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CATHEDRAL of SAINT PETER

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Meet Col. Patricia Robison

Reflecting on Years of Devoted Service to God, Country, and Community

For more than 30 years, Col. Patricia Robison cared for others while serving her country as a nurse in both the Air Force and the Army. It was a career that took her to military bases across the country, challenged her as a nurse and single mother, and strengthened a commitment to service that continues today here at the Cathedral of St. Peter.

As Veterans Day approaches on Nov. 11, Patricia's story offers an opportunity to honor one of our own parishioners while recognizing all the men and women who have faithfully served our nation and helped protect our freedom.

Patricia retired from the Army more than 25 years ago, but she still looks back fondly on her military

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Col. Patricia Robison

Meet Col. Patricia Robison

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career and says she would do it all over again in a heartbeat.

"I decided to join the Air Force because I thought it would be a way to expand my nursing career and to serve the country," she says. "Everyone was trying to avoid Vietnam, and here I was going into the military. My dad was in the Navy, but I liked the Air Force. I called the recruiter, and it was just great."

Although Patricia didn't serve overseas, her military career brought plenty of opportunities to put her nursing skills to work. During Desert Storm, she helped prepare a hospital for reservists. She also served at bases from coast to coast — from Edwards Air Force Base in California to Fort Campbell in Kentucky and Fort Bragg in North Carolina, among others. She eventually settled in Belleville, where her son and his family live.

"I loved nursing," Patricia says. "It was my passion from the time I went into nursing school. I also enjoyed the military. There were problems, of course, but you keep going. It was just a really fulfilling career."

Among Patricia's most memorable experiences was responding after one of the base jets crashed into a group of people preparing to board a plane.

"We triaged 125 people through our ER," she says. "My job was to make sure resources were allocated appropriately, and everybody had what they needed."

On a much different note, another favorite memory was helping to start pet therapy at one of the hospitals.

Military life also presented challenges. Looking back, Patricia remembers how difficult it could be to serve while raising her son as a single parent. Years later, however, he offered a perspective that has stayed with her.



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— Col. Patricia Robison

"One day my son told me, 'I'm really glad you joined the Army,'" she says. "That meant a lot."

The commitment to service Patricia developed in the military did not end with her retirement. She sees a connection between serving her country and serving her parish community. Today, she serves as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion and lector and sings in the Contemporary Choir. She also helps in the parish office on Thursday mornings and is involved with dessert ministers and funeral luncheons.

Her Catholic faith remained an important part of her life throughout her military career. Even with demanding and unpredictable schedules, Patricia made attending weekend Mass a priority.

"Most hospitals had a chapel and a chaplain, so that made it easier," she says. "When you're on crazy shifts, you check what's available. I always checked the local community to find out Mass times, so I could make it to Mass."

Whenever possible, Patricia also became involved in the Catholic communities where she was stationed.

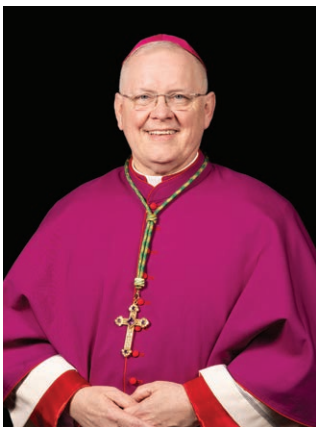
"I often lectored and sang during the Masses held at the various military chapels," she says. "It really prepared me to get involved here."

After retiring from the military, Patricia continued working in nursing before eventually retiring from that career as well. Today, she enjoys spending time with family and friends, doing crafts, reading, and continuing a lifetime of service through her involvement with the American Legion and Disabled American Veterans.

A Letter from Our Bishop and Pastor

Living the Gospel *in Ordinary Moments*

Dear Parishioners,



There is a tendency to think that living our faith requires extraordinary moments — a life-changing experience, a dramatic conversion, or some remarkable act of sacrifice. God certainly works through such moments, but most of our journey with Him takes place in much quieter ways. It unfolds in the ordinary circumstances of everyday life.

The Gospel is lived in the patience we show a family member after a long day. It is reflected in the integrity we bring to our work, the kindness we extend to a neighbor, and the time we set aside for prayer even when life feels busy. It is found in our willingness to forgive, to encourage someone who is struggling, or simply to be present for a friend in need. These moments may seem small, but they are often precisely where Christ is asking us to follow Him.

