

**SUNDAY MASSES**

(All in Main Church)

Saturday at 5 p.m.

Sunday at 9 & 11 a.m.

Holy Days as announced.

WEEKDAY MASSES

(All in Historic Church)

Monday-Friday at 9 a.m.

PERPETUAL ADORATION

(In Chapel of the Nativity)

RECONCILIATION

(In Main Church)

Friday 8-8:45 a.m.

Saturday 3:30-4:45 p.m.

Any time by appointment.

Third Sunday of Advent***DECEMBER 17, 2017***

One area in which I think all Christians ought to grow is in trust. If you have read my words here in the past, it would be clear that I have been blessed to have experienced an encounter with God that changed my heart and my mind. However, that encounter was not by chance, nor was it (in some way) unanticipated.

Through the youth ministry in the parish in which I grew up, I was attending a special Mass held for high school students, just after my graduation. In the course of his homily that evening, Fr. J.R. invited those in attendance to, as they approached for Holy Communion, make a prayer asking God to give what he knew we needed, rather than what we thought we wanted.

On this occasion, I did as Fr. J.R. suggested and, spoiled son as I was, I received what I sought from God. I remember making one suggestion in particular, thinking, "maybe this, maybe not." Undeservedly, my suggestion was granted, but not as the end I thought it. Through my suggestion, which I wanted for short-sighted and selfish hopes, God set me on the course that brought me a gift I never knew I wanted, or thought possible.

In the end, what God knew I needed was himself.

All of this I bring up reflecting on the second reading for today's Liturgy. Here Paul lays out a pretty solid game plan for the aspiring disciple:

Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophetic utterances. Test everything; retain what is good. Refrain from every kind of evil.
(1 Thessalonians 5:16-22)

Prayer was transformed for me when the fruit of that prayer, as a teenager, began to mature. No more was it a matter of wanting or needing desired results or outcomes but of seeking "the will of God for [me] in Christ Jesus." Prayer without ceasing became natural, over the ensuing years. True, profound rejoicing became a genuine response to each glimpse of grace at work around me. Giving thanks became a first response to answered prayer and even to unwanted inconveniences.

Testing everything soon became a way of life, as I attended class in a Catholic, liberal arts college with a less-than-stellar reputation for its theology. I learned to retain the good and, by that kernel of good, argue for the orthodox interpretation of Catholic teaching.

As we prepare to observe the Incarnation of the Lord in the Nativity, let us put Paul's advice into practice. Let us rejoice always, praying without end, giving thanks ceaselessly. Let us not quench the Spirit, but seek to foster its work in our hearts and in our midst. Let us trust God's word, as it comes to us. Let us test the various pursuits in our lives, keeping what is good. Moreover, let us jettison what is not good, not of God, thus may we refrain from every evil.

Lord, God of peace, as you call us by your own faithfulness, make us perfectly holy in spirit, soul and body, preserved for the coming of Jesus Christ.

David Dunst
Music Director

**Third Sunday in Advent****CONNECT
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YOUTH NEWS

FAITH FORMATION

Elementary and Middle School Religious Education

There will be no class for Grades 1 through 8, on Wednesday, December 20 or 27, due to the Christmas break. Grade 1, and 3 through 8 will resume classes on Wednesday, January 3. Grade 2 (First Eucharist) will resume classes on January 17.

Sunday School and Liturgy of the Word for Children

There will be no Sunday School or Liturgy of the Word for Children on Sunday, December 24 or 31. We will resume both of these programs on Sunday, January 7.

Grade 2 First Eucharist Program

Classes for the First Eucharist Program will begin on Wednesday, January 17. Your second grade child should have been registered in the Reconciliation Program and will therefore be automatically enrolled in the First Eucharist Program. Please call Kathy Raible at 651-905-4311, if you have any questions or concerns.

WORKCAMP BAKE SALE



Our Workcamp Youth are hosting a bake sale this weekend, December 16/17, after all Masses. Baked items will be available for a free will donation. Please consider purchasing some treats today. Thank you for your continued support of Workcamp!

