

# St. Peter's Currents

05/06.2012

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## *A New Face for St. Peter's Currents!*

Dear Parishioners,

**Y**ou may have noticed – St. Peter's *Currents* has a new look!

This change and others soon to take place are all a part of a new direction for St. Peter: Stewardship. In order to further stimulate the spiritual development of our parish community, we are introducing the concept of stewardship as a central aspect of parish life and the liturgy. Some of you may be familiar with the concept; I have mentioned it occasionally. For others, it's a completely new idea. Regardless of where you stand, we'll all be learning more about stewardship in the coming months and years.

One way in which I hope to share with you about stewardship is through this newsletter. In the past, *Currents* has been published three times a year. Beginning with this issue, we're increasing its frequency so that it will be a bi-monthly publication. Now, you and your family will be able to read about stewardship and what's happening at St. Peter every other month instead of just three times a year.

As the year continues, we'll unveil additional stewardship initiatives, such as a



new Stewardship Committee – which I'll be developing in late spring and early summer. This fall, we'll begin our first Annual Stewardship Renewal, a time when all parishioners will be asked to prayerfully consider how God is calling them deeper into relationship with Him.

Exciting things are happening in the community of St. Peter, and I want you to be a part of it all! Please read *Currents* when it arrives in your mailbox, as it will be full of important information and wonderful stories and articles in each issue.

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# *Parishioner Spotlight*

## Dan and Kelly Garrett

**I**t didn't take long for Dan and Kelly Garrett, who joined St. Peter Parish in 2007, to find their place in our faith community. While many new parishioners might "sit on the sidelines" at first, or approach active involvement with a cautious eye, the Garretts made getting involved a priority from day one.

"We were looking for ways to first strengthen our faith as a couple, and then we grew to making connections with other people," says Kelly, explaining their motivation to become active parishioners.

As a mixed-faith couple, Dan and Kelly understood the importance of deepening their own understanding of the Catholic Faith together. In doing this at St. Peter, they experienced a wonderful side effect: the development of friendships with other couples who shared the same desire to grow in faith – something the Garretts never experienced before joining our parish.

Dan is the son of a Baptist minister; he is planning to enroll in the RCIA process and hopes to join the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil next spring. As a Catholic convert-in-the-making, Dan has a unique perspective on Christianity and the many ways it can be experienced. He says it was challenge when he and Kelly were married, as they discerned how they would worship as a family. Over time, Dan's appreciation for the Catholic Faith has grown.

"It's hard to change what is so ingrained in you as a child," he says, speaking of his Baptist upbringing. "It's something I'm still connected to, and we go to my dad's church when we visit family. But I don't feel like I'm missing anything [from the Baptist church] by being a part of the Catholic Church. There's a much greater emphasis on Church Tradition and the liturgy as Catholics – it's much more regimented. Growing up, my exposure led me to believe that made Catholicism less real. I've never felt limited in my expression of faith in the Catholic Church, though – there's actually a great sense of peace in the Catholic liturgy because it is much more formal."

By contrast, Kelly has been Catholic all her life, and the couple has made the decision to raise their two children – Adelyn, 4, and Dane, 22 months – in the Catholic Faith.

Currently, Kelly serves the parish as a member of the Pastoral Council and a part of the parish's new Technology Committee. She has also recently started a moms group for women with children of any age. Dan is a member of the Men's Club, and both he and Kelly sing in the choir. Adelyn and Dane frequently accompany their parents when they sing at Mass.



Dan and Kelly say their involvement in the parish has enriched their lives in many ways. Both possess a strong desire to serve others, and participation in parish ministries has offered the perfect outlet for them to do so.

"It's a sense of doing your part, something and some way that you can contribute," Dan says. "This faith we're trying to live out each day, it's real – and if it's real, it's going to affect our life. It's important to share things you can do that others can't, and then they share what they can do but you can't."

Kelly adds, "I'm a motivated person, and if I'm going to be involved, it might as well be at a place where my faith will be strengthened at the same time as building the community."

The Garretts have found that in order to live the Faith, one must exert some effort. Being connected to the parish in an intimate way makes it hard to be disconnected from one's Faith. And staying connected – in the good times and the bad – is so important.

