



# CATHEDRAL of SAINT PETER

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

## IN THIS ISSUE:

2

A Spiritual Stewardship  
Journey Through Advent

3

A Letter from  
Our Cathedral Rector

4

An Inside Look at Cursillo  
Weekends *Offering a Unique  
Space to Encounter Christ and  
Build Relationships in Faith*

6

All Souls Day: *A Reflection of  
Catholic Stewardship and Remembrance*

7

Meet the Welcoming Committee  
*Joyfully Working Together to Make New  
Parishioners Feel at Home*

## DONUT MINISTRY

*Brings Parishioners Together for Fellowship  
and Great After-Mass Refreshments*

Something as simple as coffee and donuts after Mass can be a great icebreaker to help parishioners not only get to know one another, but also open doors

to greater involvement in the parish. The Knights of Columbus operate our Donut Ministry, which serves donuts after the 8 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Masses every other week.

Grand Knight Johnny Reitano sees this simple social hour as a way to meet an ordinary need and invite people into a deeper experience at the parish.

"After Mass, I'm sure people are ready to go to breakfast or lunch, so by offering a little snack, maybe they see someone they haven't spoken to in a while, and they stay," Johnny says.



"There's a distinct difference between seeing someone at Mass and seeing them in an environment where you can catch up or get to know them. There's more

opportunity for people to meet new parishioners and extend their comfort zones."

Since the Donut Ministry draws such a variety of people, it's also a great opportunity to showcase a little of what the parish has to offer.

"From the Knights' point of view, it's a recruiting opportunity for men at the parish who need that extra communication or to be able to see something active to consider joining the Knights," Johnny says.

Yet, this goes beyond the Knights.

*continued on back cover*





## *A Spiritual Stewardship Journey Through Advent*

**T**he Advent season is a cherished time in the Catholic calendar, representing the period of preparation and anticipation leading up to the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. It serves as a reminder that the essence of Christmas transcends materialism and calls for a deeper spiritual connection. Stewardship — which emphasizes responsible and generous use of our time, talents, and treasure — provides a meaningful framework for Catholics to observe Advent in a way that honors the true spirit of the season.

Advent, which typically begins four Sundays before Christmas, is a time of reflection and anticipation. It symbolizes the period when the world awaited the coming of the Messiah, and it invites us to prepare our hearts and minds for the celebration of Christ's birth.

During Advent, Catholics are encouraged to allocate time for prayer and reflection, fostering a sense of mindfulness and spiritual readiness. Make a conscious effort to incorporate daily prayer and reflection into your Advent routine. Meditate on the significance of Christ's coming and how you can better live out His teachings of love and charity. Consider attending Advent retreats or joining a prayer group to deepen your spiritual connection.

Advent encourages the use of one's talents in service to others. Whether it's participating in charitable activities, visiting the sick, or helping those less fortunate, this is a perfect time to put your unique gifts to good use. Identify your unique talents and find ways to utilize them in the service of others during Advent. If you have musical abilities, join the choir to enhance the beauty of Advent liturgies. If you're skilled in crafting, create handmade gifts to share with

friends and family, emphasizing the personal and thoughtful nature of the season.

Instead of focusing on buying and spending, stewardship urges Catholics to evaluate their financial resources. Evaluate your financial resources and commit to a meaningful and generous offering during the Advent season. This could involve contributing to our parish's special Advent collection or donating to a charity that aligns with Catholic values. Remember, it's not about the amount but the intention and sacrifice behind your financial stewardship.

Consider dedicating time to volunteer for Advent activities in our parish, such as decorating the church. Advent is a time to build community and support one another. Reach out to those in your parish who may be in need, extend a hand of friendship, or provide assistance where necessary. By fostering a sense of unity, you embody the spirit of stewardship.

The celebration of Advent is not simply about counting down the days until Christmas but a journey of spiritual preparation, reflection, and anticipation. By embracing the principles of Catholic stewardship during this sacred season, Catholics can not only prepare for the birth of Christ in a more meaningful way but also enrich their own faith and the lives of those they touch. Through the responsible and generous use of time, talents, and treasure, Advent becomes a time to rekindle the true spirit of Christmas and strengthen the connection with Jesus. In essence, Advent serves as a reminder that living out Catholic stewardship is not just a commitment but a way of life that brings us closer to the heart of Christ.

