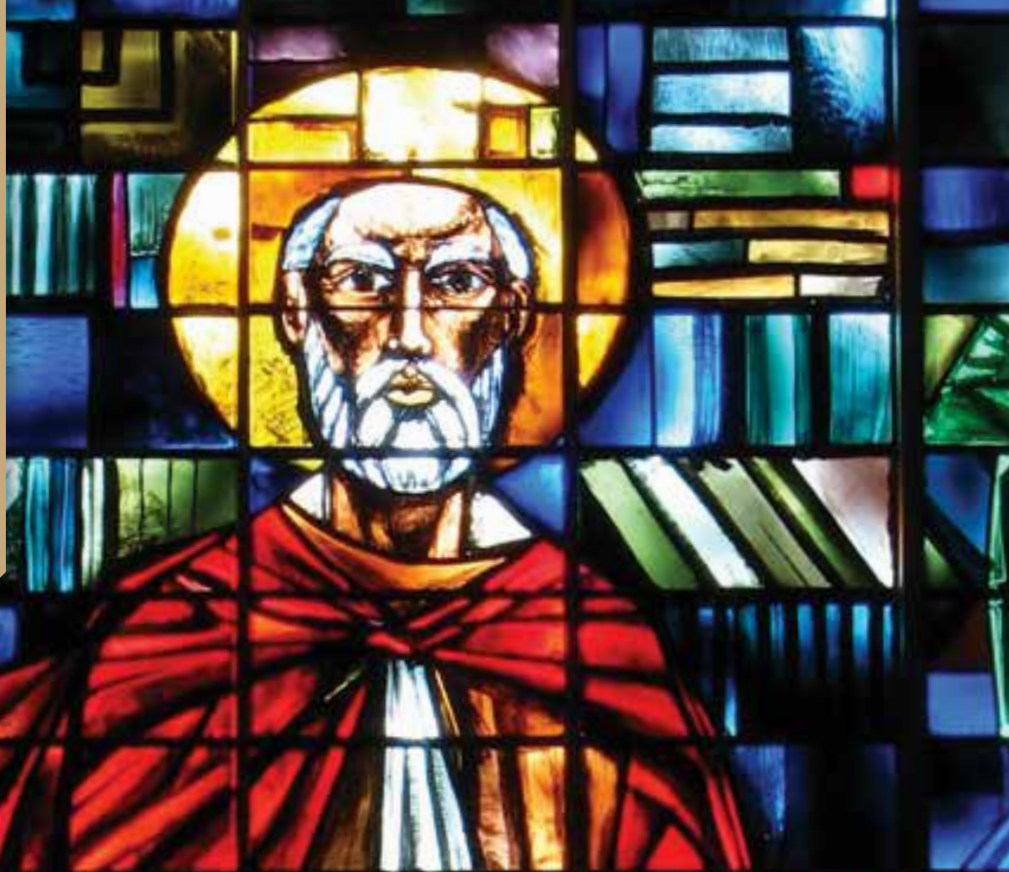


Church of St. Peter, Quincy III

MONTHLY
NEWSLETTER



CHILDCARE PROGRAM WELCOMES OUR YOUNGEST PARISHIONERS TO MASS

In Scripture, we're told that Jesus loved children. He saw their innocence as a model for our faith. So, when it comes time to introduce little souls to His love, the Childcare Program is ready to lead the way.

Offered to ages 1 to 5 during the 9:30 a.m. Sunday Mass, the Childcare Program has a two-fold mission: to allow parishioners with young children uninterrupted time to worship and to plant the seeds of love for Christ that can blossom as young Catholics mature.

"What we try to do is give a positive introduction for our littlest members," childcare teacher Erica Douglas says. "It offers a good variety of activity. We offer a space that has age-appropriate toys where little ones are safe in a fun environment.

"We play with them during Mass and sometimes we'll do a little song or activity depending on the day," Erica adds "We take that time to hang out with them and have some fun with them so that parents can focus more on the liturgy."



A member of the Childcare Program helps a young boy work on a puzzle during Mass. The program is available at each 9:30 a.m. Mass to allow little ones to build the foundations of faith while their parents enjoy the liturgy.

Each Sunday, a teacher such as Erica is joined by a volunteer and a student helper. Together this team greets little ones and leads them through an organized activity or simply unstructured play.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY PRAYER

“The family that prays together stays together.” This famous slogan was coined in 1947 by writer Al Scalpone, and has been frequently referenced ever since. The phrase pinpoints the true power of prayer, and the importance of making family prayer a consistent practice in our lives.

As Christian disciples, we are striving to follow Jesus – to grow in our love of Him and to serve Him through the use of our time, talent, and treasure. If we desire to follow in His footsteps, we must first begin by getting to know Him. Spending time with the Lord in prayer forms a foundation on which we can build our lives as Christian disciples, much in the same way that spending time with a girlfriend or boyfriend forms the foundation of a strong relationship.

