



# St. Peter's Currents

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## The Value of Service *Altar Servers*

Active service is important for all of us, regardless of age. For the youth of our parish, serving on the altar is a great way to begin practicing active stewardship while learning the value of serving God and others at an early age.

"It's a great experience for children to serve at the altar and to become more familiar with the flow of the Mass," says Fr. Joseph Gallatin. "It's also important to help their parish. We need servers, and when parents allow themselves to be a little inconvenienced by the need to get their children to church for Mass at a specific time, it sends a message about how important parents consider the family's relationship with God."

Boys and girls can become altar servers in our parish starting in the fall of their fourth grade year. These young people assist the priest and deacon throughout the celebration of the liturgy. They light candles before the liturgy, during which they are involved with the readings, the processions, and the preparation of the Eucharist. They assist the priest and deacon with the Roman Missal and the Mass book, receiving the Offertory, and more.



*"It draws many of them closer to God, and it allows them to get to know the priest as a human being and not just as some remote person. But if the servers allow the experience to have its full effect, they can become more prayerful, and become better worshipers of the Lord at Mass."*

*- Fr. Joseph Gallatin*

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# Altar Servers

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“Servers make the celebration of Mass flow more smoothly, making what we do in our worship seem as noble as it really is,” Fr. Gallatin says.

And though there are many tasks and duties performed by the servers, there are certainly many benefits to their service. Not only is it enjoyable, but serving on the altar is also a great way to get involved in the parish community at an early age, and it is something they will remember for the rest of their lives.

“It draws many of them closer to God, and it allows them to get to know the priest as a human being and not just as some remote person,” Father says. “But if the servers allow the experience to have its full effect, they can become more prayerful, and become better worshippers of the Lord at Mass.”

The altar servers become very closely connected to the celebration of the Mass. For that reason, this ministry can also be a great stepping stone to considering priestly and religious vocations.

“Because serving at the altar fosters close attention to the Mass, it leaves an impression in children of a strong dedication to God,” Fr. Gallatin says. “Being close to the altar physically allows a child to see what is taking place on it. I hope this would encourage some of them to realize God might be calling boys to the priesthood and might be calling boys or girls to the religious life.”

This ministry has a lot of room for growth, and any youth who are interested are encouraged to get involved. For more information, please call Sara Rogers at the parish office, 651-452-4550.



# Stewardship

## *A Need to Give*

When the church needs a new roof or the local food bank needs donations, we jump at the chance to give for the sake of the need. It's part of our human nature — we identify a need, and we want to give of our time, talent and treasure to help.

But as a stewardship people, we are called to give of ourselves not simply because the Church has needs, but because each of us has a need to give. As the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops states in its pastoral letter on stewardship, *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*, “We need to give our money to individuals and families in need, to the Church, and to other worthwhile charitable organizations because giving money is good for the soul and because we need to return thanks to a loving God for all of the many blessings each of us has received” (67).

As fellow members of body of Christ, created in God's image, we should strive to go beyond simply co-existing with one another on earth. The life we live should be fueled by love for each other. This love should dictate how we live — by giving of ourselves.

Jesus Christ showed us the perfect example of this self-giving love when He died on the cross. His death was a completely selfless act. He gave of Himself for our sake, offering us — through that gift — life everlasting.

As Christ's disciples, we follow His example, and we give of ourselves for the sake of others, out of love and an inherent need to give.

That's not to say that we gain nothing through our gifts. In fact, in His goodness, God sees to it that we do. Most of us have experienced what happens when we give of our time, talent or treasure. We feel as though we get more out of it than we give. If you speak to someone who serves at the soup kitchen or someone who has made it a regular practice to tithe to the Church, you are likely to find that he or she feels blessed to be able to give. As the U.S. bishops point out, “To be a Christian disciple is a rewarding way of life, a way of companionship with Jesus, and the practice of stewardship as a part of it is itself a source of deep joy. Those who live this way are happy people who have found the meaning and purpose of living” (*Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*, 21).

Find out for yourself. Get involved in a ministry. Make a commitment to put some money in the collection basket next Sunday. Don't wait to find out if there is a need — give of yourself right now. You will be richly blessed for doing so.

