



# ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

*Monthly Newsletter*

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**SEPTEMBER 2022**



# ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

## COMING SEPT. 16: FALL FAMILY FESTIVAL

*An Evening of Fun and Fellowship for Our Entire Community*

Each fall, the St. Peter's community celebrates our school and parish by throwing a big festival for everyone. Our faith community is a vital part of our lives and this celebration is a way for everyone to come together and have a little fun! It can be easy for the school and the parish to feel like two separate communities – however, it is very important to note how each supports and upholds the other. Thus, the Fall Family Festival is an opportunity for the two to come together as one big community. This event is a gesture of heartfelt gratitude to everyone in the parish for their stewardship and support throughout the year.

The festival will take place on Sept. 16 from 5 to 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$30 per family or \$7 per individual if you purchase them in advance. The event is all-inclusive for the dinner, treats, and activities – though there is an additional cost to take a chance at dunking various teachers in the dunk tank!

The whole family will enjoy a chicken dinner provided by Slim Chickens. Food will be served for the duration of the event. Cookies and snow cones will also be served. Activities for the kids will include bounce houses, games, and decorating pumpkins. Music and entertainment will be provided by a DJ.

"We just really want people to come and have a good time," says Rick Garneau, who has been involved in putting on this event since 2017. "It is a great price for a whole family event. Visit with friends and other parishioners and let the kids have a great time!"

There are also volunteer opportunities to assist in many different areas. Each volunteer slot is 30 minutes long, so it is quick and easy to sign up and help. These short time slots are great for parents, grandparents, teenagers, or other parishioners to offer essential assistance while still having

plenty of time to visit and enjoy the festivities.

"This is probably the largest event that we have at the parish as far as attendance goes," Rick says. "Last year, we had around 650 adults and children attend!"

As a parish family, we pride ourselves on our hospitality and welcoming all people into our community. This event is a wonderful opportunity to extend the reach of our hospitality to the surrounding community. We encourage you to invite neighbors and friends to this evening of fun. By welcoming those outside of our parish and school, we are evangelizing others through our hospitality.

This year will be Rick's last year as the lead coordinator of this event.

"I am really looking to restock the event committee," he says. "We really have it organized well so it isn't too complicated to organize. We would love to see some more parishioners step up to serve on this committee."

So, be sure to mark your calendars and save the date – Sept. 16 – for this event!

"The biggest thing is just to show up," Rick says. "It is a great price for an event for the whole family. Invite your neighbors and come enjoy an evening with your friends!"

*To purchase tickets or sign up to volunteer, please visit the parish website at [www.saintpeterslincoln.com](http://www.saintpeterslincoln.com) or fill out the forms sent home with the children of the parish. For more information on being a part of the committee, please call or text Rick Garneau at 402-200-8769.*



*A Letter from Our Pastor*

## WHEN GOD SPEAKS, WE SHOULD LISTEN

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

This month we celebrate the Memorial of St. Gregory the Great, a saint who should hold particular devotion to us Lincolniters. I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for our diocesan seminary, St. Gregory the Great. We have the great blessing of being able to form our men discerning a call to the priesthood with our own means and from our own sense of responsibility to provide for the needs of the Gospel.

Every vocation story starts at Baptism, but the story of my vocation to the priesthood picks up in Fargo, N.D. I was serving as a FOCUS missionary at the time, devoting my whole livelihood to bringing college students to encounter Jesus Christ. One Sunday in February, we went out for a large Indian feast and I settled in for a Sunday siesta.

Suddenly, during my nap, the bed shook, and I heard clearly the voice of Christ say, "Be my priest." Physically, I was confused at what had just happened, but spiritually I had ultimate clarity. The only objection I could offer back was, "Lord, you know what I've done." The response that welled up in my soul was, "You know what I've done for you." I heard His voice and I couldn't turn back from the mission.

My encounter with Jesus is pretty extraordinary, but I don't want you to get lost in the supernatural event. My story might be one in infinite, but so is yours. In paragraph 2013 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, we read, "All Christians in any state or walk of life are called to the fullness of Christian life and the perfection of charity. All are called to holiness: 'Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.'

It is a high challenge whether we read it in or out of context where we find this paragraph in the *Catechism*. This citation occurs in the section of God's grace, how He abundantly gives it to us to live life to the full. I can tell you that His grace is powerful, as it has helped me



grow into the priest that He desires me to be. It has been a life better than I could have imagined.

This year, I desire that we be inspired by the early Church, as they put all their livelihood at the feet of Peter. It is a high challenge, but a worthwhile one. They heard the voice of God inviting them to mission, to make disciples in their own way. The Lord Jesus said, "Let him who has ears, hear." God calls out to us each and every day, it is up to us to hear Him. Trust me when I say, "When God speaks, listen." You won't be disappointed.

In His Mercy,

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

Fr. Eric Clark,  
Pastor



## YOUTH MINISTRY PROVIDES OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE AND BE “HANDS AND FEET OF JESUS.”



For the youth in our parish, service is a critical way to grow as a young Catholic. Reaching out in service can stretch us outside our comfort zone, helps us shift our focus to others, and opens our eyes to the needs of those around us. Service is also an opportunity to share Christ’s love.

“Service is how we are the hands and feet of Jesus,” says Parish Catechist Blake Vajgrt. “Part of being a human being is that we like doing good for people.”

The main opportunity for service that our high schoolers have is through the Matt Talbot Kitchen, which provides many services to community members in need of assistance – one of the most basic needs is healthy meals. The kitchen relies entirely on volunteers to provide, prepare, and serve meals to those who are in need.