As disciples, we are called to recognize that every day presents opportunities to respond to God's grace. The gifts He has entrusted to us — our time, our abilities, our resources, and our experiences — are not meant for ourselves alone. They are gifts to be received with gratitude and shared generously for the good of others and the building up of the Church.

Here at the Cathedral of St. Peter, we have a particular reminder of that shared mission. As our Cathedral parish, this church is both a spiritual home for this community and the mother church of the Diocese of Belleville. Yet the mission entrusted to us is lived in much the same way everywhere — through faithful people striving each day to follow Christ and serve one another.

Every prayer offered, every act of service, every ministry supported, every encouraging conversation, and every quiet sacrifice contributes to that mission. Most will never receive public recognition, nor should they need to. Together, they strengthen our parish, our diocese, and the wider Church and allow the love of Christ to become visible to those around us.

October offers us a good opportunity to renew our commitment to this daily work of discipleship. As we move more fully into the routines of autumn and the many activities of parish life, I encourage each of us to ask the Lord to help us recognize the opportunities He places before us. We need not wait for some extraordinary occasion to serve Him. We can begin with the people and circumstances God has placed in our lives today.

This is how the Gospel takes root in our families, our parish, and our communities — one faithful response at a time. May we never underestimate what God can accomplish through those ordinary acts offered with love. And may our life together here at the Cathedral continue to help each of us grow as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.

Peace,

+ Godfrey Mullen, OSB

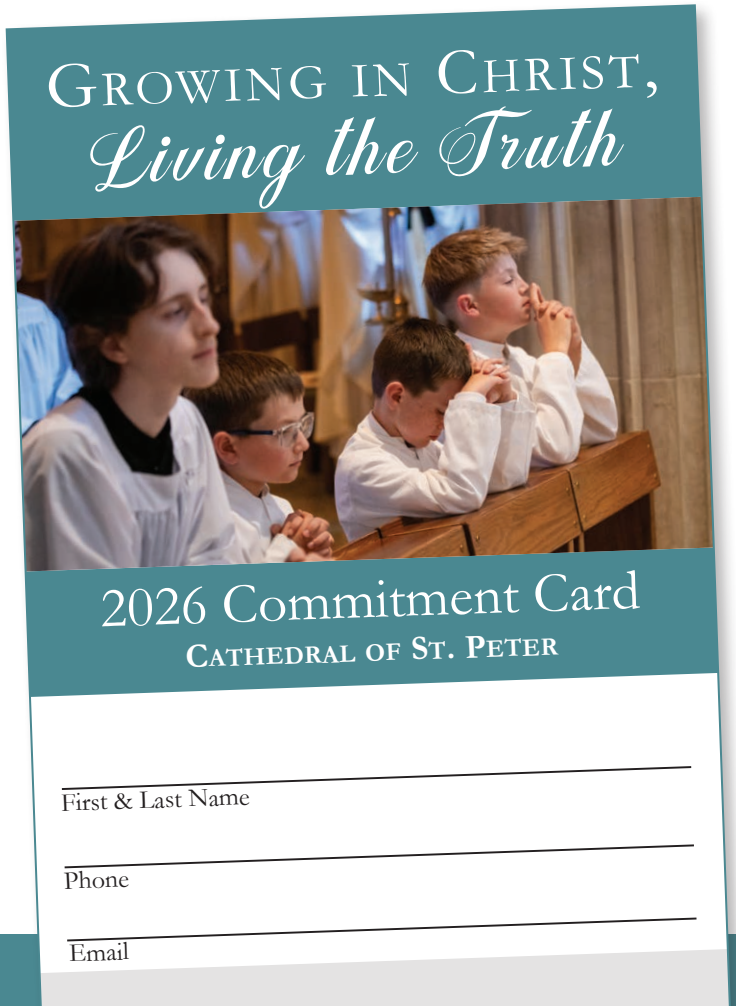
Bishop Godfrey Mullen, OSB
Bishop and Pastor



Questions and Answers About *Our*

Once again, it's time for our Annual Stewardship Renewal. Every year, someone asks, as you may have asked yourself, "Didn't we just have a Stewardship Renewal? Aren't we sufficiently 'renewed' by now?" Yes, we had a Stewardship Renewal last year, and we're going to have one next year, too! This is an annual occurrence — part of the rhythm of parish life at the Cathedral of St. Peter. Just as the Church proposes a time of spiritual renewal each Lent, we believe in the importance of a yearly examination of commitment. Is the Lord asking you to give more time, talent, or treasure to our parish this year?