"Everyone goes through a faith cycle," Dan says. "Some times we feel really close to God, and sometimes we feel distant. For me, the act of showing up every week keeps me coming back during times when there's a lull. The physical presence sets the stage for faith development – if your body is at church, your mind will go too!"

# What Does Stewardship Mean at St. Peter?

What do you think of when you hear the word “stewardship”?  
Do you think it is just another way to talk about fundraising?

Actually, stewardship is a concept that is scripturally based and absolutely vital to our life as Catholics. In the very first book of the Old Testament, Genesis 1:28, God says, “Be fertile and multiply. Fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air and all the living things that move on the earth.”

What does that mean to us today? It simply means that God is telling us, “This is yours; take care of it.” One of the first things God tells us to do is to be good stewards of the gifts He has entrusted to us!

The Old Testament is not the only place where references to stewardship are found. In fact, of the 36 parables in the New Testament, more than half of them deal with time, talent, possessions or money. If Jesus spoke of stewardship that much, it should be a very important part of our lives!

As Catholics, we refer to the three facets of stewardship as **Time, Talent and Treasure**. Although these are three concrete ways to speak of and measure stewardship, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has told us that stewardship is part of discipleship. Stewardship is a way of responding to God’s call in every aspect of our lives.

One point cannot be over-emphasized: We are taught by the scripture and Church traditions that stewardship is primarily based on our need to give in gratitude, not on the Church’s need to receive. Of course, the Church at-large and our parish specifically will always need money. However, we are not asked to give simply to defray costs and fund charitable programs – instead, we are asked to remember our need to gratefully return a portion of our time, talent, and treasure to God in recognition of all that He has given to us.

It is important to remember that stewardship is a way of life, not a program. True Catholic stewardship involves an ongoing call to live as followers of Christ. It takes time to find and define personal goals. You can begin by examining your personal commitments to the parish. In what way do you live your faith in your daily life with your family and friends? How much time do you spend in daily prayer, going to Mass or being involved in parish ministries and activities? What percentage of your income should you give back to God every week? What talents do you have that could be used to strengthen our parish family?

In the coming months, we will be increasing and intensifying our education and communication on stewardship. We will be coming to a better understanding of how stewardship is a way of responding to God’s call to discipleship. With God’s help, changes will occur in each of our hearts as we devote ourselves to a Stewardship Renewal within our parish. Examine how you are currently responding to God’s call to stewardship. If God called you home tomorrow, would He proclaim, “Well done, my good and faithful servant”?



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## A New Face *continued from cover*

Many signs of accomplishment and potential are evident in our parish, and I am very grateful to all of you who have helped us become the community we are today. As we continue to grow, the support and involvement of each individual parishioner is necessary to sustain the life of St. Peter. All of you have a place here, and all of you have a role to fill in the life of the parish as we live our lives as disciples of Christ.

May the Holy Spirit renew and refresh all of us as we work together to build our parish family through the use of our time, talent and treasure.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Joseph Gallatin  
Pastor

St. Peter

# *A Conversion of Heart*

## The Christian Initiation Process

St. Peter Pastoral Associate Lisa Amos was raised a Catholic, but fell away from an active practice of the Faith in her teens before celebrating the Sacrament of Confirmation. Eventually, Lisa felt called to return home to the Church to complete her Sacraments of Initiation (Confirmation) and enter into an active faith life through the Christian Initiation process – the process through which adults have an opportunity to come into full communion with the Church. As someone who has lived the life of both a “cradle Catholic” and an adult discerning conversion to the Faith, Lisa brings a unique perspective to the Christian Initiation process at St. Peter.

“It’s always really inspiring for me to see people who are really in love with the Church, and are making the conscious decision to take on the responsibility of being a Catholic,” she says. “I think it’s something those of us who have been Catholic their whole lives can take for granted. Being involved in this process year after year does remind me that being Catholic is a pretty incredible thing to be.”

Today, as coordinator of the Christian Initiation Process, Lisa and her fellow Christian Initiation team members lead the candidates and catechumens through the Christian Initiation process – answering questions during the process of Inquiry, leading discussions on various topics related to the Catholic Church, and guiding prospective Christian Initiation participants in their discernment.

