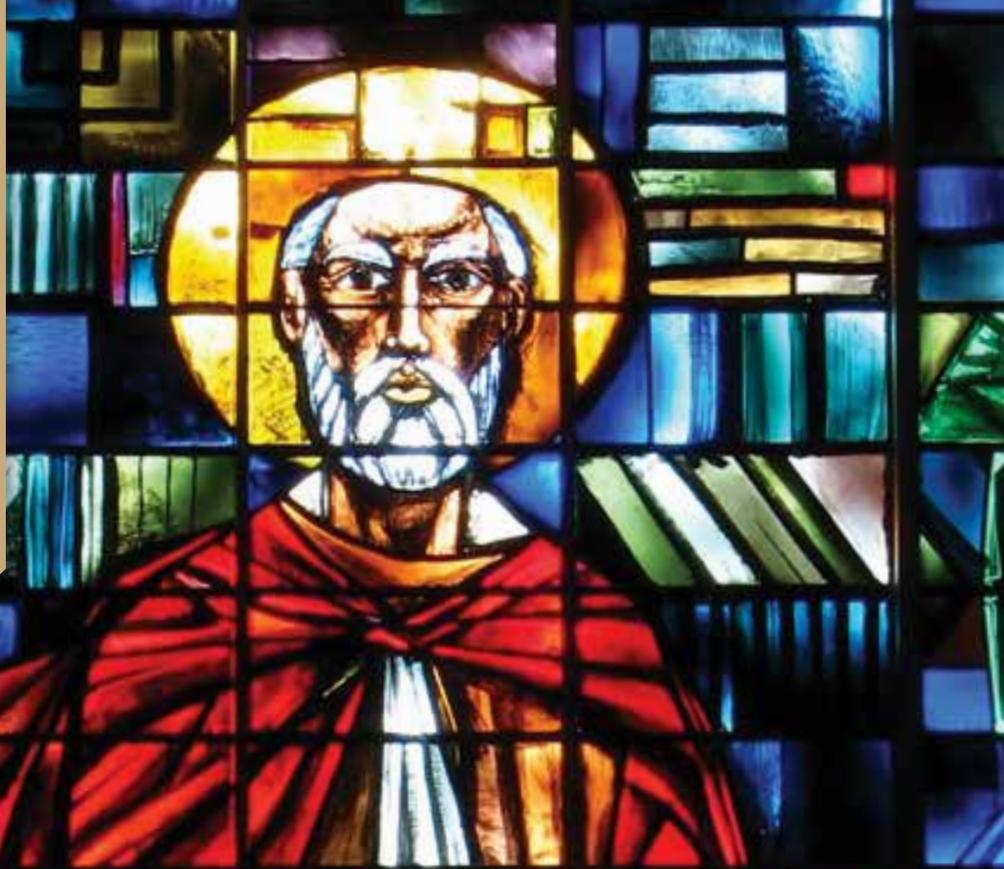


# Church of St. Peter, Quincy III

MONTHLY  
NEWSLETTER



## CONVENT RAZING PROVIDES CAMPUS OPEN SPACE

Everything has gone as planned over the Christmas break, and our students at St. Peter School have returned to campus to find that Fr. Tolton Hall is gone.

The former convent — which once housed the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood (CPPS) until about 20 years ago — has been demolished after standing since 1960. All that remains to be done is site cleanup.

“There are no plans for the space,” Msgr. Leo Enlow says in pondering the demolition. “It is a mixture of feelings. There is sadness that it is a demolition of a building made for a convent, but we can’t use it for much else. To make a major renovation, the cost would be more than a new building. So it’s something of sadness, as it’s part of our history, but there is joy that our parish is continually growing.”

Fr. Tolton Hall’s name carried a portion of St. Peter Parish history in that it was named for Augustine Tolton, the son of a runaway slave. Augustine found refuge at St. Peter, and was able to complete his primary education here. This



enabled him to go on to further his education and become the first African-American priest in 1886.

The Master Planning Committee was charged with studying any developments for the parish, and this included an evaluation of the buildings. Bill Siebers, a member of the Master Planning Committee that was formed in 2005, reflects on the decisions around razing the structure.

*continued on back cover*

## STEWARDSHIP

### *Becoming Fishers of Men*

Whether you hold a high-profile position, such as parish council president, or have more of a behind-the-scenes role as a coordinator of a parish ministry, God has called you – as a parish leader – to help build His Church.

This challenge is just as important as the call of any other Catholic leader, including the earliest disciples.

When Jesus walked along the Sea of Galilee, He urged a group of fishermen, “Come follow me.” Jesus promised if they laid down their nets and followed Him, He would make them fishers of men. These men were among His original disciples, and they knew Christ’s call was so important that they left their secular occupation to follow Him.

