

Ss. Peter and Paul Catholic Church
 239 N. Morrison
 Collinsville, IL 62234

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Stewardship As a Way of Life: Our Grateful Response to God's Love Through Prayer



Growing as a Stewardship Parish: Prayer

A stewardship parish strives to nourish the soul through prayer. Prayer and the sacraments dispose a soul to receive God's abundant graces, which are necessary to grow in holiness. It is through prayer that we nurture our personal relationship with Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

While parishioners find great fulfillment in giving themselves to parish life, prayer purifies and intensifies the intention of the steward. Prayer increases our yearning to receive the source and summit of our Catholic faith, the Eucharist. As a parish family, we gather together to worship and praise God in the Mass. Nourished by the Word of God and the Eucharist, we are strengthened as a parish family to go and to serve the Lord. Stewardship is a lived response of the disciple to follow this command.

There is a deep connection between the Eucharistic celebration and stewardship. In one of the prefaces of the Eucharistic prayers it says, "Lord, our desire to thank you is itself your gift." The Third Eucharistic Prayer states, "All life, all holiness comes from you through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, by the working of the Holy Spirit... And so, Father, we bring you these gifts."

The Parish Office has relocated to the first floor of Manning Hall. Address is 239 N. Morrison.

It is in the Eucharist where we again recognize our total dependence upon God for everything. All that is good is a gift from Him. It is not that we have loved Him, but that He first has loved us by giving His Son.

In both our personal and communal prayer, we turn toward God to discern properly our talents and gifts. In a steward's response, we place those gifts at the service of God and one another. At the heart of the steward's prayer is the petition, "Thy Will be done."

Are You Ready to Grow Closer to God?

You are invited to join your fellow parishioners as we learn to experience the Mass in a more powerful and meaningful way—by getting to know, understand and love the Sacrament of the Eucharist more deeply than ever before.



Pope Francis has repeatedly told us the Eucharist "enlarges our hearts." There are a number of opportunities.

- Adults:** Small Faith-Sharing Groups
- Families:** Participate at home using an activity book.
- Adults and Teens:** Read and meditate on the Exodus to Easter booklet
- All:** Read the weekly bulletin inserts and prayer card available in the pews.

For more information call the Parish Office at 345-4343 or visit our website at www.saintspeter-paul.org

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

As we continue with the "four seasons" of stewardship, we turn our focus to Prayer. We are all called to develop and grow a personal relationship with God—a friendship with Jesus. We are called to not just know about Jesus, but to learn to know Him. The first is easiest; the latter is a lifelong journey but it is essential if we are to leave our old selves behind and follow Him.

We do this by embracing stewardship as a way of life. This life-long journey of stewardship must be built upon a foundation of developing a personal relationship with Jesus through prayer and hospitality, welcoming and inviting all to join us as disciples. It also means that we continue to nurture our faith formation with our personal response to share what we have with others—our time, talent and treasure -- which leads to generous service of God and others.

We nourish our souls with prayer. As we receive God's gift of grace it inspires and empowers us to change our lives. It is through prayer that we nurture our personal relationship with Jesus, which leads us to a yearning for the sacraments, especially the Eucharist.

The Lenten season is the perfect time to take a look at our prayer life and our relationship with Jesus. What stands in our way of hearing God's call and growing that personal relationship? There are as many ways to pray as there are people. But all hold in common the need to be sure we are spending time in quiet with Him each day...listening, not saying anything. Just 10 minutes each day alone with the Lord can make a big difference. If you aren't doing this, the "Rediscover Jesus" book we received at Christmas offers a great opportunity to begin. Read a section, a page, a paragraph each day, ponder the questions, and listen to the Lord speak to you.

This year we are also called by Pope Francis to learn about, experience and share God's mercy. The Year of Mercy offers another opportunity to grow our relationship with Jesus as we better understand God's mercy, the role it plays in our lives and the role we play in sharing it with others.

As we enter the Lenten season, we combine our focus on prayer with the traditional Lenten practices of fasting and almsgiving. We are providing some resources to guide your Lenten focus:

- On the weekend before Ash Wednesday, we will again have the opportunity to take our Lenten Choices card to the altar as a sign of our commitment to growth. This newsletter and the Lenten cards in the pews have suggested activities.



Ask God what He is calling you to do this holy season. Fill out another copy to take home to remind you of your choices.

- We again hope to heighten your experience by promoting a fuller, more conscious and active participation in the Eucharist. Beginning on Ash Wednesday, we will use information and tools from a program called **Living the Eucharist**. More information is included in this newsletter and you will hear more about it at Mass.
- We are focusing on the Year of Mercy with information and activities to help us learn, experience and share God's mercy.

As we enter the holy season of Lent, let's ask the Holy Spirit to lead us on our spiritual journey.

