



# St. Peter's Currents

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## *Women's Bible Study Creates Strong Fellowship and a Stronger Faith*

When Jennifer Vogel, Margaret Brown and Joan Taylor started the Women's Bible Study at St. Peter, they hoped to create a group where women from the same faith background could become spiritually engaged, while also having fun in the process. Eight years and 24 members later, they have done just that.



"It's a fun and enriching few hours each week to meet with other women, and learn what their purpose with God is," says Margaret. "When we first started the group, I was new to the parish and I had participated in other non-denominational Bible studies. I felt that perhaps there would be a stronger link when doing this with other Catholic women who are coming from the same text, viewpoint and traditions of the Church."

The Women's Bible Study also aims to foster a welcoming and enjoyable atmosphere for all who take part.

"We have a lot of fun and we laugh really hard," says Jennifer. "It's great to be able to learn so much, too. Everyone that has joined gets immediately welcomed by the group and feels acclimated."

The group, which uses Catholic Scripture Study's format and resources, is currently studying the Book of James, and will begin studying 1 Corinthians starting in January. Members meet on Tuesday mornings in the parish's conference room, from 9:45 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. Before each meeting, the members read from the Bible and answer questions in a workbook. They then split into two smaller groups in order to discuss the workbook questions. Afterwards, members watch a 30-minute DVD

# Basic Questions about Our Stewardship Renewal

## What is a Stewardship Renewal?

This isn't a parish fundraiser – far from it. Our annual Stewardship Renewal is the time when we ask each other to re-prioritize the way we use God's gifts in the Church. It is the time we write down how we will support St. Peter.

## Why should I fill out a commitment card?

Your Commitment Card allows you to make commitments to prayer, parish ministries, and offertory giving, or what we at St. Peter call “time, talent, and treasure.” There's a two-fold reason to complete your card. First, it is an excellent opportunity to move forward spiritually and personally. Second, when you fill out a card, our parish is much better able to manage our many volunteers and make budgeting decisions.

## How many parish ministries are there at St. Peter?

“Ministry” is a general term for any parish group, organization, or regular activity. There are dozens of ministries in our parish. You can sign up for certain ministries, or re-commit yourself if you're already involved.

## What if I sign up for a ministry, but later find I'm not very interested?

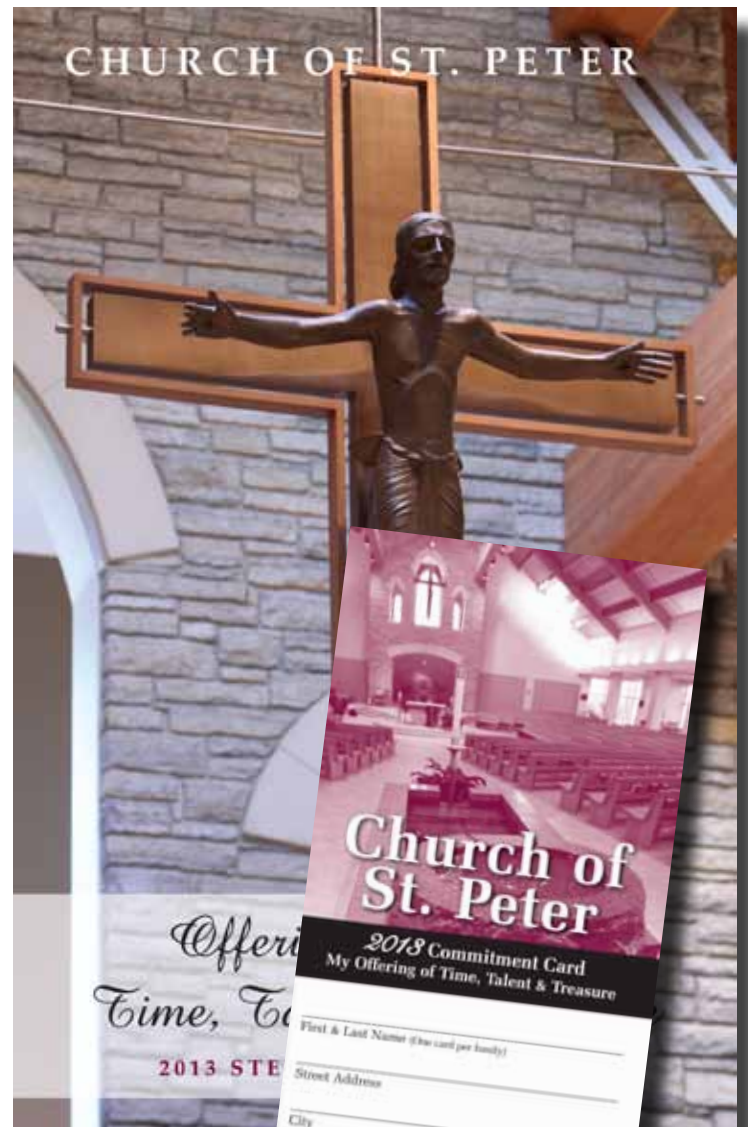
You are not making a solemn promise to participate in a particular ministry when you mark it on your commitment card. If you find that the parish group is different than you thought, or simply that their meeting time doesn't fit your schedule, you can change your mind. There are plenty of other ministries to consider.