## *Ordinary Time is Never Ordinary*

Dear Parishioners,

Glancing at the liturgical calendar for July, I noted that each Sunday in July is a Sunday in Ordinary Time. The last time we had a month when all of the Sundays were numbered Sunday of Ordinary Time was October 2012.

First of all, let me make it clear that there is nothing ordinary about Ordinary Time. If you are old enough, you may recall the term Ordinary Time did not exist until after Vatican II (actually in 1969). Prior to that, the Church called Sundays the 3rd Sunday after Epiphany or the 11th Sunday after Pentecost, or whatever it happened to be. Thus, the seasons of the Church year were Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, Pentecost, and then Advent again.

What difference does it all make?

First of all, we need to understand that Ordinary Time does not mean or imply that this time in the Church calendar is commonplace. You may have heard the expression that every Sunday is “Little Easter,” and that is absolutely true, even during so-called Ordinary Time.

In our mathematics lessons in school, we learned (at least some of us did) that there were cardinal numbers and ordinal numbers. That sounds almost Catholic. Cardinal numbers were one, two, three, while ordinal numbers were first, second, third. Our Catholic term Ordinary Time actually came from the Latin, *tempus per annum* (“time through the year”). What is important to us as Catholics, though, is that we need to understand that our sense of stewardship and our sense of discipleship do not lessen because we call this time of year “ordinary.”

Sometimes, our faith becomes too cerebral, too much of an intellectual pursuit. Surely you have heard the term “faith in action.” That is what stewardship really is; how we live



out our faith by doing things. Reading Scripture, praying, Bible study, and trying to study our faith from a deeper perspective are very important. However, it is equally important that we do something specific to show that our perception of stewardship is alive and active.

We are not necessarily talking about preaching on street corners or praying in public places. It may be something as simple as looking in our closets and identifying things we no longer need nor use. Give them away. Ordinary Time should be an incentive for us to do extraordinary things.

It is worth noting that the color of liturgical garments (what we priests wear at Mass) during Ordinary Time is green. Green is the color of life. Green is the color of hope. Green is the color most of us associate with positives, with planting and nurturing and with the rhythms of life.

It is with a smile that I note that my message for Ordinary Time is not too different from my message for Advent or Christmas or Lent or Easter. As Catholics, and as good stewards, every day is a challenge to live out our lives as disciples of Christ. Every day is a challenge to truly be a good steward. There are peaks and valleys and meadows and pastures. Perhaps this (Ordinary Time) is not a mountaintop (Christmas and Easter), but it is certainly a verdant field, and we are called to plant, nurture, and harvest now as much as any time.

May God bless you in your stewardship journeys.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Joseph Gallatin, your pastor

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# St. Peter's Gardening Teams Keep

As many of our parishioners have likely noticed, we are blessed with beautiful and well-manicured grounds here at St. Peter. There isn't a season that goes by that our landscaping is not pristine and bursting forth with the flora and fauna of the season. Behind all of this beautiful work is a team of talented and humble servants who want nothing more than to allow the Lord's house – our parish – to bring glory to His name.

As ministry leader Nancy Stanton explains, serving in the Gardening Teams Ministry accomplishes two goals.

"It is for those who wish to be a part of a parish ministry and love to garden," Nancy says.

The Gardening Teams Ministry was originally founded many years ago by parishioner and master gardener Dorothy Petroski, who began organizing a schedule for volunteers to tend the parish's gardens every two weeks.

The beautification of our parish campus requires quite a bit of work throughout the year, especially since when the new church was built six years ago, an abundance of lush land-

scaping and beautiful gardens were added to the parish campus. Thankfully, the members of the Gardening Teams Ministry are up for the challenge. Nancy leads a group of about 14 parishioners who give of their time to help tend these gardens.

"The group meets in early spring and late fall to prepare the grounds for new growth, and then to put everything to bed for the winter," Nancy says.

