



OCTOBER 2020

# ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

*Monthly Newsletter*

*Preparing for Our Third Annual Stewardship Renewal:*

## Our Response to God's Love

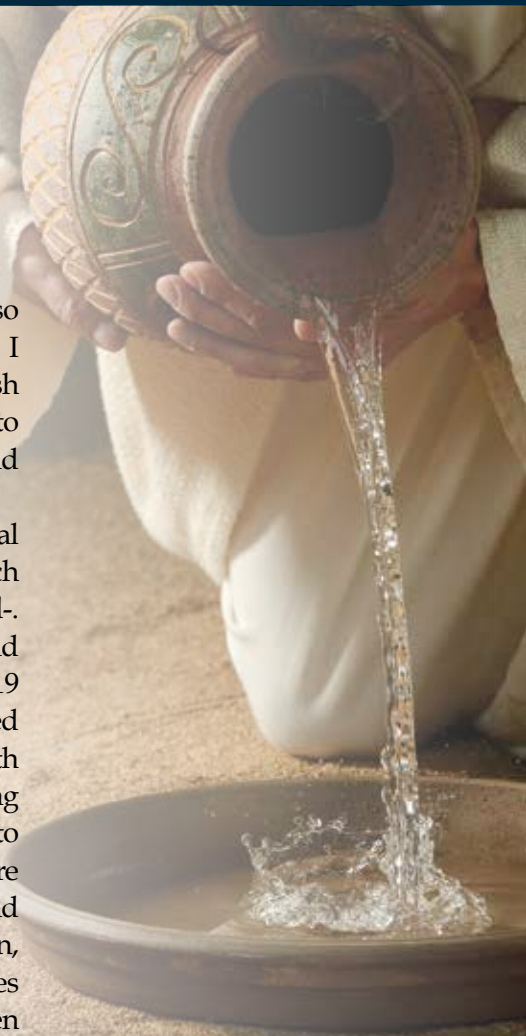
The global pandemic has changed the way Americans live and worship. While St. Peter, like all Catholic churches across the world, has been forced to adapt to new ways of serving God's people, one thing has remained constant – the strong faith and active discipleship of our parish family. With this year's Stewardship Renewal upon us, we look forward to the continued spiritual growth in our faith community.

As Stewardship Council Chair John Kuchta reminds us, stewardship is our response to God's love for us. "That is the essence of stewardship for the individual person as a steward and as it is represented in the parish," John says. "The bishops' letter on stewardship (*Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*) talks about how I can repay the Lord for all the good He has

done for me through stewardship, so that's what it all boils down to for me. I have a tremendous love for our parish at St. Peter, and I have a responsibility to serve and be informed, be hospitable and give a measure back to the church."

As we approach our third annual Stewardship Renewal process, our church has much for which to be thankful. Even in the midst of the closures and disruptions caused by the COVID-19 crisis, our parishioners have continued to give generously of their treasure, with many taking advantage of online giving options. While we were no longer able to visit the sick and homebound, cards were sent conveying to them the thoughts and prayers of our parishioners. In addition, the diocesan Catholic Social Services truck in our church parking lot has been

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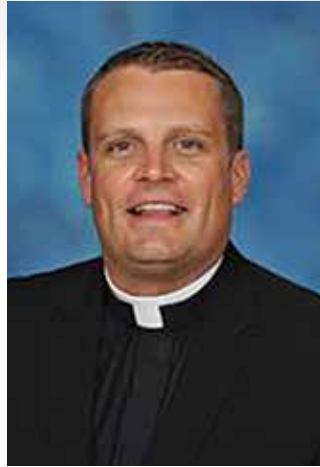
*A Letter From Our Pastor*

# HOW CAN I GIVE TODAY?

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

In these times, it is helpful to begin the day with the question, "How can I give today?"

As we continue to do our best to live stewardship during these difficult times, I have been thinking of ways for us all to share our Time, Talent and Treasure with our family, our parish, our community, and even ourselves. So, I would like to share with you my list of 10 ways to be a giver in these days that challenge us to be upbeat, or even to remain on an even keel. And, as we give effectively, we will spread and experience joy.



