



CATHEDRAL of SAINT PETER

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Cemetery Care Crew *Honoring Our Parish's History and Those Who Have Passed*

As Catholics who believe in the resurrection of the body, a cemetery is a place rich with meaning. We not only remember those who have gone before us, but we pray for the souls in purgatory and look forward to being reunited in heaven. Green Mount Catholic Cemetery is our reminder to *memento mori*, or “remember you must die” — and thus our reminder to live our lives well.

Caring for the cemetery is a way of honoring those who have passed and bringing comfort to the families who come to visit loved ones. The Cathedral has brought together a ministry dedicated to the care and upkeep of our cemetery. Bill Mueller coordinates the Cemetery Care Crew and while he



recently took on this particular role, he has been involved with cemetery care for over 10 years.

“Taking care of the cemetery is a tribute to the people who got you to where you are and who you are — in my case, my parents and parishioners,” Bill says. “I go there because it’s a tribute to those who helped make me who I am. It would be a disgrace to have it overgrown.”

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EMBRACING

STEWARDSHIP: A DISCIPLE'S RESPONSE A BLUEPRINT FOR CATHOLIC LIFE

In 1992, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) released a pastoral letter that would resonate through the years, shaping the way Catholics perceive and practice their faith. Titled *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*, this document serves as a profound blueprint for how Catholics should live stewardship as a way of life and is — in essence — the roadmap for how we live out stewardship at our parish.

At its core, stewardship is not merely a financial concept, but a profound spiritual principle deeply rooted in Catholic teachings. The 1992 pastoral letter seeks to enlighten Catholics on the transformative power of stewardship, inviting them to view their lives through the lens of discipleship and responsibility.

One of the pivotal messages of the document is the recognition that everything we have — our time, talent, and treasure — is a gift from God. Stewardship, as outlined by the USCCB, is the grateful and responsible management of these gifts in a way that reflects our love for God and others. It is a call to live out the Gospel in concrete and intentional ways, not just within the walls of the church but in every aspect of our daily lives.

The pastoral letter emphasizes that stewardship is not an optional aspect of the Christian life but an essential response to God's love. It challenges Catholics to move beyond mere Sunday worship and integrate their faith into every facet of their existence. In essence, stewardship is presented as a way of life, a continual commitment to recognize and utilize God-given gifts for the betterment of the world.

Furthermore, the document urges Catholics to embrace stewardship with a spirit of generosity, emphasizing the importance of sacrificial giving. This sacrificial aspect goes beyond monetary donations; it encompasses the giving of one's time and talents for the service of others. By doing so,

individuals are called to be active participants in building a community that reflects the love and compassion of Christ.

Stewardship is not a one-size-fits-all concept, and the pastoral letter recognizes the diversity of gifts within the Catholic community. Each person is uniquely endowed with talents, and the document encourages a discernment process to identify and employ these gifts for the common good. In essence, the USCCB provides a framework for fostering a vibrant, engaged, and spiritually rich community by acknowledging and utilizing the varied talents of its members. The pastoral letter challenges Catholics to consider the broader implications of stewardship beyond the local parish. It calls for a heightened awareness of social justice issues, advocating for a commitment to building a more just and compassionate society. Stewardship, in this context, becomes a catalyst for positive change in the world, encouraging Catholics to be agents of justice and mercy.

Stewardship: A Disciple's Response is a timeless guide for Catholics seeking to deepen their relationship with God through the practice of stewardship. It presents a holistic approach to living out one's faith, challenging individuals to recognize and utilize their God-given gifts in the service of others. By embracing stewardship as a way of life, Catholics can contribute to building a community that reflects the transformative power of God's love in the world.

Stewardship: A Disciple's Response is a must-read for any devoted Catholic looking to take his or her own stewardship to the next level. The USCCB's pastor letter is available for purchase online through various outlets, including Amazon, Barnes and Noble, Ascension Press, and more. Search for the document online and pick up a copy!



A Letter from Our Cathedral Rector



The Feast of the Assumption: A Time to Deepen Our Connection with St. Mary

Dear Parishioners,

The Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a Holy Day of Obligation, has profound significance in our Catholic faith.

The Assumption of Mary into heaven, body, and soul, is a celebration of utmost importance, and it offers us a unique opportunity to honor and venerate the Mother of God.