The group always welcomes additional parishioners to

join a gardening team, and help keep an eye on the various gardens throughout the year. Nancy says one of the ways parishioners participate is with their families, who can "adopt" a garden and maintain it all year long. This practice has been in place since the

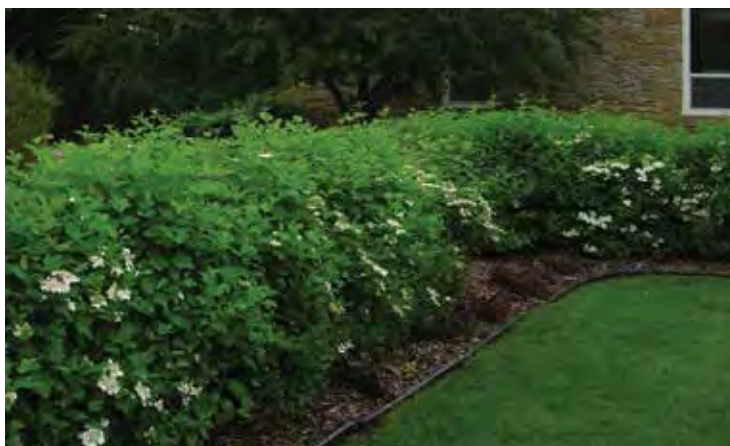
construction of the new church building was completed.

"In the spring when we meet to clean up after winter, we ask those who come if they would like to adopt a garden for the summer," says Nancy, explaining how the process works. "Whichever garden they adopt, they must water, weed, 'dead-head' any spent flowers and just keep an eye on the garden."

The Gardening Teams Ministry is a flexible choice for families who are interested in getting involved in par-

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*- Nancy Stanton*



# *p Our Parish Grounds Beautiful*

ish life, but perhaps can't commit to attending regularly-scheduled meetings. It's definitely a "volunteer when you can" type of service.

"There is no designated time commitment, just whenever they can stop by to tend their garden!" Nancy says.

Apart from the two annual meetings, being a part of the Gardening Teams Ministry involves what green thumbs like most: getting dirty! For Nancy and her husband, Keith, working in the gardens provides a time to relax and find peace.

"[We] often go up to church around 7 p.m. in the evening during the week and just do some gardening," Nancy says. "It is a peaceful place to be, and you also feel good about helping out and tending to nature."

For Nancy, being able to serve the parish in this way truly becomes a blessing. While she realizes her service helps the parish in a much-needed way, doing the service itself has enriched her life.

"The most rewarding part of being part of a ministry is serving and doing for others," Nancy says. "We have such a beautiful church and it is so important to keep it that way."

If you have some time to devote to "adopting a garden" and being a part of keeping our church grounds beautiful, then the Gardening Teams Ministry might be a good fit for you! Please contact the parish office at 651-452-4550 for more information on how to get involved.



## *Did You Know?*

- *St. Fiacre is the patron saint of gardening and gardeners. Little is known about this Irish monk, who conducted much of his ministry in France. However, sources state that he was a powerful healer, who used various herbs – grown in a garden – to cure the peasants in seventh century France. Legend says he performed a miracle by tilling the soil of the countryside with nothing but his staff. He is reported to have spent much of his time in solitude, tending a garden and praying. St. Fiacre's feast day is Sept. 1.*
- *Perhaps no other Catholic garden is as famous as the Vatican gardens, located just beyond St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. Continuously maintained since the late 13th century, few gardens anywhere in the world can claim such longevity, either. The gardens include many rare trees, idyllic fountains and ponds, a topiary in the shape of the papal coat of arms, even a colony of parrots!*
- *Some of the most memorable scenes from the Bible take place in the context of a garden. For example, the Book of Genesis illustrates Adam and Eve's folly in the Garden of Eden, thus sealing the fate of humankind until Christ's sacrifice in the Gospels. In the New Testament, Jesus was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane just prior to his torture and crucifixion.*



## *Love and Support for the Community and Beyond*

# *Prayer Chain Ministry*

When Peggy Markee left our parish community and began attending St. Joseph Parish in Rosemount a few years ago, there was one thing she just couldn't leave behind.

"Although I stopped attending St. Peter's, I decided to continue coordinating the Prayer Chain," Peggy says. "I knew the ministry was something so important that I could not bear to see it die out. I have stayed with the Prayer Chain Ministry for well over 11 years because I believe it helps keep the life of prayer in the parish going. It is so critical for a faith community to have a Prayer Chain. It all goes back to the saying, 'Prayer is the most and the least you can do for someone.'"

Peggy is one of the 39 dedicated "prayer warriors" who commit themselves to being on our parish Prayer Chain. Each morning, she sends out an email listing the liturgical calendar's Saint of the Day, newly submitted prayer intentions, and the daily prayer intention for a certain priest as suggested by our archdiocese.