Commitment Weekend is October 10-11. Don't forget to bring your Commitment Card to Mass!



How do I use my Commitment Card?

Your Commitment Card allows you to make commitments to prayer, parish ministries, and offertory giving. It is designed to be used by the whole family.

Time Section: Except for the ill and homebound, everyone should be able to check "Come to Mass on Sundays and Holy Days." Try to check at least a few other items. Daily prayer should be a priority for every person trying to grow closer to God.

Talent Section: You can either sign up for new ministries or re-commit to your current ministries. Be sure to write your first name next to the ministry! This is especially important if the card is being used by more than one person.

Treasure Section: Clearly print how much money you plan to give each week or month to our parish. Try to take a step toward giving five percent of your income to the Cathedral of St. Peter.

My age or physical limitations prevent me from being active in the parish. Should I still turn in a Commitment Card?

Yes! The first section of the card — Stewardship of Time — is the most important because it allows you to make commitments to *prayer*. Even if you can't join a ministry or make it to Mass on Sunday, you can still pray for our parish. Your spiritual support has tremendous value in the eyes of God.

One time I turned in a card, but no one ever called me when I signed up for a ministry.

If this happened in the past, please forgive us! And don't give up on filling out your Commitment Card! We have a very good plan to call every person interested in joining a new ministry. If for some reason the ministry leader does not call you within four weeks of turning in your card, let the parish office know.

How much should I give?

Your gift is entirely dependent on how much God has given you. At the Cathedral of St. Peter, we ask that you

Annual Stewardship Renewal

give five percent to our parish, one percent to the diocese, and four percent to other charities. Why a percentage of income? First, because the tithe (10 percent) is a scriptural benchmark that the Church has honored for centuries (see Malachi 3:10). Secondly, we give a percentage of income because it is a common-sense standard by which everyone can equitably support the parish. Most of all, we give because we believe God comes first in everything, even finances.

What if I can't fulfill my financial pledge?

While our pledge is not a "contract," we should all make a good-faith effort to fulfill it. Of course, if your financial circumstances change — if you lose your job, for instance — then the amount of money you give the Church will change, too. Likewise, if you get a raise or bonus. The biggest reason many people don't fulfill their pledge is that they attend Mass at another parish when they go on vacation, attend a wedding, etc. If you're out of town, just make up for the missed Sunday when you write your next check to the parish. Using your envelopes is a good way to see which Sundays you missed.

I don't even go to Mass very frequently. Why turn in a Commitment Card?

Because this is your chance to turn over a new leaf! Why not make a commitment to God to come to Mass every Sunday, and then write down that commitment? Even if that's the only commitment you make, take a step forward. Jesus Himself is waiting for you!

What happens if I don't return my Commitment Card?

We will mail you a reminder letter that includes an extra Commitment Card (in case you misplaced yours). Make every effort you can to participate. Our Stewardship Renewal is a very important annual event in the life of our parish. You and your family are part of what makes the Cathedral of St. Peter a great community! Most importantly, your commitments are actually promises to Christ Himself. All of us are called to give back to God a portion of what He has given us.



Every parish family receives a special "Stewardship Package" in the mail that further explains our parish's vision of stewardship. It includes a booklet that describes every ministry in the parish, as well as your Commitment Card.



Making Prayer a *Daily Priority*

Responding to God's Invitation Each Day

Most Catholics understand the importance of prayer, yet many struggle to make it a consistent part of daily life. Busy schedules, family responsibilities, work commitments, and countless distractions can easily crowd out time with God. Even with the best intentions, prayer sometimes becomes something we plan to do rather than something we actually do.

Yet prayer is not simply another item on a spiritual checklist. It is the foundation of our relationship with God. Through prayer, we listen to His voice, express our gratitude, seek His guidance, and open our hearts to His grace. Just as healthy relationships require regular communication, our relationship with God grows stronger when we spend time with Him consistently.

Stewardship begins with recognizing that everything we have comes from God. This includes the gift of time. Each day offers opportunities to choose how we will use the hours entrusted to us. When we intentionally set aside time for prayer, we acknowledge God's place at the center of our lives and respond to His invitation to draw closer to Him.

