



ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

Monthly Newsletter



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DECEMBER 2023



CHURCH DECORATING COMMITTEE *Prepares to Draw Us into Advent and Christmas Seasons*

Whether you attend Mass on Christmas Eve or Christmas morning, walking into the church is a moment of beauty. The simple, somber purple of Advent is replaced by white and gold, and darkness gives way to light. Behind this transformation is the Church Decorating Committee, led by Kathleen Noonan and Karen Largen. With the help of about 40 volunteers, the Church Decorating Committee brings beauty into our liturgical space.

“Our goal is ‘tasteful simplicity,’” Karen says. “The Church talks about ‘noble simplicity’ and we strive for that.”

This year is a little different for the Church Decorating Committee and for all of us. As the renovations are taking place, we will be celebrating Christmas in the lower church. While Karen acknowledges that this isn’t the ideal setup, she notes that it has some positive sides.

“We have the benefit of watching the seasons change through the wall of windows behind the altar,” she says. “We are going to enjoy that and seeing the snow fall.”

The Church Decorating Committee will be incorporating many familiar elements. Advent invites us into a place of simplicity as we journey through this quiet period of preparation.

“Advent is supposed to be a little Lent, so we don’t go crazy with flowers,” Karen says. “It’s a period of waiting so we have just the Advent wreath and tree. We will decorate for Christmas right before Christmas.”

For Christmas, the volunteers will fill the church with flowers, greenery, and gold. Our beautiful nativity set will be a focal point. The nativity set is quite heavy and volunteer help is crucial for getting it set up carefully.

“Generally, we place the creche in front of the altar for visibility,” Karen says. “The children are so drawn to it.”

While Christmas begins to hit the secular world as



early as September, Catholics wait until Christmas Eve to celebrate Christ’s birth and we continue that celebration through Epiphany.

“We follow the Church calendar, not the secular calendar,” Karen says. “That sets the tone for our parish.”

Karen hopes that the décor enhances the parish’s celebration of the liturgy and helps us enter more deeply into the liturgical seasons. She looks forward to the beauty that the completed renovations will bring to the liturgy.

“It is going to be glorious in its own right,” Karen says. “What we do will be very little because it will need so very little and the beauty of the church will speak for itself.”

*To serve with the Church Decorating Committee, contact
Karen Largen at 402-450-1008 or rexlargen@earthlink.net.*

A Letter from Our Pastor

ADVENT:

Receiving Gratefully and Sharing Generously as His Disciples

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

A few weeks ago, we changed our clocks from Daylight Savings Time to Standard Time. For us, that meant moving our clocks back an hour on a Saturday night before going to bed. Though we now have light earlier in the day, each day we are losing some more daylight.

As we live through these darkest days of the year, our Church also celebrates Advent and Christmas this month. Advent is a time of hopeful anticipation of what is to come — the Second Coming of Christ and the celebration of His birth. As Advent moves us to the darkest day of the year, we embrace the themes of hope, peace, love, and joy. As the amount of light in each day begins to grow, we celebrate that the Light entered into its creation in the birth of Jesus.

Each Sunday is an opportunity, as we light a new candle on the Advent wreath, to reflect on how these four themes are lived out in our lives as disciples.

HOPE — No matter what comes in our life, can we live in a spirit of hope in our Lord who is always with us? Can our confidence in God's amazing and generous love sustain us even in the darkest moments of life?

PEACE — So many things can try to rob us of peace: the death of a loved one, job loss, busyness, economic uncertainty, and success to name a few. Can we trust the Prince of Peace enough to know that we are not alone,



that both God and His people are with us in all times?

JOY — This Advent, instead of looking for external sources of joy, can we give time to our Lord in prayer, forming a deeper relationship with Christ and allowing Him to become our fountain of joy?

LOVE — Can we take time this Advent to savor the many loving relationships of our life, especially our relationship with Jesus, the Father, the Holy Spirit, the saints, our parish community, and our loved ones? Embracing this love will help us to look forward with joyful anticipation to the fullness of the Kingdom of God that awaits us.

God did not make us for darkness but rather for His light. May this Advent and Christmas fill us with hope, peace, joy, and love so that we live every day as children of God's light with a renewed spirit, receiving gratefully and sharing generously as disciples of Jesus.

