



MARCH 2019

ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

Monthly Newsletter

FATHER'S HOUSE RETREAT OFFERS UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY

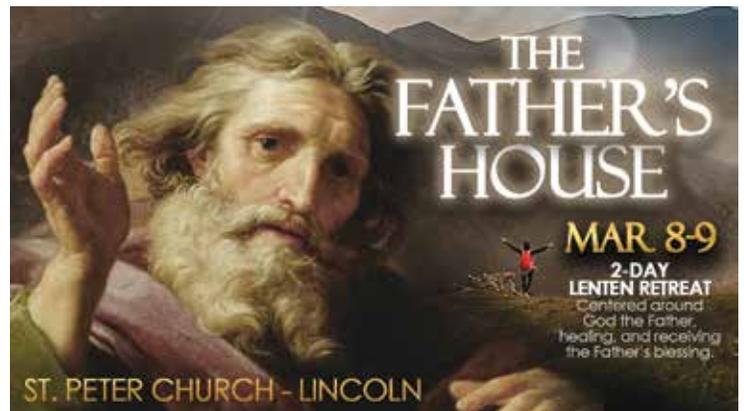
St. Peter Parish has the distinguished opportunity to be among one of the first parish locations for the Father's House Retreat, presented by the Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS).

The retreat is set for March 8-9 at the church.

"Recently, FOCUS has started expanding its mission work to parishes," says Christy Dickinson. "It has been offered only a couple times before at parishes."

Christy and her husband, Tom, both served as FOCUS missionaries in college. They point to the FOCUS website for a clear explanation of what the Father's House Retreat entails. As the site notes, "Since the beginning of time, God has always revealed Himself as a loving Father, but in so many ways we fail to see that truth. We can see Him as a taskmaster, overseer, impersonal judge or any number of other images. We fail to see Him correctly because our view is broken."

"The Father's House retreat helps retreatants to reflect on the truth of God's fatherhood and to come face to face with the human weakness that prevents us from accepting that truth. This retreat consists of several talks, personal prayer with a series of meditations, significant



time in small groups to discuss the themes and prayer times during the retreat, adoration, prayer for healing, a special blessing ceremony and the sacraments of Mass and confession."

The retreat is free and is targeted to parish adults. The retreat will begin at 7 p.m. Friday and dismiss at 9 p.m. The retreat will continue from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Saturday.

"It seems like a very family-friendly retreat," Christy says. "People can come after work on Friday, and meals are on your own, so it's not requiring a lot of time. You

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STEWARDSHIP

THE FOUR PILLARS

You've heard about the three Ts of stewardship, but what about the four Ps?

The three Ts — Time, Talent, and Treasure — describe the personal gifts we offer to the Church. The four Ps are the Four Pillars of Parish Stewardship described by the renowned pastor Msgr. Thomas McGread. They are the hallmark of a stewardship parish — Hospitality, Prayer, Formation, and Service. Let's take a look at each of them to understand how we can improve in each area.

Hospitality

Christian Kindness

"When I was a stranger, you welcomed me" (Matthew 25:35). The Gospel teaches that whenever we welcome the least of our brothers or sisters, we welcome Christ Himself. That is why the first mark of a stewardship parish is hospitality. Being friendly is one of the first ways we can be Christ-like toward others.

Modern Catholic parishes are often so large and have so many Masses that many parishioners don't know one another. To create a sense of community, be sure to smile and greet others as you enter and exit the Church. Let's try harder than ever to be a welcoming community.

Prayer

Heart-to-Heart with God

"Do not become so involved in the work of the Lord that you forget the Lord of the work," a seminary professor once taught. In other words, don't get so caught up with parish projects and outreach efforts that you forget to draw aside to spend time with God in prayer. Every great saint has taught that prayer is the most essential component in the life of the Christian. Through prayer, we nurture our most important relationship — the one that will last for all eternity.

A healthy prayer life should include communal prayer such as Mass, as well as personal prayer and family prayer. The two biggest obstacles to prayer are lack of

time and lack of understanding of how to pray. We have to schedule time for prayer just as we would for an important appointment. And we have to learn how to pray from other people. Many saints have written spiritual books that describe different methods of prayer.

