

# Church of St. Peter, Quincy III

MONTHLY  
NEWSLETTER



## THE QUINCY DEANERY: *A Leading Force of Stewardship*

The invisible structures of the Church bind us together in a shared mission of stewardship. Here at St. Peter, we are connected to the other Catholic churches in the counties of Adams, Pike and Brown as fellow parishes in our deanery.

“The church is a well-structured organization, and the deaneries are part of that structure,” says Msgr. Leo Enlow. “They keep us working together.”

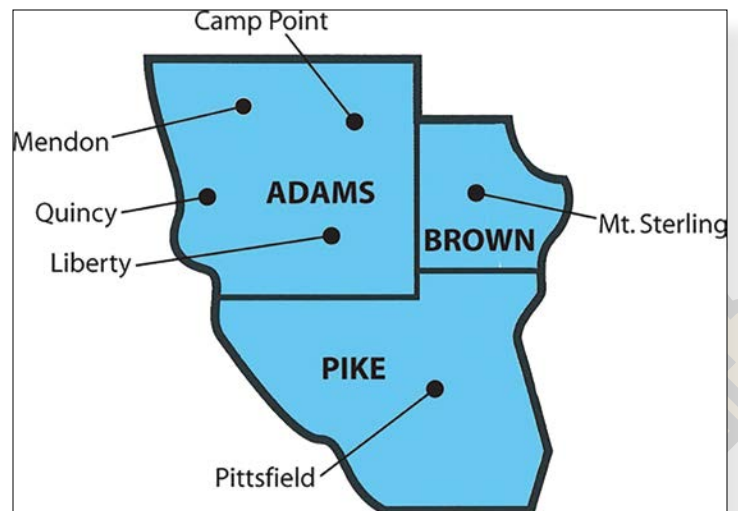
Though many of us are familiar with structural terms like a “diocese” and an “archdiocese,” we might not be familiar with what a deanery is, how it operates and who presides over it.

A subdivision of a diocese, a deanery consists of a cluster of parishes presided over by a dean.

“A diocese is divided into areas, and our particular area is the Quincy Deanery,” Fr. Leo says. “There are seven deaneries in the Diocese of Springfield.”

The Quincy Deanery consists of St. Thomas, St. Bridget, St. Edward, Holy Family, St. Mary, and the Catholic churches of Quincy.

According to the *Code of Canon Law*, the bishop appoints a “vicar forane” or a dean to preside over the deanery for a determined period of time.



*The Quincy Deanery*

The bishop “selects a priest whom he has judged suitable after he has considered the circumstances of place and time” (554).

“The dean is a representative for the bishop in each of these areas,” Fr. Leo says. “The dean represents the parishes on a diocesan level and supports the priests of the parishes.”

The duties of the dean include responsibilities

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# ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

## *Christmastime Stewardship* *How We Can Bring His Son to the World*

It is not uncommon to give gifts during Advent and Christmas, but it is never enough just to leave it at that. True, Jesus gave *Himself* to us at the first Christmas. And, as always, we should strive to imitate Him by giving of *ourselves* in some way as we celebrate the anniversary of His birth. But there is a way to give even more than just ourselves — by giving the gift of Christ to others. The seasons of Advent and Christmas are perfect opportunities to share the love and message of Jesus with others in a beautiful way.

Of course, giving of ourselves in imitation of Jesus is a beautiful thing. But it is just as important to remember that, as human beings, we bear the likeness of God. As Christians, Jesus Himself inhabits our very souls. As Catholics, our Lord literally dwells within us when we receive Him in the Eucharist. Based upon this logic, we do so much more than imitate Jesus when we selflessly give of ourselves to others. Indeed, just as Mary carried Christ in her womb when she visited her cousin, Elizabeth, and just as she brought Him in her arms to Simeon as a newborn child, we can also literally bring Jesus Christ to the world.

What a profound task Our Lord has laid out for us this season! As He grew in Mary's womb, Jesus could only go where Mary

chose to take Him. Of course, He couldn't do anything — He couldn't even speak. Mary became His hands and feet, and even His voice. Mary could have stayed at home during her pregnancy, resting and preparing for life with a newborn, as most mothers do. But instead, the Blessed Mother helped her Son begin His mission by bringing Him to her cousin, Elizabeth. Today, in much the same way, Christ invites us to share Him with the rest of the world. He chooses to make His presence known through us. And so, as the spiritual writer Caryl Houselander beautifully states, "We must carry Jesus in our hearts wherever He wants us to go, and there are many places to which He may *never* go unless we take Him to them."

