

SAINT PETER

CATHOLIC CHURCH

Inside

- 2 Achieving Financial Peace
- 3 Lent and Stewardship of the Cross
- 4 RCIA Participants Look Forward to Easter and New Life as Catholics
- 6 Saint of the Month: St. Patrick
- 7 Discovering a New Understanding of Faith FOUND

March 2012

A Letter from Our Pastor

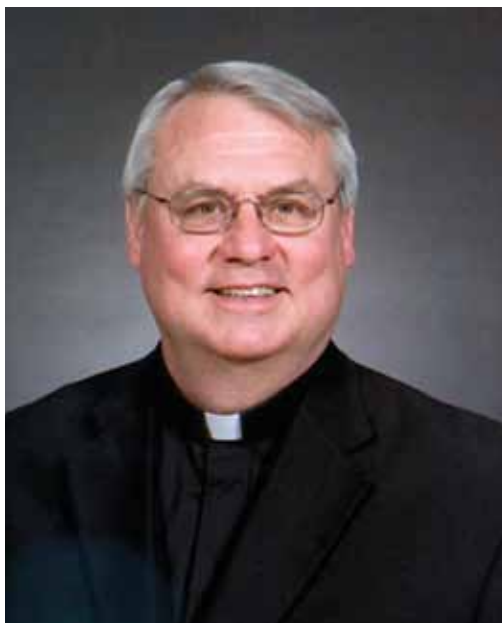
A Steward's Guide to Lenten Commitments

Dear Parishioners,

Making a Lenten commitment is simple. What's hard is keeping it! The Lenten commitments we make ourselves are frequently a lot like New Year's resolutions – they sound good, but we don't get far into the new year before they've been broken and then abandoned.

If you are like me, you approached Ash Wednesday with the intention of doing better than you did last year. But as March drags on, it seems as though we'll never get to Easter. Our enthusiasm wanes, and it seems harder and harder to keep our commitment. And then we begin to wonder, "What's the point?"

Often, we realize we've already broken our commitment in some way – perhaps we decided we'd pray a decade of the Rosary every evening, but we were too tired one night or simply forgot. Maybe we slipped up and ate a cheeseburger



on the first Friday in Lent, even though we know that all Fridays in Lent are days of abstinence from meat. So we conclude that we just can't keep a good Lent and so give up trying to make it a special season in any way.

If you're tempted to give up, don't do it! Just pick up where you left off, ask God for forgiveness, and begin again. Our Lenten commitments should challenge us, and we can grow spiritually. We can even benefit from our failures if they help us better realize how much we need God's grace.

After all, nothing worthwhile is accomplished without discipline and structure. Whether it's a football player in training or a musician practicing an instrument or a medical student mastering the intricacies of the human body, hard work, discipline and even frustration will be part of the

continued on page 5

Achieving Financial Peace

Parishioner Jeff Buckner's company, Dot Foods, has offered financial management classes for its employees for several years, but the 50-minute-plus drive to Mt. Sterling to participate in the classes was an inconvenient one for Jeff and his wife, Tammi. So when they found out that St. Peter's was offering a faith-based course called Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University right here in Quincy, Jeff and Tammi jumped at the opportunity to participate.

"Often times people will think, 'Are we doing a good job or bad job with our finances?'" Jeff says. "And both may be true. But anytime you can maybe expand your education or knowledge of a given topic or subject – specifically finances, which affects everyone – it's worth your time, energy, and effort to explore that."

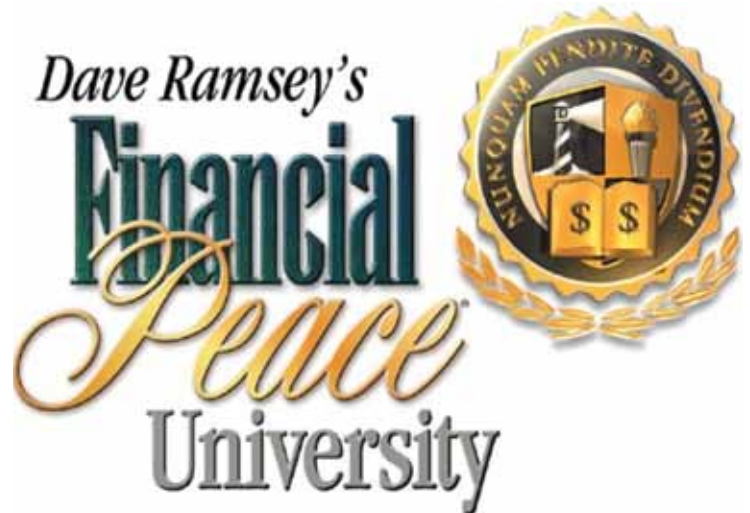
Jeff and Tammi participated in the class four years ago, and upon its completion, their facilitator, Amy Siebers, asked Jeff if he would be interested in facilitating future Financial Peace University sessions. He's been guiding others in the program ever since.

