



# CATHEDRAL of SAINT PETER

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

## IN THIS ISSUE:

3

A Letter from  
Our Cathedral Rector

4

The Paschal Triduum  
*Celebrate the Mystery of Lord's Passion,  
Death, and Resurrection*

6

Celebrating the 2025 Jubilee Year  
in the Catholic Church *Pope Francis  
Declares Theme, "Pilgrims of Hope"*

7

The Order of Christian Initiation  
of Adults *Providing Compassionate  
Accompaniment on the Road to the  
Catholic Faith*

## *Farm Blessing* Brings Community Together in Prayer, Gratitude, and Fellowship

There is a popular speech penned by the late radio broadcaster Paul Harvey, called *So God Made a Farmer*. It has many beautiful lines that show the connection between God, His land, and farming.

"It had to be somebody who'd plow deep and straight and not cut corners; somebody to seed, weed, feed, breed and rake and disc and plow and plant and tie the fleece and strain the milk and replenish the self-feeder and finish a

hard week's work with a five-mile drive to church... So God made a farmer."

Farming is an integral part of many people's lives in our diocese. Each spring and fall, the diocese honors this important industry with a farm blessing — this spring's event takes place on April 23. Farm families offer to host the event at their farms, and the time includes a Rosary walk with special prayers at stops throughout the farm.

*continued on page 2*





# Farm Blessing Brings Community Together in Prayer, Gratitude, and Fellowship *continued from front cover*



“We bless everything from the land to the animals to the machinery,” says Fr. Godfrey Mullen, OSB. “This has been going on for many years. I’m always amazed at how many people come. It’s a beautiful celebration for the diocese.”

Refreshments will follow the Rosary. Catholic Relief Services sells a fair-trade item that benefits our brothers and sisters in other parts of the world. There are usually about 150 people who attend, along with Bishop Michael McGovern and about a dozen priests and deacons.

“This goes back to the days when people would have festivals on the farm,” Fr. Godfrey says. “This event opens our minds to the ways God takes care of His people. We don’t know how it all works, but somehow, God provides for us. It’s an acknowledgment of God’s providence.”

Fr. Godfrey enjoys this event as it’s one of the few that brings people from throughout the diocese together. He especially loves that so many people open their farms to this event.

“It is a stewardship principle,” Fr. Godfrey says. “These people inherited the land or purchased it. They are acknowledging that it all belongs to the Lord. We use it, and it brings bounty for other people.”

Furthermore, Fr. Godfrey loves any chance people have to gather and pray.

“During this Jubilee Year of Hope, it is right to gather at a farm for prayer,” he says. “There is faith and hope that goes into planting the seed and hoping it produces. This is a celebration of hope fulfilled. We could all stand to have more hope in our lives.”

For Fr. Godfrey, it is always beautiful to see everyone who gathers for this event, especially because it is not required. He also loves seeing the hospitality of the host farm.

“I love the line in the Mass, ‘Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation, for through your goodness we have received the bread we offer you: fruit of the earth and work of human hands, it will become for us the bread of life,’” Fr. Godfrey says. “It’s that mix, fruit of the earth, and work of our hands that can lead us to a true sense of gratitude.”



*Join us for the Farm Blessing at 1 p.m. on April 23.*



*A Letter from Our Cathedral Rector*

# Celebrating Easter with Gratitude

Dear Parishioners,

Easter Sunday falls on April 20 this year, a date determined centuries ago using a fascinating formula tied to the spring equinox and the phases of the moon. While the specifics can be complex, most of us simply check the liturgical calendar! What matters most is the joy we feel as we gather to celebrate Christ's Resurrection.

This Easter also brings a noticeable change from the winter months — the days are longer, and the world feels brighter. Interestingly, the word “Lent” is derived from an old Anglo-Saxon word meaning “to lengthen,” referring to the lengthening of daylight during spring. Even though many of us no longer live in agricultural settings, we share the joy of creation coming back to life after the stillness of winter.

