

UPON THIS ROCK

THE COMMUNITY VOICE OF ST. PETER CHURCH

ST. PETER CHURCH, NORTH RIDGEVILLE

WINTER 2014

★ ST. PETER ROCK STARS ★

Rock Star! Who? Me!!

I had a list of names of people who are very giving and truly St. Peter Rock Stars. Then I got to thinking about the many people who quietly contribute to our parish life and for the most part remain unnoticed. As a parish family we contribute our talents to parish life, even if it is just sharing a heartfelt hand shake at the sign of peace at Mass. As children we become altar servers and/or volunteer to help during the Lenten fish fries. Many serve at liturgical events by becoming Extraordinary Ministers of Communion, they also deliver Communion to the homebound and nursing home residents. Lectors serve at Mass by proclaiming the readings and petitions for all of us. Ushers greet us before Mass and collect the offertory envelopes. There are also people behind the scenes who prepare the altar and decorate the church for various services like funerals, weddings, baptisms and holidays. The CLOW (Children's Liturgy of the Word) ministers explain the daily Mass readings to our young people. The newly-formed adult altar servers lend a dignified and solemn presence at funerals. And let's not forget the choristers who practice every week to enhance the Mass by their singing.

The Social Justice Commission serves the underprivileged through various projects. The Garden Committee supplies fresh vegetables for the Outreach

meals and also supports the monthly event with monies received from the sale of produce after Mass. There are the volunteers who minister to the incarcerated including the parishioners who donate books and dozens of homemade cookies to support this ministry.

There are other groups like the Vincentians who gather and distribute school supplies and encourage us to acts of kindness with their Blanket Sunday and the Giving Tree. They also offer other means of support behind the scenes to those in need. The Mother's Club is a group of loving women who share their friendship and support and in doing so enrich each other's lives. Read about their special "Egg" project (see page 7).

The goal of the Knights of Columbus is to support the principles of the Order: Charity, Unity, Fraternity, and Patriotism, while always following the precepts of the Church. Their support for the schools is always much appreciated, and their offshoot groups like the Squires and Isabella Guild help contribute to their many projects. When you see the Knights in their regalia you know a special event is going to happen at Mass.

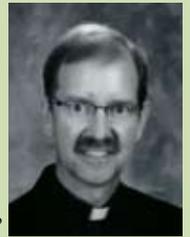
How about the school? PTU anyone? Education Commission? And we can't forget the PSR teachers! They are,

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Fr. Bob's Corner

Dear Parish Family,

Food! It is what sustains us. Food is also what gathers us together. We like to eat with others so that our souls are "fed"



through the conversation we have with others even as we nourish our bodies.

As a parish, we have also discovered the principle, "If you feed them, they will come!" We hope this is the case when we celebrate the Eucharist. We nourish both body and soul as we converse with the Lord (by listening to the Word of God proclaimed and preached upon) and then share His very Body and Blood in Holy Communion.'

In addition to the Eucharist, St. Peter and St. Julie Parishes co-host monthly "fellowship breakfasts." The women's breakfast is normally on the second Saturday of the month. The men's breakfast is normally on the third Saturday of the month. These breakfasts do much more than feed the body. Besides eating, each gathering also has time built in for an occasional witness by a fellow parishioner, a video or talk about our faith and then some friendly conversation. They begin at 8:30 AM on Saturdays and end before 10:00 AM. A free will offering is taken and though reservations are not required, calling in certainly helps in food preparation. And

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Fr. Bob's Corner

Continued from page 1

all are welcome, even non-parishioners and non-Catholics.

Christmas! The thought of it often wears us out. When we think of gift lists, shopping, wrapping, greeting cards, menus, travel and weather, we are tempted to simply try to get through it.

Christmas is to be a time when we are more built up than wore out. We celebrate that God took the initiative. He sent his Son in the flesh, born of the Virgin Mary, to reestablish his relationship with us. If God the Son became a man, what value we must hold in God's eyes!!!