The Christian family is the first place where children learn to pray. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* calls the family unit “*Ecclesia domestica*,” or “the Domestic Church” (1656). Thus, parents have a responsibility to set an example by taking time for personal prayer every day, and making family prayer a regular practice. This not only sets an example for the children, but also provides them with a faith-filled foundation and brings them closer to the Lord – forming them as grateful stewards of their time.

There are many ways in which a family can pray together. One of the most important times for prayer is before meals, where we thank God for His blessings, and for the food on our family table. Families may also share in the formal prayers of the Church, or perhaps pray a Rosary together every night. We can also thank the Lord aloud, asking Him to answer our prayers and offering Him our daily petitions. One often-suggested method of family prayer is ACTS, where we offer Adoration, Contrition, Thanksgiving, and Supplication. Families may also go to their church and kneel together before the Blessed Sacrament, offering prayers in Christ’s Presence.

These are just several of the many opportunities for families to pray together. Of course, prayer will be influenced by each family’s dynamics and personalities. But no matter how we pray, it is important that we make the time to do so. This will deepen the family’s relationship with the Lord, our commitment as His disciples will be stronger, and we may continually renew and foster our families’ bonds.



PRAYER OF PARENTS:

God, our Father, I thank you for the gift of my children and for the privilege and responsibility of being a parent, for this is my way of holiness. May I regard each of my children as a sacred pledge of Your love and a beautiful sign of Your confidence in me. Help me to pass on to my children our greatest treasures - faith in Your truths, hope in Your goodness, love in Your name for all. I entrust my children to Your loving care. Banish from our home any bitterness or lack of forgiveness. Let us have time, deep concern, and a sense of sacrifice for one another. Teach us never to be ashamed that we are, in name and in fact, a Catholic family striving to live in the way of Jesus, Who is head of our home. Give us Your Holy Spirit to unite us throughout this life and let the circle of our family be unbroken in the Kingdom of Your Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH



ST. PETER'S GARDEN AND

"This Ministry Is A

We might not perceive the act of gardening as a ministry, but there is a small team of green-thumbed parishioners whose mission of beautifying our parish campus is precisely that.

"Our campus is gorgeous, and people from all over the community notice it," says Maureen Schuering. "We're in a highly visible location, and when people see our beautiful landscape, I think it tells them we love our God and our church."

The Garden and Flowers Ministry consists of 25 dedicated members who give of their time and talent to the many gardens on campus in an act of hospitality.

"We have members who adopt an area and design, plant and maintain that garden," Maureen says. "When we dedicated ourselves to becoming a stewardship parish, it really became a ministry."

Gardening has always been a passion of Maureen's, but she didn't begin using her personal talent for the church until one Monday, when she saw the pastor on his "day off," working on the parish's grounds.

"I only live about six blocks from the church, and when I saw him out there cutting the grass on Monday, my car just turned into the campus," Maureen says. "I asked what I could do to help."

In the beginning, Maureen and her friend, Alana Flynn, worked with some of the custodians to plant flowers and were slowly joined by a few others. Today the ministry brings

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*For more information about St. Pet
contact Maureen Schuering at 217-224-*

ND FLOWERS MINISTRY

About Hospitality”

together all different members of our community, from the parishioners who donate plants to the many students who give hours to tend the gardens.

“We count on our Confirmation students and our Catholic high school students to water all summer,” Maureen says. “We have members who fill urns at various sites. We have men who weed and trim. One parishioner cares specifically for the rose bushes.”

Many of the gardens and urns around campus are cultivated according to the varying seasons and corresponding liturgical feasts and school and parish events. For example, ministry members plant daffodils and hyacinths for Easter, and in the fall, mums and pumpkins decorate the campus.

“We change the plants four times a year,” Maureen says. “Recently, we geared up for the start of the school year, and many members helped with that. Everyone has their talent, and we’re trying to use as many as we can.”

The Garden and Flowers Ministry has grown tremendously through the work of many stewards, and Maureen would like to thank the generous individuals who continue to make our parish campus welcoming to all.

“This ministry is about hospitality, and if this is your thing, join us,” Maureen says. “We are always open to suggestions. Anyone want to start a community garden on campus?”

from all over the community notice it. When people see our beautiful landscape, and our church.” – Maureen Schuering

*er’s Garden and Flowers Ministry,
4377 or maureenschuering@gmail.com.*



PARISHIONERS REFLECT ON VISIT

They have so little, yet they were so happy to go spend so much time on Sunday praising God. They are so thankful for life and their families and the blessings that they do have.”

In July, Karen Sedovic and Kimberly Venvertloh had the opportunity to travel with Fr. Leo to spend a week at our sister parish, Our Lady of Assumption, in Haiti. The group brought donations from our parish – school supplies, toys and bathroom necessities – and spent several days helping the children of Our Lady of Assumption learn some English words and phrases. Both Karen and Kimberly feel incredibly blessed to have had the opportunity to travel to Haiti and get to know the wonderful people of our sister parish.

