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No Longer Alone:

THE BELONGING MINISTRY

One of the great gifts of Christianity is that we don't have to go it alone. As members of the Body of Christ, we are each mystically united, sharing in one another's joys and sorrows (1 Corinthians 12:26). This rich sense of community is most fully felt when we have the opportunity to gather, share and grow with people experiencing similar experiences and stages of life. Yet, for those characterized as young adults, this can at times be difficult to find within the Church.

“We see a lot of people my age lose their faith, and I think part of that comes from not having a solid support system around them,” says parishioner Emily Kite. “Those of us who went to Catholic schools our whole life, we were always surrounded



This new ministry is meant to provide young adults with fellowship and friendship to accompany them on the faith journey — and, in turn, helping them live out the faith in the world.

by like-minded people. But when you go to college and then the real world, that isn't the case. And so you have to sort of find that support system.”

Now seeking to help build that support system for both herself and other Catholic young adults, Emily

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No Longer Alone:

THE BELONGING MINISTRY continued from front cover

“One of the biggest things that has come up again and again from people my age is that we feel secluded. There are a lot of things for grade and high schoolers, and then once you get married there are things for you, but there’s nothing really for our age group. We wanted to help fill in that gap — to help build up that support system.” — EMILY KITE

is part of the leadership of The Belonging. This new ministry is designed for unmarried young adults ages 19-29, serving as a place where relationships can be built, faith can be strengthened or restored, and young people can find that sense of belonging for which their hearts long.

“One of the biggest things that has come up again and again from people my age is that we feel secluded,” Emily says. “There are a lot of things for grade and high schoolers, and then once you get married there are things for you, but there’s nothing really for our age group. We wanted to help fill in that gap — to help build up that support system.”

As a teacher at Quincy Notre Dame and a mother of young adult children, adult volunteer Chris Altmix echoes Emily’s sentiments. Over the years, she’s witnessed many youth who were once committed to their faith fall away once they entered college and the work force. The Belonging, then, is a response to this crisis by providing a connection for young adults as they navigate this time of change and uncertainty in their lives.

“We really thought that if younger people had a full understanding of the Catholic faith and really

felt connected to it, it would be so much harder for them to leave,” Chris says. “Our goal is to help people to feel like they belong and are connected to the Catholic Church.”

Currently, The Belonging gathers Tuesday evenings at 7:30 p.m. Though location and topics vary, meetings consistently incorporate elements of formation and fellowship.

“We know everyone is super busy, so the meetings are only one hour and then people can stay and visit afterward as long as they want,” Chris says. “Usually the first half hour is focused on some sort of topic.”

“We’re wanting to move to a structure where one week we do something social, the next instructive, then prayer based, and then service based,” Emily adds.

Though still in its early stages, members are already reaping the rewards of the ministry. New friendships are being formed and young adults are realizing that they’re not alone in this journey. There are plenty of people ready to walk alongside them so that, together, they can live out their mission of aspiring to please Christ, whether at home or away (2 Corinthians 5:9).

If you would like more information about The Belonging and upcoming gatherings, please look to the parish bulletin, or contact Chris Altmix at 217-440-9878 or mixfam@att.net.

A LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR

“COINCIDENTAL” STEWARDSHIP

Dear Parishioners,

The famous author G.K. Chesterton once said, “Coincidences are God’s way of staying anonymous.” Since fully embracing the stewardship way of life, coincidences have become cherished experiences for which I thank God — and rightly so! While God stays anonymous, coincidences are His way of interacting with the world He created. Importantly, as we have been continually impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and with many of our circumstances changing day to day, we can be grateful for His “coincidental” intervention.

As I continue to witness the grace-filled effects of the stewardship way of life on our parish, and in my own life, it is definitely God’s hand at work in our lives of faith. If some identify a coincidence as a “surprise blessing” that lifts the spirits and draws one closer to gratefulness to God, we cannot deny that in those circumstances that God is giving us the grace to live and celebrate our faith. So, let’s celebrate the coincidences!

Celebrate the coincidence that Chesterton himself converted to Catholicism late in his life, yet wrote book after book affirming and defending the Catholic faith long before his conversion. Four years after Chesterton joined the Catholic Church, he wrote a phenomenal book called *The Catholic Church and Conversion*. It is one of the best works on conversion to Catholicism, as well as a wonderful description of conversion to the stewardship way of life. The same experiences, or “coincidences,” apply when we find ourselves drawn into the understanding, practice and expression of discipleship, known to us as “stewardship.”

Chesterton describes conversion in three steps. “The convert takes his first step rather



unwittingly when he decides he’s going to be fair to the Catholic Church,” he wrote. The convert to stewardship must also dispel the “myths of stewardship” and give it a chance.

This first step of conversion then leads to a long and enjoyable second step, which is the utter fascination of learning what the Catholic Church really does teach. Chesterton says, “It is like discovering a new continent full of strange flowers and fantastic animals, which is at once

wild and hospitable.” For the stewardship convert, it is recognizing that stewardship is a practical way of living the Gospel. It makes sense, and others are doing it with joy and passion. What they have, the convert also wants.

