



ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

Monthly Newsletter

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AUGUST 2023



ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

MEET NEW ST. PETER SCHOOL ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL JANNA WALKOWIAK HELPING STUDENTS BUILD A FOUNDATION FOR THEIR FUTURE

Janna Walkowiak truly cares about children and Catholic education, and this is evident in every part of her work. Ms. Walkowiak spent a year of her early career at a public school but made the switch to Catholic education because she desired to work at the intersection of faith and academics. She is looking forward to applying her experience here at St. Peter Catholic School as our new Assistant Principal.

“Being in an environment where faith is the foundation brings a community together and helps develop and foster connections,” Ms. Walkowiak says.

Education is near and dear to Ms. Walkowiak’s heart. She most recently taught middle school English at St. Robert Bellarmine School in Omaha. During the pandemic, she felt a call to pursue her Master’s in Educational Leadership.

“What I love about education, in general, is that we are helping students lay the foundation for their future endeavors,” Ms. Walkowiak says. “There was no better feeling in my time as an educator than seeing a student put in the work and being successful in their goals.”

After seeing the posting for the Assistant Principal position here at St. Peter Catholic School, Ms. Walkowiak did some online research and loved what she saw. When she interviewed and learned more, she knew this community would be a great fit.

“I am very excited to join the parish and meet everyone,” Ms. Walkowiak says.

While Ms. Walkowiak notes that this will be somewhat of a learning year for her, she is looking



New Assistant Principal Janna Walkowiak (second from left) and her family — Ms. Walkowiak was raised in Grand Island and is excited to join our parish and school community.

forward to learning the procedures, routines, and curriculum and, most importantly, getting to know the students and staff. She hopes to spend a lot of time in the classrooms.

“My role is to support in any way that I can, so I look forward to understanding the school better to see where I can make the biggest impact,” she says.

Ms. Walkowiak’s family is very important to her. Raised in Grand Island, she has two siblings, a mom and

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A Letter from Our Pastor

ST. AUGUSTINE:

A REMINDER THAT EVANGELIZATION CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

If you look at the greatest movies of all time, they are usually stories of adventure, success, and romance. This reveals to us something about the human heart. St. Augustine of Hippo, the great Church Father, once said, "To seek God is the greatest adventure, to find God is the greatest success and to fall in love with God is the greatest romance."

As Catholics, we care about truth, for Jesus reveals Himself as the way, the truth, and the life. Our world around us also cares about truth. The search for truth is our common meeting place with the searching hearts of today.

St. Augustine is arguably one of the most influential thinkers in the Western world. Raised by a Catholic mother, Monica, he resisted the Catholic faith as a young man because he found it untrue or against the popular reasonableness of the time. He searched as a young man for truth and for a fulfilling way of life. He tried out many different philosophies and approaches to life and found them wanting.

He retells his conversion and coming to faith in his work, *The Confessions*. One of his most famous lines from *The Confessions* is, "You have made us for yourself and our hearts are restless until they rest in thee." It wasn't any argument or proof that changed his heart, but God's grace.

Augustine recounts his conversion and how he was sitting in a garden pondering the truth of the Catholic faith. He heard childlike voices urging him to "pick up and read" the Bible. The voices were relentless and he picked up and read. His heart was set aflame and he cried the renewing tears of the Holy Spirit. The patient prayers and guidance of his mother, St. Monica, and St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan,



helped Augustine encounter the transforming power of God's grace.

Augustine's conversion to the Catholic faith was not a mere change of affiliation, but a radical transformation of his entire being. His encounter with the Word of God, Jesus Christ, touched the deepest recesses of his heart and compelled him to surrender his life completely to God. Augustine's conversion was a turning point that shaped his understanding of truth. In his conversion, he saw

that some truths can only be learned when one becomes a disciple of Jesus, Truth itself.