## I'm hesitant to make a firm financial pledge. What if I lose my job?

Your commitment card isn't a legal contract. If your circumstances change, your gift will change. In scripture, we are asked to “give according to our means.” So if you lose your job, you may be unable to give at the level you pledged. Likewise, if you get a promotion, you may be able to give more. That is why at St. Peter, our standard of giving is based upon a percentage of income.

## What happens if I don't fill out a commitment card?

Returning a card is an important part of being an active member of St. Peter. If for some reason you lose your card, we'll send you a reminder letter with an extra commitment card. Please make every effort to return it!



*Please bring your Commitment Card to Mass on Commitment Weekend, January 19 and 20. How will you use your time, talent & treasure in our parish?*

## *Have a Stewardship “Epiphany” this New Year*

Dear Parishioners,

Another Christmas has come and gone, and as wonderful as the Advent season and Christmas are, things can get a little hectic in even the most organized households. Cards, decorations, shopping for gifts, and attending holiday parties can be stressful. But once we make it past New Year’s Day, things finally settle down a bit.

In January, though, we still have another big feast to celebrate — Epiphany.

For most of us, Epiphany is just an afterthought of Christmas, the day we observe the arrival of the wise men in Bethlehem.

And we’ve all heard homilies explaining how that odd word Epiphany comes from the Greek meaning “showing forth,” because the child Jesus was shown forth to the magi (who were Gentiles) as the Savior of all people, not only the Messiah of the Jews.

This is true, but the Epiphany has a stewardship message for us as well.

After all, the magi did not come just to gawk at the baby Jesus. They came because they knew he is someone special. “Where is the newborn king of the Jews?” they asked (Mt 2:2), although he’s not the sort of king who lives in palaces. As St. Matthew relates it (2:11), “They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.” They came to worship, and part of that worship included offering gifts to the newborn Lord.



Jesus certainly welcomes all who come to visit Him, even those who come out of mere curiosity. But when we really meet Him, our instinctive response is to worship because we recognize that His character is unlike anyone else we’ve ever met. Although Jesus, being God become man, is not limited, for most of us our meetings with Him take place at Mass or other public services.

But meeting Jesus and worshiping Him calls forth an additional response, and so we, along with the wise men, open our treasures. And what are they? They

are our Time, our Talent, and our Treasure.

We can all find symbolic meanings in the magi’s gifts. Gold, of course, represents Treasure. And because even today, frankincense is the chief ingredient in the incense used at Mass, it can stand for the gift of the Time we offer in worship and prayer. Finally, because it takes effort and knowledge to transform the raw gum from tree sap into the forms used in perfumes, myrrh is a fitting symbol for our gift of Talent.

As we begin this new year, let us take a moment to reflect on our place in the Epiphany narrative. Are you willing to undertake the journey to find the King? What treasures will you offer Him in 2013?

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Joseph Gallatin  
Pastor

*Jesus certainly welcomes all who come to visit Him, even those who come out of mere curiosity. But when we really meet Him, our instinctive response is to worship because we recognize that His character is unlike anyone else we’ve ever met.*

# *Catholic Men Live Out Vocations Through the Knights of Columbus*



*Children participate in the annual Faithful Shepherd Knights of Columbus Easter Egg Hunt*



*The Faithful Shepherd Council hosts a tailgate trick or treat night for Halloween*



*Several Knights gather to host a trick or treat party*

**T**here is one unifying theme to all Catholic vocations — the call to holiness.

Whether we are priests or married, religious or single, wealthy or poor, blue collar or white collar — no matter what our vocation, God calls each of us to strive for holiness.

There are a number of different ministries and organizations that provide opportunities to live out our particular vocations. For Catholic men, there is one of particular distinction.