But make no mistake — Easter is not merely a celebration of spring. It is first and foremost a proclamation of the event that changed the course of history: the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Over 2,000 years ago, during the Jewish Passover, Jesus offered His life on the cross and rose on the third day, conquering sin and death for all time. This is the heart of our faith and the reason we rejoice.

At the same time, Easter reminds



us of the blessings God pours into our lives — both spiritual and material. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, in their pastoral letter *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*, teaches that a Christian steward is someone who “receives God’s gifts gratefully.” These gifts include not only our faith and hope of eternal life but also the beauty of creation, the relationships we cherish, and the talents and resources entrusted to us.

As we celebrate this Easter season, let us take time to reflect on all that God has given us.

Gratitude is the first step toward living as faithful stewards. When we acknowledge our blessings and use them for God’s glory and the good of others, we participate in building His Kingdom here on earth.

May this Easter be a time of renewal, joy, and gratitude for you and your family. Together, let us give thanks for Christ’s victory over death and for the beauty of new life, both in nature and in our hearts.

Peace,

*Fr Godfrey OSB*

Very Rev. Godfrey Mullen, OSB  
Cathedral Rector





# The Pascha

*Celebrate With Us the Mystery of Lord*

**A**s Lent draws to a close and we prepare to celebrate the great feast of Easter, we invite everyone to come to the services throughout the Easter Triduum. On Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and then Holy Saturday night, we will come together as a parish family to celebrate the mystery of the Lord's passion, death, and resurrection.

On Holy Thursday, we will celebrate the Mass of the Lord's Supper at 7 p.m. On Good Friday, we will have the Passion of the Lord Service at 3 p.m. and the Burial of the Lord Service at 7 p.m. And on Holy Saturday at 8 p.m., we will celebrate the culmination of the Triduum at the Easter Vigil. Fr. Godfrey Mullen encourages all of us to participate in as many of these celebrations as possible.

"The Triduum is really the center of our faith," Fr. Godfrey says. "Witnessing the washing of feet, the institution of the Eucharist, the poverty of Good Friday, and the joy of Easter is crucial for our faith.



Participating in these liturgies, all of them can really help us find new enthusiasm for our faith. We all need renewal and the Triduum can so easily bring that forward."

Furthermore, Fr. Godfrey makes clear that each of the Triduum services is one part of a three-day celebration. So, participating in all of it helps us better grasp and appreciate the grandeur of what we are celebrating.

"The Paschal Triduum — all three days — is all part of the Paschal Mystery wherein the Lamb of God offers His blood for our freedom," Fr. Godfrey says. "The Almighty serves the servants, gives His life for our salvation, and is raised up from the dead as the way for us. The three days blur from one to the other as we celebrate the central mystery of our faith. At the Cathedral, beyond what many parishes do, on Good Friday

evening, we do the Burial of the Lord. It's a very meditative service, with music, readings, the entombing of the dead Christ, and the opportunity for every participant to offer their lives symbolically in the tomb of the Lord. It's becoming a beloved part of our celebration of the Triduum."

Then, at the Easter Vigil, we will sing Alleluia for the first time in 40 days! The Easter Vigil ushers in the Easter season as the high point of the liturgical year. We light the Easter candle and celebrate light conquering darkness. We hear Scripture read, proclaiming God's faithfulness to His covenant, and then we welcome new Catholics into the faith. All of this is in addition to the Liturgy of the Eucharist when bread becomes the body of Christ!

"Who doesn't need this boost in faith?" Fr. Godfrey says.





# Paschal Triduum

*Jesus' Passion, Death, and Resurrection*

Indeed, Fr. Godfrey encourages all of us to consider participating in the Easter Vigil this year. We have spent time preparing our hearts for Easter throughout the Lenten season. So now, let's celebrate with great joy! The three days of the Triduum help us to celebrate our living faith in its fullness.

"Keeping the Paschal Mystery — Jesus' life, death, and resurrection — in front of us is crucial for us to be faithful disciples," Fr. Godfrey says. "When life is challenging, I can identify well with Good Friday. When service is demanding, there is Holy Thursday. And when time and again, God offers me new life, there is Easter."

