE AND STEWARDSHIP, *During Thanksgiving and Beyond*

Every November, as the holiday season fast approaches, we are filled with a deep sense of sentimentality and gratefulness for all of our blessings. At the same time, we encounter many wonderful ways to give — to cheerfully share our own gifts — during this time of Thanksgiving.

It is with this spirit of gratitude that we can truly live out the stewardship way of life. This Thanksgiving, there are plenty of opportunities to do this in a direct way. Is there a family member or friend you haven't spoken to for a long time, or someone who might be spending the holiday alone? Drop them an email, pick up the phone and call, or even catch up with them via Zoom or FaceTime — even virtually, such connections at this time are essential! Perhaps you may volunteer at a soup kitchen, or you might donate a Thanksgiving meal to a family in need who wouldn't have one otherwise.

For Black Friday, make it a point the next day to donate old clothes that you or your family members no longer need. And as the winter draws closer, you might participate in — or even organize — a coat drive, and

then go out into the community to give the coats away to homeless shelters and those in need during the winter months. There are countless such opportunities to live in gratitude and thanksgiving — opportunities that go beyond just having a meal at home.

Of course, we must remember that this spirit of thanksgiving does not end after Thanksgiving, nor does it end following Advent and Christmas. We must always consider how to give, even as the glow of the holiday season fades after the New Year. In January, if there is abundance in your closet, give away from that abundance. In February, if there are volunteers needed at the soup kitchen, give of your time. We need a renewed spirit of stewardship and thanksgiving that lasts the whole year so that our giving becomes habitual, and not just seasonal.

This Thanksgiving, ask the Holy Spirit where He is calling you to give. And may the joy of the Thanksgiving season flow into our lives as good stewards, every day and throughout the entire year.

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A Letter from Our Pastor

“WHAT’S IN IT FOR US” MAY SURPRISE YOU

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

You already know that our parish is committed to living as intentional disciples of Christ through the holistic practice of stewardship. What you may not know is that one of our inspirations and mentors is the late Msgr. Thomas McGread of the Diocese of Wichita.

Who was Msgr. McGread?

Msgr. McGread was a humble, servant priest who created a model for how stewardship should be practiced – both here and in many Catholic parishes across the country. What began simply with Msgr. McGread applying his stewardship principles at St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Wichita – where he served as pastor for 31 years – has become a way of life for our parish family and for Catholics around the nation.

With such an incredible blueprint from this visionary priest, how could we go wrong?

We have truly embraced stewardship here at St. Peter, and for that, I am blessed and grateful. From the beginning, however, the question “What’s in it for us?” had to be on our minds as our efforts to educate parishioners and promote the stewardship way of life were introduced.

At first, “What’s in it for us?” seemed to center on what people were willing to do to give back to God as part of practicing their faith and living as disciples of Jesus Christ.

While this is important, there is so much more to it.

The truth is, “What’s in it for us?” is really about “What’s in it for you?”

“What’s in it for you?” perhaps is best explained as one simple principle – cultivating a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ.

When Christ calls us to discipleship, He is also calling us to be faithful stewards of our time, talent and treasure. Our gratitude for these gifts is best expressed through giving a portion of each back to God. Thus, stewardship becomes a way of life that is also the way to holiness.



Our relationship with Christ is what we get in return.

Our efforts as a parish to promote the spiritual benefits of active stewardship are designed to foster a deeper relationship with God for all of us. Membership in a parish family should encourage, support, and celebrate that relationship with the living God, first and foremost. Everything else flows from that.

If we are not focused on our relationship with God, then what will define our spirituality?

If we have embraced the blessings of stewardship as a practical way of being the disciples we are called to be, we will in turn know a deeper relationship with Christ.

We celebrate Thanksgiving this month, which truly is a stewardship holiday since stewardship begins with an attitude of gratitude. I am thankful for all that is done here at St. Peter, and for the many parishioners willing to do so much.

In closing, let me share one final thought to help you realize the gift that our parish is to each and every one of us.