*A Letter from Our Cathedral Rector*

# Giving Thanks to God for the Gift of Time

Dear Parishioners,

The next several weeks are certainly a busy time for us as Catholics, good stewards, good citizens, and faithful members of the Church and our parish. There are celebrations and commemorations both inside and outside the Church that are momentous in terms of faith, citizenship, and living as people of thanksgiving and gratitude.

We celebrate Veterans Day to honor and thank all those men and women who served in the United States Armed Forces in one capacity or another. Indicative of the importance of this day, every year at 11 a.m. Eastern, a wreath-laying ceremony is held at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery.

We all understand that Americans celebrate a day of Thanksgiving on Nov. 27. What more can we say about this? It is a day that was faith-based from its very beginnings, and it is an indication of how much we have to thank God for in terms of the gifts we have received — our lives, our families, our Church, our Lord and Savior — everything we are and everything we have.

No sooner are Thanksgiving Day celebrations concluded than we begin that glorious season called Advent on Sunday, Nov. 30. This prepares us for and leads to Christmas. Indeed, this is both a busy and extraordinary



time of year! There is, of course, much more on which we could focus and about which we could think, meditate, and pray, but that is more than enough for us to consider and absorb.

From a stewardship perspective, I encourage you to not only participate and focus on all the particular things that are about to happen, but also on one of our special gifts — the gift of time. The gift of time, which we all receive from God in equal amounts, is precious because it is a non-renewable resource. Although some of our time is committed because of family responsibilities,

work responsibilities or simply personal needs, we have an element of free will with how we spend a certain amount of it. We need to spend some of that time in prayer, in thanksgiving, in worship, and in works of mercy and ministry. Our time is perhaps more precious than any material gifts we receive from the Lord. How are we doing with that gift?

Peace,

*Fr Godfrey OSB*

Very Rev. Godfrey Mullen, OSB  
Cathedral Rector





# An Inside Look at CURS

## Offering a Unique Space to Encounter



*Aaron Augustine and his wife, Sarah*



*Aaron Augustine and his daughter, Phoebe*

When Aaron Augustine attended his first Cursillo weekend in 2022, he was still new to the Catholic faith, having just been confirmed at Easter. Encouraged to attend by his sponsor, Deacon Wayne Weiler, Aaron stepped into the unknown.

“It didn’t take much convincing for me to attend Cursillo,” Aaron says. “But his sponsorship gave me the courage I needed to step into something like Cursillo, especially being so new to the Church. That weekend was incredibly impactful for me, so much so that I knew I wanted to serve on a team.”

Earlier this year, Aaron returned to Cursillo — not as a participant, but as a member of the Belleville Men’s Cursillo Team.

“When the team was being put together, I was asked to be on the team,” he says. “And I didn’t hesitate to say yes. Three years had passed since my Cursillo weekend, and I couldn’t wait to go back and share with everyone just how my life had changed since my weekend.”

A Cursillo weekend is a three-day gathering that brings together Catholics to support and build fellowship with one another while entering into a deeper relationship with Jesus. There are opportunities to listen to talks, pray, meditate, and celebrate the Eucharist in the Mass.

The weekend is structured around the opportunity to encounter self, Christ, and others. By the end of the third full day, the participants are encouraged to move forward into the rest of their lives of faith and fellowship. Once someone attends a Cursillo weekend, they are then considered part of the lay movement.

A significant part of the experience is the component of fellowship in the Christian life, while growing in one’s own relationship to God. Those who have participated can come back and serve at a later time.

“Serving on the Men’s Team gave me the chance to give back and support others, which was incredibly fulfilling,” Aaron says. “Both experiences have left me with fond memories and a strengthened sense of purpose, grounded in the simple joys of faith and fellowship.”

Deacon Wayne, who has served as a Cursillo spiritual

*continued on page 5*



# CURSILLO WEEKENDS

## *Christ and Build Relationships in Faith*

advisor since making his own weekend in 2003, explains that the movement isn't about large-scale advertising — instead, it relies on person-to-person connection.

“Cursillo is largely about personal contact,” he says. “The overriding theme is make a friend, be a friend, bring a friend to Christ. You won't see a lot of publicity, posters, or talks about it. It's really about one-on-one relationships with others to invite them into experiencing a Cursillo weekend.”