Yet, even as Fr. Godfrey encourages us to participate in the Sacred Triduum services, he insists that these three days are not the end of



our celebration — quite the opposite.

"We celebrate in these three days, but the Paschal Mystery is always part of our daily living faith!" Fr. Godfrey says.

May we all come together to celebrate with deep joy the greatest mystery of our faith. As St. John Paul II once said, "We are an Easter people and Alleluia is our song!"





## CELEBRATING THE

# 2025 Jubilee Year in the Catholic Church

## Pope Francis Declares Theme, “Pilgrims of Hope”

The Catholic Church’s 2025 Jubilee Year, themed “Pilgrims of Hope,” offers Catholics worldwide a profound opportunity to deepen their faith and rekindle their relationship with Christ. A Jubilee Year, rooted in the biblical tradition of restoration and renewal, is a special time set aside by the Church to foster spiritual growth, encourage reconciliation, and celebrate God’s abundant mercy. Declared by Pope Francis, this Holy Year is an invitation for all Catholics to embrace hope as a guiding light in their spiritual journey.

Part of the Jubilee Year are pilgrimages, particularly to Rome, where the Holy Door of St. Peter’s Basilica will be opened as a symbol of God’s grace. Walking through the Holy Door signifies a passage into a renewed life with Christ. In his apostolic letter introducing the Jubilee, Pope Francis emphasizes the need for hope in a world marked by challenges, encouraging the faithful to rediscover their role as witnesses of Christ’s love and mercy.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) echoes this sentiment, urging American Catholics to see the Jubilee Year as an opportunity for renewal and a deeper commitment to discipleship. The bishops have outlined several ways for Catholics to participate in the Jubilee, including pilgrimages to designated shrines across the United States, special liturgical celebrations, and communal acts of prayer and service. The USCCB also encourages parishes to focus on Eucharistic devotion, as

the Jubilee aligns with the National Eucharistic Revival, emphasizing the transformative power of the Eucharist in Catholic life.

Special events and devotions will highlight the year. Many dioceses will host local pilgrimages, mission retreats, and reconciliation services to inspire spiritual renewal. Parishes are encouraged to organize events fostering community and prayer, such as Eucharistic processions, adoration, and acts of charity. These activities aim to remind the faithful of their call to stewardship and their role in building up the Body of Christ.

Catholics across the United States can celebrate the Jubilee Year in their daily lives by embracing discipleship and stewardship. Engaging in regular prayer, receiving the sacraments, and participating in acts of service and charity can deepen their connection to Christ. Families might consider creating home altars, praying the Rosary together, or reading Scripture to mark this holy time. Small groups or parish ministries can focus on themes of hope and renewal through study and discussion.

Ultimately, the 2025 Jubilee Year is a call for all Catholics to walk as “Pilgrims of Hope” — to rediscover the joy of the Gospel, renew their faith, and strengthen their commitment to Christ. By participating in the Jubilee’s spiritual and communal opportunities, the faithful can grow closer to God and embrace their mission as stewards of His hope in the world.

*For more information on Jubilee 2025, visit the United States  
Conference of Catholic Bishops Jubilee page at [www.usccb.org/jubilee2025](http://www.usccb.org/jubilee2025)*



# The Order of Christian Initiation of Adults

## Providing Compassionate Accompaniment on the Road to the Catholic Faith

There's a real beauty to being raised in the Catholic Church and continuing to practice the faith from childhood to adulthood. But there is also beauty in finding the Catholic Faith as an adult and going through the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults process, or OCIA — formerly known as RCIA.

Deacon Wayne Weiler leads the OCIA process here at the Cathedral of St. Peter. There are currently 12 people going through OCIA who will likely receive the sacraments at the Easter Vigil. Deacon Wayne coordinates OCIA at all of the Belleville parishes.

“My role is to develop the formation curriculum, ensure resources are available for the sessions, schedule presenters, communicate with participating parish pastors, team members and inquirers, and present some topic material,” he says.