Formation

Continuous Conversion

Pope John Paul II always emphasized ongoing conversion. From childhood through adulthood, our whole life must be a process of drawing closer to God. He never stops calling us forward to learn more and to examine ourselves more deeply.

Very often our society values material things more than interior virtues. But as personal experience shows, when we finally acquire the car or house or "toy" that we wanted so badly, it doesn't really satisfy. On the other hand, we don't tend to desire spiritual virtues with the same kind of longing, but when we actually have them, we find them far more rewarding than material things.

Service

Love in Action

"Amen I say to you, whatever you did to the least of my brothers, you did it to me" (Matthew 25:40). This Scripture was one of St. Teresa of Calcutta's favorites. Each time she picked up a poor and hungry child, she knew she was ministering to Christ. While we may not view ourselves as saints, we too are called to such heroic service right within our own community. As St. Teresa of Calcutta said, "To be a saint is not the privilege of a few, but the duty of everyone."

We have many service opportunities right here within our own parish. If you have the willingness to serve and take the initiative to find where you are needed, you'll find that there is no end to the families and individuals who truly need help. How can you reach out to them in love?





A Letter from Our Pastor

ANSWERING THE CALL

FOR LENT

Dear Parishioners,

This month, as we proceed on our Lenten journey to Easter, every one of us should ask ourselves, “What does it mean to be a disciple of Christ and how well am I living that out each day?”

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops addressed what it means to be a disciple when they wrote their pastoral letter *Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response*. “Who is a Christian disciple?” the USCCB asked and, in turn, they also provided the answer, “One who responds to Christ’s call, follows Jesus, and shapes his or her life in imitation of Christ’s” (9). So, as disciples of Jesus Christ, it is essential that we consider the true meaning of that answer.

The first step in the Christian life is responding to Jesus’ call. Jesus invites every person to develop a relationship with Him. But obviously, not every person is a Christian disciple. Some people are too busy to even hear that invitation or don’t make the effort to recognize it. Others make a conscious decision to reject the call because it demands that they can no longer place themselves at the center of their lives.

On the other hand, for those of us who make an affirmative response to Christ’s call, the most meaningful life possible awaits us, both now and into eternity. However, saying “yes” to Jesus has consequences that affect the rest of our lives.

The first consequence of becoming a disciple is that we now follow Jesus. The Gospel accounts record that when He called His disciples, they left what they were doing and followed Him. The same is true for us today. Becoming a Christian disciple does not necessarily mean that all of us will leave our present job, or enter into the



consecrated life, or serve as a missionary in another country – although that might be where the journey leads you. But it does mean that we offer our work – whether as a doctor, homemaker, mechanic, farmer or teacher – to build up the Kingdom of God.

In following Jesus as His disciples, we should strive to more fully absorb His teaching and then apply it to our daily lives. As we do, we find that we attempt to imitate Him, treating others with the same welcoming and generous spirit. St. Peter was direct when he described how Jesus acted: “He went about doing good... for God was with Him” (Acts 10:38). That’s the model for

how we must live.

Discipleship leads naturally to stewardship as a way of life. The time we offer in prayer and worship will give us the strength and guidance for serving Christ. Using the skills and gifts we have to build the Kingdom will direct our offering of talent. The support of all these endeavors with our treasure will ensure that our lives as disciples and stewards are genuine.

As a Christian steward this Lent, I encourage you to reflect on the changes you can make in growing as a disciple of Jesus.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Craig Doty,
Pastor



SISTER MARY MICHAEL:

LIVING OUT GOD'S CALL WITH JOY

Even though young Sister Mary Michael once thought “religious life is a great life, but it is not for me, thanks,” by God’s amazing grace, she is wearing the religious habit of the School Sisters of Christ the King today. With profound dedication and happiness, Sr. Mary Michael now serves as the principal of our parish school.

“I love being a sister!” she says. “I love knowing I am doing the Lord’s will and His work. Being able to mediate grace to the children and their families is a real blessing. God made me for this vocation, so it makes sense that doing it – though difficult sometimes – is not only good, but often enjoyable. To belong totally to an all-powerful and all-loving King – wow, I can still hardly believe this gift is mine!”

After a long spiritual journey, which included witnessing a close friend enter the religious life, Sr. Mary Michael had a change of heart, and opened her soul to

God’s grace in a remarkable way.

