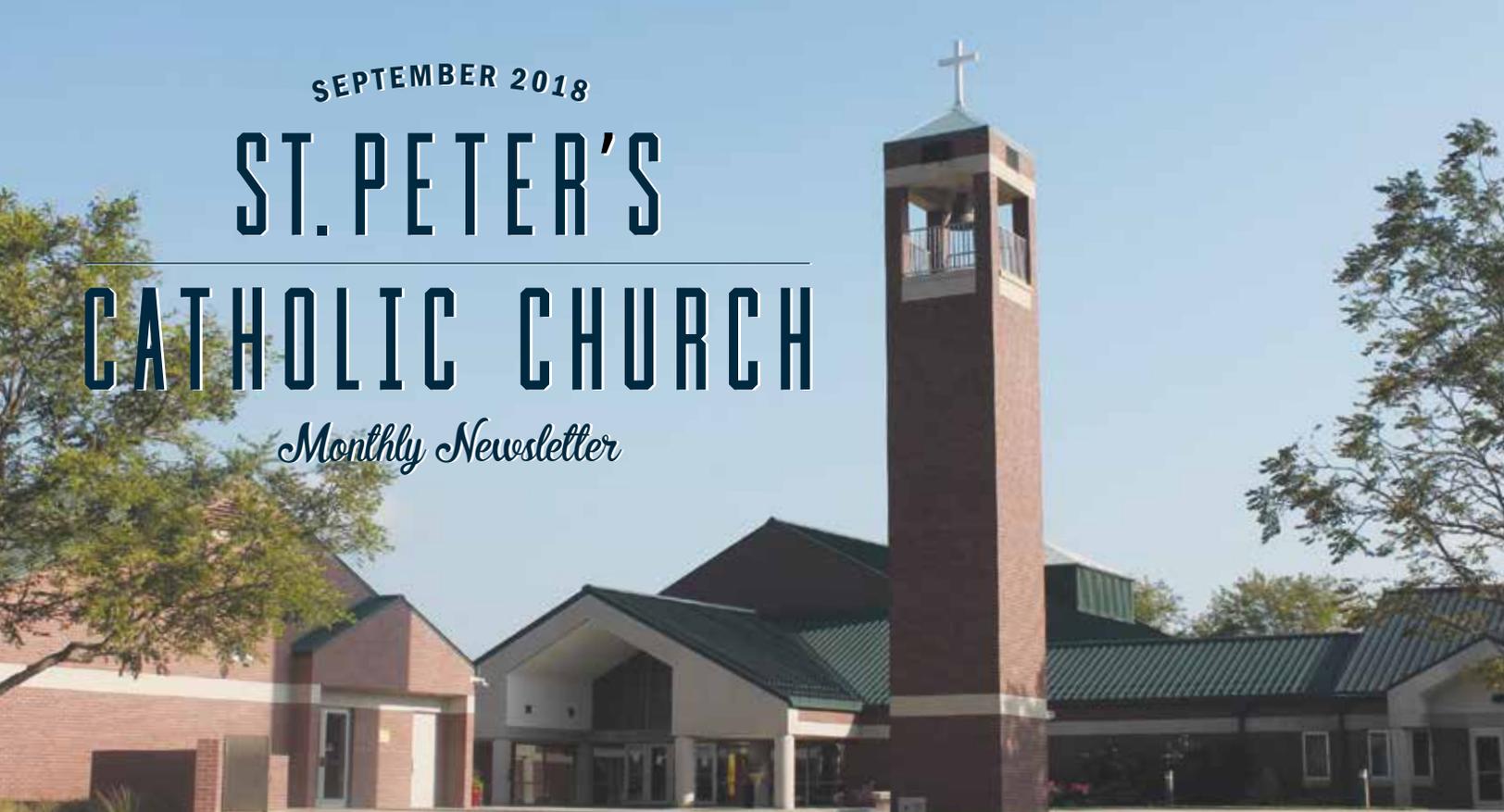


SEPTEMBER 2018

ST. PETER'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

Monthly Newsletter



INTRODUCING OUR NEW PARISH NEWSLETTER!

Welcome to the first issue of our new monthly parish newsletter! As our parish community continues to grow and develop stewardship as a way of life, we have recognized the need for increased communication. Through this newsletter, we hope to share stories that will help us all to better understand who we are as Catholics and what we are doing as individual members of Christ's family. In upcoming issues, we will focus on what's going on in the St. Peter community, and how those activities and events are changing hearts and minds and helping parishioners grow closer to Christ and each other. Each article will ultimately focus on Christ at work within our community through the stewardship way of life.

Our hope is that this newsletter will be a successful means for ongoing education and formation in our faith, and that it may serve as a vehicle through which you are informed and inspired to become more actively involved in the life of Christ and the parish.