1. **Give encouragement.** Many folks are struggling as they adjust to a new normal, which keeps changing – but they are moving along, trying to do what is right and good. Encouragement helps us become united as the body of Christ as St. Paul writes, "Mend your ways, encourage one another, agree with one another, live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you" (2 Corinthians 13:11).
2. **Give gratitude.** Be grateful to God, to family and friends. "No duty is more urgent than that of returning thanks" – St. Ambrose. Find unique ways to express gratitude – maybe send a hand-written note. The greatest way to express gratitude is attending Mass together.
3. **Give reconciliation.** We are all victims in one way or another. People who have hurt us are usually victims themselves. Holding on to the hurt or harboring resentment does no one any good. Start forgiving by praying for the one who has hurt you or a loved one. This is a good time to mend fences by expressing care and the desire to see beyond the rift (see Matthew 5:24).
4. **Give yourself some slack.** During these days, many people report that memories of their own mean, foolish and hurtful actions are flooding them with a vengeance. If others have forgiven us, if God and the Church have forgiven us, if we would forgive someone who did to us what we cannot forgive ourselves for,

well then, what good reason is there to withhold forgiving ourselves?

5. **Give time to volunteer.** There are many needs out there for folks to share their time and talents in one way or another and we are called to use our gifts to serve others (Rom. 12:6-8). We know this in our Church, our neighborhood, our places of work. In our bulletin, we regularly invite folks to volunteer, to make another person's life healthier and safer. Seldom do we volunteer as a solitary person – we can make great friends among our fellow volunteers.
6. **Give financial support.** This past May, *Give to Lincoln Day* campaign reached nearly 7 million dollars. It is remarkable what people can give in uncertain times! Our Church and parish face the challenge of managing our budget while there are less people attending Mass and giving less of their treasure. There is a joy and a sense of peace when we give, when we trust God to provide enough for our well-being, and when we can see the good our generosity and sacrifices are accomplishing.
7. **Give the gift of self-care.** Balance exercise, healthy meals, rest, staying in touch with family and friends, intellectual stimulation, finding ways to enjoy life with virtual assistance, staying safe and keeping others safe. Find ways to enjoy nature. Self-care is important so we can be our best self in our relationships with others and as we encounter life's challenges.
8. **Give time to listen to God.** Trust that God has words of encouragement, direction, clarification and peace for us. We pray speaking to God from our hearts, but also by listening to the Divine Message which penetrates our hearts. Consider signing up for an hour of adoration. Jesus asked, "Could you not watch one hour with me?" (Matthew 26:40).
9. **Give the gift of intercessory prayer.** Intercessory prayer

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# HOW CAN I GIVE TODAY? *continued from page 2*

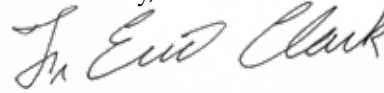
works — the result is not always that our will is done, but intercessory prayer leads us to look for God, to trust in God, and to compassionately put those for whom we pray in the hands of God. Intercessory prayer unites us with those for whom we are praying and those who are also praying (Ephesians 6:18). We give a great gift when we pray for someone — we have the joy of bringing our hopes to God and feeling the Divine Presence.

**10. Give the gift of the desire to give.** St. Ignatius of Loyola began his day by praying, “Lord, teach me to be generous. Teach me to serve You as You deserve.” If we start every day with the desire and the question “How can I give today?” we will have a spirit of dedication and

build on the joy of giving day by day as we gradually work our way through this pandemic and all the fears, issues and problems which have surfaced.

Our Lord taught, “Give and gifts will be given to you” (Luke 6:38) so let us trust the joy of giving as we move forward.

In His Mercy,



Fr. Eric Clark,  
Pastor

# Third Annual Stewardship Renewal *continued from front cover*

overflowing with donated clothing and other items from parishioners.

As health and financial struggles increase and social distancing becomes the new normal, the most vulnerable of our community members will benefit — now more than ever — from these acts of generosity.

“The outpouring is just amazing and it’s a wonderful thing to see,” John says. “People have been donating and serving in other ways, which is part of the uniqueness of this pandemic and the impact it has had.”

It should come as no surprise that nothing can stop our dedicated parishioners from sharing their time, talent and treasure in any way possible! Last year’s Stewardship Renewal showed a great increase in commitments to prayer and faith formation over the first year. John hopes that this year, even more parishioners will consider making a commitment to live as intentional disciples by engaging more fully in their faith.

“I think the most important thing is just to clear your mind and spend a few minutes praying about it,” John says. “Go to church and have a visit and think about what you want to do this year with your faith life. God will speak to you — just give Him a chance.”