Just as He did with the fishermen, Jesus calls each of us today. He is not necessarily asking us to leave our secular careers, but He is asking us to put Him first in our lives and to share His message of love with others.

God truly wants us to serve Him and to build His Church through the secular occupations we have chosen. It is through the Church that new disciples are born, and it is in the Church that disciples continue to mature. Forming disciples of Christ is the most important work that can be done on earth, and each of us has been called to play an active role in this work.

So, how do we go about building the Church? Where do we find the plans?

Some people mistakenly think that building the Church – in particular, building our own parish or diocese – is no different than building a successful business. Indeed, the purpose of building

the Church is to change hearts – a goal that only God can accomplish.

Secular society has not prepared us for this work. However, the Holy Spirit – sometimes referred to as the “Architect of the Church” – has the plan. In order to implement this plan, we must become good listeners. We must open ourselves to the workings of the Holy Spirit as He transforms us and guides us to carry out God’s work and to serve as His instruments on earth, building the Church together with Him.

This is where spiritual exercises, such as retreats, come into play. A retreat offers the individual an opportunity to spend time alone with the Lord, allowing God to draw the person deeper into the mystery of who He is, who we are and what He is doing in our lives. Stewardship retreats can offer parish leaders the opportunity each year to spend time with the Lord as He directs them in the ways of discipleship. As leaders, we must take time to meditate on the Scriptures and allow Jesus to open up His Word to us. Then, as we grow deeper in our understanding of what God wants of us, we can exclaim, just as the first disciples did on the road to Emmaus, “Our hearts are burning within us” (Lk 24:32).

God has placed an extremely important call on the lives of all parish leaders, no matter how big or small the role. It is vital to understand how we, as parish leaders, can best answer His call. What, in particular, is the Lord calling each one of us to do? He most likely is not asking us to drop our nets, but to pick them up and become “fishers of men.” We must discern how we can most effectively cast our nets for Him.

## RESOLVE TO GIVE BACK TO GOD IN 2018

Dear Parishioners,

Another new year — 2018! There was a time in my life when this date (and others) seemed so far in the future. It is amazing how those dates start to pile up and stream by, isn't it? I have reached a point where measuring one's life by the years and dates is not as significant as many other things.

I recall reading somewhere, "The world around us asks, 'What does a person own?' But God asks, 'How does a person use what he or she has been given?'" This month of January is one filled with reminders of holiness — the official end of the Christmas season; the Epiphany of our Lord; the Baptism of the Lord; and the return to Ordinary Time, which, as we know, is not "ordinary" at all.

At Epiphany we hear, "Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts" (Matthew 2:11), a reference to the Magi and their visit to the Christ Child. The image of the Magi kneeling before the infant Jesus and opening their gifts for Him is one we should all try to follow. Each of us is called to open our gifts before Jesus and offer Him what He needs. I heard a suggestion once that if you have a problem with this thought, you should

perhaps keep one of the Magi from your Christmas Nativity set and place it on your desk as a reminder.

During the Baptism of the Lord, God makes it clear when He proclaims from the Heavens, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased" (Mark 1:11). God has given

us the greatest gift He could give. He gave His only Son. When we think about the enormity of that gift of Jesus sent to save us, in addition to all the other blessings that God has entrusted to us, it is very humbling. God has given us so much. What do we give in return?

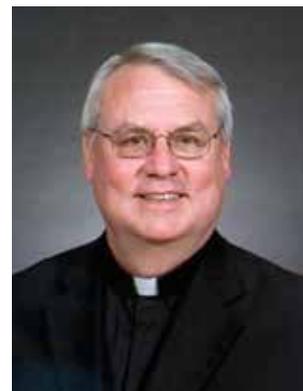
Making resolutions is common at this time of year. We will also hear this month about how Jesus called the first apostles. The Lord calls us as well to follow Him. Let us resolve to try to do that better — all of us. That does not mean we have to leave our work and our families behind, but we do need to put our service to Jesus. That should be our top resolution.

In *The Theology of the Hammer*, Habitat for Humanity co-founder Millard Fuller wrote, "The only truly safe investment one can make in life is what is given away." First and foremost, God wants us. That should be our real resolution — to give ourselves to the Lord. May we all do a better job of that in 2018. God bless you all.

Yours in Christ,



Rev. Msgr. Leo J. Enlow  
Pastor



## BAPTISM: *Beginning*

Setting up the nursery. Installing the car seat. Stocking up on diapers. The to-do list as you prepare for a new baby can be both exciting and exhausting. Sometimes, in the midst of washing tiny clothes, writing shower thank-you notes and choosing a name, it can be easy to forget the most important thing that you, as a Catholic parent, will do for your child.

“Holy Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life,” the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* tells us (CCC 1213). In other words, the Sacrament of Baptism is the foundation of a life of faith.