Founded by Fr. Michael J. McGivney in 1882, the Knights of Columbus are called to assist their priests and to look after the widows and orphans of their parishes. Over the past 130 years, the Knights have grown to become one of the premier institutions in American Catholicism.

Since 1980, the men of St. Peter have had the opportunity to serve as Knights, alongside their brothers from St. John Neumann and St. Thomas Becket, in the Faithful Shepherd Knights of Columbus Council 7604. Named after Faithful Shepherd Catholic School, where the monthly meetings are held, the council membership currently numbers just under 300 Knights. Of this number, around 50 members are particularly active, attending meetings, assisting with service projects, and participating in social events.

“We’re not all priests or deacons or anything, we’re just Catholic men who are interested in practicing our faith,” says St. Peter parishioner Chuck Stanek, a former Grand Knight with the council. “We might not all be from the same parish or be the same age, but we share a common foundation in our Catholic faith. We’re regular guys that are happy to share a beer together after a meeting just like anybody else, but we also believe that there is more to life than working, eating, sleeping and finding ways to entertain ourselves. In life, you have to do something bigger than yourself, and being a Knight provides you with that opportunity.”

Focusing on the three areas of faith, service and fraternity, the Faithful Shepherd Knights maintain a busy schedule throughout the year. During this past November and December, they held their annual Keep Christ in Christmas program, inviting all of the preschool through sixth-grade children at the three parishes to make posters promoting the real meaning of Christmas. Each participant received a

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small award, and winners in each age group received special prizes.

After we closed out 2012 with Christmas and New Year's festivities, the council hosted its annual Christmas party – regarded as a staple event in our community.

“The Christmas party is one of our biggest social events of the year,” says Neil Heiden, a parishioner at St. John Neumann and current Grand Knight. “We sold tickets to all of the Knights and their families, and treated all of the tri-parish priests and deacons. It's always a great time!”

The Free Throw Contest is another staple for council. Held annually each January at Faithful Shepherd Catholic School, it serves as the local feeder for similar Knights of Columbus tournaments at both the regional and state levels, and beyond.

“We do some social things of course, but our biggest thing is doing charitable events for the parishes and the community,” Chuck says. “Whether that's working with groups like the Special Olympics or raising money for things like pro-life organizations and Alcoholics Anonymous, we put a lot of emphasis on service.”

To facilitate their many charitable efforts, the council hosts a number of different fundraisers throughout the year, including the Tootsie Roll Drive, spaghetti dinners, and their iconic pancake breakfasts and fish fries. Another popular fundraiser is the council's monthly Culver's Nights.

“On the fourth Thursday of every month, we deliver all the food to the tables at the local Culver's restaurant from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.,” Neil says. “In return, Culver's donates 10 percent of their profits that evening to our funds. It's a great fundraiser for us, and also helps us to get the word out about the Knights.”

The Faithful Shepherd Knights are always looking for new members. If you are a Catholic man whose resolution for the new year was to get more involved in your faith, look no further! The Knights represent a perfect opportunity to live your faith with a band of like-minded Catholic brothers. To join, please talk to any active Knight, or visit the council's website at [www.eaganknights.com](http://www.eaganknights.com).



*Faithful Shepherd Knights grill hamburgers at their annual summer picnic*



*Faithful Shepherd Knights assist with Special Olympics bowling*



*Santa makes an appearance at the Faithful Shepherd Knights monthly Culver's fundraiser*

# Youth Takes Active Role in Ministry and Parish Life

Victoria Rabuse is a high school junior with big plans for youth ministry here at St. Peter.

“We have a really strong group of juniors and seniors who want to be involved this year,” Victoria says. “People I met on mission trips had these really big youth groups, and I wanted St. Peter to have the same sort of thing. We’re still working on it, but ultimately that’s our goal.”

Victoria’s family belongs to our parish, she has been a member of St. Peter all of her life. While in middle school, Victoria started to become involved in parish life on her own. She participated in the Week of Hope after her seventh and eighth grade years. Since then, her involvement has only increased.

As a high school freshman, Victoria joined the St. Peter Youth Group. For the past two summers, she has attended the annual Workcamp mission trip.

“I highly recommend it,” Victoria says. “It’s kind of a stress release, honestly, to know you have someplace to go where you know people with similar interests. It’s a lot more fun, and you feel like you belong more. Instead of going once a week, you start doing more and learning more, and it’s a really broadening opportunity, I’d say.”

