



ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

Monthly Newsletter

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APRIL 2023



ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

ACOLYTES FULFILL THE CALL TO HUMBLE SERVICE WITH DISCIPLINE AND INTEGRITY

If you have ever wondered who the grown men serving the Altar at Mass are, you are probably not alone. These men are not just grown-up altar servers – they are acolytes.

For centuries the Church has appointed men to the ministry of acolyte to prepare the vessels for Mass, serve the altar, distribute the Eucharist, and assist the priest. It is also one of the steps a seminarian has to undergo during the priestly formation – although you don't have to be a seminarian to be an acolyte.

Here at St. Peter, we are blessed to have so many men who have volunteered to be acolytes. John Kuchta has been an acolyte for over 30 years and is a leader of the ministry. He has experienced the blessings of being installed as an acolyte and has been fortunate enough to witness the impact of such a ministry.

"Currently, we have 36 men in the ministry," John says. "We serve our parish by helping the priest with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The impact of the service we provide to Father can be seen by the fact that he is freed up to hear Confessions before Mass and minister to people after. This is because we prepare the vessels and books before the Mass and clean them after.

"The thing that has impacted me the most, as an acolyte, is that I am right there at the altar during the consecration of the Eucharist," he adds. "Being this close to Christ, while He is present to us in the Eucharist, is powerful. You can feel the significance of the event."

Being an acolyte is an honor that holds much responsibility.

"Acolytes serve as a good example to the parish," John says. "Although our service at Mass is to never distract others from Christ, I know that in these moments I have the opportunity to set a good example for my family, other young people, and my fellow parishioners."



Installation with the bishop was celebrated on Feb. 25. Two of our parishioners were installed – Kevin Norman and Dylan Navratil.

To meet the demands of being an acolyte, candidates for the ministry must attend two training sessions before they are installed by the bishop.

"During training, our pastor and assisting priest provide scriptural, spiritual, intellectual, and practical training to instruct the men in their duties as an acolyte and to strengthen their faith," John says.

After the training, the candidates are brought before the bishop to be formally installed as acolyte ministers. This past February, we had two men who were installed as acolytes.

To fulfill their duties in helping the priest, acolytes make sure to be present at each Mass. To accomplish, this John schedules about three acolytes to serve at every Mass, which means that each member is serving Mass roughly every three to four weeks.

The Acolyte Ministry is always welcoming practicing Catholic men who want to grow in faith and service of the Lord.

"Being an acolyte gives me discipline and integrity," John says. "It challenges me to fulfill my commitments and has provided me with a foundation of prayer."

If you are interested in becoming an acolyte, indicate your interest on your commitment card this fall during our Stewardship Renewal. In addition, you can also ask Fr. Clark or any of the acolytes about the ministry.

A Letter From Our Pastor

DISCIPLESHIP IN LIGHT OF THE RESURRECTION

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

During the Eucharistic Prayer on Holy Thursday, the celebrating priest recites this line, “On the day before he was to suffer for our salvation and the salvation of all, that is today. He (Jesus) took bread.” The addition of “today” is the only time during the liturgical year that this word is added. It is a reminder that we are not just remembering the Last Supper but actually participating in it.

We are made participants in these mysteries. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states this reality, “When the Church celebrates the mystery of Christ, there is a word that marks her prayer: ‘Today!’ – a word echoing the prayer her Lord taught her and the call of the Holy Spirit. This ‘today’ of the living God which man is called to enter is ‘the hour’ of Jesus’ Passover, which reaches across and underlies all history” (1165).

If you greet me in the hallway or out and about, you might often hear me respond to the ask of how I am, “I’m blessed.” Sometimes, if I’m having a particularly difficult day you might get, “I’m blessed...with this Cross the Lord has laid on me.” Our lives give off the aroma of Christ Jesus, when our sorrows and joys of our lives, are united to the Paschal Mystery.

We’ve just walked with Jesus this Lent and now basking in the light of Easter. What is next? It seems like there are two options. We could act like nothing has happened, almost like St. Peter when he tells the apostles after the resurrection, “I’m going fishing” as if there was



nothing more. If you remember the story, Jesus encounters the apostles and charges Peter to not forget his mission to tend and feed Christ’s flock.

The other option is to be like Peter after Pentecost tells the crippled man, “I do not have silver or gold but what I do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.” This is living in light of the Resurrection. To be a disciple means to go forward knowing that the Kingdom of God can be right now.

St. John Paul II was known for his repeating the phrase, “Be Not Afraid.” This Easter season, do not be afraid to listen to Jesus’ call and follow it, come what may. This call is what our patron writes about in his first epistle, “In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so the genuineness of your faith may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”

Let Easter change you and enter into the *today* of a renewed life and following after Him.

In His Mercy,

Fr. Eric Clark,
Pastor



ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

THE GROUNDS USING STEWARDSHIP GIFTS TO SERVE

The Grounds Ministry at St. Peter Catholic Church, led by Jeff and Monica Kavan, is responsible for monitoring, maintaining, and improving the facilities and parish grounds. Formed last July, the group has been busy getting the grounds ready for the upcoming spring planting season. Much of their work so far has included removing the existing trees, bushes, and rocks from the planting areas in front of the church and school.

“Members have grown spiritually in the Grounds Ministry because we are able to recognize the talent and value of each member,” Monica says. “We then develop meaningful relationships to accomplish common goals for the benefit of our parish. Also, because we are working outdoors, we are able to grow spiritually with God’s creation through communing with nature.”

The Grounds Ministry has been a wonderful way

for parishioners to share their God-given talents with the rest of the parish.