By keeping a commitment to stewardship at the forefront, our community is sure to emerge from these unprecedented times with an even stronger devotion to living out our faith together as brothers and sisters in Christ.

“I hope that there will be a renewed spirit of participation in our parish [when we are fully back],” John says. “My hope and prayer is that people will feel welcome in our community. We’ve just been blessed with a new pastor, and I think he will bring a renewal to the parish as well, because he has a deep focus on formation and prayer. Fr. Clark will be an inspiration for the parish moving forward, for sure.”

# Don't Forget **TO RETURN YOUR COMMITMENT CARD!**

Please remember to turn in your commitment cards to the parish as soon as possible. We appreciate your willingness to participate in this year’s renewal. The more we grow to embrace and understand the stewardship way of life, the more our parish will flourish and grow!



**Time**  
share time with God in prayer

Using my time on earth wisely, making time for personal prayer, family prayer and quality time with friends and loved ones.

Please check the circle next to your commitments to prayer:

- Attend Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament weekly
- Attend weekday Mass at least once a week
- Attend Mass every Sunday and Holy Days
- Invite a friend or acquaintance to Mass
- Pray together with my family
- Pray for the sick, the lonely and the deceased
- Discuss our Catholic faith with my family
- Read the Bible for a half hour a week
- Spend at least 15 minutes a day in personal prayer
- Pray the Rosary at least weekly
- Go to Confession at least every month
- Spend extra time with my spouse each day
- Pray for my country daily
- Pray for an increase in vocations
- Pray for our priests and sisters
- Pray for persecuted Christians
- Pray for life from conception to natural death
- Pray for those serving in the military
- Pray for conversion and healing
- Pray for the Church in the face of crisis

**Talent**  
get involved, use your talents

Using my God-given abilities to strengthen the Church and help others, especially through parish ministries and activities.

Write the first name of the family member who wishes to join or is active in each ministry on the lines below. You may write multiple names for the same ministry.

Currently involved  Interested in joining

**PRAYER**

- Adoptions
- Altar Servers
- Children's Liturgy
- Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (EMHC) Homebound
- Lectors/Readers
- Legion of Mary
- Music Ministry
- Men's Saturday Morning Formation Group and Saturday Morning Rosary Walk to Planned Parenthood
- Pre-natal Adoration
- Prayer Line
- Women's Friday Morning Bible Study

**FORMATION**

- Baptismal Preparation Class

**Treasure**  
financially support the parish

In thanksgiving for God's gifts, each household at St. Peter is asked to give a specific percentage of income based on the 10% biblical standard.

**5% TO ST. PETER, 5% TO OTHER CHARITIES**

Household Income	5%	10%	15%
\$20,000	\$1,000	\$2,000	\$3,000
\$25,000	\$1,250	\$2,500	\$3,750
\$30,000	\$1,500	\$3,000	\$4,500
\$35,000	\$1,750	\$3,500	\$5,250
\$40,000	\$2,000	\$4,000	\$6,000

**Weekly Giving Chart**

Household Income	5%	10%	15%
\$20,000	\$1,000	\$2,000	\$3,000
\$25,000	\$1,250	\$2,500	\$3,750
\$30,000	\$1,500	\$3,000	\$4,500
\$35,000	\$1,750	\$3,500	\$5,250
\$40,000	\$2,000	\$4,000	\$6,000

**My Offering pledge to St. Peter**

Percentage of household income

Please complete either a weekly or monthly offering gift:

Weekly gift: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ x 52 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ annually

OR

Monthly gift: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ x 12 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ annually

**Online Giving**

Set up a recurring weekly or monthly transaction using your checking, savings or credit card account. Enroll in Online Giving by visiting the St. Peter website: [www.saintpetercatholic.com](http://www.saintpetercatholic.com).

**2021 Commitment Card**  
An offering of Time, Talent & Treasure

ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

Life Up, Your Hearts!