Each Cursillo experience follows a similar format — Friday focuses on self-awareness, Saturday deepens one's knowledge of Christ, and Sunday looks at living out one's faith in the parish and community.

“The weekend is built on three pillars — piety, study, and action,” Deacon Wayne says. “When they leave the weekend, they leave with a better understanding of what their role can be within a parish community, how their faith can come more alive within their parish community, and how they can become more involved in the life of their parish.”

The Cursillo journey continues after participating in a weekend. Those who've attended are encouraged to gather in small groups or at larger diocesan events, where they

share their joys and struggles and encourage one another to keep growing in faith.

“It really builds a community of disciples,” Deacon Wayne says. “I've often said, during the pandemic we stopped doing so many things, even attending Mass — but Cursillo has a great opportunity to revitalize what may have been lost. It has a voice in restoration, revival, and renewal.”

For Aaron, his experiences both as an attendee — also known as “Cursillista” — and serving on the team were both rewarding and enriching for his faith.

“The journey as a Cursillista allowed me to connect with my faith and the community in a very personal and meaningful way,” he says.

The greatest lesson for Aaron has been trust in God's timing.

“While the Cursillo calls you to immediate action, it also teaches the value of patience and accepting God's grace to do things on His time, not ours,” Aaron says. “God is calling all of us to share our faith, but He is also gently leading all of us along the way to be the Christian witnesses He calls us to be.”

---

*“The overriding theme is make a friend, be a friend, bring a friend to Christ. You won't see a lot of publicity, posters, or talks about it. It's really about one-on-one relationships with others to invite them into experiencing a Cursillo weekend.” — Deacon Wayne Weiler*





# All Souls Day:

## *A Reflection of Catholic Stewardship and Remembrance*

In our rich Catholic faith, few days hold the same depth of significance as All Souls Day, observed on Nov. 2. This solemn occasion, rooted in both faith and compassion, offers Catholics a unique opportunity to intertwine their beliefs in stewardship and remembrance, creating a powerful link between the living and the departed.

All Souls Day is a day of profound reflection and prayer for the souls of the departed who are believed to be undergoing purification before entering the eternal embrace of heaven. This belief rests on the concept of purgatory – a state of cleansing and transformation where souls are purified of their remaining imperfections. As Catholics, this doctrine emphasizes the enduring connection between the living and the deceased. By offering prayers, Masses, and acts of devotion on this day, Catholics hope to assist the souls in purgatory on their journey towards heavenly glory.

Catholic stewardship is founded on the principles of giving our time, talent, and treasure back to God and the parish in gratitude for the gifts God has given us. It extends not only to the earth and its resources but also to the spiritual realm and the souls of those who have passed away. All Souls Day embodies the essence of stewardship by underscoring the responsibility Catholics have towards their fellow human beings, even beyond the threshold of death. Stewardship, in this context, signifies an active commitment to caring for the spiritual well-being of others. By praying for the souls of the departed, Catholics are fulfilling their stewardship duty by interceding on behalf of those who cannot pray for themselves. This act of compassion and selflessness exemplifies the core values of stewardship and resonates deeply with the Catholic teachings of love, charity, and empathy.

There are many ways to honor and pray for the deceased in our parish community and our own families. Attending Mass on All Souls Day is one of the most powerful ways to honor the deceased. Offerings of prayer are customary on All Souls Day. These prayers are not only for the souls of specific individuals but also for all departed souls. The Catholic tradition of lighting candles serves as a symbol of hope and remembrance. Visiting the graves of loved ones, cleaning tombstones, and leaving flowers are poignant ways to connect with the departed. It serves as a reminder that life is fleeting and encourages the living to cherish their time and relationships. Performing acts of charity in memory of the deceased is another meaningful way to honor them. Donating to a cause they cared about or volunteering in their name reflects the Catholic spirit of selflessness and compassion. And families can come together to share stories, memories, and prayers for their departed loved ones. This fosters a sense of unity and ensures that the memories of those who have passed away remain alive in the hearts of the living.