Amid the "flurry" of activity (Lord, spare us a heavy snowfall!), please take time to pray and listen to the Lord through the Sacred Scriptures. We want to get to know Jesus ever more deeply and follow Him more closely than ever.

Lent! Since this newsletter covers through the end of February and the beginning of March, I need to mention Lent, which begins on Wednesday, February 18 with the distribution of ashes at each of our three Masses: 6:30 and 8:15 AM and 7:00 PM.

Penance! Both the season of Advent and, in a special way, Lent are time of penance. Advent and Lent are times in which we come to know our sins and then, by the gift of Jesus Christ, conform our lives to Christ. There are a number of special opportunities to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance dur-

ing Advent and Lent. St. Peter and St. Julie Parishes will be gathering together to celebrate this sacrament on Sunday, December 14 (at St. Julie's) and Sunday, March 8 (St. Peter Parish). Both of these begin at 7:00 PM. Also, during Lent, there will be a diocesan-wide celebration in which each parish will have confessors available on Wednesday, March 4 from 5:00 to 8:00 PM.

School! St. Peter School is a vibrant and wonderful learning environment going from Pre-K through Grade 8. We will be celebrating and showing off our school during Catholic Schools Week, which begins on Sunday, January 25. We will have a special Family Mass at 10:00 AM that morning and then host an Open House for new people at our school from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM. On Tuesday of that week, January 27, St. Peter School will be having its annual Science Fair in our gym along with a Community Open House for parishioners and parents. And please refer to our principal Sr. Pat Vovk's article on Raise Your Paddle and the St. Peter PTU. This important fundraiser also raises a lot of fun!

Sincerely in Christ,



Fr. Bob Franco
Pastor, St. Peter Parish

Heroic Act of Charity

The theological virtue of Charity is often defined as "unlimited love and kindness." As Christians we should strive to be charitable to others at all times and we often are without even thinking: holding a door for an elderly person, passing on the last piece of pie at dinner so someone else may enjoy it, praying for the holy souls in Purgatory. But heroic charity goes a step further.

The Heroic Act of Charity consists in formally surrendering to the Blessed Virgin all the satisfactory value of the merits we have accumulated during our lifetime, including "all the suffrages which shall be given to us after our death," and placing them at her disposal, to apply to whomever and however she deems best. By satisfactory value is meant the value of our good works which serves to atone for sin and satisfy Divine Justice. By making this offering to her we retain nothing for ourselves by which we can "discharge our own debt" to God, but instead trust in her benevolence on our behalf.

There is no special formula to follow to perform this Heroic Act of Charity. A sincere and heartfelt offering to the Blessed Virgin is all that is necessary. It can be revoked at any time and it is not a sin should we choose to do so. Even after the fact, we are still free to pray for our own intentions, but again, any satisfactory merits we accrue will be left to her discretion and disposal. And we should not fear that if we surrender to her the benefit of all our prayers and good works that our own stay in Purgatory will be lengthened because, as our Lord revealed to St. Gertrude, the degree of charity required by this act is so immensely pleasing to God that it alone can recompense for many sins and actually shorten our stay there. In effect, we "do not lose but actually gain" by giving all away. This Heroic Act of Charity is clearly a win-win opportunity.

UPON THIS ROCK is published by St. Peter Church of North Ridgville, Ohio for the parishioners of the church.

Publisher: Father Robert Franco, Pastor

Staff Writers: Mary Lou Cole, Andee Mason, Mary Ann Tipple,

Articles may be sent to tip060@windstream.net

Gregorian Mass

Sooner or later most of us will lose a loved one - a parent, friend, neighbor or even a child. Except for those rare souls who go directly to Heaven, most of us, with any luck and God's grace, will merit Purgatory. It's not a subject to which we give much thought, especially since so many of us have grown up in a culture that denies its very existence, but it's a very real place which serves a very real purpose. It's where souls still tainted by sin are further purified so as to merit an eternity in the presence of God. The problem is that these souls are no longer in a position to speed their release from Purgatory and are totally dependent upon God's mercy. However, there is a powerful way in which we can help.