2021 Commitment Card  
An offering of Time, Talent & Treasure

Print & Last Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Spouse First & Last Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Spouse Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Spouse Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_



# From Boy

## SCOUTING PROGRAMS AT ST. PETER TEA



*Boy Scout Troop 32 explores the beauty of God's creation.*



*Members of Boy Scout Troop 32 learn about campsite cooking.*

St. Peter Parish is blessed to have an organization that encourages independence in some of our youngest parishioners while providing their parents with a wonderful resource for helping their children and teenagers grow in character and virtue – the Boy Scouts of America (BSA), represented in our parish by Cub Scout Pack 32 and Boy Scout Troop 32. Participating boys benefit from these programs as they learn outdoor survival skills, participate in community service projects, and forge lasting friendships with their fellow scouts.

Michelle and Matt Tapling have two sons in the scouting program. Michelle served as Cubmaster for several years when the boys were younger. Now that their sons are Boy Scouts, Matt has gotten involved, and has served as the leader of Troop 32 for three years.

“I would sum up the Boy Scouts as a program that allows the boys to have a wide opportunity of experiences and to learn male leadership in a safe environment,” Matt says. “It builds character and responsibility, love of country and respect for the laws.”

Cub Scouts is open to boys from kindergarten through fifth grade. In the spring of the fifth grade year, many decide to “cross over” to the Boy Scout Troop. Fifth-graders who have not participated in Cub Scouts are also welcome to join Boy Scouts.

At their weekly meetings, the Boy Scouts begin with a flag ceremony and recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, Scout Oath and Scout Law before engaging in merit badge activities or preparation for any upcoming campouts. The group camps as a troop one weekend out of every month. Three times a year, the scouts receive any badges or ranks they have earned in a special Court of Honor ceremony.

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# us to Men:

## ACH LEADERSHIP, TEAMWORK AND FAITH

As both leader and father, Matt has a great appreciation for the many life lessons made available through the Boy Scouts.

“It provides an opportunity for the boys to have a great number of experiences,” he says. “There are 135 different merit badges. Each one of the scouts has the opportunity to get to know what they like, and to have an understanding of something and not be afraid of it. For example, my son did a welding class. If I did a welding class, I’d probably blow up the house! But at 14, he learned the basics of welding, so when he’s 35, he’ll be able to do it without being afraid.”

According to the Scout Law recited at the beginning of all Cub Scout meetings, a scout strives to be “trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent.” In Boy Scout Troop 32, this last character trait — reverence — takes on a particularly Catholic component.

“Really, all of the 12 pinnacles of the Scout Law can support how you respond to God’s will in your life and your relationship with God and service to others,” Matt says. “It brings that kind of awareness of God at the center of life that they can then carry out from there. There are also four religious awards the boys can get that reinforce the teaching of the faith.”

Another way the scouts live out their faith together is through service. In order to raise funds for their activities, they provide a meal to the parish after Sunday Mass. They also donate their time and talent to our parish auction by

offering yard work or other services, and have worked to help with fundraisers for the St. Gianna’s Maternity Home and other charitable organizations.

Having witnessed firsthand how much the Boy Scouts mature during their time in the program, Matt views the benefits of his sons’ participation in scouting to be truly priceless. The Boy Scouts are boy-led, so the scouts teach and lead one another. Those who make it through to earn the prestigious Eagle Scout rank, especially, grow in leaps and bounds during their time in the program.

“It is only a few years on the calendar, but it is a lifetime on a maturity level,” Matt says. “These boys will have a world of experiences and will be their own men. They are farther along in their own personal development than they otherwise would have been.”

Boy Scout Troop 32 is grateful to our parishioners for all the amazing generosity they have shown our scouts over the years. Thank you for supporting these boys as they make the journey from children to men of faith!



*Boy Scout Troop 32 participated in the 2019 Veterans Day parade.*

*Are you interested in finding out more about Boy Scout Troop 32?  
Please contact Matt Tapling at 402-570-5156 or [mtapling@gmail.com](mailto:mtapling@gmail.com).*



## GOOD STEWARDSHIP OF *Our Social Media*

When we are talking about the idea of stewardship and how we care for the tools and gifts we have been given, it is not often that we stop to have a conversation about how we are caring for and using the gift of social media to positively spread Gospel values. However, this is an appropriate topic for us to consider when we are talking about the many young people, as well as adults, who gather online on a frequent basis. Therefore, it is important for us to think about how we are using the amazing gifts of technology.

If you are frequently online – especially on Pinterest – there is a popular acronym that you may have already come across. While it is used in many different contexts, it seems very appropriate to follow as we find ourselves posting statuses and pictures on various social media sites. The acronym is T.H.I.N.K., and it invites us to consider what we are saying and sharing, and whether or not it should be said!