How do we bring Jesus to those in our parish and community? There are many ways. We might visit with a sick parishioner over the holidays, providing fellowship and support in their time of need. We may consider serving a local soup kitchen or food bank, and doing our part to make sure that the hungry are fed. We can sing Christmas carols for our neighbors, bringing true joy and love to their homes. Perhaps we could help a tired friend clean her house, making her life a little bit easier during this busy season. Or we can share the Good News

of Jesus Christ with others. We might even try going to work with a cheery disposition, or donating money so that a starving child in a poor country can have something to eat. These are just a few examples of how we can practice stewardship.

We may sometimes feel as if our efforts are in vain — especially when it is hard to see the effects of our evangelization. This temptation is particularly strong when we offer our treasure as a gift to God. The positive effects of monetary gifts aren't always as visible as gifts of time or talent. But when we give of our treasure, the love of Jesus can travel to places we could never go. While our gift may not directly affect someone in a positive way, it very well may enable someone else to do it for us. Sometimes, God doesn't just ask *us* to be His hands and feet, but to enable *someone else* to be them, as well.

Advent and Christmas give us the opportunity to reflect on Jesus' call to live as stewards and disciples of His Word. God has put us in a particular place, given us a certain amount of time, and asked us to perform particular tasks and selflessly share a portion of our gifts. This is all for a singular purpose — to bring His Son into the world, and make Christ's presence just as real as when He first became man more than 2,000 years ago.

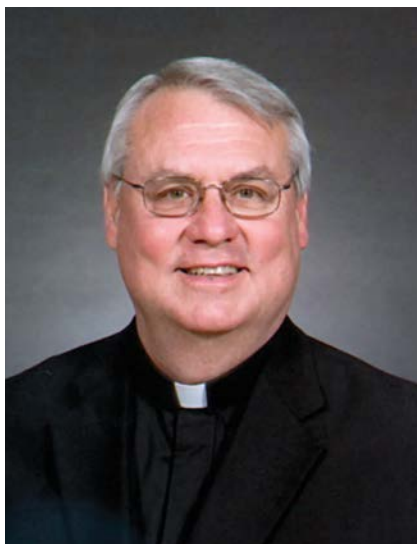
## REFLECTIONS AT THE END OF THE YEAR

Dear Parishioners,

**I**t seems as if we just finished Lent and Easter, and here we are at Advent and Christmas. To say this is a busy month for many is an understatement. Although December is a month of love, it can also be a difficult month for some. For those with families, it may be a month of travel as people rush to be united with loved ones, sometimes after a long period of separation.

There is no shortage of reminders as to what time of year this is. However, for us as Catholics, we may need to refocus to see where we are in our faith lives. Were you aware that for us, December is dedicated to the Immaculate Conception? In that regard, we celebrate a Holy Day of Obligation on Friday, Dec. 8. Advent begins on Dec. 3, and you may notice that we begin to wear purple as a sign of Advent. That color changes to white or gold beginning at Christmas.

Of course, this is also the last month of the regular calendar year, which may add additional tasks to our own schedules as we finalize things for the end of the year. However, there are many opportunities for us during this month to share, to pray and to celebrate in a Christian way, and I would encourage you to make an effort to be part of these. Right here in our parish, much is happening along those lines, and a careful reading



of the bulletin will alert you to the “when, where and what” of these upcoming opportunities.

As I indicated earlier, this can also be a difficult time for some. In the midst of our own celebrations and joy, we need to be aware of that reality and of those living with it. This is a time to reach out, and it is a time to show love.

This December, let our minds be focused on Christ, Who will be born for us at Christmas, and for Whose coming we must always be prepared throughout the year. This is a time to thank God and to pray. It is a time to reach out to love and live peacefully with one another. We need to remember that life continues after December, in spite of everything we feel we need to get done.

My prayers and blessings go out to each of you and your families. May God continue to watch over you. May the year 2017 end well for all of us!

