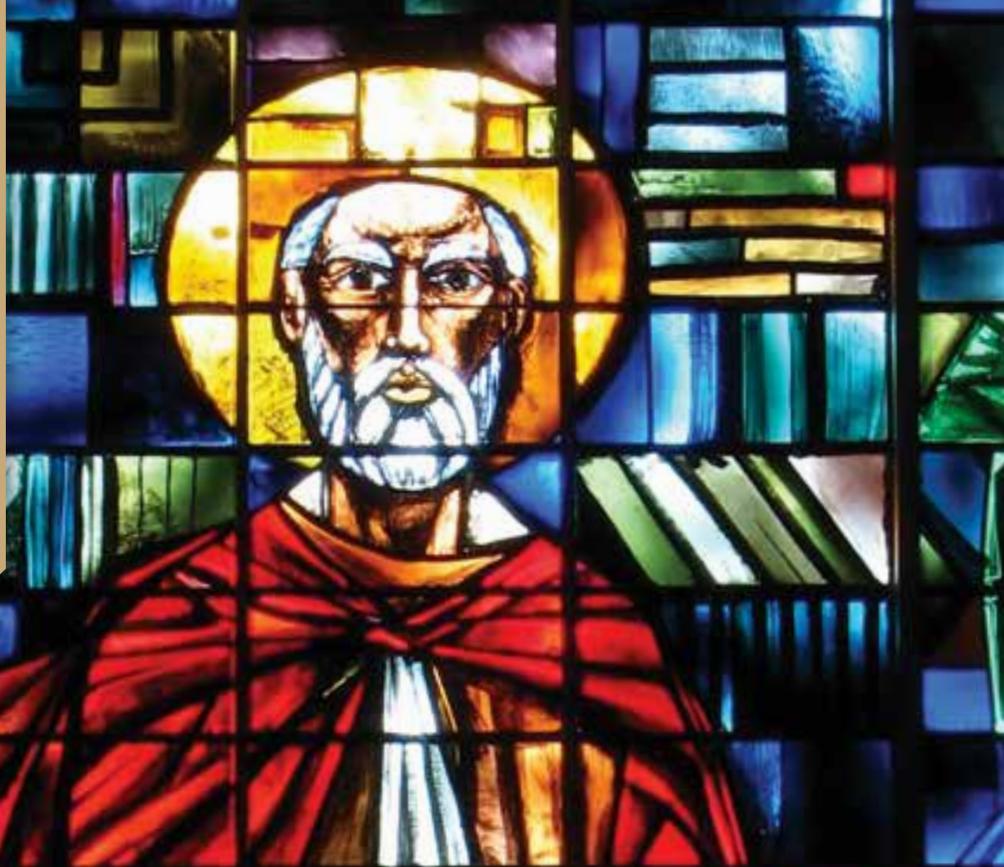


Church of St. Peter, Quincy III

MONTHLY
NEWSLETTER



“UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU BELIEVE”

By Serving with RCIA at St. Peter

When Connie Schrage first started serving as a sponsor for adults entering the Church through RCIA, she was struck with the realization of the life changes they were willing to make and how deeply they appreciated the faith.

“Seeing people excited to become Catholic makes me appreciate my Catholic faith,” Connie says. “The time we give to RCIA is so rewarding personally — our understanding and faith are strengthened and enjoyed.”

At St. Peter’s, adults are welcome to inquire about faith through RCIA, the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults. The RCIA classes take place from the middle of September until two weeks before Easter. They meet from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on Tuesday nights in the Martha Jane Room under the church.

Parishioners who are willing to share their time and their faith to journey alongside these adults are an essential part of RCIA.

“We need parishioners to reach out to co-workers, friends and neighbors, and then offer to sponsor them and support them throughout the RCIA time period,” Connie says. “Every Catholic



St. Peter’s RCIA class and team

sponsor has always said it is a good experience.”

In addition to sponsors, the RCIA team also welcomes new members. The team offers support to the whole class and leads the classes and discussions. These team members also take turns providing refreshments.

“We have excellent presenters that teach the classes, and the sponsors or team members are

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ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

ST. PETER'S GARDEN MINISTRY

Recognizing the Beauty of God through Our Environment

When Amanda Strudwick and her family moved to Quincy and joined St. Peter's, Amanda looked for a flexible way to plug into parish life, a way of giving back that could potentially involve her children, too.