"I enjoyed the class, and it's been beneficial for us," Jeff says. "It's interesting in that you have an opportunity to learn from the materials presented by Dave Ramsey, but you also have that comfort level with other people that the class provides. Sometimes, that's difficult, because personal finances is a very personal issue."

The program, created by Ramsey, a renowned financial author and speaker, features a 13-week, DVD-based curriculum that teaches participants how to eliminate debt, invest wisely, and save for the future – all while giving back to God from their first fruits as faithful disciples of Christ.

"At one point, Ramsey talks of money in terms of how people feel like it's their money, their property, and their belongings, but ultimately, everything you have came from God," Jeff says. "So when you look at it, it's all a gift from God, so we're really just stewards of managing what God has given us. And there are a lot of different ways you can give back."

Jeff says that one of the things that has made this program successful in his



experiences facilitating it is the mutual support that participants can offer one another throughout the course of the curriculum.

"There is a huge opportunity to learn from what people in the class will share, because you learn that there are some people who do some things better than you do it, and you will learn that there are people who do some things maybe not as well as you do it, and that's okay," Jeff says. "It's important to learn from it and move forward. It's also an opportunity to meet some different people in class and form some new relationships, and that's kind of fun, too."

Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University is traditionally held at St. Peter starting in January. Each class meets once a week for approximately two hours over the course of the 13-week duration of the program. While Jeff admits the time commitment may seem daunting at first, he points out that the class is extremely valuable and informative, and is a great source of support and ideas for parishioners who would like to learn more about managing and being good stewards of their finances.

"There were a few couples in the class we were participants in who completely eliminated their debt, and in the last class we had a couple of couples who were debt-free, and they were just looking to do better with what they do

The 13 themes of Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace

1. Super Saving
2. Relating with Money
3. Cash Flow Planning
4. Dumping Debt
5. Credit Sharks in Suits
6. Buyer Beware
7. Clause and Effect
8. That's Not Good Enough
9. Of Mice & Mutual Funds
10. From Fruition to Tuition
11. Working in Your Strengths
12. Real Estate & Mortgages
13. Great Misunderstanding

continued on next page

Lent and Stewardship of the Cross

The liturgical year is such a gift to us. As we turn the pages of the calendar, reflecting on the life of Christ, we have the opportunity to consider the most sublime events in the history of mankind. Of these events, perhaps none is more beautiful and worthy of contemplation than the one we are about to commemorate: Jesus' sacrifice of Himself for us on the Cross.

It is fitting and at the same time paradoxical — fitting that God should do it because only an infinite God could rid us of the infinite debt we owed by our sin; paradoxical that He not only did it, but wanted to do it out of pure love for us, His lowly creatures. What is Jesus trying to show us by this? Even more staggering, what is He really asking when He exhorts us, in turn, to take up our cross and follow Him?

Jesus gave His life for the Church and gave it freely, and He calls us to do the same. While some of us may in fact give our entire lives for the Church, for most of us, this giving takes place by a series of daily actions, both large and small, of Christ-like, sacrificial love — specifically, by giving our time, talent, and treasure for the good of the Church. And yet, by joining these actions with His and our hearts with His Heart, we have the chance to participate in that very same sacrifice. This month, let us take the time to examine our hearts and actions in light of Jesus' as we journey with Him toward the Cross:

Jesus gave Himself unselfishly and excessively. Consider the manner of His sacrifice. One drop of Christ's blood would

have been more than sufficient to save the entire human race, and yet Our Lord Jesus chose to shed every last bit. From start to finish, Jesus showed us by His passion that He wanted to do more than what was merely sufficient. If there was more He could give, He gave it. He never stopped to count the cost or to look for what He could get in return.