"We will pray for anything — you name it and we will cover it!" Peggy says. "We even get prayer intentions from people who are not parishioners or Catholic. People can pray however they want for the intentions. The Lord knows exactly what is going on. There is no 'right' or 'wrong' way to do it.

Sometimes, people may be uncomfortable submitting a name, so they can just ask in general for a prayer request. God knows who the person is and what they need."

Over the years, Prayer Chain volunteers have seen some truly amazing responses to prayer.

"We have seen so many answers come through," Peggy says. "For example, there was one time when my cousin was in a foreign country on business and the lives of her husband and children were in serious danger. We prayed a lot for them, and everything turned out just fine. I have definitely noticed that this ministry makes a difference in people's lives. The Prayer Chain offers a lot of love and support to our parish community and beyond. Those we pray for are usually very, very grateful, regardless of the outcome of their requests."

In fact, the impact is so profound that they can't help feeling blessed in return for their stewardship of time and talent.

"It is humbling to see our prayers come to fruition, and



it builds up our faith," Peggy says. "Each volunteer also feels the support of the rest of our prayer team. We work together."

Those who would like to discover God's infinite goodness by submitting a prayer request or signing up to be on the Prayer Chain may contact Peggy Markee at 952-322-6479 or [pmarkee@frontier.com](mailto:pmarkee@frontier.com).

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# *A Life of Stewardship* Msgr. Thomas McGread

This spring, we said goodbye to perhaps the most influential advocate for stewardship as a way of life. On Monday, April 1, 2013, Msgr. Thomas McGread died at the age of 84.

Msgr. McGread has been called the “Father of Stewardship,” and that title carries more than a little merit. Most of the efforts and developments in stewardship as a way of life throughout the country can be traced directly back to Msgr. McGread and the work he started at his parish of St. Francis of Assisi in Wichita, Kan., in the 1960s.

Msgr. McGread was born in Omagh, County Tyrone, Ireland on Dec. 5, 1928, and he was ordained a priest at All Hallows College in Dublin, Ireland on June 21, 1953. Later that year, he was assigned the position of associate pastor at St. Patrick Parish in Parsons, Kan. Over the next few years, he served as associate pastor for two other parishes, and as pastor of two more in the Diocese of Wichita before being named pastor of St. Francis of Assisi in 1968. He continued to serve as pastor at St. Francis of Assisi until retiring in 1999.

It was at this parish that Msgr. McGread’s vision of stewardship as a way of life began to thrive — from there, it spread through Catholic parishes and communities all over the country and throughout the world, as it continues to do today. This vision views stewardship as a spiritual, biblically based principle that begins with conversion of heart and translates into a lifestyle of service.

Msgr. McGread broke stewardship down into three equally important components — time, talent and treasure. Monsignor taught his parishioners the importance of using our personal gifts in each of these areas, as well as the importance of giving these gifts back to God.

St. Francis of Assisi became one of the most dynamic and vibrant parishes in the country, and Catholic parishes all over the U.S. have followed the example of Msgr. McGread and the parishioners of St. Francis of Assisi.

Msgr. McGread was also involved in the drafting of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishop’s pastoral letter, *Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response*, in 1992. He spoke about his message of stewardship at parishes and dioceses around the country.

Msgr. McGread’s concepts and teachings serve as the model for our stewardship efforts here at our parish, and it is the same model that is successfully followed by Catholic parishes across the country and the world. Though we will truly miss this great visionary, Monsignor’s influence and legacy will live on as we continue to live the stewardship way of life.



# Church of St. Peter

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## Parish Events for July & August

### Historic Church Tours

Every Sunday (through Labor Day), noon-2:30 p.m.  
Free and open to the public.

### Mass on the Anniversary of the Dedication of the Church

Wednesday, July 10, 9 a.m. at the Main Church

### Ugandan Pig Roast

Sunday, July 21, noon at Heritage Center

### Weekday Mass

Thursday, Aug. 1, 6:30 p.m. at Historic Church

### Parish Potluck Lunch

Sunday, Aug. 11, noon at Heritage Center

### Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Wednesday, Aug. 14, Mass at 5 p.m. at the Main Church

Thursday, Aug. 15, Mass at 9 a.m. at the Main Church

Thursday, Aug. 15, Mass at 7 p.m. at the Historic Church

[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