All Souls Day bridges the gap between the living and the departed, weaving together the threads of Catholic faith, stewardship, and remembrance. By dedicating time to prayer, reflection, and acts of compassion on this day, Catholics honor the souls in purgatory, demonstrating their commitment to the principles of stewardship and their unshakeable belief in the eternal connection that transcends death. In this way, All Souls Day serves as a powerful reminder that Catholic stewardship encompasses not only the tangible world but also the realm of the soul – a testament to the depth and richness of Catholic tradition.





# Meet the **WELCOMING COMMITTEE**

## *Joyfully Working Together to Make New Parishioners Feel at Home*

*“It makes me feel good to know something as simple as a call and mail can make them feel welcome.” — Margie Schwartz*

**W**e’ve all had that feeling — like a fish out of water — when we don’t feel like we belong, whether in a group, at work, or even at church. We never want people to feel that way at the Cathedral of St. Peter. But it can be easy to get lost in the crowd. That’s why there’s a specific ministry called the Welcoming Committee. Its efforts are simple but impactful. Members reach out to every parishioner when they join the Cathedral and again about a month later. New members receive a mailed packet of helpful parish information, complete with a letter from Fr. Godfrey Mullen, OSB.



*Margie Schwartz*

Margie Schwartz has been involved in this ministry for more than 25 years and has been at the helm for about 10 years. An influx of new parishioners, which Margie credits to Fr. Godfrey, keeps this group of stewards busy.

“Fr. Godfrey makes you feel like he wants to talk to you and see you,” Margie says. “I think he’s helped us get more parishioners. He is charismatic.”

When Margie is informed of a new parishioner, she or another volunteer picks up the phone and calls them.

“They are thankful we called and just happy to hear from us,” Margie says. “We want them to know we are here for them.”

About five weeks later, the new parishioners receive another call to see if they have any other questions. Margie and the other members are thankful to have new members and hope they will find ways to get involved at the Cathedral.

“We are, of course, happy they are coming for Mass,” Margie says. “We hope they will also want to join in on helping in the parish. It’s so easy to get involved.”

Margie has been a lifelong member of the Cathedral, so she could easily say she doesn’t need to meet anyone new. But that’s far from the truth — she enjoys meeting new members through the Welcoming

Committee, even if it’s only by phone. To her, it’s another way of sharing a smile.

“It makes me feel good to know something as simple as a call and mail can make them feel welcome,” Margie says.

The Cathedral is large, and it can be hard to get to know people through weekend Mass. The Welcoming Committee extends a hand to new parishioners.

“It’s not complicated,” Margie says. “We feel it’s a way to open the doors — otherwise our parish is so spread out.”

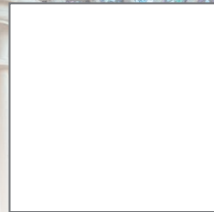
Margie also helps in the Bishop’s Library and has a dedicated month where she helps keep it tidy. She has also helped check in donated books.

*To get involved in the Welcoming Committee, contact  
Margie Schwartz at 618-578-8781 or [schwartzpm@charter.net](mailto:schwartzpm@charter.net).*



# CATHEDRAL of SAINT PETER

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



## Donut Ministry *continued from front cover*

Many of our choir members stop in for a donut and a cup of coffee. This social time is a way for them to meet and potentially recruit more members in a low-pressure setting.

“When more people are involved and are coming to something like this, which is open to everybody, it starts trickling into other aspects of what the church runs,” Johnny says.

The Donut Ministry typically provides donuts every other Sunday, but the exact upcoming weekends can be found in the bulletin. Between the Knights of Columbus and volunteer, Holly Ritter, donuts are ordered and picked up early Sunday morning. The Knights set up to welcome

parishioners and clean up the space after. While the Knights don’t draw too much attention to it, they do keep a donation box nearby and have found that our parishioners are more than happy to help.

“Ninety-nine percent of the time, we break even or have a little extra, which will go towards the next Donut Ministry,” Johnny says. “The parishioners who come down are very generous.”

Johnny hopes that the Donut Ministry helps everyone to build a stronger community and to step outside their comfort zone. All are welcome to join us after Mass to catch up with old friends, to meet a new friend, or to talk with any of the Knights of Columbus.

*Check the parish bulletin for the next Donut Ministry weekend.*

### 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.

### ADORATION

**Tuesday** 12:00-1:00 p.m. | **Thursday** 6:00-7:00 p.m.