Jesus made His sacrifice a supreme act of love for the Church. Counter-cultural even to this day, Jesus actually upheld sacrifice as desirable — as the most perfect way to show our love: “Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (Jn. 15:13). In His infinite wisdom, Jesus now offers this path to us as the way to holiness: “If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily and follow me” (Lk. 9:23).

Jesus gave Himself willingly and even joyfully. “No one takes [My life] from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have the power to lay it down, and I have the power to take it again” (Jn. 10:18). At the first Eucharist, Jesus even went so far as to say, “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you” (Lk. 22:15). Needless to say, the Passover sacrifice to which Jesus referred was not a symbolic one, but was in fact His very Body and Blood He would give for us through the sacrifice of the Cross.

Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make our hearts more like Yours.

Achieving Financial Peace *continued from previous page*

have,” Jeff says. “You’ll see some of the people from the classes maybe at the parish picnic or out and about in town, and they’ll come up and say what a benefit it has been for them.”

St. Peter Parish is currently gauging interest in a future offering of Dave Ramsey’s Financial Peace University, and it is important to note that the Diocese of Springfield covers half the program costs of any St. Peter parishioners who

would like to participate in the course. If you are interested in taking advantage of this wonderful opportunity, please visit the parish Web site at www.cospq.org, or indicate your interest on your Commitment Card during the Annual Stewardship Renewal. You can also contact Jeff Buckner at 217-224-4853 or jbuckner@dotfoods.com for more information.

RCIA Participants Look Forward to



With Lent hastening on toward Holy Week, the RCIA class is finishing a life-changing eight-month journey of preparation.

This year, Msgr. Leo Enlow and the RCIA team have overseen the catechesis of two catechumens and 10 candidates as they prepare to receive Baptism, Confirmation, Reconciliation and Communion.

Each of these 12 comes from a unique background: some have been around the Catholic Church for years, some have been active in Protestant denominations, and some have had little religious experience whatsoever. Nevertheless, the Holy Spirit has worked in each of them, prompting questions, nurturing desires and ultimately pointing the way to the Church for fulfillment.

The following is an introduction to one family that has participated in this year's program. Please keep all the RCIA members in your prayers as they conclude their preparations and begin their new lives as fully initiated Catholics at the Easter Vigil.

Eric and Mary-Ann Ervin have been friends of St. Peter and St. Peter Catholic School for a number of years, although both were raised in Protestant families. But after a life-changing experience last summer, the couple decided to begin the RCIA process and join the Catholic Church.

"We have been sending our kids to St. Peter Catholic School for many years and have always been very impressed with the parish and the schools," Eric says. "But last summer, sort of as a last minute favor to a friend, I agreed to go with the Quincy Notre Dame High School students on a Catholic

Heart Work Camp and it really opened my eyes. The week down there was an awakening for me and I came back with really different views on the Catholic religion and it all just started to make sense."

Looking more into joining the Catholic Church has long been in the back of Eric and Mary-Ann's minds, but one conscious decision set the whole process in motion. This Fall the couple and their oldest child, Brendan, who is a junior at Quincy Notre Dame, joined the RCIA program.

"We've been around the church since Brendan started at St. Peter in fourth grade," Mary-Ann says. "Over those years we've been very active in volunteering at the school. Eric does radio broadcasts of Notre Dame sports and we've helped out in a variety of ways however we can. With busy lives we realized you really have to just make a decision and stick to it or it won't happen."

The Ervins made the decision this summer and have greatly enjoyed the RCIA process from the first class onward.

"Before it started I wasn't sure how much I was going to enjoy spending an evening every week at Church, but it has been simply wonderful," Eric says. "I truly look forward to going every Tuesday night, which says a lot. We can't say enough about Fr. Leo: he is a very large part of why we want to do this so badly. He's just a wonderful, wonderful priest. And he always makes the class so interesting — but really, the whole RCIA team has been wonderful to work with and learn from."



o Easter and New Life as Catholics

Eric, Mary-Ann and Brendan have faithfully attended classes throughout the entire program and have enjoyed learning about a variety of topics. Mary-Ann has particularly enjoyed learning about the Mass and the church building itself, while Eric has come to appreciate the Church's strength in upholding her teachings.