Frequently Masses are offered for the repose of the souls of the deceased, and there is no more efficacious manner of prayer. But a little known and often misunderstood option is the Gregorian Mass, which consists of a series of

30 Masses offered over a consecutive 30-day period. This practice originated with Pope Gregory the Great in 590 A.D. and so bears his name. Because Pope Gregory had grave concerns over the soul of a deceased monk, he ordered that 30 Masses be offered on his behalf. Soon after the last Mass was concluded, the spirit of the deceased appeared in a vision and confirmed that he had that day been released from Purgatory due to the Pope's generosity in requesting these Masses. While we are under no obligation to believe in the authenticity of this story (because it falls under the definition of "private revelation"), it appears plausible since the Pope himself, noted for his sanctity, gave a detailed account of the incident in his memoirs.

Since that time, Gregorian Masses have become a pious tradition of the Catholic Church. However, even though this type of intercessory prayer is encouraged, the Church does not

guarantee the immediate release from Purgatory of the soul for whom they are intended; that decision is up to God alone. But in view of the fact that the stipend for these Masses is around \$300, it might be wise to remember that God cannot be outdone in generosity. Still, we are encouraged to continue praying and offering small sacrifices on behalf of the poor souls since we would want no less for ourselves if we were in their place.

Gregorian Masses can be requested of almost any priest, but finding one whose schedule can accommodate this request could pose a problem. Some contemplative monasteries offer them, as do other religious organizations such as the Marians of the Immaculate Conception. For further information, the Marians can be contacted at Marian.org or 1-800-462-7426.

We can all be Rock Stars (continued from page 1)

indeed, a vital and much-needed group of volunteers in our parish.

The Legion of Mary, an association of Catholic men and women organized to serve in the fight against evil, pray the Rosary after the 8:15 a.m. weekday Mass. The Holy Name Society, besides providing fellowship for its members, helps the parish both financially and through prayer. The goal of our Bereavement Support team is to let no member of our faith community grieve alone. There is also the church library and the volunteers who round up treats for the ever popular Donut Sunday.

The Parish Council and the Finance Council meet to review finances and suggest ways to further support our parish. One of their offshoot organizations is the Evangelization Commission whose goal is to transform the parish into a place of warm hospital-

ity with a genuine spirit of inclusion. They welcome new people by getting to know them and encouraging them to volunteer their talents in whatever way they feel most comfortable so they can make a difference in our parish life. The Commission also encourages and supports ecumenical programs and inter-faith dialogue in the broader community.

Yes, there are lots of people that participate selflessly in church life, and yet there is always room for one more at the table. Are you willing?

*Separately we are incomplete.
Together we are strong with
the strength of God.*

- T. Merton



St. Peter parish remembers the deceased.

Advent

The latest Christmas fad is the Elf on the Shelf. The idea behind it is that the elf hides and watches the family, and at night flies back to report the children's behavior to Santa so that Santa can reward good behavior with an appropriate gift. In a similar fashion, the church encourages us to prepare for the coming of the Lord through use of an Advent wreath.

The keeping of an Advent wreath is a common practice in churches. The readings for the first Sunday in Advent relate to the old testament patriarchs, Christ's ancestors, who prophesied the coming of the Messiah. For this reason, the first Advent candle represents Hope. The readings for the second Sunday reference Christ's birth in a manger and other prophecies, so this candle represents Bethlehem, the Way, or the Prophets. On the third Sunday, Gaudete Sunday, the readings relate to St. John the Baptist, and the rose candle represents Joy or Shepherds. The readings for the fourth Sunday relate to the annunciation of Christ's birth, so that candle is known as the Angel's candle and the Magnificat or Song of Mary may be featured during the liturgy.