On Aug. 15, we commemorate the Assumption, the moment when the Virgin Mary was taken up to heaven by the power of God. This event signifies the culmination of Mary's earthly life, as her sinless body was preserved from corruption and united with her soul in the glory of heaven. Mary's Assumption not only demonstrates her unique role in salvation history but also points to the promise of our own resurrection and the hope of eternal life with God.

The Feast of the Assumption invites us to honor and venerate Mary, the Mother of God, in a special way. She who said "yes" to God's plan and brought our Savior into the world deserves our love, respect, and devotion. Mary's example of faith, humility, and self-surrender provides us with a model for living a life of holiness and obedience to God's will.

Here are some ways in which we can honor and venerate Mary on this Holy Day of Obligation:

- **Attend Mass:** The most important way to honor the Feast of the Assumption is to participate in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. By doing so, we unite ourselves with the whole Church in commemorating this event and receiving the grace of the Eucharist.
- **Pray the Rosary:** The Rosary is a beautiful prayer that allows us to meditate on the life of Jesus and Mary. On

this day, consider praying the Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary, which include the Assumption.

- **Visit a Marian Shrine:** If possible, visit a local Marian shrine or grotto to pray. These sacred places are often filled with a sense of peace and devotion.
- **Acts of Charity:** In honor of Mary's compassionate heart, engage in acts of charity and kindness towards others. By emulating her love and care for those in need, we bring honor to her name.
- **Read and Reflect:** Take some time to read about the Assumption and meditate on the significance of this event. Reflect on Mary's unique role in God's plan for our salvation.
- **Personal Prayer:** Spend time in personal prayer, expressing your love and gratitude to Mary. Seek her intercession in your life and entrust your concerns to her.

The Feast of the Assumption is an occasion to deepen our connection with Mary and, through her, with Christ. It reminds us of the hope of our own resurrection and the promise of eternal life. May this day be a source of grace, renewal, and inspiration for all of us.

In Mary's loving care and intercession, I pray that you have a blessed and meaningful Feast of the Assumption.

Peace,

Fr Godfrey OSB

Very Rev. Godfrey Mullen, OSB
Cathedral Rector



OCIA: Accompanying People on the

Immediately before Jesus ascended, He commissioned His disciples: “Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (Mt. 28: 19-20).

This is our mission as the Church — to bring people to Jesus — and this is exactly what we do through the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults process, or OCIA, year after year.

“OCIA is a gathering, it is a journey, it is a coming together of people wanting to learn more about Christ and His Church,” says Deacon Wayne Weiler, director of OCIA. “This is not just an academic drill. It is about learning to live a life in Christ and having a conversion along the way. Jesus told us to go and make disciples, and that’s what we do through OCIA. We journey together to Jesus.”

Deacon Wayne has coordinated our OCIA process for the past four years, but his experience with OCIA goes well beyond that. He got involved in OCIA when he was serving in the military and stationed in Japan.

“One Sunday after Mass, they made an announcement and invited people to get involved in OCIA,” Deacon Wayne says. “My wife and



I had been talking about how we needed to get more involved in our faith, so I answered that invitation and got involved.”

From there, Deacon Wayne’s involvement grew. He began serving as a team member, then as a presenter, and then as a sponsor.

“As we moved from base to base, I continued to get involved,” Deacon Wayne says. “I have found it very uplifting to be involved in OCIA. It is fulfilling to see this conversion happen. It means a lot for the life of the Church.”

In fact, Deacon Wayne says it is

vital for all of us to be involved in one way or another, witnessing the conversion of others and journeying with them along the way.

“It is incredibly important for the parish to see people having this conversion,” Deacon Wayne says. “It’s really the parish that initiates them into the life of Christ and into the life of the parish. The parish has a big part to play.”

Deacon Wayne and the OCIA team, which includes parishioners and clergy from many of the parishes in the Belleville area, gather with those interested in becoming Catholic

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— Deacon Wayne Weiler

Journey to the Catholic Faith

every week for about seven months. They gather in the undercroft of the cathedral where they listen to presentations on the faith and then spend time discussing it.