Another way we hope to improve our parish's communication efforts is through a comprehensive parish survey that will be conducted in Spring 2019. Through the survey, we want to hear from you regarding our parish and its future. A survey will be mailed to each home, and then we will ask you to take the time to fill it out and return it as soon as possible. Your input will be very important, and it will give our Pastoral Council and pastor a better understanding of your thoughts about our parish.

Perhaps the most important next step in our stewardship journey will occur this fall, when we conduct



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KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

As the world's largest Catholic fraternal service organization, the Knights of Columbus has developed into a benefit society dedicated to providing a wide range of charitable services. Since its 1882 founding, the Knights of Columbus organization has actively defended Catholicism in various nations and promoted Catholic education.

Our own Knights of Columbus Council 10510, which serves St. Peter Parish, was established in 1990 almost in conjunction with the establishment of our parish, and itself carries out a multitude of important services in our community and parish. All of the good works carried out by the Knights of Columbus – in our Council and beyond – are based upon the

four core principles of Charity, Unity, Fraternity, and Patriotism.

"The Knights of St. Peter Council 10510 are actively involved in the ongoing support of our priests, religious sisters, and all aspects of our parish," says longtime member Mike McCrory. "Our members serve as acolytes, readers and ushers during liturgical celebrations; as Eucharistic ministers taking the Body and Blood of our Lord to the elderly, sick and homebound; as participants in our Perpetual Adoration program; and actively engaging in the ongoing pro-life campaign against abortion. I am proud to be a member of the Knights of Columbus."

Our Council meets the first Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. We pray the Rosary at 6:30 p.m. in the church and following the meeting, we have a social from 8-9 p.m.

"We have done a lot and continue to do a lot in the parish and school and community," Mike says.





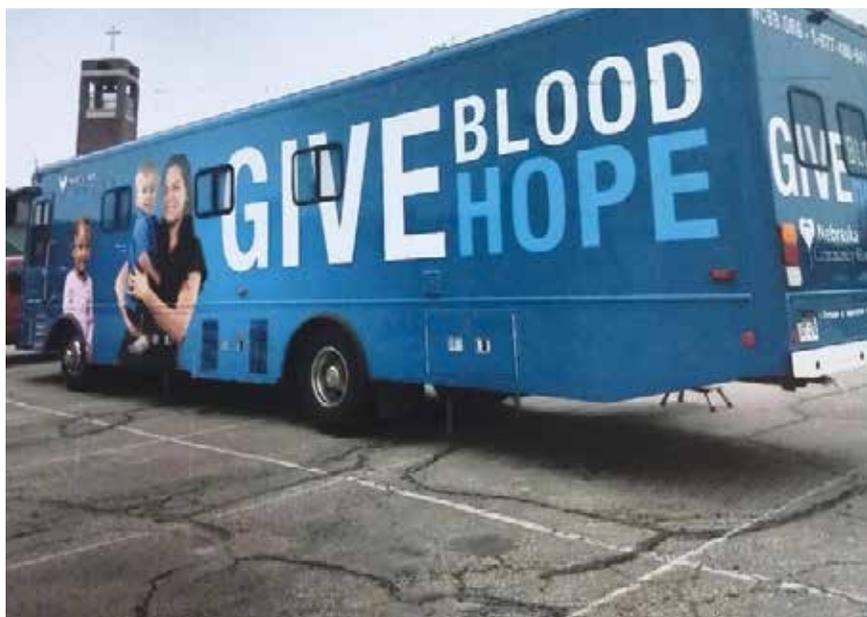
ACTIVELY AND FAITHFULLY SERVING OUR COMMUNITY, PARISH, AND SCHOOL

“In recent years we have, among other things, purchased the new church bell tower, contributed toward the purchase of a new Sisters’ Convent, contributed to the purchase of the new rectory, purchased the new organ, paid for courtyard reconstruction, paid for improvements to the school gym, purchased a school playground system, and much more.”

“In addition we coordinate and conduct parish blood drives, contribute to Seminarian Education, offer support expenses for Eagle Scout projects, give annually to the Focus Central America Missionary Program, and partnered with PCCW to purchase music hymnals,” Mike adds.

To be sure, charity and service are hallmarks of the Knights. In the past decade worldwide, the Knights have donated \$1.475 billion to charity and given almost 700 million hours in support of the Church and charitable works.

Our St. Peter Parish extends gratitude to our Knights Council for all of the great work they do, and the faithful example they set forth to all. And this gratitude towards the Knights of Columbus organization extends worldwide. As Pope Francis has expressed to the Knights for their faithful efforts, “May prayer, witness to the faith and concern for our brothers and sisters in need always be the pillars supporting your work, both individually and corporately.”