The Church has always taught the necessity of Baptism for salvation, that is, welcome into heaven. It is the call and duty of Catholic parents to make every effort to aid their children in experiencing a relationship with Christ here on earth, and also, for eternity in heaven. Baptism is the first step in this journey.

While the Sacrament of Baptism can be received in a number of different situations, including older children, and adults, the ordinary form of Baptism in the Catholic Church takes place when a child is an infant.

Alison and Jason Merrill recently had their second daughter, Stella Maris — a title of the Blessed Mother — baptized at St. Peter’s. For the Merrills, Stella Maris was the third member of their family to be baptized by Fr. Leo, as Jason was baptized after going through RCIA at St. Peter’s several years ago. Fr. Leo baptized their 2-year-old, Gemma, as well.

“It was so special and meaningful to us,” Alison says.

For Alison, who was baptized as an infant, going through the RCIA process with Jason helped her see the Sacrament of Baptism

***“You’re committing to a life with God at the center. There are things that you let kids make choices about, but there are also many decisions you make for your children to help guide them to have a spiritual life and relationship with God.” — Alison Merrill***

with new eyes.

“Baptism is the best gift ever,” she says. “It’s a little sad to me that Jason wasn’t baptized for all those years. We can take it for granted — I was born and my parents did it for me and I didn’t realize how blessed I was. So, I’m so glad Jason now has that gift and we definitely want to give it to our little girls.”

For the Merrills, there was no question of whether or not they would have their children baptized.

“We want our children to be children of God and to realize how important He is in their lives and in our lives, as they grow up,” Alison says. “Baptism is a gift and it’s more important than anything.”

Alison found herself particularly moved by the blessings for the mother and father, which are part of the Baptism Rite. For her, the ritual served as a beautiful reminder of the role that parents have in raising their children in the faith.

“You’re committing to a life with God at the center,” says Alison, who, along with

# the Journey of Faith

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Jason, prioritizes attending Mass each Sunday and going to adoration each Wednesday, with their children. “There are things that you let kids make choices about, but there are also many decisions you make for your children to help guide them to have a spiritual life and relationship with God.”

The Merrills also try to make the Sacrament of Baptism not just a “one-time thing,” but rather incorporate it into their family traditions, by celebrating the anniversary of the girls’ Baptisms each year, bringing out their Baptismal candles and reminding them about the significance of that special day.

Gina Bergman, who was recently hired to help coordinate Sacramental Preparation, teaches Baptism classes for parents, along

with Fr. Leo. She hopes that all baptized parishioners will remember the significance of their First Sacrament.

“I think it’s important for people to remember what Baptism does,” Gina says. “You’re entered into the Church and you receive that light of Christ. You need to keep the light of faith shining — it’s your responsibility. If you’re baptized, what does that mean to you? We believe in the grace of the sacrament — that’s such a beautiful thing and I think people can take it for granted.

“I hope we realize we’re all part of the Church,” she adds. “We can be a good example to others, and we can invite other people to know Jesus. It’s a responsibility of being baptized.”

*If you would like more information on how to begin the process of being baptized as an adult, or having your child receive the sacrament, please contact the parish office at 217-222-3155. Classes for infant Baptism are offered every other month, on the first Monday of even-numbered months. The next class will be offered in February.*



## FAITH AND SCIENCE:

There have long been scientists who claimed that their work was “incompatible” with faith in God. But as our world has become increasingly polarized, more and more people seem to believe that there must be a disconnect between faith and reason. For many scientists — and secular scholars in other fields, as well — religion and academics are deemed mutually exclusive. If something cannot be proven empirically, they posit, it is foolhardy to stake one’s life on it. And yet, this is exactly what we as Catholic Christians do — every time we say the word “amen,” in fact, we are declaring that we believe Church teachings to be an absolute truth.

So is all this to say that the Church really is “anti-science,” as some of its detractors claim? Certainly not! In fact, most people — Catholics and non-Catholics alike — would probably be very surprised to know just how many Catholic thinkers have played a major role in the development of modern scientific thought.

Most of us are familiar with some of the earliest scientific advances made by famous Catholic scholars

like Copernicus, Galileo, Descartes, and Leonardo da Vinci. But fast-forward to the 19<sup>th</sup> century — when countless innovations in modern science began kicking into high gear — and the contributions made by Catholic scientists are astounding! For example, the Mercalli scale used to measure earthquakes was developed by an Italian Catholic volcanologist, Giuseppe Mercalli, at the turn of the last century. You may also remember some of the laws of Mendelian inheritance from your high school biology class — Augustinian friar and botanist Gregor Mendel first discovered these recessive and dominant “factors” (which would later come to be called genes) in the 1800s, becoming the founder of genetics.