On the second Wednesday of every other month, two Godteen groups come together to serve a meal. Parishioner Sarah Hodge plans the meal, collects the donations, and coordinates the students in preparing, serving, and cleaning up. Between 15 and 20 students are needed to help each time. The students spend time together and also have the chance to interact with those whom they serve – a valuable opportunity for our youth to meet and talk with people that they might otherwise never know.

“The students that serve are all very positive and mention how much helping someone less fortunate than them

*“Service is how we are the hands and feet of Jesus. Part of being a human being is that we like doing good for people.” — BLAKE VAJGRT*

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## **PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES HANDS AND FEET OF JESUS"**

always makes them appreciate the blessings God has provided for them in life," Sarah says.

Sarah sees the service they do at Matt Talbot Kitchen as a way of giving back for all of the gifts God has given her. She encourages any high schoolers who haven't volunteered to give it a try. While Godteen groups are scheduled, all high school students are welcome to serve, even if they aren't able to fit Sunday Godteen meetings into their schedules.

Blake is looking for more ways that high school

students can serve the parish and community. With so many volunteers, students might serve at Matt Talbot Kitchen once or twice a year. Blake plans to make service a more frequent part of the high school ministry. Volunteering at the kitchen is both a constant and an inspiration to go further.

"Hopefully the more they keep serving the meals, the more that service to others can become a way of life for them that they can carry with them as they age and grow," Sarah says.

*If you would like to get involved with Godteen or serving at Matt Talbot Kitchen, please contact Blake Vajgrt at [blake-vajgrt@cdolinc.net](mailto:blake-vajgrt@cdolinc.net) or 402-328-2866. Parishioners with ideas for constructive and organized service opportunities for the high school students are also welcomed to contact Blake to further discuss these ideas.*





## THAT MAN IS YOU!

### *Inspiring Men to Live Out the Faith With Conviction*

For about the last 10 years or so, That Man is You! has been forming men in our parish. The program has brought hundreds of men into a closer relationship with Christ and has taught them the rich doctrines of the faith in a way that naturally leads to action and practical application in real life.

Parishioner Jerry Vrbka was a founding member and has been active as a small-group leader and scheduling coordinator. He has witnessed the impact that this program has had on several men.

"Guys have said that the lessons in the program have increased their Mass attendance," Jerry says. "Others have become better husbands and fathers. The men that attend our meetings are noticeably active in the parish."

That Man is You! is a 26-week program that is divided into two sessions – one in the fall and the other in the spring, each containing 13 weeks of meetings. The meetings are held on Saturday morning from 6:30 to 8 a.m. in the St. Paul Outside the Wall Room. The early morning meetings are designed for men to learn and discuss the faith for a substantial amount of time without cutting into their personal and family lives.

The meetings are engaging and interactive, starting with a brief social time from 6:30 to 7 a.m. After all the men arrive, a high-quality video of a nationally acclaimed Catholic speaker is shown. Multiple speakers rotate throughout the weeks, all of whom present on a topic relevant to the year's theme.

"Even though every man is in a different place in



his faith journey, the videos do a great job at meeting every man where they are at in a way that inspires each of us to action," Jerry says. "Our theme last year was 'Thy Kingdom Come,' where we learned how to build the Church through our personal lives by sharing the Gospel and living virtuously."

After the instructional video, there is a short time for small groups, where the men break out into groups and discuss the points made in the video, reflect upon the message in a personal way, and plan to implement the lesson into their daily lives.

"I have found that the men like the videos and enjoy the discussions where they can hold each other accountable and grow in the faith together," Jerry says.

"Being a member of That Man is You! has incentivized me to commit to my faith in a way that demands prayer and reaching out to other men and evangelizing," he adds.

That Man is You! offers a path for men to grow in virtue and holiness in an inspiring and fraternal setting.

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## **THAT MAN IS YOU!** *continued from page 6*

“There is a hunger in men that seeks righteousness,” Jerry says. “This feeds that hunger and is a tangible reminder that we are not alone in our journey of growing in the faith.”

The next 13-week session will start on Sept. 10. Exact dates and details about the upcoming theme will be listed in the bulletins. Men do not be afraid! While a 13-week commitment may seem daunting for many schedules, know that if you must miss one, you will still be able to come back the next week without missing a step.



*Picture is from the “empty chair” ceremony we had on the passing of Ken Merboth.*

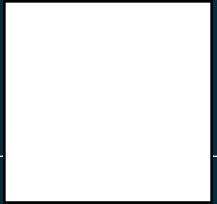
*If you are interested in joining this amazing group of men, keep your attention on the upcoming bulletins. You may also contact Jerry Vrbka at [jdvrbka@gmail.com](mailto:jdvrbka@gmail.com) or 402-429-0711.*

*“Guys have said that the lessons in the program have increased their Mass attendance. Others have become better husbands and fathers. The men that attend our meetings are noticeably active in the parish.”*

**— JERRY VRBKA**



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4500 Duxhall Dr. | Lincoln, NE 68516  
402-423-1239 | [www.saintpeterslincoln.com](http://www.saintpeterslincoln.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 & Friday: 7:00 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.*

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

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

*Sunday 30 minutes before each Mass*

## DON'T FORGET TO RETURN YOUR COMMITMENT CARD!

By filling out a Commitment Card, you are committing to a certain course of action. When God calls us, He doesn't want us to say "yes" and then never do it. He desires that we be faithful to Him, faithful to His commands, and faithful to our word.

### *Complete your Commitment Card Today!*

- Drop your completed card off in our parish office or in the white box in the lobby.
- Drop your completed card in the offertory basket on Sunday.
- Or complete your card online at [saintpeterlincoln.com](http://saintpeterlincoln.com).