Karen has been on the Sister Parish Committee since this ministry first began, and has long looked forward to the day that she would be able to make this kind of trip.

“I’ve always been interested in international projects, and when I was looking for a ministry at St. Peter to be involved in, I was hoping something like this would come along,” Karen says. “So, two years ago when Fr. Leo mentioned that Fr. Delix, the priest at Our Lady of Assumption, would be at our Mass, I thought ‘this is it.’ I’ve had friends who have traveled to other impoverished nations and I’ve always been interested in having a chance to get to know the people there.”

Although Kimberly had not been formerly

involved with the Sister Parish Ministry before this trip, when she heard her friend, Karen, talking about traveling to Our Lady of Assumption, she began to think and pray on the opportunity. Feeling a tug on her heart to make the trip, she ended up asking Fr. Leo and Karen if she could tag along. For all three travelers – Fr. Leo, Karen and Kimberly – this was the first time at the sister parish in Haiti.

The trio spent a week in Haiti, staying in a town about 20 minutes away from Our Lady of Assumption. Fr. Delix, the parish priest there, introduced them to the parishioners and also took them to explore the surrounding area and visit the two mountain mission churches.

Getting to know the people of Our Lady of Assumption really brought to life the true meaning of the sister parish relationship – to be in communion with one another across the two parishes.

“A lot of people may think that a sister parish is a one-sided relationship, but it is really a partnership, and the people in Haiti view it that way,” Karen affirms. “So they want to contribute in any way they can. While St. Peter is obviously providing the financial support, it goes beyond that – the people there want to



(From left) Karen Sedovic and Kimberly Venvertloh visit with families at one of the mountain mission churches.



Fr. Leo teaches the children a game during a break from English lessons at Our Lady of Assumption.

TO SISTER PARISH IN HAITI

“The Trip of a Lifetime”

hear about our church and our day-to-day lives in Quincy, and they are praying for us just as much as we are praying for them.”

As this visit with Our Lady of Assumption showed both Karen and Kimberly, we certainly have a lot to gain from nurturing this relationship, and a lot to learn from the people of our sister parish. For example, it is life-changing to witness the strong faith life that thrives at the parish despite the extreme poverty of the area.

The gratitude the parishioners of Our Lady of Assumption express in their daily lives was a great inspiration to Kimberly.

“They have so little, yet they were so happy to go spend so much time on Sunday praising God,” she says. “They are so thankful for life and their families and the blessings that they do have. It was very foreign to me to see so much poverty and need, but the people are so kind and welcoming. They were so happy to show us their culture, and they are proud of Haiti and proud of where they are making a life for themselves. Every prayer, every amount of support that we give them in any way is going to be well used.”

Like Kimberly, Karen was amazed by everything she witnessed and experienced during their week in Haiti. The poverty was more intense than she had anticipated, but so were the graciousness of the people and the beauty of the landscape. The children were every bit as kind and loving as their parents, and also impressively patient as they sat in the pews for their English lessons!

Karen won’t soon forget the effect that making this trip has had on her own faith life.

“I think it reinforced my faith and my commitment to the Catholic Church,” she says. “It was just impactful to see people who endure a lot of struggles on a daily basis who still feel a great gratitude for the blessings in their life.



Karen Sedovic with the children at Our Lady of Assumption.

And I also walked away feeling blessed for the many conveniences that I have in my own life. It was an inspiration to remember to prioritize the things in life that they do – family, friends and faith.”

Both Karen and Kimberly find it difficult to describe in mere words the impact their visit to our sister parish has had on their lives, and they are incredibly thankful for this invaluable experience.

“It was the trip of a lifetime,” Kimberly affirms. “Hopefully my kids will get to hear stories for many years to come about my experiences there, because it was so impactful and powerful. I just feel so blessed and grateful to have had this opportunity.”

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

CHILDCARE PROGRAM WELCOMES OUR YOUNGEST PARISHIONERS TO MASS *continued from front cover*

Erica says the program can vary from week to week depending on the teacher and what's happening in the Church calendar.

A mom to two young children herself — Noah, 7, and Claire, 4 — Erica became involved when her daughter was first introduced to the Childcare Program at three years old.

On average, the program typically involves between five to eight children at a time, but Erica says that number has fluctuated over the years and she hopes it will grow.

“We’re looking to get the word out that

it’s something that we offer for our littlest members,” Erica says.

For parishioners who wouldn’t mind spending their Sunday morning fostering little hearts and minds, the Childcare Program is looking both for teachers and volunteers. Student helpers typically include high school-age teens interested in earning service learning hours or simply for personal enrichment.

“I find it so rewarding and I think our volunteers feel the same,” Erica says. “The kids really look forward to the program and it’s such a fun time spending time with them.”

Parents who would like more information about the Childcare Program are invited to bring their child to the program where a teacher will meet them, or they can contact Erica directly at 217-779-1123. The program is offered every Sunday throughout the year with the exception of holidays.