This year, Victoria has taken an even more active role in the Youth Group. She participates in a leadership team with other juniors and seniors, leading the group meetings and planning activities. These meetings — held on Sunday evenings every two weeks — include music, fun activities and games, as well as group discussion and reflection on that day’s Gospel reading.

Victoria’s participation in the leadership of the St. Peter Youth Group allows her to use her talents and gifts for the parish even more than she was able in the past.

“Going and doing things either to promote Youth Group or Workcamp, there’s a lot of chances to do things that I like to do, like talking after Mass about events,” Victoria says. “Public speaking is something I like to do, and I also like the musical things we do. Things like that make it fun.”

Through all of her involvement in our parish, Victoria has become more and more a part of the St. Peter parish family. This involvement has most certainly enriched her faith life.

“Being a part of St. Peter is really important for me,” Victoria says. “I like going to Mass, I like being involved in parish things. I think it’s cool to show off my church because I’m really proud of being a part of the community. It’s a peaceful place to be. I don’t mind going to church, I like it. It’s something I look forward to.”



*St. Peter youth enjoy such ministry activities as Workcamp mission trip, which Victoria Rabuse has actively worked to promote for our parish*

# Women's Bible Study *continued from front cover*

in which a priest reviews the lesson and offers further insights.

In addition to the resources provided by Catholic Scripture Study, members often use the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* as an additional key resource. This helps them to understand the role that Scripture plays in Church teaching and in their everyday lives.

"The workbook directs us to the *Catechism*, and that's always involved in the questions," says Jennifer. "Everyone really likes that because you don't generally look at the *Catechism* on a regular basis. It's also interesting how the *Catechism* ties right into the readings and the Gospel. A lot of the time, I'll find that the readings had to do with our study questions from a couple of weeks ago, and now I can understand it!"

"It's amazing to me how year after year, something that you hear in church

can feel new and apply to your life today," says Margaret.

In addition to the spiritual benefits, the women enjoy a strong fellowship with their fellow members. From potluck lunches to heartfelt sharing and prayer requests, the women create important and lasting friendships through the group.

"It's amazing because as women, we all have common bonds and common stories," says Margaret. "There is a lot of emotional support that comes from meeting friends of all different ages, and the wisdom that can be gained from that."

This fellowship also helps to strengthen members' relationships with the parish family, as well as encouraging stewardship within the community. All meetings include some time to share in-

formation about upcoming parish events and opportunities to get involved.

"It helps you feel more connected with your parish," says Jennifer. "Fellowship is so important, because God is always working through other people in your life, and you need to be around other people in order for that to happen. Everybody has talked about how it has affected their own lives and also the lives of the people around them, because they're learning new things, and they share that with family and friends. It changes their perspectives on life, always in a positive way."

All St. Peter women are invited to join the Women's Bible Study at any time. To get involved, please contact Margaret Brown at 651-456-5661, Joan Taylor at 651-688-7818, or Jennifer Vogel at 651-688-7427.



*"It helps you feel more connected with your parish. Fellowship is so important, because God is always working through other people in your life, and you need to be around other people in order for that to happen." - Jennifer Vogel*

# Church of St. Peter

1405 Highway 13, PO Box 50679 | Mendota, MN 55150  
(651) 452-4550 | [www.stpetersmendota.org](http://www.stpetersmendota.org)

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## St. Peter January and February 2013 Schedule

### Stewardship Fair

After all Masses on weekend of Jan. 13 and 14

### CCW's Pastor Appreciation Lunch

Sunday, Jan. 20 — 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

### Religion Education and Faith Formation Pizza and Bingo Night

Friday, Jan. 25 — 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

### Workcamp Bake Sale

After all Masses on weekend of Jan. 27 and 28

### Workcamp Pancake Breakfast

Sunday, Jan. 27 — 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

### Catholic Schools Week

Saturday, Jan. 26 through Saturday, Feb. 2

### Ash Wednesday

Feb. 13 — Masses at 7 a.m., 9 a.m., and 7 p.m.

### Stations of the Cross

Every Friday during Lent at 7 p.m.

### Cana Dinner

Saturday, Feb. 16 — 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

### Growing Through Loss Speaker Series

Tuesday, Feb. 26

[www.stpetersmendota.org](http://www.stpetersmendota.org)

**Weekend Mass:** Saturday, 5:00 p.m. Vigil | Sunday, 9:00 & 11:00 a.m.

**Daily Mass:** Monday - Friday, 9:00 a.m.

**Confession:** Saturdays, 4:00 - 4:45 p.m. and by appointment