Then, the convert to Catholicism suddenly realizes with a shock that he can no longer be detached and impartial about the Catholic Church. The convert to the stewardship way of life realizes this is the way he or she wants to live — and makes the commitment to do so.

If this were not true of what Christ has called us to be, I would not be writing this today. If this were not true of our commitment to stewardship, you may not be reading this today. And, if this were not true of a stewardship parish such as ours, we would not be the faithful stewards we are today. Wouldn’t you also agree it is a “coincidence” to thank God for each day of our lives?

In Christ,

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

Meet the @

REFLECTING ON THE BLESSINGS OF CATH



The members of the Hun family are grateful for the academic and spiritual formation provided through St. Peter School — (front row, from left) Raul, Barb, Rachell (daughter-in-law) and Gabriel; (back row, from left) Emanuel, Julia, Joseph, Magdalen, Ivan, Anna, Nicholas and Hannah (Nicholas' fiancée).

While so many things have changed for all of us over these past several months, one thing remains the same — the end of summer signals a return to learning for all of our school-age parishioners. For many St. Peter families, this means a return to our parish school. It is a particularly bittersweet start for one parish family, as their youngest child enters the eighth grade. Raul and Barb Hun have sent all eight of their children to

St. Peter School for a total of 15 years, and they are most grateful for the love and learning that each one has received there.

Reflecting on their many years as parents at St. Peter School, the Huns feel most thankful for the way the Catholic faith is integrated into the everyday life of the school, as well as the genuine affection the teachers demonstrate for their students.

“The faith aspect of the school is a given, but the teachers also

really care about the kids,” Barb says. “They really *know* my kids, and I’ve gotten to know them over the years and will miss seeing them. They know the kids’ different strengths and weaknesses, and that individualized attention is a big thing for our kids.”

Barb and Raul both benefited from a Catholic education in grade school and high school themselves, and they greatly appreciate the sacrifices their own parents made to ensure that

Hun Family

CATHOLIC EDUCATION AT ST. PETER SCHOOL

they would be grounded and immersed in their faith on a daily basis. With profound gratitude for their own impactful experiences in Catholic schools, passing this gift on to their own children has always seemed a natural choice.

Over the years, the Huns have enjoyed the opportunity to witness their children grow both spiritually and academically at St. Peter.

“Our kids are impressively into their faith,” Barb says. “They are very in tune with their faith and defenders of the faith.”

When the Huns’ oldest son was a sophomore at Quincy Notre Dame High School, Fr. Leo began offering Mass there twice a week. So, the family decided that they would attend the Thursday morning Mass together during Lent. After Easter came and went, the children all decided that they loved this new family tradition. Now, eight years later, the Huns continue to attend the Thursday Mass together.

As the Hun children’s faith has grown and matured, so, too, has their desire to serve God and the parish community. They have been active in various parish ministries over the years. Raul and Barb attribute their children’s love of service to the formation they received at St. Peter School.

“The school asks them to volunteer with things and to complete service hours, so that is good,” Raul says.

“They really teach them to be stewards,” Barb adds. “They really drive stewardship home to those kids at a young age, and that is important because they are the future of our world. If we can teach our kids to care for others, that’s a step in the right direction. Stewardship is huge in the Catholic Church — it’s one of the pillars of our faith, and something they have to learn at a young age to carry it on throughout their lives. Then, it

just becomes an automatic part of their life.”

As he reflects back on the Hun family’s time at St. Peter School, Raul is pleased to have heeded the words of wisdom that his own mother once offered to him.

“My mom always said, ‘The only thing we can leave our kids that no one can take away is education,’” he says. “So, we always spend our money on education.”

Indeed, the Huns are thankful that they made the decision to provide all of their children with the opportunity to learn and thrive in the loving and faith-filled academic community of St. Peter School.

“You can’t put a price on it,” Barb says. “It is a sacrifice, but it’s one worth making, for sure. If you’re going to sacrifice for your kids, this is a good thing to sacrifice for.”

“If we can teach our kids to care for others, that’s a step in the right direction. Stewardship is huge in the Catholic Church — it’s one of the pillars of our faith, and something they have to learn at a young age to carry it on throughout their lives. Then, it just becomes an automatic part of their life.”

— BARB HUN

Building The Domestic Church

Living Stewardship in Our Family as Pandemic Continues

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, the question of how to strengthen our family faith and continue to live Stewardship as a Way of Life while separated from the sacraments and parish life is being put to the test.

Our priests and parish leaders already have found new ways to minister to our parish family from a distance. Now, it is our own time to shine within our own homes. It is our time to seize this opportunity and continue to build our own Domestic Church.

What is the domestic Church? Simply put, it is our family — the smallest body of gathered believers in Christ. The early Church fathers understood the home was fertile ground for discipleship, sanctification, and holiness. And the Domestic Church plays a key role in this as the primary place where we practice coming to intimately love others.

Even before the pandemic, in recent years, our Holy Father Pope Francis placed great emphasis on the family, asking us as Catholics to explore the meaning and the theology of the Domestic Church.