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS DINNER/DANCE

The Catholic Single Adults Club of the Twin Cities invites all single Catholics, ages 21 and older, to join us Saturday, January 6, for our annual Christmas dinner and dance. A social hour and dinner will begin at 5:30 p.m.; the dance will start at 7:30 p.m.

The cost for the dinner and dancing is \$25; cost for the dance only is \$10. Dinner reservations for a delicious buffet meal at Gulden's Restaurant in Maplewood are required by Wednesday, December 27. No reservation is needed for dance-only participants. For dinner reservation information, please call Greg at 651-636-3508 or Carl at 651-603-1412.

CATHOLIC SPIRIT MAGAZINE

We have a limited number of free annual subscriptions to The Catholic Spirit, the award-winning official newspaper of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. Each edition is packed with Catholic news coverage of our archdiocese, nation and world, as well as issue analysis and reflections on Catholic living from family life to public policy. If you would like to receive the Catholic Spirit, contact Rita Holien in our parish office at rhohlen@stpetersmendota.org.



OFFICE INFORMATION

- ♦ Father Steven Hoffman: 651-452-4550
- ♦ Deacon Tim Hennessey: 651-905-4301

Parish Office Hours: Mon - Fri, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Phone: 651-452-4550

BAPTISMS, NEW PARISHIONERS, WEDDINGS

Call the parish office for more information.

PRAYER CHAIN REQUESTS

Email Lisa Amos at lamos@stpetersmendota.org, call her at 651-905-4304 or call the parish office.

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GROUP TRIP TO STATE CAPITOL

Join us on Monday, January 8, 2018, for our next St. Peter's Group Trip. We will leave from St. Peter's at 9:45 a.m. and travel to St. Paul for a tour of the Minnesota State Capitol. If you've been hoping to get an inside look at the new renovations, this is your chance. Following our tour, we will have lunch at Buca di Beppo Italian Restaurant and return to St. Peter's at approximately 2:30pm. Space is limited; register now by contacting Lisa Amos at 651-905-4304 or at lamos@stpetersmendota.org. You may also stop by the parish office to sign up. Your \$40 trip fee includes the tour, lunch and bus. The registration deadline is Thursday, December 28. I hope you can join us!

RESOURCE CENTER

Anytime you are looking for resources to encourage you and help you grow in faith, consider checking out the Resource Center, located in the Gathering Space. You will find books, CD's and pamphlets about a variety of subjects. In addition, you will be able to choose spiritual reading that you can trust, recommended by Fr. Steven, Lisa Amos and Elizabeth McCanna (yes - there are even books for teens and young people!).

This center is self-funded. We would ask that those who are able to do so, please donate \$5/CD, \$1/pamphlet and the list price of the books you choose (usually listed on the back cover). Because we want everyone to be able to enjoy these resources, whether they can contribute or not, we welcome any additional donations, above these suggestions. There is a slot in the center to place your donation. If you are unable to donate, please take a resource anyway!

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY



Due to Christmas, St. Peter's Prayer Shawl Ministry will meet on the third Thursday in December from 1 to 3 p.m. in the Family Room. Our next meeting is December 21. Those who knit and crochet are always welcome to join us for fellowship, prayer and shared work. For more information about this meeting, please contact Laura Elm at lblynam@yahoo.com or 612-578-0377.

ALPHA RETURNS TO ST. PETER'S IN FEBRUARY

Alpha is returning to St. Peter's on Monday, February 19. In a recent homily, Deacon Tim asked the question, "Have you met Jesus?" Alpha is a place to meet Jesus and to explore the basics of the Christian faith. It will take place on Mondays, February 19 through May 14, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., in Heritage Center. Alpha consists of a meal, a talk and small group discussion. It is an open, informal and honest space to explore and discuss life's big questions together; it is designed to create and/or deepen a personal relationship with Jesus and create fellowship. One recent participant commented: "Great sharing with fellow participants!" Another said, "I really entered into a relationship with the Holy Spirit." Sign-ups will begin mid-January. Watch for more information in upcoming bulletins. In the meantime, mark your calendars and plan to join us! Space is limited. If you have any questions, please contact Laurie Reding at 612-419-1709 or lreding1@aol.com.