Her natural love for nature and the outdoors led her to the Garden Ministry.

"Beauty is such an important characteristic of who God is," Amanda says. "The Garden Ministry has a really direct way of being able to draw that out by using His creation, his flowers and plants, to show beauty."

The Garden Ministry consists of multiple faith community members who nurture and beautify the parish campus. The ministry gives "green-thumbed" parishioners a practical way to share their time and talent with the church.

"If you don't have much time, the Garden Ministry is a relatively easy commitment, and you won't feel overwhelmed," Amanda says. "You can take on a small section and tend for it whenever you have an afternoon or morning free."

Amanda's section of the parish campus was the two large flower pots in front of St. Peter School. With a child attending the school, Amanda found that she could easily care for the pots as part of her regular routine.

"It was a very organic way for me to serve the school just as much as the church community," Amanda says.

The flower pots greet students, staff and



One of the flower pots in front of St. Peter School tended by Amanda Strudwick

families entering the school, and Amanda endeavored to keep the decorations fun and fresh for the children while following the liturgical calendar.

"In those last days of Advent before Christmas started, I would switch and put up Christmas decorations," Amanda says. "The pots were bare during Lent, and then I'd plant tulips in time for Easter."

The Garden Ministry is a wonderful opportunity for children to practice stewardship and learn about the liturgical calendar at a young age. Amanda's three children all helped at different times, and she has fond memories of her toddler carrying a little water can.

"We want the Church to be a natural part of their life and to feel like their home in addition to their domestic church," Amanda says. "This is a very hands-on and practical way for them to be part of the Church and to belong to the community."

As her children have grown, Amanda has taken on new responsibilities and felt it was time to "pass on the baton" regarding the Garden Ministry. The ministry would welcome new members and would like to thank the many generous individuals who have shared their time and talent to beautify the parish campus.

"Each person who participates in the Garden Ministry recognizes that we're all called to make use of the gifts that God has given us, whether in small ways or large," Amanda says.

If you would like more information about the Garden Ministry, please reach out to the parish office at 217-222-3155.

As Summer Winds Down, Fall Back into Stewardship

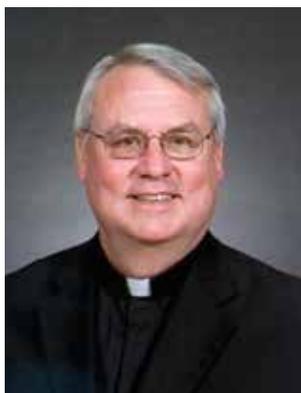
Dear Parishioners,

August has traditionally been regarded as a summer month — a continuation of July with a few differences, namely back-to-school sales that arrive during the month. But now, many schools begin the academic year in August, with the ever-present back-to-school sales falling even earlier in July.

So do we regard August as “still summer” or “the beginning of fall”? While I don’t have an answer to that question, I do know that it’s a time when we should be thinking about how we’re going to serve as Christian disciples and stewards once the fall routines begin.

Even for adults long out of school, the concept of “summer vacation” has a strong hold on us. Sure, some take vacations in the fall to see the leaves, or in winter for skiing or to see family during the Christmas season — but we still think of the summer as *the* time for vacations. Many also have the preconceived notion that “nothing happens” in our parish over the summer. Yes, Mass is still regularly celebrated, and there are weddings and funerals. But otherwise, the parish is a quieter place during the summer months... isn’t it?

Of course, that is certainly not the case. In parishes across America, there are summer programs like Vacation Bible School for the children, and youth groups are attending conferences and sharing in service projects in areas of need. In addition, both our staff



and our volunteers are busy during the summer, as they prepare for all “normally scheduled” activities that resume after Labor Day.

That brings me to my main point — how are *you* preparing to serve as a steward once Labor Day is past? Have you thought of how you can best serve the Lord Jesus with the talent He has entrusted to you? Have you planned how you can arrange your schedule to offer Him more of your time in prayer, worship and study? Have you considered how your budget might be rearranged to share more of the treasure in your care?

Maybe our Lord is inviting you to teach religious education, or to work with the youth, or to visit shut-ins, or to volunteer at a food bank, or to sing in the choir, or to attend weekday Mass, or... well, you get the idea. While we count down the days and wait for autumn to arrive, we can use our time to evaluate how we can be better disciples, better stewards and better Christians — this fall and throughout the rest of our lives.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, written in a cursive style. The signature reads "Rev. Msgr. Leo J. Enlow".