*All practicing Catholic men over the age of 18 are welcome and encouraged to join.
For more information, please contact Mike Davis, Grand Knight,
at 402-480-0404 or davism72@gmail.com.*

WHAT DOES STEWARDSHIP MEAN?

What comes to mind when you hear the word “stewardship”?

Do you think of it as just another way to talk about money? Do you quickly dismiss it as a notion that has nothing to do with being Catholic?

Stewardship is actually a concept that is Scripturally based, and is absolutely vital to our life as Catholics. God tells us, in the very first book of the Old Testament, “Be fertile and multiply. Fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air and all the living things that move on the earth” (Gen 1:28).

What does that mean to us today? It simply means that God is telling us, “This is yours, so take care of it.” One of the first things God tells us to do is to be good stewards of the gifts He has entrusted to us!

The Old Testament is not the only place where we can find references to stewardship. Indeed, of the 36 parables in the New Testament, more than half of them deal with time, talent, possessions, or money. Therefore, if Jesus spoke of stewardship that much, it should be a very important part of our lives!

As Catholics, we refer to the three facets of stewardship as “time, talent, and treasure.” Although these are three concrete ways to express and measure stewardship, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops tells us that stewardship is part of discipleship. Stewardship is a way of responding to God’s call in every aspect of our lives.

The Scriptures and Church traditions teach us one important point that cannot be overstated – that

stewardship is primarily based on our need to give in gratitude, not on the Church’s need to receive. Of course, both the Catholic Church and our particular parish will always need money. However, we are not asked to give simply to defray costs and fund charitable programs. We are instead asked to remember our *need* to gratefully return a portion of our time, talent, and treasure to God, recognizing all that He has given to us.

It is important to remember that stewardship is a way of life, and not a program. True Catholic stewardship involves an ongoing call to live as followers of Christ. It takes time to find and define personal goals. You can begin by examining your personal commitments to the parish. How do you live your faith in your daily life with your family and friends? How much time do you spend in daily prayer, going to Mass or being involved in parish ministries and activities? What percentage of your income should you give back to God every week? What talents do you have that could be used to strengthen our parish family?

The coming months will see us increasing and intensifying our education and communication on stewardship. We will be developing a better understanding of how stewardship is a way of responding to God’s call to discipleship. And with God’s help, changes will occur in each of our hearts as we devote ourselves to a stewardship renewal within our parish. Examine how you are currently responding to God’s call to stewardship. If God called you home tomorrow, would He proclaim, “Well done, my good and faithful servant”?

*The Old Testament is not the only place where we can find references to **stewardship**. Indeed, of the 36 parables in the New Testament, more than half of them deal with **time, talent, possessions or money**. Therefore, if Jesus spoke of stewardship that much, it should be a **very important** part of our lives!*



ST. PETER'S FUNERAL MINISTRY

PROVIDING COMFORT TO GRIEVING PARISHIONERS

In the Jewish faith, *shiva* is a weeklong period of mourning that follows the loss of a loved one. Sharing food with those mourning constitutes an integral part of this period, and there is even a formal "meal of condolences" provided by neighbors and friends.

Similarly, LaDonna Hegemann coordinates St. Peter's Funeral Ministry, which provides such a meal for members of our faith community after they experience a loss.

"I feel this is important because it is one less thing the family has to worry about during this time," LaDonna says.

After someone from the community passes away, the funeral home and parish secretary contact LaDonna with the relevant information regarding the funeral, and she reaches out to the family.

"I contact the family and explain to them the process we have for a luncheon, if they would like one," LaDonna says. "We also offer to serve cookies and beverages following a Rosary the evening before the funeral, again if they would like the service."

Much preparation work occurs the day before the luncheon. A small group of volunteers help with setup in Bishop Vasa Hall, or the Knights of Columbus help with chairs and tables in the event of a larger group. The volunteers set placemats, silverware and napkins.

"We do this the night before since a lot of people work during the day," LaDonna says. "I will send out an email to have the ladies of the parish provide salads and desserts. I also call Hy-Vee to order meat and cheese trays and cocktail buns, which they deliver the morning of."

Kathleen Noonan and LaDonna Hegemann coordinate the volunteers who serve the luncheon, and while LaDonna works during the day, Kathleen is present at the funeral luncheon to help volunteers and serve the food.

Parishioners can support grieving members of



*St. Peter's Funeral Ministry members (from left)
LaDonna Hegemann and Kathleen Noonan*

our parish by volunteering with the Funeral Ministry in several different ways.

"Anyone can participate by donating food, serving the luncheon or the cookies, and helping with setup or take down," LaDonna says.