Peace,

Father John

Our Lenten Choices: Choose to Grow Your Spiritual Life

During Lent, we traditionally focus on prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Make this Lent a time of spiritual growth by: 1) committing to spending more time in prayer and spiritual reading; 2) focusing on God rather than ourselves by fasting; and 3) nurturing generosity and gratitude for God's gifts by sharing ourselves—our time and financial resources—with others.

Prayer and Study

- Spend at least 10 minutes each day alone with God—in silence, listening, hearing
- Participate in a *Living the Eucharist* faith-sharing group
- Participate in the *Living the Eucharist* Family Activity program
- Read the *Exodus to Easter* daily meditation booklet
- Read the *Living the Eucharist* bulletin inserts during Lent
- Say the *Living the Eucharist* Lent Prayer daily
- Read a section of the *Rediscover Jesus* book daily; ponder; listen to God speak
- List God's gifts for which you are grateful and recall them daily
- Attend weekday Mass more often
- Read the Bible each day for 10 minutes starting with the Gospels
- Join one of the Bible study groups that the parish offers
- Visit the Blessed Sacrament at least once per week
- Start a family prayer time
- Take "quiet moments" during the day and thank God
- Say the Rosary more often
- Receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation more frequently
- Take one idea from God's Word at Mass and apply it to your life each week



- Listen to Catholic Radio in the car (1080 AM/1460 AM)
- Download the Bible on your smartphone
- Subscribe to a daily meditation publication like "The Word Among Us"

Other _____

Fasting

- Refrain from a favorite food/drink
- Give up a favorite activity (TV, listening to music, internet, video games, gambling, etc.)
- Refrain from eating between meals
- Fast one day a week
- Eat a simpler lunch a few times a week
- Make small sacrifices each day for others
- Other _____

Almsgiving

- Eliminate some expense (daily latte, lunch out, etc.) and donate to St. Vincent de Paul
- Donate to the S.O.S. Soup Kitchen
- Keep the Rice Bowl visible at home to collect change
- Donate time at a community organization
- Call a family member/friend with whom you've lost touch
- Focus on doing at least one Work of Mercy daily
- Other _____

Don't Give Up Chocolate --Rediscover Jesus!

One way to read the Christmas book we received, "Rediscover Jesus," is to use it as a guide to a 40-day spiritual journey, reading a portion a day and incorporating the information, questions and scripture into your daily prayer.

Dynamic Catholic offers other resources to help make this your best Lent ever including a daily inspirational email with a short video based on the book featuring Matthew Kelly. So don't just give up chocolate—commit to do something life changing! Sign up at DynamicCatholic.com/Lent.

You can also get a free copy of Rediscover Jesus at the website.

Year of Mercy: Learn, Experience and Share God's Mercy

As a parish community, we are answering the call of Pope Francis to join Catholics throughout the world to focus on being a witness to mercy.

Our plans will try to help all parishioners learn about what mercy is, experience mercy, recognize that we are already acting in ways that show mercy to others, share our mercy more deliberately, and share our experiences of giving and receiving God's mercy.



The Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy

Matthew Kelly notes in his book "Beautiful Mercy" that he thinks Pope Francis has called for a Year of Mercy because he wants us to connect on a personal level with God's mercy. Fortunately there is a way in the "genius of Catholicism"—the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy. We will be using these throughout the year to learn, experience and share.

January/February/March Plans

Following are some of the activities and communications plans for the first quarter.

- Year of Mercy page in each Bulletin with ideas on integrating mercy into our daily prayer life and other activities
- Information on our website
- Mass announcements
- Chaplet of Mercy at weekly Adoration during Lent
- Mercy quotes on Church sign
- Tie in with ministries
- Penance service
- Year of Mercy Prayer
- Additional visits to the homebound and sick

Visit our website and the U. S bishops website to get more information about the Year of Mercy

www.saintspeter-paul.org

www.usccb.org

The Corporal Works of Mercy are found in the teachings of Jesus and give us a model for how we should treat all others, as if they were Christ in disguise. They "are charitable actions by which we help our neighbors in their bodily needs" (USCCA). They respond to the basic needs of humanity as we journey together through this life.

The Spiritual Works of Mercy have long been a part of the Christian tradition, appearing in the works of theologians and spiritual writers throughout history. Just as Jesus attended to the spiritual well-being of those he ministered to, these Spiritual Works of Mercy guide us to "help our neighbor in their spiritual needs" (USCCA).

The Corporal Works of Mercy

1. Feed the Hungry
2. Give Drink to the Thirsty
3. Clothe the Naked
4. Welcome the Stranger
5. Visit the Sick
6. Visit the Imprisoned
7. Bury the Dead

The Spiritual Works of Mercy

1. Counsel the Doubtful
2. Instruct the Ignorant
3. Admonish the Sinner
4. Comfort the Afflicted
5. Forgive Offenses Willingly
6. Bear Wrongs Patiently
7. Pray for the Living and the Dead