Be grateful for all you have.

Be generous in giving something back to God.

Be faithful stewards, and you will have done both.

That is what’s in it for you, and in turn, that is what’s in it for us!

And don’t forget – God has been doing this for centuries. We’re just the latest and most fortunate recipients.

Happy Thanksgiving, and may God bless you and your family.

In His Mercy,

Fr. Eric Clark,
Pastor



ESTATE PLANNING:

Prayerfully En

Estate planning is a process many of us avoid considering because it means confronting our own mortality, or it may loom as a complicated matter we'd rather put off altogether. However, thoughtful estate planning can help us embrace stewardship by helping us plan how our treasure can best be distributed. As we plan for our treasure, we can make a difference for the future of St. Peter Parish.

"Estate planning is necessary for when you can no longer make your own decisions regarding your home, assets, investments, and even healthcare" says Katherine Norman, St. Peter Coordinator for Evangelization, Stewardship, and Volunteer Programs. "Deciding who and how your assets and accounts will be handled, is a lot more than just a will. A will is only good once you have passed. An estate plan arranges the management and disposal of your estate in the event you become incapacitated as well as after death, it also may help you and your beneficiaries pay substantially less in taxes and fees."

Many people have an Individual Retirement Account, or IRA, that has been paid into throughout their working lives. The rules covering IRAs include taking Required Minimum Distributions (RMD). This requires an IRA holder, starting at the age of 72, to begin withdrawing money from the account. The withdrawals in a traditional IRA, as opposed to a Roth IRA, are considered income and are subject to being taxed.

"Some people don't need this money to live on,

depending on their Social Security, pensions, and other assets," Katherine says. "However, if they don't withdraw their RMD by the end of the year, they will be subject to a 50-percent penalty. So they must withdraw the required amount every year and count it as taxable income."

One option to avoid taxes being taken on the distribution is to give the money to an entity as a Qualified Charitable Distribution, or QCD.

"This money can go straight from the IRA to a charitable entity and therefore is not counted as taxable income, which can keep your income below a certain threshold," Katherine says. "Many people do not take advantage of QCD and their tax efficiency. If you are 72 or older, you should consider talking to your financial advisor about how to make your charitable giving tax-efficient. It is also a good idea to review your beneficiaries on an annual basis and consider adding the church to your beneficiary list by giving 10 percent of each account to St. Peter."

St. Peter Parish can receive QCD and contributions through estate planning that can help our parish in several ways.

"Our parish does our best to be good stewards of the money we have, but there is still always a long list of wants and needs for the church," Katherine says. "Sometimes, we cannot address the needs until a bequest is received.

*Last Will and Testament
of*



Ensuring the Continued Stewardship of Our Treasure

However, it is impossible to plan for since we almost never know we have a benefactor until after they pass.”

There are many times we as parishioners are unaware that there has been such a donation, but we receive the benefits of someone else’s charitable giving.

“We put our trust in the Lord and He takes care of us,” Katherine says. “One way the Lord does this is with generous people – only because of them our needs and wants of the parish are met. It’s like the Christmas bonus you didn’t know you were getting, but it always helps out!”

Being a good steward of our treasure means we cannot act in ignorance.

“It is our responsibility to make plans for our money after we are gone,” Katherine says. “We should be the ones to decide how much goes where. You shouldn’t put this off. It is good to be diligent and pray about it. It’s our duty to put the time and effort in making these decisions. And if you

need help, talk to your financial advisor and accountant.”

Katherine also suggests looking into a living will, or advanced directive.

“Five Wishes Advance Directive was created by Jim Towey who worked closely with St. Mother Teresa,” Katherine says. “He lived in a hospice that she ran for a year and was inspired by his experience. He wanted to give families a way to cope with illness and have people decide how they are treated if you get seriously ill.”