During his address at the World Meeting of Families during his 2015 apostolic visit to the United States, Pope Francis told us, “Love is shown by little things, by attention to small daily signs which make us feel at home. Faith grows when it is lived and shaped by love. That is why our families, our homes, are true domestic churches. They are the right place for faith to become life, and life to grow in faith.”

Now, as the pandemic continues to distance us from our parish and affects the way we live our faith and practice stewardship, it is now more important than ever to discern the unique role God has in mind for our lives, and the lives of our family members.

If your family truly is committed to answering the call to live as intentional disciples of Christ, our response to this call starts in the home through stewardship.

As Catholics, we often associate stewardship with sharing our time, talents and resources with our parish. We see it as volunteering and helping to build our parish community. Rarely, do we recognize the need for stewardship in our own homes. But what can you do to live out stewardship as a Domestic Church?

You can set aside time each day for personal and family prayer. If you are still unable to attend Mass, you and your family can participate in the Sunday liturgy and daily Masses in your home via livestream. Read and reflect each

day on the daily Mass readings, which are available online at www.usccb.org/bible. Do some online faith formation together.

Other ideas include simply being kind to each other, doing something extra for your spouse or children, avoiding criticism, or working on being more patient with a family member who sometimes can be challenging to be around. Help a family member financially during these challenging times. Pray for our family members and each of their unique needs. Spend extra time with a child and our spouse — make that a priority worked into each week.

The possibilities for living stewardship within our Domestic Churches are endless. How we treat each other in our homes is as important as praying together when living out stewardship. In a nutshell, live in your home with your faith-filled family celebrating your Catholic identity!

Stewardship is not just something we do within the confines of our parish walls. It is meant to be lived 24/7, to be practiced anywhere and everywhere. And it begins with our Domestic Church — our families.

By focusing on new ways to share our Time, Talent and Treasure together within our own homes — both during the pandemic and after the storm passes — we can make faith the source and center of our family lives and fulfill our mission as the Domestic Church.

PROVIDING *COMFORT* AND *LOVE* OF CHRIST TO THOSE IN NEED THROUGH THE

St. Veronica Guild

Just as St. Veronica brought comfort and love to Christ as He struggled with His cross, our St. Veronica Guild brings comfort to the ill and injured, our baptized, and our RCIA candidates through the loving creation of prayer shawls.

When in-person meetings are possible, the St. Veronica Guild meets on the second Thursday of each month in the mornings, and the fourth Thursday of the month in the afternoons at the parish hall.

"Anyone baptized gets a shawl made by the group, and anyone injured, ill, or who is hospital or being cared for at home, in need of a prayer shawl, we make for them," says Meg Fitch, the St. Veronica Guild contact.

Although all the shawls cannot be completed during the meetings, the gatherings are valuable in many other ways.

"We are social, we pray, we gather for special intentions," Meg says. "We talk, laugh, have fun. It's a really cool group!"

The group was started when it was understood that there was a need to reach out to people who needed something tangible. The name came about when one of the members pointed out how St. Veronica wiped the face of Jesus with her veil, giving Him some comfort during His passion.

"Our goal is to be of help and bring comfort, as St. Veronica did to Jesus," Meg says.

The prayer shawls are either crocheted, knitted or sewn, depending on the choice of the maker. The shawls given to those hospitalized or confined to home are blessed by our priests, and the Baptism shawls are blessed during the ceremony. The RCIA shawls are



blessed during the candidate's welcome Mass.

"We hope that the person receiving the shawl will be cared for by God and get comfort," Meg says. "A number of people have said, 'You can't imagine the comfort I get wrapping up in the prayer shawl. There is comfort of caring and love.'"

St. Veronica Guild members are able to freely share their talents through the support of the parish.

"We are very well supported by the Social Concerns Committee," Meg says. "We've been part of the Giving Tree with our receiving gift cards. I haven't purchased yarn in two years. Our parish is so giving. The time flies as you sit and crochet. I have no idea who the prayer shawl will go to, but I know it will go to someone who needs it."

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Anyone who is interested in joining the St. Veronica Guild may contact Meg Fitch at 217-223-6149.



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www.cospq.org

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There is no doubt for the members that their work is one way they can show God's love to others.

"In my own case, it is one of the most outward things I do," Meg says. "It is a very good way to express what we do and how we feel about it. I think what we do is incredibly important. People need to know they are cared for and loved. This is one way we can show it."

The prayer shawls designated for hospital, nursing home, or home health recipients are distributed by Parish Nurse Kathy Harman. The shawls made for Baptisms and RCIA are given kept at the parish office until they are needed.

St. Veronica Guild members aren't required to attend meetings to take part. When the group meets, there usually are 10 to 15 attending, depending on their schedules or the weather.

"There are some I've never met face to face, but I have talked to them," Meg says. "Some have joined through the Stewardship Renewal. If someone likes to knit, crochet or sew, I give them directions, and they can do it at home. And they are practicing stewardship. I can call on them at any time. It's a very, very special group of people."

"In my own case, it is one of the most outward things I do. It is a very good way to express what we do and how we feel about it. I think what we do is incredibly important. People need to know they are cared for and loved. This is one way we can show it." — Meg Fitch

MASS SCHEDULE

Weekend 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