One thing that distinguishes St. Peter’s Christian Initiation process from that of many other faith communities is that it is a year-round process, in which participants can become involved at any time during the year. Lisa says that this is in an effort to be inclusive, and to not make people wait until the fall to begin the process.

“If somebody approaches the Church, we don’t make them wait until September to get ready,” she explains. “It’s easy for me to meet with them in the summer and assess where they are in their faith development, and to also encourage them to become involved in the community during that time, because being involved in the community is actually an important part of the process.”

In addition to the numerous rites in which the candidates and catechumens participate throughout the Christian Initiation process, they also learn about the tenets of the Faith, its sacraments, its traditions, and its theological principles. They enjoy fellowship with one another and have opportunities for prayer and reflection throughout the process. All the while, they are led by volunteer Christian Initiation catechists and



accompanied by individual sponsors – confirmed Catholics who serve as brothers and sisters of faith in their respective journeys, and can answer any questions they might have.

“I really enjoy teaching both at work and at the parish, and I thought it would be a fun way to get involved in the Church and help people along,” says Ryan Marcum, who entered the Church through the Christian Initiation process himself and now serves as a volunteer catechist along with his wife, Sarah. “I was raised in a different church, so I had a lot of questions about why Catholics do what they do and the different meanings of things. I really enjoy the educational and historic parts of it.”

Gina Lane grew up in a Southern Baptist faith tradition, until she moved to Minnesota and eventually married a Catholic. She attended Mass with her husband, Cory, for about a year before making the decision to explore the Christian Initiation process, and she says the things she has learned through the process have greatly enhanced her appreciation of the Mass.

“Prior to the classes, I didn’t really understand why certain things were said and why certain things were done; it was just kind of like, ‘This is what it is,’ but there really was no explanation of why,” Gina says. “After going through the classes,

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*(from left) Luke Lortie, Rebecca Fritz, Gina Lane and Dan Luck*

it makes more sense, and I can see how the things are done and why they're done in a certain way."

Today, as a newly-initiated Catholic, Gina has fully embraced the Faith, which has permeated every aspect of her life. She and Cory convalidated their marriage in the Church during the Christian Initiation process, and she had the honor of celebrating her First Communion at the same time as her son, Connor.

"Connor has been attending Catholic schools for about two years now, and we love everything about them," Gina says. "It's kind of neat – it's not like there's school, home, and church as three separate entities. It all kind of goes together, and it flows into everything that we do."

Lucas Lortie, another new Catholic, became engaged to a Catholic last year; he made the decision to join the Church last December. Lucas was not raised in a specific faith tradition, so he did not come into the Christian Initiation process with many preconceived notions about the Church. He says that the process has been an educational one that he has truly enjoyed.

"The catechists in the classes are all very knowledgeable, and they may not have all the answers to your questions, but they know where to find the answers," Lucas says. "They're very adamant about finding the answers for you, and it's kind of nice to review things with other people. Everyone involved in the process is very enjoyable and helpful, and some people will ask questions that you were thinking of but just didn't want to ask. It kind of helps settle the mood a little bit."

For Lucas, who regularly attended Mass with his fiancé prior to becoming Catholic, complete participation in the Mass was what he most looked forward to during the Christian Initiation process.

"I'm really looking forward to finally being included in all parts of the Mass – being able to go up for Communion and being more of a part of the Church – and to using the knowledge that I have and expanding on that knowledge," Lucas said during an interview just before Easter. "I'm also looking forward to getting involved in different groups in the Church. Lisa's gotten me a little involved in the Men's Club, it will be a good initiation into the Church to be able to take part in the whole Mass and become involved within the life of the Church."

The members of the Christian Initiation class of 2012 celebrated their Sacraments of Initiation at the Easter Vigil last month. For Lisa, this culmination of the Christian Initiation journey is what she most looks forward to each year as coordinator.

"It's joyful," she says. "I'm so happy for them, so proud of them, and so thrilled and honored that they have allowed me to be a part of their journey. The Triduum marks my favorite three days of the entire liturgical calendar, largely because of Christian Initiation. To see them and their families and what it means to them to receive Holy Communion for the first time – it's powerful."