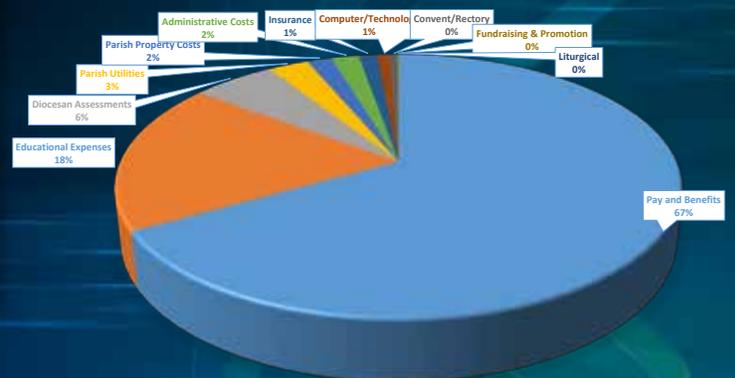
The document addresses how one’s needs are to be addressed – medical, personal, emotional, and spiritual, at the end of their life.

“It is a free document for downloading, and once it is filled out, it is a valid living will under Nebraska law,” she says. “It is easy to complete and your family will thank you for not having to make hard choices, without knowing your wishes, during difficult times.”

St. Peter Parish and School 2020-2021 Income and Expense Comparison



St. Peter Parish and School Percentage of Total Expense July 2020-Aug 2020





ST. CHARLES BORROMEEO:

AN EXAMPLE OF LIVING COMPLETELY FOR THE LORD

One important aspect of stewardship – of involvement in parish life and our community – is understanding our own personal vocation. One saint especially embodies this key aspect of stewardship. St. Charles was a model priest, and many priests and clergy-in-training look to his life as an example of how to live completely for the Lord. Let us look to his example as we serve our own faith family and community.

When St. Charles Borromeo died at the age of 46, he had accomplished more than most clergy twice his age. St. Charles is credited with the continuation and completion of the Council of Trent in 1562, extensive reformation within the Archdiocese of Milan and beyond, and the creation of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine – the forerunner of the modern Religious Education system. St. Charles possessed a fierce love for the Church, especially for the people under his spiritual care – the Archdiocese of Milan.

He was born in 1538 to the powerful noble family Borromeo. But rather than live the life of a noble, St. Charles chose instead to serve the Church.

As a young man, St. Charles received the clerical tonsure – a hairstyle where the top of the head is shaved, common among religious orders – and studied at a Benedictine abbey near his hometown of Arona, Italy. His uncle, Cardinal Giovanni Angelo de' Medici, was elected Pope in 1559, and he took the name Pius IV. Shortly after becoming pope, Pius IV appointed St. Charles to serve as secretary of state, as well as cardinal and administrator of the Archdiocese of Milan. At the time, St. Charles was still a layperson. While serving in these positions, he encouraged the pope to reconvene the Council of Trent, an ecumenical gathering during which Church leaders corrected various abuses and sought to more clearly define elements of Catholic doctrine.



In 1563, St. Charles was ordained to the priesthood during a secret ordination ceremony. Following the death of his older brother, Count Federico Borromeo, St. Charles' family had urged him to marry and carry on the Borromeo name. However, St. Charles felt that God was calling him to serve the Church, and continued to fulfill his vocation.

Shortly after becoming a priest, St. Charles was appointed by Pope Pius IV as Archbishop of Milan. Historians say the people of Milan rejoiced under St. Charles' leadership and spiritual guidance – he was the first bishop in 80

years to actually live in Milan and minister to its people himself. Under his rule, Milan became a model diocese that was revered throughout the Catholic world.

Due to his great intellect, St. Charles was often called away from Milan to help the pope in various ways. However, despite his busy life, St. Charles continued to push reformation among clergy and sought to continually improve the ministry of the Church. He often encouraged clergy to spend time educating and spiritually renewing themselves. During a homily at a diocesan synod, St. Charles addressed the priests saying, "Are you in charge of a parish? If so, do not neglect the parish of your own soul, do not give yourself to others so completely that you have nothing left for yourself. You have to be mindful of your people without becoming forgetful of yourself."