"It's a very beautiful religion in a kind of serious and somber way," Eric says. "The Catholic Church has some very strong opinions and ideals that they stick to strongly. Fr. Leo talked about that and I really respect that — especially in today's world."

The Ervins daughter Maddison, an eighth grader at St. Peter Catholic School, is also due to be confirmed this spring. While Brendan has gone through RCIA with his parents, Maddison was able to be catechized at school and will be confirmed with her eighth grade peers.

All of the Ervins are delighted to have the support of strong sponsors as they prepare for Confirmation. Mary-Ann's sponsor is Ann Klene, Eric's is Tom Klene, Brendan's is Mark Anderson and Maddison's is Katie Kroeter.

The Ervin family, like all of our candidates and catechumens, are excited to finish the final leg of their RCIA journey

and begin their lives as fully initiated members of the Catholic Church.

"We're very much looking forward to that day when we are a full-fledged members of St. Peter and full-fledged Catholics," Eric says. "It's something that we've been working toward for a while now, and it will be well worth the wait when the day comes."

"We're very much looking forward to that day when we are a full-fledged members of St. Peter and full-fledged Catholics. It's something that we've been working toward for a while now, and it will be well worth the wait when the day comes."

– Eric Ervin

Guide to Lenten Commitments *continued from front cover*

process. Only those who keep at it will master the skills those activities demand.

The spiritual life follows the same principles. Spiritual growth requires hard work and discipline and practice. Making our wills conform to God's will is the result of repeated efforts over a period of years.

It is true that sometimes we need to reevaluate our Lenten commitments. If we are aware we're consistently failing in some point, we may need to modify it. But normally the value of our Lenten commitments comes from our steady, day-to-day observance of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving all through the season.

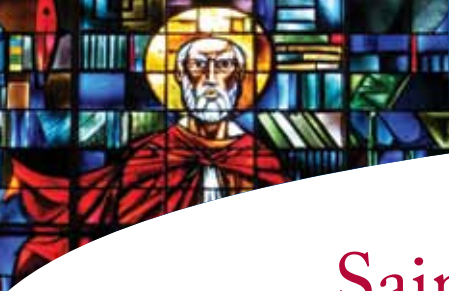
But when we fail, we should remember the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32). He had failed miserably. Suppose he had concluded, "I've blown it. I rejected my father and my home.

There's no way I can go back." He'd have given up in despair. But "coming to his senses," he decides to return home in penitence, to be a servant. But when he arrives home, he's welcomed with joy and restored to his position.

This parable sets forth the pattern we should follow when we fail in our Lenten commitments. Begin our observance again, and keeping on trudging the whole length of March, until we come to the joys of Easter. God our Father will welcome us. Then we will indeed be ready to celebrate.



Rev. Msgr. Leo J. Enlow
Pastor



Saint of the Month: St. Patrick

This month we celebrate the feast of St. Patrick. Born in the year 385, Patrick grew up in the Roman province of Britain. He was captured at the age of 16 by Irish raiders, taken to Ireland and sold into slavery. And, despite the precarious nature of his captivity, Patrick managed to learn the language and customs of the Druid pagans who held him.

Throughout Patrick's captivity, the young saint would often turn to God in times of distress and need. Prayer became Patrick's refuge, and he would spend hours in conversation with God.

In all, Patrick remained in the hands of his captors for six long years. Then, in the summer of 407, he experienced a profound religious transformation. Commanded by God in a dream, Patrick was instructed to leave Ireland via the coast. There, on the rocky shores of the coast, sailors caught sight of Patrick and returned him to Britain and his family.

However, a short while later, Patrick experienced another profound dream. In the dream Patrick heard the cries of the Irish people, "We beg you, holy youth, to come and walk among us once more." And although it would be years before he returned to Ireland, the prophetic nature of Patrick's dream was inevitable.

Patrick was not destined to stay in Britain for long; he moved to continental Europe and began studying for the priesthood in a French monastery. In 432, Patrick was ordained a bishop and commissioned to take the Gospel to Ireland. He reached the Irish shores for a second time on March 25, 433. Patrick would spend the remainder of his life in Ireland, converting the Irish pagans for the next 30 years.