Your Pastor

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rev. Msgr. Leo J. Enlow". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rev. Msgr. Leo J. Enlow  
Pastor



## KEEPING “CHRIST” IN CHRISTMAS

*“This ministry gives us a great way to be good stewards. It is also a perfect ministry for families to do together so that parents can show their children what it means to give during the Christmas Season. It helps us to reflect on how blessed we are, as well. Without those who buy gifts, there would be no Giving Wreath Ministry! It is a ministry that comes from the generosity of peoples’ hearts.” — Christy Holm*



*Each year, members of the Giving Wreath Ministry work with local agencies to gather and fulfill requests for items to be given to needy families around Christmastime.*

For over 20 years, our parish family has been busy keeping the “Christ” in Christmas in a beautiful way through the Giving Wreath Ministry.

“When I first started helping out with this ministry, I would sometimes put a note along

with the gift which said something like, ‘God loves you and is watching over you,’” says Christy Holm, who coordinates the ministry along with her husband, Mike. “I felt that this made the gift even more ‘Christian,’ and helped me to share the Christmas spirit.”

Each year, members of the Giving Wreath Ministry work with local agencies to gather and fulfill requests for items to be given to needy families around Christmastime. Among those contacted are shelters for women and children, and various local charitable organizations. Each agency makes a list of items their residents are in need of, and sends the list to the Giving Wreath volunteers, who write them on labeled tags. Parishioners are free to take one or more tags, which are placed in the narthex in November. Typically, requested items include basic things such as clothing, diapers, baby items, coats, pots, pans, and cleaning products.

“It is a special tradition at our parish that has grown and been modified throughout the years,” Christy says. “It is a huge community effort. Some years, our parishioners have given 1,000 gifts, but that was a little too many to handle, so

*Giving Wreath tags will be put on tables in the narthex on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. Wrapped gifts need to be returned to the narthex by Dec. 10. For more information, please contact the Parish Office at 217-222-3155*

# S with the Giving Wreath Ministry

now we usually accept about 850 to 900 gifts.”

Ultimately, the Giving Wreath has proved to be a phenomenal way to bring forth the stewardship vision in our midst.

“This ministry gives us a great way to be good stewards,” Christy says. “It is also a perfect ministry for families to do together so that parents can show their children what it means to give during the Christmas Season. It helps us to reflect on how blessed we are, as well. Without those who buy gifts, there would be no Giving Wreath Ministry! It is a ministry that comes from the generosity of peoples’ hearts.”

Like many of those who volunteer with this ministry, Christy first got involved with it because she desired to share Christ’s love during the holy season of Christmas.

“I am a nurse by profession, and I enjoy caring



*Ultimately, the Giving Wreath has proved to be a phenomenal way to bring forth the stewardship vision in our midst.*

for people,” Christy says. “I felt the need to do something more for others during Christmastime, so about 17 years ago, I signed up to help with this outreach. It has given me a way to make Christmas a little brighter for others.

## THE QUINCY DEANERY: *A Leading Force of Stewardship* *continued from front cover*

such as coordinating pastoral activities in the deanery, ensuring that the rectories are maintained, seeing that religious celebrations are observed with “the prescriptions of the sacred liturgy” and even serving in the place of a priest in the case of sickness or death (555).

On July 1, Fr. Leo began his appointment as the dean for the Quincy Deanery. He anticipates serving the respective faith communities and bringing the vision of stewardship to a broader level across the deanery.

“One of the beautiful parts about our deanery is that we are a leading force of stewardship,” Fr. Leo says. “Our parishes, and especially the Quincy parishes, are at the forefront of stewardship and discipleship in the diocese.”

This November, our deanery recently worked to promote discipleship through its sponsorship of a one-night performance of *Tolton: From Slave to Priest* at Quincy University. The play is based on the life of Fr. Augustus Tolton, the first African American Catholic Priest, who celebrated his first public Mass in Quincy.

Let us support Fr. Leo with our prayers as he begins his new appointment, and likewise remember to pray for the other parishes that constitute the larger faith community of the Quincy Deanery.

“When we are individualistic, it weakens all of us,” Fr. Leo says. “When we work together and pray together and celebrate together, we are ‘being church,’ and we are stronger.”

## STEWARDSHIP AND HOSPITALITY FOR THE ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS SEASONS

**I**t's the Advent and Christmas season. You've extended invitations, planned the menu, and decorated your home. You are ready to be hospitable. But what does it really mean to live the stewardship of hospitality?