Please pray for the newest members of our parish family, and welcome them into our community. If you are interested in more information about the Christian Initiation process at St. Peter, or would like to volunteer as a Christian Initiation catechist or sponsor, please contact Lisa Amos at 651-905-4304 or [lamos@stpetersmendota.org](mailto:lamos@stpetersmendota.org).

*St. Peter*

# *Historic Church Tours Offer Glimpse into Parish's Rich History*



As we welcome the summer months and start thinking about opportunities for fun and relaxing events in which to participate, there is one option that is closer to home than we might expect.

This summer, the parish will once again host regular tours of the historic church. Tours will be held on Sunday afternoons between 12 p.m. and 2 p.m., and will begin Memorial Day weekend and end Labor Day weekend.

“We have been giving guided tours of the historic church on an as-requested basis for many years, but last summer we started offering them every week,” says Sara Rogers, who coordinates the tour ministry for our parish. “With other historic sites very close at hand – like the Sibley House and Fort Snelling – it is a great opportunity to draw people into our parish and our historic church.”

Mendota is the site of some of the oldest settlements in Minnesota. St. Peter Parish dates back to 1840, at which time it was part of the sprawling Diocese of Dubuque. Less than 15 years later, the Catholics in the settlement and nearby Fort Snelling numbered far too many for the small chapel on the Sibley estate, so Fr. Augustine Ravoux set to work building the limestone church which stands to this day.

The church was constructed in 1853, and is the oldest place of worship of any religion still in existence in the state of Minnesota.

“The parish restored the church in the 1970s with items originally dating back to the 1890s,” Sara says. “It was around that time that the congregation outgrew the building and moved weekend Masses to the Ravoux Room, but the historic church has always been used for weekday Masses and special occasions like weddings.”



*(top) The historic church after renovations were completed (above left and right) Renovations involved adjustments to the flooring as well as ceiling.*

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Tours of the church point out several key characteristics including the local limestone, so prevalent in Twin Cities architecture, the altar and stained glass windows, the frames of the Stations of the Cross and countless other features dating back to the early 20th century and before.

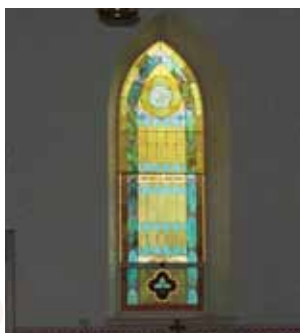
One interesting feature noted on the tour is how the seating has changed over the years. Less concerned about fire codes in those days, the original layout had pews that spanned the width of the church without a middle aisle.

Back in the 1850s, when Fr. Ravoux and his parishioners were footing the bill, the total price for the then-new church came to \$4,425.80. Donations came from key families in the parish – many of whom have descendants still here today – and from Catholics throughout the region.

Free of charge to parishioners and the public, the 30- to 45-minute tours are an engaging and educational way for parishioners and non-parishioners alike to learn about a little slice of Minnesota's history.

With many local tours running from 12-4 p.m. on Sundays, the St. Peter tours coincide nicely with anyone attending the 11 a.m. Mass, and offer a nice opportunity to stick around afterwards. If you have a group that would like to schedule a tour for a different time, please contact the parish at least a week ahead of time so that a guide can be scheduled.

To make this educational ministry possible, the parish relies on a team of volunteer tour guides, all of whom are long-time parishioners with a passion for local history. To accommodate all of our summer visitors, Sara is looking for additional volunteers for the summer. Training and guide information will be provided for anyone interested. To volunteer, please contact the parish office at 651-452-4550.



# *Church of St. Peter*

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## *Parish Events*

### **Volunteer Appreciation Dinner**

*May 17, 6:30 p.m. in the Heritage Center*

### **Council of Catholic Women Style Show**

*June 2*

### **Anointing of the Sick Within Mass**

*June 9, 11 a.m., with reception to follow in the Heritage Center*

### **Church of St. Peter and Faithful Shepherd Catholic School Golf Tournament**

*June 16, Emerald Greens Golf Club in Hastings*

[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*