Patrick's legend spread far and wide, and by the grace of God, the saint converted thousands of Druids to the Catholic Faith. He built churches throughout Ireland and opened the eyes of ruthless barbarian kings to the grace and love of Christ. Legend has it that Patrick used an ordinary shamrock clover to explain the mystery of the Trinity to the uneducated Irish people. Other legends depict Patrick ridding the island of venomous snakes. However, scientists now know that snakes never inhabited the Emerald Isle. But the story symbolically sheds light on Patrick's evangelical mission – ridding Ireland of Pagan religions, the cross replaced the popular Druid serpent.

Today, 93 percent of Ireland is Catholic. We celebrate St. Patrick's Day on March 17, the day of his death. A holiday for all nations, St. Patrick's Day has become a universal opportunity to celebrate friendship and good fortune.



We celebrate St. Patrick's Day on March 17, the day of his death. A holiday for all nations, St. Patrick's Day has become a universal opportunity to celebrate friendship and good fortune.

Discovering a New Understanding of Faith FOUND

Youth Ministry is an important part of any parish. The youth play a special role in the Church, and Youth Ministry is often the best way for them to discover and live out that role.

“I think everybody is called to get involved in whatever the Church has to offer for them,” says David Cawthon, one of the leaders of the FOUND Youth Group. “A lot of people simply don’t answer that call and don’t get involved. These kids need to belong to their parish, and FOUND is one of those ways they can belong to their parish and have ownership in their parish.”

FOUND is a youth group for seventh-, eighth- and ninth-graders in our parish. The name, FOUND, is a backwards acronym for Discovering New Understanding Of Faith.

The group meets twice a month during the school year and once a month in the summer, generally from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. on Sunday. These meetings include a short message time, snacks, prayer, activities and games.

The start of this new year brings with it a few changes to the FOUND Youth Group. One such change is an increased focus on the importance of attending Mass every week.

“I put out a challenge for them at the beginning of this year for them to make a point to go to Mass every Sunday in 2012,” David says. “That’s crucial. We need to get our kids going to church and making sure their families are going to church every Sunday. It’s very important.”

Another change is more specific to the activities of the group. Over the last year, the group has set aside the last 10 to 15 minutes of each meeting for shared prayer. The youth were a little uncomfortable with this addition in the beginning, but it has become a major part of their time together.

“It’s gotten to the point where the kids really want that,” David says. “They don’t even flinch. They want to have that time. And they’re learning how to pray that way.”

During Lent, all the meetings will be focused on messages and themes related to the Lenten season. At the first meeting of Lent, the message focused on what the youth can be doing during this season.

“If they don’t start whatever they’re doing for Lent, it’s not too late to start in the middle of March,” David says. “We’ll be encouraging all of our kids to do that during the Lenten season, to grow in their faith and do the best they can.”

Although it is always the goal of youth ministry to help the youth grow in their faith, David believes Lent is a special time for it.

“It’s the whole Paschal Mystery,” David says. “What our whole Faith is based on is that Christ suffered, died, and rose again, and Lent is a time to reflect on that sacrifice.”

For more information about the FOUND Youth Group or to get involved, call Gina Bergman at 217-224-4581.





St. Peter Catholic Church

2600 Maine Street
Quincy, Illinois 62301

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 105,
Quincy, IL 62301

New Mass & Reconciliation Schedule

Sunday Masses

Saturday: 5 p.m.,

Sunday: 8, 9:30 and 11 a.m.

Weekday Masses

Mon-Sat: 8:00 a.m., except for

Wednesdays during the school year:

8:30 a.m.

Reconciliation

Saturday: 7:30-7:50 a.m.,

3:30-4:30 p.m. or by appointment

Palm Sunday & Easter Triduum Schedule

Palm Sunday – March 31, 5:00 p.m.

Palm Sunday – April 1, 8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m.

Monday & Tuesday – April 2 & 3, 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Mass

Wednesday – April 4, 8:30 a.m. School Mass and 7:00 p.m. Mass

Holy Thursday – April 5 (No Morning Mass)

7:00 p.m. Mass

Good Friday – April 6 (No Morning Mass)

7:00 p.m. – Good Friday Service

Easter Vigil – April 7 (No Morning Mass)

8:00 p.m. Mass with our new Catholics

(There will be no 5:00 p.m. Mass this evening)

Easter Sunday – April 8

8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m.