Prayer does not need to be lengthy or complicated to be meaningful. A few quiet moments in the morning, reflection on Scripture, grace before meals, the Rosary, Eucharistic Adoration, or an examination of conscience before bed can all help cultivate a deeper relationship with Christ. The key is consistency rather than perfection.

Regular prayer also shapes the way we live stewardship. As we spend time with God, we become more aware of His blessings and more attentive to His will. Prayer helps us recognize opportunities to serve others, use our gifts wisely, and respond generously to the needs around us. It reminds us that stewardship is not simply about what we do but about becoming the people God calls us to be.

Many saints viewed prayer as the source of their strength and mission. They understood that fruitful service flows from a relationship with Christ. Without prayer, even our best efforts can become disconnected from the One who gives them meaning and purpose.

Establishing a habit of prayer often begins with small steps. Setting aside a specific time each day, choosing a quiet place, and committing to a simple routine can help transform good intentions into lasting habits. Over time, these moments become opportunities to encounter God and experience His presence more fully.

Each day, God invites us into conversation with Him. As Christian stewards, we are called to respond to that invitation with grateful hearts. By making prayer a daily priority, we deepen our relationship with Christ and become better equipped to share His love with the world around us.

MINISTRY TO THE HOMEBOUND Shares Glory of the Eucharist Beyond Our Parish Walls

Being unable to attend Mass does not mean being separated from the life of the Cathedral parish. For parishioners who are homebound or living in nursing homes, the Ministry to the Homebound provides an important connection to their faith community — and, most importantly, ensures they are able to receive the Eucharist regularly.

Sue Wiegers coordinates the Ministry to the Homebound. As a nurse, she understands how difficult isolation due to age or illness can be. About a dozen ministers currently bring the Eucharist, prayer, friendship, and a connection to the Cathedral to those who can no longer join us for Mass.

"We have wonderful people who give of their time to go to people's homes and nursing homes," Sue says. "They establish a relationship with them and look forward to seeing them. It creates a sense of belonging. They get to know them pretty well if they take Communion to them every week for a long period of time."

Many of our homebound parishioners have given much to St. Peter over the years and continue to contribute to the life of our parish through their prayers. Bringing them the Eucharist allows them to remain connected to the source and summit of our Christian faith. Just as importantly, these regular visits provide an opportunity for conversation and friendship.

"It's important to let them know we haven't forgotten about them," Sue says. "They're still part of our parish family. Sometimes when you're isolated and you can't get out, it's nice to have a familiar face come and visit. We want them to know they're still part of our parish family and always will be."



(Front row, from left) Rosemary Steuer, Laurel "Buff" Burkel, Sr. Tess Markus, SSND; (back row, from left) Paula Segert, Mel Weck, Catherine Epplin, Gloria Schwartz, Susan Wiegers, Steve Szewczyk, and Leonard Haskenhoff; (Not pictured — Jean Mason, Jennifer McGuire, Kathy Fleshren, Sarah Cerny, Emily Lassman, Sue McCormack, Carissa and John Reitano

About 30 parishioners currently benefit from the Ministry to the Homebound, although that number changes as individual circumstances change. Sue believes there may be others who do not realize the ministry is available or who may be hesitant to ask. Parishioners who cannot attend Mass, or family members caring for someone who cannot attend, are encouraged to reach out. Ministers are eager to help.

For those who serve in the ministry, bringing the Eucharist to another person is both a privilege and a work of mercy. When new ministers of care are trained, Sue emphasizes the reverence required when carrying

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***"Sometimes when you're isolated and you can't get out, it's nice to have a familiar face come and visit. We want them to know they're still part of our parish family and always will be."* — Sue Wiegers**

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Ministry to the Homebound

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Christ in the Eucharist.

"When you take the Eucharist, you have to realize that you are carrying the Body and Blood of Christ, so it has to be done reverently," Sue says. "When you receive the Eucharist in the pyx, you should take it to the person right away."

Ministers of care generally bring the Eucharist to their assigned parishioners once a week, with each minister and recipient arranging a schedule that works well for both.

If you or a loved one would like to receive a visit from the Ministry to the Homebound, or if you are interested in serving, contact Sue Wiegers by call or text at 618-304-2355.



MASS TIMES

Saturday: *4:00 p.m.* | ***Sunday:*** *8:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 5:00 p.m.* | ***Weekdays:*** *Monday-Friday 6:45 a.m., Thursday 12:00 p.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.*