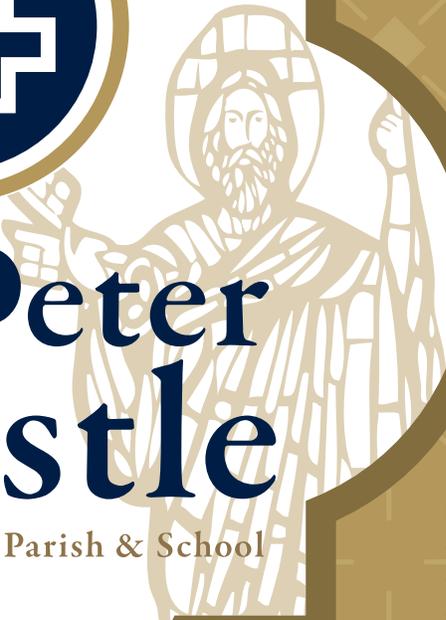




Saint Peter the Apostle

Catholic Parish & School



MASS SCHEDULE

SATURDAY ANTICIPATED: 5:30PM

SUNDAY: 7:30AM, 9AM*, 11:15AM*

CHAPEL WEEKDAY MASS: 7:30AM

HOLY DAYS: 8:30AM and 7PM

SATURDAY RECONCILIATION: 4:30-5PM

* Nursery available

“The Backbone of the Parish”

The Parish Council at St. Peter the Apostle

Have you ever wondered about the daily decision-making process required to run a parish? How does a pastor determine future plans for expansion? What new ministries are needed within the parish? How the finances should be distributed? Even the holiest and most gifted of men need council. As Scripture tells us, “For lack of guidance a people fails; security lies in many counselors” (Proverbs 11:14). This is why St. Peter the Apostle, like so many other diocesan parishes, has what is known as a Parish Pastoral Council.

“Pastoral council is very important to the parish because anything that comes up, whether it is change in the parish or something the [parishioners] want to build like a grotto, has to come before the Parish Council,” explains Linda Wilharm, Parish Secretary and former member of the Council. “The Parish Council has the final word, especially with things that have to do with finances.”

Linda further points out that this is important to parish life because it ensures that no one person is making decisions for the parish.

“Everything is presented, discussed and voted on,” she says.

continued on page 2

March 11

School Board Meeting

March 13

Liturgical Services, 6:30 p.m.

March 15

Contemporary Mass, 5 p.m.

March 17

St. Patrick's Day, parish office closed

March 20

Liturgical Services, 6:30 p.m.

March 24

Parish Lenten Penance Service, 7 p.m.

March 25

CCD Penance Service, 6:30 p.m.

March 27

K of C Lenten Fish Fry, 5 to 8 p.m.

Liturgical Services, 6:30 p.m.

continued on back cover

Parish Council *continued from front cover*



Council members at their December 2014 meeting. (Back row, from left) Bob Scanlon, Mark Immel, David Wood, Cheryl Ducey, Paula Hubert, Tom Madison, Connie Baran, Roy Ogletree, Susan Pinkston, Kerry Richardson, John Fogarty, and Fr. Paul Cabrita, S.M. (Front row, from left) Dennis Conlon, Msgr. P. James Costigan, Joe Thomas, and JoAnn Smith.

The Parish Council is a unique ministry designed to provide consultation when sought by the pastor, assist in maintaining faithfulness to the parish's mission, and aid the achievement of parish goals. St. Peter the Apostle's Council currently consists of 21 members who are elected, appointed and ex officio, or non-voting. Important parish ministries such as the Parish School, LifeTeen, Finance, and Stewardship are all represented on the committee in order to create a balanced perspective of parish life.

"It's a wonderful experience to talk about things and to get people's opinions as to what is important," says Dennis Conlon, current Parish Council President.

Terms of service for elected members are three years, whereas the term of an appointed member is two.

"It almost takes that long to truly get a handle for what is going on because things occur in seasons within the Church," Linda says.

Meetings take place on a monthly basis and are generally on the fourth Tuesday of each month. Elections typically occur in early spring with the term officially beginning the following September. And while the Parish Council is a unique ministry because of its advisory role to the pastor, it also allows the members to truly see and value the complex workings of parish life, as well as to seek collaborative ways to perfect it.

The Council, which Linda describes as "the backbone of the parish," performs a host of important functions. For example, it is the Council that coordinates the Stewardship Fair, setting up the event and getting people involved.

"As active as I was in the parish, I really didn't know what was going on until I became part of this ministry," says Dennis, who is the former Grand Knight of the Knights of Columbus and currently Chair of the Respect for Life Ministry. "It's one of the most interesting things I've ever done. It's all about doing good for the parish, keeping the parish afloat and informing parishioners. The more parishioners know, the better they and the entire parish can become."