Is what we are posting:

**T** rue? Are we sharing factual information or a rumor that we heard, and if we think our information is factual, what is our source? Is it trustworthy?

**H** elpful? Is the information we are sharing something that can be useful to another person? We don't need to over-examine all of our content to consider its "educational factor," but is the content we are posting going to help someone learn about us, learn about a place or an activity, think about the world, reflect on life, engage us in laughter, and so forth?

**I** nspirational? There is certainly no requirement to be a poet or an artist, but social media has become a wonderful outlet for positive self-expression. "Positive" is the key word – are we posting to inspire others about the good in our world, or are we posting to cut someone down or to simply rant?

**N** ice? Have we considered the feelings of others when we include them in a status or post a picture of them? Will they be embarrassed? Are we using social media to humiliate and intimidate others, or are we using it to try to better the world and the lives of others?

**K** ind? What a great tool to compliment, show gratitude, and build the self-esteem of those you care about!

People often speak of social media in a negative way because of the content they see posted. T.H.I.N.K. is a great way for us to remind ourselves that we can be good stewards of our own social media use. A major part of living out the Gospel has to do with the positive way we approach this life and bring God's light and love to others – and we can do just that by sharing an uplifting status on Facebook, a Tweet of gratitude to a friend, or a beautiful image of God's inspiring creation on Instagram. What a great way to build the Kingdom of God!

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## SATURDAY MORNING MEN'S GROUP FULFILLS "SPIRITUAL HUNGER" AS MEMBERS SHARE IN FELLOWSHIP



*Saturday Morning Men's Group attendees gather to watch the That Man is You! video series.*

**B**ible studies and church offerings often may be populated with more women than men. In turn, men may feel there isn't really a place to share their faith and enjoy fellowship with one another. So, nine years ago, a group of men here at St. Peter saw a need and stepped in to fill it.

"We took this up as an apostolate," says Jerry Vrbka, who helps coordinate this ministry. "We wanted to do something for men in our parish."

With about eight other members who handle the various aspects of the planning, the Saturday Morning Men's Group offers breakfast, a topic presented via video and time for small-group discussion. It's a recipe that seems to work well, with about 25 to 30 men attending on a regular basis. The sessions run in two 13-week semesters — one session is in the fall and the other is in the spring. The group begins at 6:30 a.m. and is over in time for 8:15 a.m. Mass.

During the sessions, the men watch a video message and share in small-group questions from a program called *That Man is You!* from Paradisus Dei. This program addresses the pressures and temptations that men — particu-

larly husbands and fathers — face in today's society.

One aspect of the *That Man is You!* program that Jerry appreciates is how it uses science and statistics. For instance, there is research presented on how staying married is better for you economically and spiritually. The program also makes references to real-life events and popular culture, so it is relatable for participants.

As a husband and father of three, Jerry wishes he would have had this group when he was in his 20s and 30s.

"Men have a hunger to do something spiritual," Jerry says. "There is a hole, and we try to fill it with this program. Men don't naturally want to do these things. This program seems to go a little deeper, but it's not too deep to go above everyone's heads."

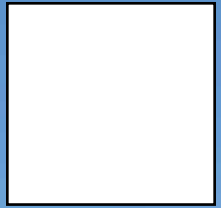
The time for small-group discussion, held after the videos, covers many relevant topics. The small groups typically consist of the same group of men throughout the 13 weeks.

"The men really like breaking into small groups and discussing what they saw and how it applies to daily life and scenarios," Jerry says.

*Jerry Vrbka personally invites all men of our parish to join the Saturday Morning Men's Group. Men may join at any time during the 13 weeks, and there is no expectation to attend all 13 sessions. For more information, please refer to the parish bulletin or call Jerry at 402-423-5590.*



# ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH



4500 Duxhall Dr. | Lincoln, NE 68516  
402-423-1239 | [www.saintpeterslincoln.com](http://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 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.*

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

## MEN ON FIRE MEN'S CONFERENCE



Please join us for the Men on Fire conference on Oct. 17.  
For more information and registration, please visit  
[www.jpilhealingcenter.org/tc-event-category/men-on-fire/](http://www.jpilhealingcenter.org/tc-event-category/men-on-fire/)  
or our St. Peter website, or contact  
Nancy Allder in the Parish Office at 402-423-1239.