ADVENT SPEAKER: LESSONS OF DISCIPLESHIP FROM NAZARETH WITH FATHER STEVEN

Join us on Tuesday, December 19, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. in Heritage Center for an enlightening and inspiring evening. Advent is a time for preparation and reflection. We invite you to open yourself to the lessons of the season.

The time from Jesus' birth to the beginning of His public ministry spans 30 years. During this time, Mary and Joseph are learning how to parent this special child. But as Jesus comes of age, growing in wisdom and grace, Mary and Joseph also become His first disciples. We hope you can come and join us, as we ponder together the lessons Mary and Joseph teach us about discipleship—lessons that can profoundly impact our ordinary daily lives.

We look forward to spending this evening of spiritual growth with you! Questions may be directed to Lisa Amos, at 651-905-4304 or lamos@stpetersmendota.org.

SAVE THE DATE!

St. Peter's annual Cana Dinner, in celebration of marriage, will be held on Saturday, February 10, beginning with Mass at 5 p.m. Social Hour will begin at 6 p.m.; dinner begins at 7 p.m. Entertainment will be Deacon Tim and his friends, Bob and Jackie Harvey from Deacon Tim's church. All parishioners are invited to attend. Ticket sales will begin the weekend of January 27/28.



FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Automatic Withdrawal—Electronic Funds Transfer

Please consider donating electronically, through our ACH program. Setting up a recurring payment directly from your checking or savings account is the **safest** and **preferred** method of receiving your donations. We also accept payment through credit and debit cards. Please visit our website to manage your electronic contributions online at www.stpetersmendota.org and click on the Donate Online box. You may also complete and remit an EFT form available in the parish office or online at www.stpetersmendota.org/community/stewardship/financial-giving/.

Stock Contributions

Appreciated stock is a great way to make a contribution AND perhaps maximize your tax benefit. Please contact Mary Jubenville at the parish office at 651-905-4307.

End of the Year Information

Parishioners are reminded that all donations must be received in the parish office or postmarked by Sunday, December 31, to be included as a 2017 contribution. If a stock contribution is to be made, be sure to allow enough time for the transaction to be completed. Stock transfer instructions are available by calling Mary Jubenville at 651-905-4307.



"GIVE...
TO GOD

THE THINGS
THAT ARE
GOD'S."

MATTHEW 22:21, NRSV

Financial Recap

July 1 to December 10, 2017

YTD Actual Collections:	\$375,331
YTD Budgeted Collections:	404,245
Difference:	\$(28,914)

To donate electronically visit www.stpetersmendota.org or call Mary in the parish office at 651-905-4307.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

St. Peter's is here to bring the good news of the Gospel to all, so that every person can have a personal, life changing, life giving relationship with Jesus Christ.

Trustees:

Jim Oricchio.....651-452-3587
Helen Wilkie.....651-365-1334

READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 17

Sunday: Is 61:1-2a, 10-11/Lk 1:46-48, 49-50, 53-54 [Is 61:10b]/1 Thes 5:16-24/Jn 1:6-8, 19-28

Monday: Jer 23:5-8/Ps 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19 [cf. 7]/Mt 1:18-25

Tuesday: Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a/Ps 71:3-4a, 5-6ab, 16-17 [cf. 8]/Lk 1:5-25

Wednesday: Is 7:10-14/Ps 24:1-2, 3-4ab, 5-6 [cf. 7c and 10b]/Lk 1:26-38

Thursday: Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a/Ps 33:2-3, 11-12, 20-21 [1a; 3a]/Lk 1:39-45