The usual liturgical color for Advent is purple. It is used for adorning the tabernacle and decorating the church and is the predominant color of the priest's vestments. There are those who argue that this liturgical color trend is traditionally associated with solemnity and somberness which is more fitting to the repentant character of Lent, but the Roman Catholic Church retains the traditional purple during the Advent season. However, on the 3rd Sunday of Advent, Gaudete Sunday, the color rose may be substituted, reflecting the rose used on Laetare Sunday, the 4th Sunday of Lent.

One common observance of Advent outside church has been the keeping of an Advent calendar or Advent candle. The calendar has a small tab for each day of the month that can be opened with a Christmas-themed religious picture or saying inside. The Advent candle is divided into sections so that one section can be burned each day in December up to Christmas Eve. Both of these have become family traditions designed to call to mind and prepare us for the birth of the Christ Child.

Unknown Saints

On November 1, All Saints Day of this year, Pope Francis celebrated a special Mass inside Rome's Campo Verano Cemetery in Rome, Italy. This municipal cemetery was built during the early 19th century very near ancient Roman burial grounds. Completed in 1836, it is one of the largest in Rome. It consists of a Jewish section and a Catholic section and includes a monument to victims of WWI.

Pope Francis paid tribute to many buried here by referring to them as the "unknown saints". By this he meant those who suffered hunger and poverty, joblessness, homelessness, addiction, abuse of all kinds, and the civil unrest and lawlessness prevalent at that time which made it necessary for many to flee their homeland. Just like people today in countries all around the world, these many victims became unknown saints, having been sanctified through their many sufferings.

In his homily, Pope Francis asked that even as we pray for our own family members and holy souls this November, we remember these unknown saints in our prayers since as friends of God they can influence Him, especially on behalf of those suffering war and persecution today.

40 DAYS FOR LIFE™

Every spring and fall St. Peter Parishioners travel on Monday mornings to pray for an hour at a Cleveland Abortion Center. This fall they traveled to Deaconess Hospital and joined others from the Cleveland area quietly praying for an end to all abortion. 40 Days for Life is a community-based campaign that takes a determined, peaceful approach to showing local communities the consequences of abortion in their own neighborhoods, for their own friends and families. It puts into action a desire to cooperate with God in the carrying out of His plan for the end of abortion. It draws attention to the evil of abortion through the use of a three-point program: Prayer and fasting,

constant vigil, community outreach

The 40-day campaign tracks Biblical history, where God used 40-day periods to transform individuals, communities ... and the entire world. From Noah in the flood to Moses on the mountain to the disciples after Christ's resurrection, it is clear that God sees the transformative value of His people accepting and meeting a 40-day challenge.

Each day during 40 Days for Life, individuals, churches, families and groups will be asked to join together in prayer for a specific request so the entire Body of Christ can unite around a common focus. These specific prayer requests will seek God's help for:

- Women who are at risk of having an abortion
- Innocent children who are at risk of perishing
- Men and women who carry the pain of a past abortion experience
- Workers at Planned Parenthood facilities and abortion centers
- Local, regional, and national leaders
- Revival and renewal in our churches
- Repentance and healing throughout our nation

The Body of Christ is invited to pray together and participate in 40 Days for Life, uniting in one focused mission that can save lives and make an eternal impact.

Scenes from Supper



Scenes from the November Outreach Meal as Father Bob Franco leads the gathering in prayer. Scouts were on hand to bus tables and many hands help dish out a flavorful meal of sausage, peppers, onions and a pumpkin dessert.





Parent Teacher Unit

"We welcome each person, nurturing his/her spiritual, academic, and societal gifts, in a Catholic family environment while promoting diversity, openness, and respect."

- (St. Peter School Mission statement)

During this season in which we celebrate the ultimate generosity of our good and gracious God, St. Peter School would like to thank its Parent Teacher Unit (P.T.U.). This vibrant group is the envy of other schools and many organizations because of the group's closeness to the mission of St. Peter School, its pulse on day-to-day activities, and its enthusiasm for projects that will make a difference in the education and environment of the school.