The Bible tells us in 1 Peter 4: 8-11, "Above all, let your love for one another be intense, because love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaining. As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace. Whoever preaches, let it be with the words of God; whoever serves, let it be with the strength that God supplies, so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong glory and dominion forever and ever."

When we read Peter's words, we see that hospitality is more than good manners. We see that hospitality is part of what it means to be a faithful steward. So, during the hustle and bustle of Advent and Christmas, how can we be hospitable?

Open your home to strangers. The holidays can be an especially painful time for people. This year, do something about it. If you're already expecting strangers, welcome them warmly. Decide ahead of time that showing love is more important than passing judgment.

Be truly cheerful. When you open your home for the holidays, you may be a happy host, but are you a cheerful one? Believe it or not, there's a difference. A happy person feels happiness. A cheerful person causes happiness.

Use your gifts to serve. Hosting and serving go together. You bake the turkey, pour the drinks, and slice the pie. To some degree, this is expected and normal. What's not normal is for a host to truly serve — to look for the needs in others and the gifts in themselves and find even a small way to help.

Give God glory. When family, friends and strangers enter your home, it's an opportunity for them to see Christ in you. You never know what's going on behind the scenes in people's lives or how much an encounter like this might mean to them. So, when you welcome and serve your guests, remember that your ultimate goal is to give God glory.

Advent and Christmas give us the opportunity to reflect on Jesus' call to live as stewards and disciples of His Word — and through hospitality, we can live that calling.



## DECORATING COMMITTEE SPREADS JOY THROUGH BEAUTY IN OUR CHURCH

Though the Mass remains the Mass no matter what the external circumstances, the church environment can play a big part in a person's worship experience. Surrounded by the beautiful displays and decorations, one almost can't help but have their thoughts elevated toward God — the Creator of all beauty and goodness. This is especially true, says parishioner Diane Frese, during special feast days like Christmas and Easter, when the joy of the season seems to be conveyed all around us.

"I don't know fully how to describe it, but something about the décor overwhelms you during the Church's special seasons," Diane says. "It's a comfort — a visible representation of the joy of the season as you are surrounded by all of that beauty."

Diane first experienced this personally as a young child while attending Midnight Mass with her family on Christmas Eve. As she entered the dark church, all she could see was the beautiful Christmas display set off by the twinkling of the white Christmas lights on the trees. And then as she went outside, snow began to fall in majestic beauty, almost as if nature was proclaiming the joy of Christ's birth.

"I'll never forget going outside on that particular Midnight Mass," Diane says. "There was just a hush and holiness that permeated around us. It just grabbed you and made you feel the awe and wonder of the season."

Impacted by this early experience, Diane was eager to help contribute to the church's beauty when she saw an advertisement in the bulletin for St. Peter's Decorating Committee. Responsible for outwardly representing each liturgical season within the church, this parish ministry uniquely allows parishioners to use their gifts and talents for God, representing Him through the beauty of His creation.

"It's such a pleasure to help convey the joy

*continued on back cover*



*With each new liturgical season, members of the Decorating Committee are provided with new opportunities to use their time and talent for God's glory.*



*Through each carefully placed flower arrangement, statue and banner, Decorating Committee members seek to convey the joyfulness of the Christmas season.*

# ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

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## 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: 8:30 a.m.

### Reconciliation

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

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

## DECORATING COMMITTEE *continued from page 7*

of the seasons, especially the big ones like Christmas and Easter,” Diane says. “It gives parishioners like myself a chance to express themselves in a creative way that greatly impacts our parish family, making the church a place where people can joyfully come to worship together. And there is always room for new ideas as people pitch in and come in with their unique gifts.”

The ministry welcomes new members as it continues to live out its mission of joyfully leading others to God through beauty.

“It’s just probably one of the more enjoyable ministries that there are,” Diane says. “I always get a certain satisfaction out of creating something, and I’m sure that other people do too. It’s always nice to be able to use the talent that God gave you in a way that will bless others.”

*Parishioners interested in joining the Decorating Committee may contact Diane Frese at 217-257-5989 or [berg1955@yahoo.com](mailto:berg1955@yahoo.com).*

## Holiday Mass Times

**Christmas Eve:**  
4:00, 6:00, 8:00 p.m.

**Christmas Day:**  
8:00, 10:00 a.m.

**New Year’s Eve:**  
5:00 p.m.

**New Year’s Day:**  
8:00, 10:00 a.m.