Friday: 1 Sm 1:24-28/1 Sm 2:1, 4-5, 6-7, 8abcd [cf. 1a]/Lk 1:46-56

Saturday: Mal 3:1-4, 23-24/Ps 25:4-5ab, 8-9, 10 and 14 [cf. Lk 21:28]/Lk 1:57-66

Next Sunday: 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16/Ps 89:2-3, 4-5, 27, 29 [2a]/Rom 16:25-27/Lk 1:26-38

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MASS INTENTIONS

The following are the intentions offered by the priest at Mass:

Monday, December 18	Margaret McGee
Tuesday, December 19	† Louis J. Chapdelaine
Wednesday, December 20	Eli Backman
Thursday, December 21	Maebel Holien
Friday, December 22	Trevor Holien
Saturday, December 23	Mass For The People
Sunday, December 24, 9 am	† Agnes Stock
11 am	† Bernard, Christy & Robert Becker

THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR: DECEMBER 18

Monday, December 18

9 am Mass, Historic Church (8:30 Rosary)
6 pm Cub Scout Pack Meeting, Heritage Center

Tuesday, December 19

9 am Mass, Historic Church (8:30 Rosary)
9:45 am Women's Bible Study, Ravoux Room
10:30 am Mobile Meals, Off Campus
6:30 pm Advent Speaker - Fr. Steven, Heritage Center
6:30 pm RCIA, Conference Room
7 pm Endow, Family Room

Wednesday, December 20

9 am Mass, Historic Church (8:30 Rosary)
9:45 am Divine Mercy Cenacle, Ravoux Room
6:30 pm Perissos, Heritage Center

Thursday, December 21

9 am Mass, Historic Church (8:30 Rosary)
1 pm Prayer Shawl Ministry, Family Room
7 pm AA Meeting, Classroom 5

Friday, December 22

8 am Confession (Main Church)
9 am Mass, Historic Church (8:30 Rosary)

Saturday, December 23

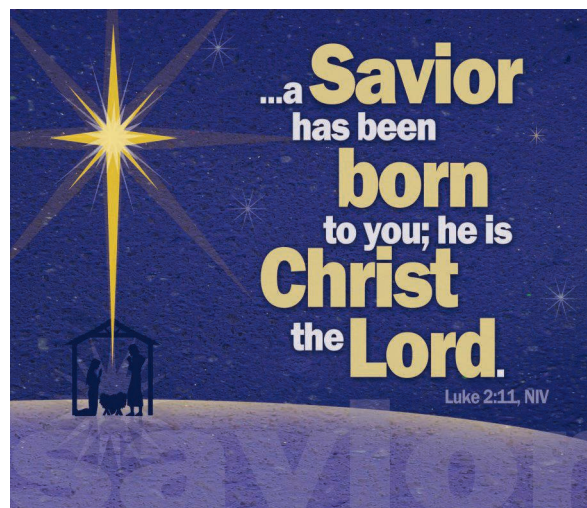
9 am & 10:30 am AA Meeting, Classrooms
3:30 pm Confession, Main Church
4:30 pm Choir Rehearsal, Music Room
5 pm Mass, Main Church

Sunday, December 24

8:30 am Choir Rehearsal, Music Room
9 am Fourth Sunday of Advent Mass, Main Church
4 pm Christmas Eve Mass, Main Church
8 pm Christmas Vigil Mass, Main Church

Monday, December 25

8:30 am Choir Rehearsal, Music Room
9 am Christmas Mass, Main Church
10:30 am Choir Rehearsal, Music Room
11 am Christmas Mass, Main Church



PASTORAL MINISTRY

FOLLOWING JESUS



Today is Gaudete Sunday, a Latin word that means rejoice. The Bible talks a lot about joy: the joy that comes from what God does for us. Jesus sums up in so many ways what God has done for us. As disciples of Jesus, let us ask God to renew our joy this week, as we think of all the ways that Jesus has loved us.