Rev. Msgr. Leo J. Enlow
Pastor

While we count down the days and wait for autumn to arrive, we can use our time to evaluate how we can be better disciples, better stewards and better Christians — this fall and throughout the rest of our lives.

A CALL TO SERVE: *The Voca*

For our Pastor, Msgr. Leo Enlow, the faithful examples set forth by the various priests who served his parish while he was growing up would eventually inspire his own vocational journey.

“I admired their work and ministry and their enjoyment of their priesthood,” Fr. Leo says. “I can remember even in first and second grade, times when we would play Mass and we’d have the ‘hosts’ and the grape juice — it was just one of those things that was part of my life. Who knew at that time that it would actually one day become a reality?”

As with many who are called to serve as priests, Fr. Leo credits the beginnings of his vocation to the role and influence of his family.

“My mom told me, after I’d been ordained

25 years, that when I was very young, as a child, I was deathly sick and there was a question of whether I’d make it,” Fr. Leo says, recalling his mother’s words. “I told God, if you would get well, that I would not hamper you being a priest.’ Wow, the prayer of a mother!

“I’m not sure I had much of a say in it,” he adds, with a smile.

Fr. Leo’s family were steadfast in their faith, always worshiping and attending Mass together — in particular, he recalls attending 6:30 a.m. daily Mass with his father.

“I think a strong family life is the source of a vocation,” he says. “Vocations begin within the home. [My parents’] example of faith was remarkable. I have a little piece of my mom, when



Fr. Leo also encourages parishioners to pray for themselves and others to be open to where God calls them to serve, especially as priests.

tion of the Priesthood

I wear the various vestments she made. Every time I wear some of her vestments, it's a reminder that this is from where my vocation came."

Fr. Leo has also experienced the power of God strengthening and working through him in various ways, as he serves.

"I had a very bad speech impediment," he says. "For the first four to five years of my life, no one could understand me. To think I could overcome that and be able to preach, it's God's grace and gift. I've got to make sure I get out of the way and let God speak through me."

Over the 43 years that Fr. Leo has been ordained, he's found himself in many situations he would've never dreamed of and has discovered his favorite aspects of being a priest.

"[My favorite things are] serving the people, celebrating the Eucharist with them and for them, and God opening up each day different challenges for me," he says. "If you told me 43 years ago that I would be learning sign language, I would've said you were nuts. Serving at a school for the deaf, that's been one of my greatest experiences as a priest. In learning sign language, I learned to appreciate the signs and symbols of the Eucharist on a deeper level."

Fr. Leo encourages people to experience the joy and fulfillment that comes from being open and following God's plan for your life.

"I've found a happiness and joy that is beyond what I would've ever had doing anything else," Fr. Leo says. "I try to tell the kids, whether it's the priesthood or religious life or if you're going to be a doctor or a lawyer, if you try to discern what God wants from you and you open yourself to what God wants, you will always be happy."

"When we allow God to help us to live the

"God gifts to us certain things and He expects us to use those things, not for ourselves, but to serve and glorify Him. And for me, serving Him in the priesthood is very much how I found my joy and happiness."

— Msgr. Leo Enlow, Pastor

vocation He wants from us, we will always find happiness and joy, and that's what I've found in my priesthood," he adds. "Every day, there are different challenges and struggles, but God's always been there with me, and for that I'm grateful."

He reminds parishioners of the importance of using our strengths and talents for service, in whatever vocation we're called.

"God gifts to us certain things and He expects us to use those things, not for ourselves, but to serve and glorify Him," Fr. Leo says. "And for me, serving Him in the priesthood is very much how I found my joy and happiness."

Fr. Leo also encourages parishioners to pray for themselves and others to be open to where God calls them to serve, especially as priests.

"Prayer worked with my mother, and prayer will work with others if we pray for the priests and pray for more vocations," Fr. Leo says. "Pray that people have the humility to be able to want to serve God and the Church."

"And if you want to be of humble service and feel God's presence in His people, the priesthood is a very good ministry of service," he adds.

If you are interested in discerning a vocation to priesthood or religious life, please contact our Diocesan Vocations Director, Rev. Brian C. Alford, at 217-698-8500 or vocations@dio.org.