As we reflect on the life of St. Augustine, whose memorial we celebrate later this month, we are reminded of the relevance and urgency of being Jesus' disciples too. Like Augustine, the world around us is searching for truth, ways of believing, and living that fulfill the heart. He is a reminder that God goes before us in the work of making disciples. All we have to do is share Jesus' name and work in our lives with others. This is the simple work of evangelization.

Abide in Christ and build His Kingdom by making disciples. Who knows — you might be the next St. Ambrose to St. Augustine in a hurting world that desperately needs the truth of God.

In His Mercy,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Fr. Eric Clark".

Fr. Eric Clark,
Pastor



OUR ANNUAL DISCIPLESHIP RENEWAL “ZEAL FOR YOUR HOUSE WILL CONSUME ME”

Periodically, we need to re-examine the ways in which we’ll answer the call to discipleship, which is the reason for our Annual Discipleship Renewal. You will be receiving in the mail your Discipleship Renewal packet. Enclosed in this packet is a “Zeal for your house will consume me” brochure that will lead you through that self-examination. It is a time to ask how we can better use our time, talent, and treasure.

- Do I make time for prayer? By myself and with my family?
- Is my talent at work in our parish actively building the Church?
- Do I give a proportionate amount of my treasure to the weekly offertory?

*Commitment Weekend is
Aug. 19-20. 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 more than one person is using the card.

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 seven percent of your income to St. Peter.

Is your prayer life in need of a tune-up?

Honestly ask yourself, “How much time do I spend in prayer each week?” The answer is probably a bit embarrassing. Everyone wants to spend more time in prayer, but there’s just never enough time to do everything we want to do. Good intentions are just that: intentions. This year, as you’re discerning how you will offer your time to God, resolve to follow through with your commitments. Consider each moment you spend in prayer as nourishment for your soul. The spiritual health of our parish is only as strong as the sum of its parts (individual parishioners).

Is your level of parish involvement in need of a boost?

We give our talents back to God when we get involved in ministries at St. Peter. And, with a host of ministries to choose from, there’s something for everyone. Sure, ministries give parishioners opportunities to serve others in the community, but they also benefit those in the ministry itself. Ask anyone who actively participates in a ministry at St. Peter, “Why do you enjoy serving in this way?” They’ll probably say, “I get more out of the ministry than the people I serve.” This year, as you’re discerning how you will offer your talents to God, consider signing up for a ministry that may benefit you, like a Bible study, prayer group, or retreat. Or contribute to an outreach ministry, where your good deeds not only help others in the community but also give you feelings of satisfaction and thankfulness.

RENEWAL

“ZEAL FOR YOUR HOUSE WILL CONSUME ME.” — JOHN 2:17

Do you give a percentage of your income to the offertory?

It may be hard to see offertory giving as a way to “help yourself,” but when we approach the subject from a spiritual viewpoint, it can lead to individual spiritual growth and an increase in faith. Even the savviest businessperson worries about his or her personal finances from time to time. Adding a weekly offertory check to the list of monthly bills may seem crazy but, ultimately, sacrificial giving forces us to cut unnecessary spending, create a budget, and have faith that God will help us make it through the month. All of these are good things for each of us, individually. After faithfully giving to the offertory for a few months, many Catholics find that it’s not only possible to give a weekly offering, but that the fruits of their gift far outweigh the expense.

At St. Peter, we ask that you give seven percent to our parish and three 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.

Every parish family receives a special “Discipleship Package” in the mail that further explains our parish’s vision of Discipleship. It includes a booklet that describes every ministry in the parish, as well as your Commitment Card.

“ZEAL FOR YOUR HOUSE
WILL CONSUME ME.”
JOHN 2:17

ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH
2023 COMMITMENT CARD

First & Last Name _____
Phone _____
Email _____
Spouse: First & Last Name _____
Spouse: Phone _____
Spouse: Email _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Please bring this card to Mass, mail it to the parish office or fill it out online at saintpeterlincoln.com.
Thanks and God bless you!