“Suddenly, and somewhat to my surprise, I found myself asking, ‘God, are you calling me, also?’” she says. “Having little or no clue as to an answer, I knew I needed to pray about it. This was clearly the most important question I would ever answer in life, and I wanted to get it right with all my heart and soul. God has the best plan, and I wanted to find it. At first, I didn’t feel particularly drawn to religious life, but I realized if it was His call, it was the best thing for me. So I prayed, and He answered by calling me.”

The School Sisters of Christ the King were founded by Bishop Glennon Patrick Flavin, the seventh bishop of the Diocese of Lincoln. Currently, the sisters serve in six parish schools in the Diocese of Lincoln. According to their website, the “apostolate of the School Sisters of Christ the King is first and foremost the witness of their consecrated lives.



Sister Mary Michael professes vows into the hands of Mother Joan Paul.



As daughters of the Church we have Catholic Education as our specific mission. We strive to extend the Kingdom of Christ by laboring with zeal in Catholic Schools and other Religious Programs." Their Apostolic Mission is listed as follows: "Responding to the call of Christ and His Church, we, the School Sisters of Christ the King, strive to bring about the reign of Christ through the apostolate of Catholic education. As Brides of Christ, Daughters of the Church and Mothers of Souls, we devote ourselves to reflect His love, teach His truth and form His image in souls in the schools of the Diocese of Lincoln."

The School Sisters of Christ the King rely on their communion with the Holy Eucharist and one another for spiritual nourishment and strength. "Our religious community of 30 sisters is much like a family and we truly support one another as we strive together to be good Brides of Christ," Sr. Mary Michael says. "It is through prayer, both private and common, especially the Mass, that the Lord enables us to serve Him well. The common life, with all of us sisters living together in unity, is such a blessing to me."

Sr. Mary Michael lives out the charism of her order with tremendous enthusiasm and joy. "My goal in daily life is to witness to the Lord, His Goodness and His love for us, and I do that primarily through being a Sister here as Principal," Sr. Mary Michael says. "It is He Who will



Sister Mary Michael and Sister Maura Therese share fellowship with friends of the Community.

bring about all good that happens, so I try to stay out of the way and let Him work."

To any woman who is praying about entering the religious life, Sr. Mary Michael has some helpful advice. "Go to Mass often, talk to the Lord regularly in prayer and pray the Rosary," she says. "Finding ways to get to know sisters or a religious community is a very good idea, as well. I would also recommend watching a video called, 'For Love Alone' [located online at www.cmswr.org/for-love-alone/] that gives a good synopsis of religious life."

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— SISTER MARY MICHAEL

Those who would like to know more about or volunteer with the Sisters of Christ the King may send an email to sr.mary-immaculata@cdolinc.net. For more information about this beautiful, flourishing religious order, please visit www.cksisters.org.



MASS REVERENCE

AND ETIQUETTE

For many of us, when we are invited to a wedding, one of our first considerations is “what am I going to wear?” We wouldn’t think of showing up at a formal event in our workout clothes. How many of us search for just the right outfit to wear to our annual office party or on a date? Compare that to how much thought we put into what we wear to Mass on Sunday.

How we dress for an occasion indicates the importance that we place upon that particular celebration. At Mass, we encounter God through the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Dressing appropriately for Mass is one way that we show respect both for God and for our faith family. And this respect is important at all Masses – no matter what time of day or night.

Think about what you are teaching your children when you all wear your “Sunday clothes” to Mass. You are reminding them that Mass is a special celebration. After all, we are going to Jesus’ house.

Some people may quickly point out that Mass shouldn’t be a fashion show – a place to show off your finery – and they are right! We also know that some parishioners come to Mass on their way home from work, and they certainly should not feel embarrassed about arriving at Mass in their work clothes. And no one should ever stay away from Mass because of simplicity of clothing.

But one rule should apply in all instances – our attire at Mass should always be modest. Our clothing should never distract others from what we are gathered together to celebrate – the life, death and resurrection of our Lord.

The celebration of Mass is always a holy occasion and thus should be treated in the most holy manner – in body, mind and spirit.





MEN'S FAITH FORMATION MINISTRY:

MAKING OUR FAITH A PART OF EVERYDAY LIFE

Mark Aylor poses a simple question to the men of our faith community – are you satisfied with the way you are living today?