In His Mercy,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Fr. Eric Clark". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Fr. Eric Clark,
Pastor



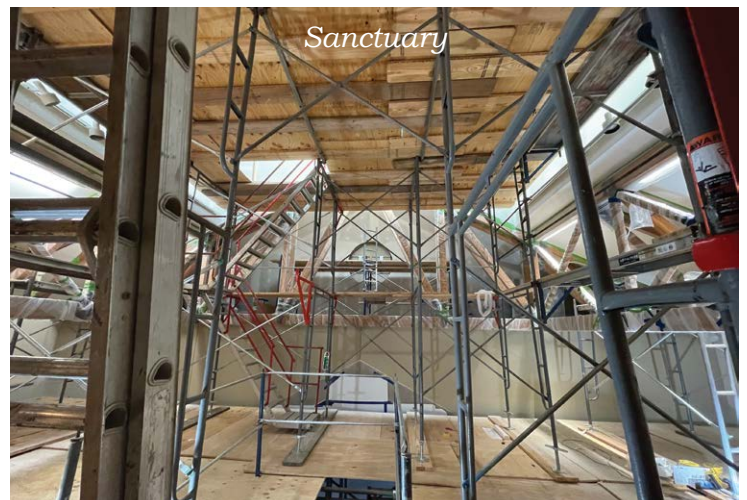
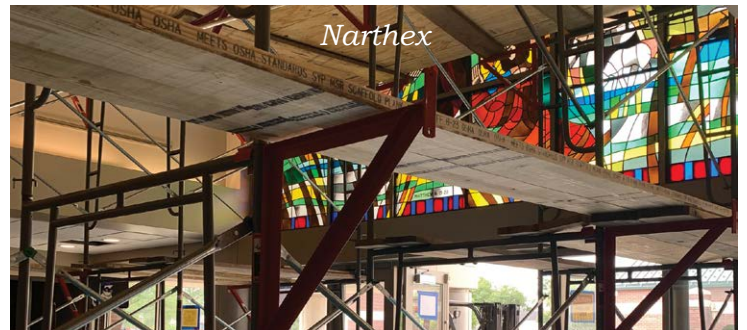


ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

“At the Feet of 1

Before

Middle



The great work has been made possible by parishioners who pledged over \$9 million!

Peter” Campaign

Current



An Update on Our Progress

The “At the Feet of Peter Campaign” is two-fold – give glory back to God and provide for the needs of our parish, now and for the future. The new physical changes have been proceeding well. We wanted to give you a behind-the-scenes look at some of the updates. So far, we have completed the HVAC improvements, parking lot, narthex, new welcome counter, parish office improvements, and updates to St. Paul Outside the Walls and St. Mary Chapel.

Thankfully, we are still on schedule for our March finish, but we’ll still be wearing hardhats while we work on finishing painting the sanctuary, installing light fixtures, laying the floor tile, installing the pews, finishing the sanctuary furnishings, and installing the stained glass windows.

The great work has been made possible by parishioners who pledged over \$9 million! If you still have an outstanding pledge, we ask you to consider paying it off so that we won’t have to take out any loans to finish this great work. Scan the QR code with your phone for more info on the campaign and to make a pledge.





STATIONS OF THE NATIVITY:



Each year, the excitement and anticipation for the Christmas season fills us with joy. We decorate, bake, and wrap gifts, as well as enjoy Christmas parties, caroling, and Christmas concerts. This excitement is a good thing – all of these activities lend themselves to the joy of celebrating the birth of Christ. However, one aspect is often overlooked in the excitement and busyness of the season – the need to spiritually prepare for Christmas. Just as we prepare our homes to celebrate Christmas, we also must prepare our hearts to welcome Him.

At St. Peter Catholic Church, we have a beautiful devotion during the Advent season that helps us to prepare our hearts and focus on the most important part of Christmas – the birth of Jesus. This devotion is the Stations of the Nativity.

“The Stations of the Nativity is a way for people to enter into the infancy narrative of the Lord,” Fr. Clark says. “When I was in seminary, I saw a Holy Card with a picture of the Nativity and on the back, it listed 14 stations. I developed a devotional with an Old Testament prophecy, the New Testament fulfillment of that prophecy, and a reflection from one of the Church fathers.

“We have been using this devotional in the parish for the last couple of years to remind us of the importance of ‘Oh come let us adore Him!’” he adds.

This special event is held at several times on Wednesday, Dec. 6 – 2:30 p.m., 4:30 p.m., and 7 p.m. All parishioners are encouraged to both attend and invite others to come and focus our hearts and minds on Jesus.

“Each year, the Christmas lights go up earlier, the shopping lists get longer, and the parties become

“In the present secular age and the ‘advent’ of materialism, we must pause and reflect upon the mystery of God becoming man. The Incarnation of Jesus shows humanity the depths of God’s love for us.” — Fr. Clark

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ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH



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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: 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

Christmas Wish List

Item	Amount
Commercial Roomba Vacuum	\$700
4 Exterior Planters	\$800
Pascal Candle Stand	\$800
Religious Art for Narthex and Hall	\$1,000
12.9" iPad and Enclosure Mount	\$1,300
6 Candlesticks for New High Altar	\$2,000
Camera for church to livestream and record Mass	\$2,000
5 New Trees to Replace Dead Pines	\$2,500
Tuition Assistance (K-8)	\$3,220

See bulletin insert or go online for complete list of items.

All donations are welcome, no matter the amount. Please scan here to donate online or you can drop off a check with the donation item in the memo line.



Christmas

MASS SCHEDULE

Sunday, December 24th

4:00 p.m., 6:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m.

Monday, December 25th

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

Monday, January 1st

6:30 a.m., 8:15 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.