LaDonna, a St. Peter's member since the parish's founding, became involved with the Funeral Ministry about 12 years ago. It is a wonderful opportunity to support others in need and to grow in your own faith.

"Any time a person can help serve in any way with the Church, it gives you more strength and faith," LaDonna says.

Faith community members who would like an active way to reach out and comfort parishioners experiencing loss are welcome to find out more about the Funeral Ministry.

"Anyone can serve," LaDonna says. "I know I always feel good when I do, and the families are so appreciative. It makes me feel like I have accomplished something for the church."

*If you would like more information about St. Peter's Funeral Ministry,
please reach out to LaDonna Hegemann at 402-421-9333.*



THE BLESSINGS OF THE *Catholic*

It is ironic that today, with all of the freedom of religion that we enjoy in the United States, many of us wonder why we must go to Mass on Sunday.

However, if we really understood what the Mass is and how we participate in the celebration, we would instead be asking why we are, as sinful human beings, blessed with the opportunity to participate in the holy Mass. If we simply understood and recognized that God's infinite goodness allows us to do so, we would be eager to go to Mass on Sunday and every other day of the week.

It is true, however, that all Catholics are obliged to "Keep holy the Lord's Day" by sharing in the Mass. But why are we obliged?

The Eucharistic Liturgy is the center of our faith. It is "the summit toward which all activity of the Church is directed" and it is "the font from which all her power flows" (*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* 10). It does not exhaust the activity of the Church, but is most certainly her greatest work.

The sacrifice of Christ on the cross is literally re-presented to the Father during Mass, and Christ allows us to join with Him in offering that sacrifice. Imagine our Lord and Savior dying on the cross for us right up the street. Imagine knowing that Mary is sitting at the foot of the cross with St. John, witnessing her Son giving Himself to the Father for the sake of all of us. Would we not run to be there? Would we not desire to share in His sacrifice, just as Mary did?

Believe it or not, the sacrifice of Calvary is really, truly happening at our parish, every time the Mass is offered.

Our participation in Mass gives us the strength and the graces we need to live our lives as Christ's disciples. So, what does this mean for us?

This means we have a front row seat to the sacrifice of Calvary. Given such a gift, how can we not accept it?

We also have a chance to join in Jesus' sacrifice by offering our own prayers and petitions. As an example, what better gift could we give deceased loved ones than the offering of prayers for their souls in purgatory?



Mass

Most importantly, we have the opportunity to *receive* the Eucharist, followed by quiet time, when we offer sincere thanks and allow God's graces to fill us. Think of all you are missing when you do not properly prepare yourself to receive the Holy Eucharist.

We ought to joyfully head to Church each Sunday, eager to give God glory in the greatest way we can! Attending and actively participating in Mass every Sunday is our obligation as Catholics. But we should not allow the fact that our attendance is "required" to stop us from going. Nor should we allow our laziness to overshadow the amazing privilege and the many blessings that lay before us in the Mass.

The pope and the bishops direct us to participate in the Eucharistic Liturgy every Sunday because they know there is no better way to keep holy the Lord's day – giving God thanks for all He has done for us in the most powerful way possible. They know that, through the Mass, we gain the graces necessary to live our lives in this world.

Our ability to participate in the Mass is a wonderful gift, not a great burden. May Christ enlighten our minds and hearts to clearly see the wonders of the celebration, and give us great enthusiasm and eagerness to participate.

Imagine our Lord and Savior dying on the cross for us right up the street. Imagine knowing that Mary is sitting at the foot of the cross with St. John, witnessing her Son giving Himself to the Father for the sake of all of us. Would we not run to be there? Would we not desire to share in His sacrifice, just as Mary did?

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.

ST. PETER'S 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-Friday: 6-6:15 a.m., 7:45-8:00 a.m.

Saturday: 3-3:45 p.m.

INTRODUCING OUR NEW PARISH NEWSLETTER! continued from front cover

our Annual Stewardship Renewal. The Renewal is the time each year when we ask each other to re-prioritize the way we use God's gifts in the Church. It is the time we write down how we will become more devoted to Christ over the next year with our commitments of time (using our time on earth wisely; making time for personal prayer, family prayer, and quality time with friends and loved ones); talent (using our God-given gifts to strengthen the Church through service to parish ministries and other activities), and treasure (the wise and just management of our financial resources; giving a proportionate amount of my income to the parish).

As we strive to develop stewardship as a way of life at St. Peter, the support and involvement of each individual parishioner is necessary to sustain the life of our parish. All of you have a place here, and all of you have a role to fill in the life of the parish as we live our lives as disciples of Christ.

May the Holy Spirit renew and refresh all of us as we work together to build our parish family through the use of our time, talent and treasure.