CCD PROGRAM READY FOR FORMING OUR PARISH



Fourth-graders make unleavened bread as they learn its meaning in God's plan of salvation.



Second-graders enjoy a lesson with Mrs. Tichy.



Middle school students make paper with Fr. Doherty as they learn about Sacred Scripture.

We have all adapted to changes during the renovation, and our CCD program is no exception. As St. Peter focuses on the words of John 2:17, "Zeal for your house will consume me," the CCD program will incorporate an appreciation for religious art and architecture into its usual curriculum. This will involve a brief monthly newsletter for families and an art exhibit day. Appreciating the beauty of famous churches and their sacred art will help us look forward to the beauty that we will be able to celebrate soon in our own space.

As August gets underway, we look towards the new beginnings of fall, as vacations come to an end and the new school year begins. In turn, our CCD program here at St. Peter kicks off at the end of this month.

Our CCD program is made possible thanks to our volunteer catechists. New and experienced teachers give our children the invaluable gift of bringing the faith to life. Catechists are always needed and Parish Catechist Blake Vajgrt hopes no one feels intimidated by the idea of teaching faith formation.

"Some people have an extraordinary gift to teach, but teaching and sharing the faith is something we all should be doing as disciples," Blake says. "If you've ever thought, 'I'd like to do that but I just don't know enough,' consider maybe you're limiting the Holy Spirit's work in your life."

Our CCD program is geared especially toward families who don't have the opportunity for faith formation inside the school day, but an equally important aspect of the program is the community that develops through CCD. A faith community is vital for children and families. In addition to formally learning about the faith, it's an opportunity to live and grow in faith together.

"We want to help people get connected and hope that families bring a willingness to get to know each other," Blake says. "I would even challenge them to meet two or three other families in the program. You could introduce

FOR ANOTHER GREAT YEAR

YOUTH IN THE FAITH

yourself to someone when you come to pick up your kids from CCD”

A special invitation is extended to all students entering sixth through eighth grade. Confirmation marks a huge milestone, but it is not the end of faith formation. The program for this age group looks more like youth group than a classroom.

“Any of those kids would say that it’s not boring, it’s worthwhile,” Blake says. “We have social and game time, and set time for prayer and learning. We weave formation into the experience.”

CCD is held on Wednesday nights. First through fifth grade meets from 4:15 to 5:30 p.m. The middle school program meets from 6:45 to 8 p.m. Check the parish website for registration information.



Sr. Fiat Marie helps the second-grade students with their work in the atrium.

To learn more or to serve as a catechist, contact Blake Vajgrt at blake-vajgrt@cdolinc.net.

NEW ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL *continued from page 2*

dad, a brother-in-law, and two nephews. Oliver, a shih tzu-poodle mix, is also an important part of her family. In her free time, Ms. Walkowiak enjoys reading and bargain shopping at Costco or Sam’s Club. Family vacations are also quite enjoyable.

If you see Ms. Walkowiak around, make sure to introduce yourself.

“Even in the brief interactions that I’ve had at the school, it became immediately apparent that St. Peter is a wonderful community,” she says. “I am looking forward to continuing the school and church’s mission of preparing students spiritually and academically.”

Ms. Walkowiak can’t wait to get started and continue the vital work of Catholic education.

“What I love most about Catholic education is that we have created a space where academics and faith are entwined,” she says.

For more information about St. Peter Catholic School, visit saintpeterlincoln.com/school or call 402-421-6299.



ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH



4500 Duxhall Dr. | Lincoln, NE 68516
402-423-1239 | www.saintpeterlincoln.com

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: 7:00 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.

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

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

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

Sunday 30 minutes before each Mass

COMMITMENT WEEKEND

AUGUST 19-20

BRING YOUR COMMITMENT CARD TO MASS AND STAY FOR REFRESHMENTS!