“We talk about all of the important things,” Deacon Wayne says. “We discuss who God is and what God means in the world. We learn about the Scriptures, the Sacraments, and the social teachings of the Church. And we discuss Catholic practices — like the Rosary, novenas, and such.”

After meeting for months and

coming to a better understanding of the faith and growing in their commitment to Christ and His Church through the OCIA journey, those candidates and catechumens receive the Sacraments of Initiation at the Easter Vigil.

Yet, Deacon Wayne is quick to acknowledge that the journey doesn’t stop there.

“After Easter, they go through the Mystagogia period wherein they begin to really understand what it means to live as a Catholic,” Deacon Wayne says. “They learn about what it

means to be involved in the life of the Church, and we make sure to be there for them then as well.”

This fall, OCIA classes will begin with an initial inquiry session on Oct. 3 at 7 p.m. in the undercroft of the cathedral. All are welcome. This session is meant particularly for those who are interested in becoming Catholic, but Deacon Wayne invites all of us to attend.

“OCIA can serve as a wonderful means of continuing education for those who are Catholic,” he says. “All are welcome to join us.”

If you are interested in going through OCIA or are interested in serving with the ministry, contact Deacon Wayne at 618-593-2755.

Cemetery Care Crew *continued from front cover*

Bill first got involved through the Memorial Day Flag display, a striking display of 170 nine-foot flags. Both of Bill’s parents are veterans and are buried at Green Mount. This led him to volunteer his time maintaining the roadways for years, but there are many other jobs necessary to keep the cemetery clean and cared for.

“It says something to visitors that you care about the place and that it’s clean,” Bill says.

Bill currently has about eight volunteers, many of whom come in on their own time to clean up litter and keep an eye on the flowers. Cemetery maintenance draws people from many different ministries and organizations. The Cub Scouts have gotten involved in clean-up days over the past two years.

Looking ahead, Bill hopes to give some attention to the infant area of the cemetery, in the southwest corner. He and others have seen a need to give it some upgrades and greater recognition.

Green Mount Catholic Cemetery serves families from the Cathedral and surrounding parishes. Bill notes that some families visit their loved ones’ graves regularly, while others come once or twice a year. The cemetery houses many veterans. Cub Scout Pack 11 decorated the graves of veterans for Veterans Day — they even used up all 450 of their flags before finding all the veterans’ graves. In addition, the cemetery is a testament to our parish history. The Sisters and students who perished in the fire at the Cathedral school over 100 years ago are buried there.

“Everywhere you look, down every row of tombstones, there’s some of our history,” Bill says.

If you are interested in serving with the Cemetery Care Crew, contact Bill Mueller at bbrc@charter.net or 618-234-4960.



Nurture Your Faith and Build a Relationship with Our Parish Priests

In the Catholic faith, the parish priest plays a pivotal role as a spiritual guide, confessor, and shepherd of the local faith community. Developing a personal relationship with your parish priest can be immensely beneficial for your spiritual growth. Here are some insights on the significance of building such relationships and advice for how you can approach our priests for advice on prayer and spiritual guidance.

Our parish priests are well-equipped to offer spiritual guidance and counsel. They possess a deep understanding of Catholic teachings, theology, and the spiritual needs of their parishioners. By fostering a relationship with your priest, you gain access to a valuable resource for navigating your faith journey.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is an essential aspect of Catholic life. Our parish priest is the person who can guide you through the sacrament and offer the assurance of God's forgiveness. Building a relationship with your priest can make the confession process more comfortable and meaningful.

Everyone's spiritual journey is unique, and priests can provide personalized advice tailored to your specific needs and circumstances. They can help you develop a more profound prayer life, address doubts and questions, and navigate life's challenges through the lens of faith.

Parish priests often play a central role in fostering a sense of community within the parish. By building a relationship with your priest, you can become more deeply connected to the parish family and participate in various activities and ministries.

So, how do you approach our priests for advice, prayer, and spiritual guidance?

- **Respect Their Time:** Priests are often very busy with their pastoral duties. When seeking advice, it's

essential to be respectful of their time. Schedule an appointment or attend office hours if available and be punctual for your meetings.