Each person going through OCIA is at a different spot in their journey. Through prayer and discernment, God helps them receive the sacraments at the right time. They meet each Thursday in the Undercroft at 7 p.m.

The candidates and catechumens learn the core teachings of the Catholic Church, but Deacon Wayne says that is only one important part.

“Through it all, the formation goal is for catechumens and candidates to develop a meaningful and lasting relationship with Jesus,” he says. “I believe helping them know the importance of that relationship, in all life’s circumstances, is at the core of the OCIA ministry.”

Deacon Wayne loves watching the OCIA participants begin to recognize the importance of faith.

“I love seeing them become excited about being engaged in parish life and becoming a part of the church community,” he says. “It is an honor to see them grow in faith and love for our Lord.”

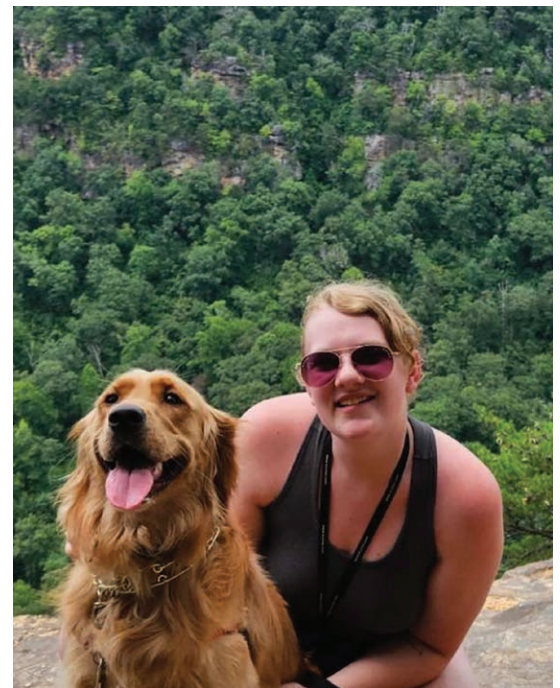
Meeting all the participants is another highlight for Deacon Wayne. Abby Schneider is receiving Reconciliation, First Communion, and Confirmation. Her husband, Alex, has been Catholic his whole life, and she was baptized nondenominational and has been a churchgoer her whole life. She has loved being part of OCIA, with Alex serving as her

*continued on back cover*

***“OCIA has helped me with my faith by bringing me closer to the Church and people going through the same journey as I am.” — Baylie Ruhmann***



*Abby Schneider*



*Baylie Ruhmann*





# CATHEDRAL of SAINT PETER

200 W. Harrison St • Belleville, IL 62220  
(618) 234-1166 • [cathedralbelle.org](http://cathedralbelle.org)



## The Order of Christian Initiation of Adults *continued from page 7*

sponsor, and most looks forward to receiving the Eucharist at the Easter Vigil.

“I’m learning a lot about the Catholic Church in such a small amount of time with others who are along for the ride with me,” Abby says.

Her Confirmation saint is St. William of Toulouse.

“He became a monk at 51 years old,” Abby says. “I always find it inspiring to see someone follow the path God may put them on despite their age and circumstances.”

Baylie Ruhmann was baptized in eighth grade and will receive Holy Communion and Confirmation at the Easter Vigil. She is getting married to George, a Cathedral member and her sponsor, next February. Baylie has attended the Cathedral for three years and sings in the choir. She looks forward to finally becoming Catholic.

“OCIA has helped me with my faith by bringing me

closer to the Church and people going through the same journey as I am,” she says.

Baylie’s Confirmation saint is St. Blaise, who was a healer. His life resonated with her because she is studying veterinary medicine. She has loved the OCIA process and especially appreciates the support of the leaders and other participants.

“OCIA has been a great way for me to not only know what exactly the Catholic church is doing, but it has been a great support system when I am not feeling strong in my faith,” Baylie says.

*To learn more about the OCIA process,  
call the Cathedral at 618-234-1166 or go to the  
website: [www.cathedralbelle.org/becoming-catholic/](http://www.cathedralbelle.org/becoming-catholic/).*

### 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.*