St. Charles was a true servant of the people. As the plague of 1576 ravaged much of Milan, he remained with his people, serving the sick and dying in hospitals throughout the archdiocese.

St. Charles Borromeo died Nov. 3, 1584. He was canonized in 1610, and his feast day is celebrated each year on Nov. 4.



THE SCRIP PROGRAM

*KEEP YOUR PANTRY STOCKED AND GAS TANK FILLED
WHILE SUPPORTING OUR SCHOOL!*

Imagine buying gas, groceries, or clothing – even airline tickets! – and having some of the proceeds go right to our school. Believe it or not, these everyday purchases can be used to benefit the School Family Association, or SFA, at St. Peter Catholic School. And it's done through a program called SCRIP.

Through SCRIP, gift cards are sold, and merchants give a portion of the sale right back to the school. This returned percentage can reach up to 30 percent. The gift cards are from local and national stores, gas stations, and restaurants, just to name a few.

Bridget Paseka helps coordinate SCRIP and she says the money has been a huge blessing to the SFA and school.

“Previous items that SCRIP funds have gone toward include the computer lab, teacher supplies, playground equipment, security cameras for the school, and many other worthy causes,” she says. “Every dollar earned through SCRIP benefits our school children and teachers.”

SCRIP is especially convenient, as it gives you the opportunity to support the school through businesses you already patronize. Plus, there is a gift card for everyone!

Bridget points out that even something as simple as using SCRIP is a form of stewardship – the program is an important source of revenue and every little bit counts.

“Everyone who purchases gift cards through the SCRIP program is being a steward of their treasure,” Bridget says.

You can begin using SCRIP in a number of ways. A variety of SCRIP cards are sold at weekend Masses. Orders and payment are dropped off at the SCRIP counter before Mass, filled during Mass, and are ready



Bridget Paseka helps with the SCRIP program to benefit the School Family Association.

for pickup after. If you have a child at the school, forms can be sent back with them and the SCRIP cards are sent home.

For those who are tech-savvy, there is a RaiseRight app for purchasing electronic cards and physical cards, to be delivered to the school. You may also visit www.saintpeterslincoln.com/scrip.html to learn more about getting set up with an online account.

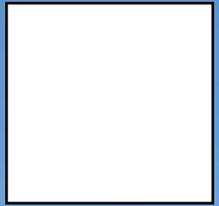
Finally, there is also the E-SCRIP option, which allows people to receive SCRIP orders automatically on the 1st, 16th, or both days of each month. Orders are pre-determined by the purchaser, payment for their order is automatically deducted from their checking account, and orders are either sent home with their children or are available for pickup at weekend Masses.

Another way to support the SCRIP program is by helping fill Scrip orders at Mass. SCRIP is sold every weekend, all year, except Christmas and Easter.

If you would like to volunteer by helping to fill SCRIP orders at Mass, please contact Bridget Paseka at 402-480-5463 or bridgetpaseka@gmail.com. Bridget says no experience is necessary and it's a great way to support St. Peter Catholic School.



ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH



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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 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.

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

USHER MINISTRY CARRIES OUT THE MISSION OF HOSPITALITY

continued from front cover

coming to Mass again," Chuck says. "We want them to feel comfortable after having been gone for a while."

About four ushers serve at each of our weekend Masses. There are two groups of four ushers who are scheduled to cover each Mass throughout a given month. The groups alternate months with additional groups of ushers, so that every usher serves each weekend of the month, every other month.

Overall, the ministry is a meaningful way to live out the stewardship pillar of hospitality, making our parish family into a family with open arms. Our ushers help St. Benedict's famous saying, "All guests are to be welcomed as Christ," come to life.

"I see being involved with the Usher Ministry as part of my commitment to stewardship," Chuck says. "I believe it is a talent God gave me, and I think the other ushers believe this as well."



If you would like further information about this ministry of hospitality, or to find out how to serve as an usher, please contact Chuck Hiller 402-328-7011 or chuck_hiller@outlook.com.