Coming on the heels of the new year is the P.T.U.'s major fundraiser: Raise Your Paddle. This is a bold effort of

parents on behalf of the school community. This year's goal is \$45,000 for technology / academic advancements and environmental enhancements.

In the past, the P.T.U. has raised significant dollars for a new computer lab, a new playground, WI-FI for the school, new iMacs, projectors, and ActivBoards for classrooms.

The P.T.U. invites YOU to the 2015 Raise Your Paddle Auction on March 14, 2015 at Springvale Ballroom in North Olmsted. The live auction is hosted by local radio personality, Alan Fee, from Q104. There are raffles, silent auctions, cocktails, dinner, and entertainment to look forward to! You'll love every minute of it!

All of us at St. Peter School wish you the greatest awareness of God's loving presence among us during this holy season! We appreciate you and we pray for you!



Robin Red Breast



The North Star ushered them
Through land remote and dark
To the outskirts of Bethlehem
To seek shelter from the night

One stable the only lodging
Its walls of straw and loam
Sheltered beasts of burden
Till the glow of morning light

Perched upon its wooden beam
A bird watched the birth of a child
Whose tiny body was cloth enfolded
And embraced by a manger of straw

Three Kings journeyed from afar
To kneel before this Child
In the corner a bird looked on
As they offered their gifts of love

Secure she crouched on the beam
And groomed her drab brown feathers
While shadows danced on the wall
To the rhythm of the fire

With dawn the swaying ceased to be
And all within began to shiver
To the animals Mary beseeched
For warmth for her newborn son

But the ox curled deeper in the straw
And denied them his warm breathe
The gray donkey brayed and barked
To fan the fire with his tail

This troubled the tiny brown bird
Feet no longer tucked beneath her feathers
With wings extended and aflutter
Sailed down to the fragments of the fire

Thrusting like puffs from a bellow
Her wings ignited the sleeping embers
And the newborn slept contentedly
Warmed by the beating of her wings

From crackling logs an ash sparked
And landed on her exposed breast
It singed her plain brown color
Transforming it to a brilliant red

Tenderly Mary caressed the **Robin**
And honored her for her unselfish deed
"Your **RED BREAST** will, forever be,
A symbol of a **HUMBLE HEART**"

May your homes this Christmas
Be filled with love, joy and warmth.

Written by Mary Lou

A Good Thing



The city of North Ridgeville's churches have made free meals available to community members in need of nourishment and companionship. The last week of the month, a different church sponsors a free meal every day. St. Peter parish has made the commitment for several years on the last Wednesday of the month. Sponsored by the Social Justice Committee funds have been raised by donation envelopes at the doors of the church and by the sale of vegetables and cookbooks by the Garden Committee. The program has not had to use church funds. Thanks to the staff of chefs, servers and a great cleanup squad!

Egg Luncheon

The St. Peter's Mothers Club "Egg Luncheon" was recently mentioned in our church bulletin. The end-purpose of this luncheon is to buy a large enough supply of eggs to keep on hand for distribution to the needy at North Ridgeville's Community Care. Some people have asked how this "tea party" began. It began when Kathleen Forthofer was volunteering at Community Care packing food for clients. It frequently happened that when eggs were requested, there were none to give. So with a simple prayer and some creative thought, it came to Kathleen to put on an "Egg Basket Tea." This tea began over six years ago and has continued to grow and expand. It is now the primary egg supplier for Community Care's needy families.