“We have one member that has access to specialized equipment that he is very knowledgeable on how to operate,” Monica says. “This has allowed him to complete many improvements on our baseball field. Another member is very knowledgeable about the design and maintenance of a butterfly or pollinator garden, which is located on the backside of the parish property. Still, another member was previously employed at a landscaping company, so she will be able to use the knowledge she acquired to benefit us during the spring planting season.”

The group has enjoyed getting to meet new members and grow closer to other parishioners, all while using their gifts to give glory to God and to serve their parish family.



Landscaping before the Grounds Ministry began its work

DS MINISTRY SERVE GOD AND OUR PARISH CAMPUS



Digital renderings of the Grounds Ministry's planned projects

"We would like the outside courtyard area of the church and school to be just as welcoming and beautiful as the inside of the church," Monica says. "We feel it is also important to improve the baseball field and playground area for our children that attend school here."

There are currently around 16 members in the Grounds Ministry, but additional members would be greatly appreciated. Any parishioner is welcome to join.

"You don't have to have a green thumb to be a part of our ministry!" Monica says. "If you like being outdoors, there are many other jobs such as watering plants, pulling weeds, pruning, raking leaves, or even picking up trash and debris."



Members of the Grounds Ministry working to clear the existing trees, bushes and rocks in preparation for the spring planting season

For more information about the Grounds Ministry, or to become involved, contact the parish office at 402-423-1239. You can also indicate your interest on your commitment card this fall during our Stewardship Renewal.



THE EASTER VIGIL: A COMMUNITY IN JOYFUL



The completion of the Triduum, the Easter Vigil, is a sacred night for the Church.

"We are waiting for what we had hoped for, and we get that Easter night," says Blake Vajgrt, Parish Catechist. "It's the holiest night of the year. It gives us a true sacramental experience of what began on Holy Thursday and is completed on Easter."

The Easter Vigil is a markedly fuller Mass than a typical Sunday, given the additional components of the Mass. Beginning with the blessing of the fire, then the Liturgy of the Word, the administration of the Sacraments, and Baptism.

"The beauty of Easter Vigil is it's a full representation of the history of salvation – from the beginning, the prophets, seven readings, the epistle, and the gospel that retell this grand story of God's love for us," Blake says. "From there, we see the fruits – people coming to know God in a new way, being brought into the context of our community. From there, we move into the fruits of that – union with Christ and the Eucharist."

Traditionally, the Easter Vigil has been the Mass during which candidates are received into the faith.

"This is the night where death is defeated, like the *Exsultet* says," Blake says. "Jesus comes up from the grave. We celebrate that by bringing others into the Body of Christ through Baptism and Confirmation, and Holy Communion. We don't get that without the beautiful tradition of our church. These are linked and you cannot find a better night to celebrate them."

St. Peter has a wonderful group of new members coming into the Church this Easter Vigil. The group has been undergoing preparations since September through our adult faith formation program, *The Way: Discovering and Living the Catholic Faith*. They will continue to meet after Easter, ending with Mass and a celebration on the Feast of the Ascension, a Holy Day of Obligation for our diocese.

"A lot of it is intellectual and spiritual formation," Blake says.

And while they have been preparing for months, Blake says the candidates have been getting ready for far longer than that.

"Their whole life has brought them to this point, whether they're coming never having been baptized, or coming from a different ecclesial community,

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another denomination – their whole life has been leading them to this point,” he says. “It is a time they feel the outpouring of love when they are brought into the Church.”

Blake encourages parishioners to pray for those entering into the Church this Easter and asks our community to recognize their own calling as disciples.

“The most important thing is to pray for them,” Blake says. “The second most important thing is to recognize how you have been called as a disciple and go and invite others to follow after Our Lord Jesus. The best support we can give is we make God known in our parish and call others to deeper discipleship with Our Lord. We want everybody to come to know the surpassing love of Christ Jesus.”

All are welcome to attend the Easter Vigil on April 8 at 8:30 p.m. and witness the initiation of new members into our church.

“Our Lord speaks to you in the best way possible throughout the entire celebration,” Blake says. “If you haven’t been yet, come.”

“Jesus comes up from the grave. We celebrate that by bringing others into the Body of Christ through Baptism and Confirmation, and Holy Communion. The two are linked and you cannot find a better night to celebrate both.”

— Blake Vajgrt





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MASS SCHEDULE:

Saturday: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday: 8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m.

DAILY MASS

*Monday-Friday: 6:30 a.m., 8:15 a.m.,
5:30 p.m.*

Saturday: 8:15 a.m.

CONFESSION

Monday & Friday: 7:00 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.

Wednesday: 4:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Saturday: 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Sunday 30 minutes before each Mass

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

CONFESSIONS

Monday, April 3

7:00-8:00 a.m.

Wednesday, April 5

4:30-5:30 p.m.

6:00-7:00 p.m.

Thursday, April 6

6:00-7:00 p.m.

8:30-9:30 p.m.

Friday, April 7

3:30-4:30 p.m.

6:00-7:00 p.m.

8:30-9:30 p.m.

LITURGIES

Monday, April 3 — Masses

6:30 a.m. and 8:15 a.m.

Tuesday, April 4 — Masses

6:30 a.m., 8:15 a.m.

and 5:30 p.m.

Wed., April 5 — Masses

6:30 a.m., 8:15 a.m.

and 5:30 p.m.

Holy Thursday

April 6

7:00 p.m.

Good Friday

April 7

3:00 p.m. — Stations

7:00 p.m. — Service

Easter Vigil

Saturday, April 8

8:30 p.m.

Easter Sunday

April 9 — Masses

8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m.

and 11:00 a.m.