TOTUS TUUS



A group shot of this summer's youth participants.



One of the Totus Tuus missionaries instructs the youth.

Though most of us associate the summer months with things like vacationing, fun in the sun and a general reprieve from the hectic pace of the school year, it's important not to let the lazy days of summer negatively impact our spiritual life. For, as Msgr. Leo Enlow is fond of reminding the students each year, we never take a vacation from our Catholic faith. This is why St. Peter's annual Totus Tuus program continues to be such an important ministry for the youth of our parish, presenting the truths of our Catholic faith in new, dynamic ways each summer.

"This continues to be just a really great way to deepen the young people's faith and to help them learn new things," says Gina Bergman, Director of Religious Education and Youth Ministry. "It's really cool for even the adult volunteers, because we end up learning things, too. It's a great way to balance your summer, not forgetting that important aspect of deepening your faith amidst those vacation months."

This summer's Totus Tuus program occurred June 24-29, with youth between first and sixth grades gathering each day from 8 a.m. to noon, while junior and senior high youth met from 7-9 p.m. in the evening. Centered on the Luminous Mysteries of the Rosary, the program worked to deepen our youth's faiths through daily interactive lessons, skits, games, discussions and reception of the sacraments.

"It manages to be very structured and yet flexible at the same time," Gina says. "The junior and senior high kids really seemed to like and enjoy it, especially because their teachers weren't too much older than them, making it easy for them to relate. There were lots of ice breakers, teachings, games and socialization throughout the week, all designed to help our youth more totally give

BALANCING THE SUMMER MONTHS WITH FAITH

themselves to Christ.”

Yet, our parish youth weren't the only ones to benefit from this year's program, Gina adds — while Totus Tuus is put on by four college-age missionaries, it takes an army of volunteers to pull it all together each year. And in the process of feeding, housing and supporting the missionaries in their work, adult parishioners can't help but also be inspired.

“I really love the Totus Tuus program, not only because it teaches and administers to our kids each year, but because of how the entire parish comes together through it,” Gina says. “There are always two families who host the male and female missionaries. Then we have volunteers preparing lunches each day, different parishioners hosting the missionaries for dinner each night, and volunteers helping out for the morning and night sessions.”

Though this year's Totus Tuus program has already occurred and summertime will soon be giving way to fall, our hope is that the lessons learned through the program continue to blossom in our youth's hearts as they entrust themselves more fully to Jesus Christ — that it helps our youth embrace the faith as a way of life, now and always.

“This continues to be just a really great way to deepen the young people's faith and to help them learn new things. It's really cool for even the adult volunteers, because we end up learning things, too. It's a great way to balance your summer, not forgetting that important aspect of deepening your faith amidst those vacation months.” — Gina Bergman, Director of Religious Education and Youth Ministry



Our teenage boys enjoy a meal together.



Enjoying one of the Totus Tuus teaching sessions.



Each year, Totus Tuus remains grounded in the sacraments, ending each day session with the sacrifice of the Mass.

ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

2600 Maine Street
Quincy, Illinois 62301



Return Service Requested

MASS & RECONCILIATION SCHEDULE

Sunday Masses

Saturday: 5:00 p.m.,

Sunday: 8:00, 9:30 and 11:00 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

RCIA continued from front cover

there to support the candidates and catechumens,” Connie says. “They do not have to ‘have all the answers.’”

One of the ways that sponsors best support the candidates during the classes is by asking questions they may be hesitant to ask and explaining material in “lay language.”

“By attending the RCIA classes with them, sponsors can hear and learn what is being taught,” Connie says. “We keep serving on this RCIA program because we learn something every year. The classes teach the theology, and we teach the practice of our faith.”

Connie would like to thank all the members of the RCIA team, including Tami Cain, Merrie Colgrove, Mary Kussman, Bob Musolino, Bill and Pat Prichard, Martha Rapp, Daniel Strudwick and Beth Young.

Connie, a cradle Catholic, believes that all the Catholic adults who serve as sponsors or team members enrich their faith while supporting others in their own faith journeys.

“Faith is believing, but I need to understand what I am believing,” Connie says. “The RCIA classes build up my faith by being able to learn things on an adult level and being able to ask questions.”

If you would like more information about the RCIA process and becoming a sponsor, please contact Connie Schrage at 217-316-6564.