- **Be Open and Honest:** When discussing your spiritual needs or questions, be open and honest with your parish priest. Share your concerns, challenges, and aspirations. The more they know about your spiritual journey, the better they can provide guidance.
- **Listen Actively:** During your conversations, actively listen to your priest's advice and insights. Their wisdom and experience can offer valuable perspectives on your faith and prayer life.
- **Ask Specific Questions:** If you have questions or issues you'd like to address, formulate them in advance. Specific questions can lead to more targeted advice and guidance.
- **Attend Parish Events:** Participate in parish events and activities to engage with your priest on a personal level. This can help establish a more comfortable and open relationship.
- **Practice Patience:** Building a deep, trusting relationship takes time. Be patient in nurturing your connection with your parish priest.

Developing relationships with parish priests is crucial for Catholics seeking spiritual guidance, advice on prayer, and a deeper understanding of their faith. Parish priests are there to serve and support their communities, and by actively engaging with them, you can enhance your faith journey and cultivate a closer relationship with God. Remember that your priest is a trusted source of spiritual counsel and a compassionate guide on your path toward spiritual growth and fulfillment.

Pastoral Council Discerns Ways to Improve Our Cathedral Parish

Putting Stewardship Into Action

Our Cathedral parish is our spiritual home, and it is ours to care for. In turn, the Pastoral Council is a group of parishioners who are spearheading the effort of taking care of our faith community and assisting Fr. Godfrey in improving the parish.

The Pastoral Council meets monthly and brings a wide array of perspectives and personal experiences to the table as members identify areas of growth and share in brainstorming solutions. Currently, the council is in the midst of creating a strategic plan that will guide the parish in a direction of spiritual and communal growth.

The planning process is occurring slowly and deliberately in order to evaluate every facet of our parish. Council member Greta Stock is assisting in creating the strategic plan. She desires to increase the strength of our parish community and implement initiatives that empower parishioners to grow in their faith and follow Christ through a life of service to others.

“Jesus asks us to follow Him by serving each other,” Greta says. “We get closer to God by following Jesus’s way of care, compassion, and love for the poor. Together we do so much more than we can do alone. The strategic plan helps us to accomplish this mission to serve. It gives us ways to hear, understand, and help our brothers and sisters in a purposeful and directed way.”

There have been multiple phases involved in the creation of the strategic plan. In the beginning, the Pastoral Council members met and shared their thoughts on the parish, what the Cathedral of St. Peter does well, and where our parish could improve. They then used these notes as a launching pad into deeper investigation, discovering a more focused agenda to address with the plan.

“In the second phase, we began looking at other parishes, observing what they do well, and began to visualize and voice what we want our Church to be,” Greta says. “Now, we are in the process of surveying the parishioners to hear their voices so that they can

also be part of the process to make our Church a better place for all to participate in God’s work, bringing us all closer to God.”

Once the survey data is collected, the Pastoral Council will analyze the responses and will help Fr. Godfrey discern what direction the Cathedral needs to take to make our parish more faithful and a place of encounter with Christ.

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The Cathedral Tribute Truck Fest, which celebrated the Catholic school, was planned in part by the Pastoral Council.





CATHEDRAL of SAINT PETER

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Pastoral Council Discerns Ways to Improve Our Cathedral Parish *continued from page 7*

A large part of the strategic plan will be focused on encouraging parishioners to put their faith into action and offer more purposeful ministries. In essence, the strategic plan is a practice of stewardship.

“Stewardship is to take care of something,” Greta says.

During this process of creating and implementing a strategic plan, Fr. Godfrey and the Pastoral Council are taking inventory of the areas of our parish that need to be cared for and are thoughtfully developing plans to improve those areas.

All are encouraged to participate in this process of caring for our parish community by filling out and submitting a survey. Your voice will help make The Cathedral of St. Peter an even better spiritual home!

“Together we do so much more than we can do alone. The strategic plan helps us to accomplish this mission to serve. It gives us ways to hear, understand, and help our brothers and sisters in a purposeful and directed way.” — Greta Stock

MASS TIMES

Saturday Vigil Mass: 4:00 p.m. | Sunday: 8:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 5:00 p.m.

Weekdays: Monday-Friday 6:45 a.m.

SACRAMENT OF PENANCE (CONFESSIONS)

Monday-Friday: 7:15-7:30 a.m. | Thursday: 6:00-7:00 p.m. | Saturday: 3:00-3:45 p.m.