“If you want to live a better life and to be a better man, husband and father, come join the Men’s Ministry, and we’ll help each other,” Mark says.

The Men’s Faith Formation Ministry exists to challenge men from our faith community to go beyond simply living in the world that is around us.

“We are drowning in this world, and it isn’t enough,” Mark says. “We need to take the faith and make it part of our everyday lives. Take it home with you to your family. Take the faith to your workplace. Be an example of a Christian man.”

The Men’s Faith Formation Ministry meets on Monday and Tuesday nights and Saturday mornings. The Saturday morning program, which goes from 6:30 a.m. until 8 a.m. in Bishop Vasa Hall, is a great place for interested faith community members to start.

“The Saturday morning program is awesome and has been taking place for almost six years,” Mark says. “We have coffee and rolls, and do a 30-minute video followed by small-group discussion based on the video.”

The group has primarily used the *That Man Is You!* program, which addresses the pressures men face in our current society, as well as relevant Church teachings.

“The videos focus on everything from your spirituality to virtues to the Bible, and being a better father and husband,” Mark says. “It’s really all about being a real man of faith and bringing the faith into your daily lives.”

The ministry also has individual small groups that meet on Monday and Tuesday evenings at Reese Construction.

“On the weekday evenings we read the Gospel and discuss it,” Mark says. “We reflect on a case study and make a resolution about what we’re going



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to do that week. This group is about accountability.”

The Men’s Ministry also organizes a first-Saturday Rosary walk to the Planned Parenthood that begins after the 8:15 a.m. Mass.

“No matter what the weather is like, we walk and pray the Rosary,” Mark says. “We also do breakfast and have fellowship afterwards, and some men from other parishes join as well.”

Participating in the Men’s Ministry has tremendously changed Mark’s life.

“This changed everything I do, from how I am as a husband to how I am at my work,” Mark says. “This gives us a way to find other men who believe the same things and to set examples for each other.”

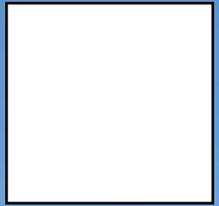
All men – single or married, younger or older – are welcome to join this Men’s Ministry.

“All men struggle and are challenged by everything in the world,” Mark says. “But we all have the same mission in the end – to lead others to Christ. Come join us.”

If you would like more information about St. Peter’s Men’s Faith Formation Ministry, please reach out to Mark Aylor at 707-483-0067 or reducer@yahoo.com.



ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH



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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: 6-6:15 a.m., 7:45-8:00 a.m.

Saturday: 3-3:45 p.m.

FATHER'S HOUSE RETREAT *continued from front cover*

can go home at any time if you need to. We're asking for pre-registration and there will be a free-will donation requested at the retreat, but there is no cost to go."

Although pre-registration is requested, last-minute participants will be welcome.

"This is a fairly new ministry for FOCUS, as its main work is with college students," Christy says. "FOCUS started in 1999, and Tom and I were involved as college students and served as missionaries. So we are participating in other FOCUS events even though we're no longer college students. We're missionaries."

During the retreat there will be talks, small-group discussions and time for meditation. At 2:30 p.m. Saturday there will be Eucharistic Adoration and confessions.

From 7:30-9 p.m. Saturday there will be adoration and a blessing ceremony. On Sunday, participants will be invited to attend their normal Masses, when the priest will give a few points in his homily about how to "continue living in our Father's House" while going about our daily lives — this will conclude the retreat.

"Hopefully, those attending the retreat will have a better understanding and view of God the Father," Christy says. "Hopefully some change will take place and they will be rebuilt spiritually, set on fire for God."

With the retreat set shortly after the beginning of Lent, participants will have the opportunity to be better prepared for their Lenten journey.

"It's an honor that St. Peter has been chosen to do this," Christy says.

"Hopefully, those attending the retreat will have a better understanding and view of God the Father. Hopefully some change will take place and they will be rebuilt spiritually, set on fire for God." — CHRISTY DICKINSON

If you would like more information about this upcoming retreat, please call the parish office at 402-423-1239 or Tommy and Christy Dickinson at 402-840-7801, christydickinson24@yahoo.com.