The tea itself began with 12 women who each donated a dozen eggs and \$12.00. The event was so successful it later became known as the "Egg Salad

We welcome to our parish community newly registered at St. Peter Parish:

Ruth Ann Bowser
 Josh and Sarah Dubecky
 Jonathon and Mary Ann Eliot
 Chris and Darci Gervaise
 George and Gloria Morse
 Nicole Pozega
 Matthew and Janet Tagliaferri
 Sarah Boots
 Kate Calvey
 Nick and Denna Clements
 Jim and Ann Mazanek
 Rich and Sherri Mullaney
 Todd and Cindi O'Neill
 Terrell and Katie Priestler
 Mark and Kerri Sudik
 Nick and Anastasia Volsko

We welcome to our parish community the newly baptized:

Hollie Elizabeth Jarrett
 Noah James Smith
 Santino Marciano Micklas
 Alexis Marianna Masline
 Tyron Andrew Crumpton
 Emily Kate Santell
 Braydon Michael Wish
 Emily Grace Ahmetonic
 Leah Hope Meister
 Henry Ryan Gorski
 Emma Anne Klingshirn

Solemnity of Mary

The Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God is a feast day of the Blessed Virgin Mary under the aspect of her motherhood of Jesus Christ. It is celebrated by the Latin Rite of the Catholic Church on January 1, the Octave (8th) day of Christmas.

The feast is a celebration of Mary's motherhood of Jesus. This title was dogmatically adopted at the First Council of Ephesus as a way to assert that Jesus is God, and that his mother can therefore be called Mother of God.

In his Apostolic Letter, *Marialis Cultus*, Pope Paul VI explained, "This celebration, placed on January 1 . . . is meant to commemorate the part played by Mary in this mystery of salvation. It is meant also to exalt the singular dignity which this mystery brings to the "holy Mother, through whom we were found worthy to receive the Author of life." It is likewise a fitting occasion for renewing adoration of the newborn Prince of Peace, for listening once more to the glad tidings of the angels and for imploring from God, through the Queen of Peace, the supreme gift of peace.



Sandwich Luncheon." In time it outgrew the capacity of Kathleen's dining room, and with the support of the Mothers Club's out-reach program and with the use of the Galilee room at St. Peter's parish center, the fundraiser for "Eggs for Community Care" still continues. Dolly McAndrews, Gloria Sliva and Mary Lou Cole now head up and organize the luncheon. Eggs-tra donations are always appreciated, especially in today's economy when there are over 1,000 families who rely on help from Community Care. The Mothers Club is proud of its sponsorship of this event, and new members are always welcome.

UPON THIS ROCK

THE COMMUNITY VOICE OF ST. PETER CHURCH

St. Peter Church
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North Ridgeville, Ohio 44039

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Save the Date

Christmas

Vigil Mass Dec. 24

4pm Gym & Church, 6pm, 10pm

December 25

6am, 8am, 10am, 12pm

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

January 1

Epiphany

January 6

Ash Wednesday

February 18

Outreach Meals

Last Wednesday
of the Month

Please check the bulletin for
current news and updates

Worship

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Every Tuesday 8:45 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Liturgy of the Hours and

Benediction at 6:40 p.m.

Legion of Mary Rosary

Following 8:15 a.m. weekday Mass

Miraculous Medal Novena

Following 8:15 a.m. Monday Mass

Reconciliation (Confession)

3:30 - 4:30 p.m. Saturdays

Prayer

Advent Prayer

Father, in the wilderness of the Jordan
you sent a messenger to prepare people's
hearts for the coming of your Son.
Help me to hear his words and repent
of my sins, so that I may clearly see
the way to walk, the truth to speak,
and the life to live for Him,
our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Eucharistic Celebration

Monday thru Friday: 8:15 a.m.

Weekends:

Saturday: 5 p.m.

Sunday: 6 a.m.

8 a.m.

10 a.m.

12 p.m.

Parish Staff

Pastor: Rev. Robert J. Franco

Senior Parochial Vicar:

Rev. Robert Sanson

Deacon: Rev. Mr. Don Jankowski

Principal: Sr. Mary Patricia Vovk, S.N.D.

Music Director: James Akoury

Lay Ecclesial Minister: Cheryle Koberna

Youth Minister: Michael Cox

Director of Religious Education:

Sr. Mary Sean Groh, S.N.D.

Business Manager: Karen Doubrava

Secretary: Christine Stefanek