ROSARY MAKER MINISTRY COMING TO ST. PETER

Thanks to a dedicated parishioner, we are starting a rosary makers group. Members will gather in the Ravoux Room on the first Tuesday of each month from 6:30 to 8 p.m., beginning January 2. The cord rosaries you make will be sent to missions or used for local and national needs.



The core group we join recently sent 400 to shelters in Houston, Texas after the flooding, 500 hundred were sent to Mexico and Fr. Lawrence was able to take 600 back to Uganda after his visit this past fall.

There is great demand, and your help is needed in order for us to keep up. Leaders will teach you how to make the rosaries and supply all materials.

Come and see if this ministry is right for you! For more information, please call Mary Ellen at 651-457-1764.

GROWING THROUGH LOSS



St. Peter's is an active member of a coalition of local churches that presents Growing Through Loss, a program of support and information for persons who are experiencing grief due to the death of a loved one, broken relationship, job loss, loss of health, etc.

Small group facilitators are needed for this coming year.

Growing Through Loss Series take place twice a year. Each series runs once a week for four weeks in the fall; and four weeks, with a fifth for a remembrance service, in the spring. Each session offers a presentation, followed by small groups lead by facilitators. Training is provided. If you are a good listener and wish to minister to those experiencing grief, this ministry may be for you. St. Peter's has always been very well represented, and many parishioners serve as facilitators. If you are interested in learning more or applying for this ministry, please contact Lisa Amos at 651-905-4304 or at lamos@stpetersmendota.org.



CHAPEL OF THE NATIVITY ADORATION CHAPEL

"During those days, Mary set out and traveled to the hill country in haste to a town of Judah, where she entered the house of Zachariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb. . . ." Luke 1:39-41.



Mary and Jesus, what a combination! Jesus was with Mary wherever she went, as He is wherever we go, too! The question is, "Do people see Jesus in us?" Are we letting his light shine through?

Jesus resides in our tabernacle here at St. Peter and with special Exposition through our Perpetual Adoration Program. We urge you to come into the Chapel and learn what John the Baptist was leaping for joy about in his mother's womb!

The chapel is closed for Masses. Christmas hours are now posted outside the chapel. If you will need a sub for your hour, please refer to your substitute roster to cover your hour in advance.

Please contact Lisa Amos to sign up at 651-905-4304 or at lamos@stpetersmendota.org. We still especially need adorers at the following hours:

Early Morning		Daytime		Evening	
Monday	2 to 3 am	Sunday	2 to 3 pm	Sunday	5 to 6 pm
Wednesday	1 to 2 am	Monday	2 to 3 pm	Friday	7 to 8 pm
Friday	5 to 6 am	Wednesday.....	7 to 8 am	Friday	8 to 9 pm
Saturday	3 to 4 am	Friday	Noon to 1 pm		
Saturday	4 to 5 am	Friday	4 to 5 pm		

HEALING THE WHOLE PERSON

Church of the Epiphany, in Coon Rapids is hosting a Healing the Whole Person Retreat, led by the John Paul II Healing Center, on January 18 - 20. Learn more and register for this amazing retreat at www.jpilhealingcenter.org. Online registration closes on January 8.

Jesus responds today to brokenness, disease and pain with transformative love and restoration. Through three days of teaching, worship, prayer and testimony, you'll encounter God in a powerful way, and experience deeper freedom as the Father speaks to you in the depths of your heart and through the supernatural graces of the sacraments. Whether you're struggling with life, or you just want "more" in your walk with God, this conference will empower you with tools, revelation and a greater desire to live your life passionately on fire for God. Grounded in Church teaching, you'll engage the topics of "Facing our Brokenness," "Encountering the Father's Love" and "Living in Freedom."

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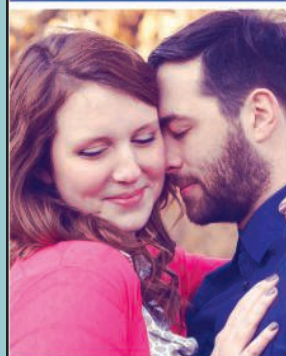
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