Of course, these are just a few of the more widely known examples. Those who work in the specific fields of physics and cosmology have several priests to thank for the incredible advances made in this area of study over the last century. Fr. Georges Lemaître was a Catholic priest living in Belgium during the first half of the 20th century. A professor

of astronomy and physics at the Catholic University of Leuven, Fr. Lemaître was the first scientist to propose the Big Bang theory — which he referred to as the “primeval atom” or the “Cosmic Egg” — and the theory of the expansion of the universe. Fr. Lemaître’s brilliant and meticulous research won over even the most skeptical scientists in his field — reportedly, upon hearing Fr. Lemaître present his theories at a conference in California, Albert Einstein declared, “This is the most beautiful and satisfactory explanation of creation to which I have ever listened.”

For Fr. Lemaître, who served as president of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences from 1960 until his death in 1966, balancing the worlds of priesthood and cosmology research was not always easy. Sometimes, Catholic believers misunderstood his quest to discover the origin of the universe as a desire to put limits on God. On the other side, secular scientists questioned his ability to formulate theories of the universe objectively, suspecting that he was

*continued on page 7*

# Can They Mix?

seeking to manipulate his scientific finds to fit them within Church teaching. In reality, Fr. Lemaître always advocated for a strict separation between science and faith, claiming that the Bible was not intended to be read as a science textbook and that “God could not be reduced to a scientific hypothesis.” For this Catholic scientist, although faith and science may have each answered separate questions, they were certainly not incompatible.

In contrast to Lemaître’s careful separation of questions of science and faith, another famous physicist priest takes the opposite approach. Fr. Michal Heller, professor of philosophy at the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Kraków, Poland, and member of the Vatican Observatory staff, seeks to bring together the fields of science, philosophy, and theology. In an interview with *The New York Times* upon his receipt of the acclaimed Templeton Prize for science and religion in 2008, Heller explained: “I always wanted to do the most important things, and what can be more important than science and religion? Science gives us knowledge, and religion gives us meaning. Both are prerequisites of the decent existence.” Fr. Heller, whose current research focuses on general relativity and quantum mechanics, strives to study the known elements of science within the context of a universe that has an (empirically) unknowable God as its creator.

In a similar way, yet another scientist priest of the past century successfully reconciled science and faith in his life’s work. Fr. Stanley Jaki (1924-2009) was a Hungarian Benedictine priest who held doctorates in theology and physics, and authored over 40 books in these fields — and in the history of science — during his lifetime. Fr. Jaki is perhaps best known for his claim that modern science and cosmology were only made possible through the Christian understanding of creation that took root in medieval Europe. Fr. Jaki believed that faith and science must work together, and he warned against the tendency of modern society to seek omniscience through scientific study, thus letting science take the place of God.

Certainly, the list of Catholic scientists who have deservedly become renowned in their fields of study is longer than most people probably imagine. Still today, scientists like astronomer Fr. George Coyne, former director of the Vatican Observatory and current professor at Le Moyne College in New York, continue to make significant contributions to the study of modern science worldwide. Contrary to those who may try to claim that faith and science are incompatible, the Church has proven over the centuries that understanding the science behind how our world works absolutely can — and *should* — go hand in hand with the pursuit of fully knowing and serving our God.

*Are you interested in learning about the Church’s teachings on the relationship between faith and reason? The papal encyclicals *Humani Generis* and *Fides et Ratio* provide in-depth explorations of this important topic.*

# 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

## CONVENT RAZING PROVIDES CAMPUS OPEN SPACE

*continued from front cover*

“Judy Nelson and I were on the committee, and we had a feasibility study done on how the convent might be used, going forward to continue the mission of the parish,” Bill says. “After an analysis was done by an architect and engineers, it was found there was no cost-effective way to modify it so it could be usable, going forward. The building was constructed as a convent and it is not easily converted to open spaces to be used by any group or ministry. That was the cost/benefit analysis by the Master Planning Committee that determined it was not feasible to remodel. The cost to tear it down was a potential line item in our Living Stones Campaign. When it came down to the priorities for the budget, with the money available, tearing down the building wasn’t high on the list. It just sort of sat there.”

Over the years after the sisters departed, the

convent building has been used as a preschool, school library, nurse office, Adoration chapel, meetings, teacher lunchroom, computer lab, and a school for children with special needs.

“The nuns moved out when I was a kid,” Bill says. “The chapel in it, a two-story space, was used as our school library.”

Around the time that the Master Planning Committee was evaluating the building for potential re-use, the building became a storage facility, a usage that continued until the demolition.

“There has been an effort to clean things out of there,” Bill says. “The building was costing money to sit there, with costs such as insurance. It was all brick, and from the outside, it was a nice building. When you crunch the numbers, to modify it? It becomes cost-prohibitive pretty quickly.”