Parish Council members are meant to represent the entire parish as they proceed with making decisions. Members of the Council are able to more fully come to appreciate the multi-faceted aspects of parish life, help build upon the foundations laid before them and plan for the future.

"One member from each family should become a part of this ministry at some point, allowing them to understand, appreciate and develop parish life," Dennis says.

Parishioners who are interested in learning more about the Parish Council or who simply wish to speak to a Council member can contact Dennis Conlon at 912-897-3098.

A Letter from Our Pastor

The Joy of Lent

My Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

Have you ever thought about the joy in sacrifice that Lent provides? Most of us don't delight in sacrifice; in fact, in our daily lives we often do our best to avoid challenges and practices that push us outside of our comfort zones.

In Christianity, there is a beautiful irony between joy and sacrifice, and we are presented with a wonderful opportunity to embrace this in a unique way during Lent. In his 2014 Lenten message, Pope Francis shared, "Lent is a fitting time for self-denial; we would do well to ask ourselves what we can give up in order to help and enrich others by our own poverty."

While giving up sweets in favor of healthy snacks for Lent is a common and noble endeavor, the goal of Lent should not only be a spiritual excuse to lose weight! In choosing acts of self-denial, we are saying "no" to things in order to get into the practice of saying "no" when inclined towards sin, ultimately deepening our faith and our relationship with the Lord. Victory can be found when we deny ourselves and pick up our crosses and hardships in order to grow closer to Christ!

Therein lies the joy. When we grow closer to God by denying our will, we say "yes" to a life of abundance with Him. Our God is a benevolent God; He will not hold back His grace from those who honor Him and choose challenging things to grow and give Him glory. Christ even tells us Himself, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Without question, Lent is a time for conscious penitence and for spiritual preparation for Easter. And, it is important to remember that God loves us whether we make Lenten changes or not. At the same time, Lent provides us an opportunity to make God a greater part of our life, and to take our faith to new levels. Stewardship is a God-centered way of life — a spiritual way of living that, above all, acknowledges God's presence in all we do.

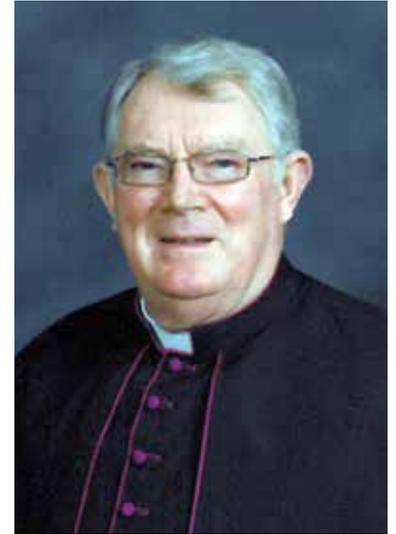
Lent is a time for each and every one of us to do more than simply deny ourselves; we need to welcome God into our lives in greater ways, so that when we get to Holy Week and Easter, we have an even greater appreciation for the sacrifice the Lord made for us. Talk about pure joy!

May you and your loved ones enjoy a holy and joyous Lenten journey, and a blessed Easter.

Yours in Christ,



Msgr. P. James Costigan
Pastor



When we grow closer to God by denying our will, we say "yes" to a life of abundance with Him. Our God is a benevolent God; He will not hold back His grace from those who honor Him and choose challenging things to grow and give Him glory.

“A Unique Opportunity to Worship God” The LifeTeen Praise Band



*The LifeTeen Praise Band with
Msgr. Costigan*

Take a moment and picture thousands of young people on their feet worshipping God at a concert or a conference. Now, consider our own LifeTeen Mass – although it is in a different venue, the experience of the Holy Spirit is the same!

“We are trying to open up the hearts and minds of the young people so that they can enter into a better and deeper relationship with Christ through the Holy Spirit,” says Ron Winders, Coordinator of the LifeTeen Praise Band. “We begin the LifeTeen Masses with praying that the Holy Spirit will come and move you, and we try to help do that by music.”

When he relocated back to Savannah, Ron brought over 15 years of experience in a LifeTeen Band at St. Joseph in Athens, Ga. At St.

Peter, Ron connected with Lisa Fogarty, Youth and RCIA Director, and Renee Singleton, LifeTeen Assistant Coordinator, and shared his vision for the new band.

“Young people today are faced with so many challenges, and they are even looked down upon for being Christian,” Ron says. “This is serious. This is the future of our young people, and we need to connect with them however we can.”

Getting the band started was a grassroots effort at the parish. From inserts in the bulletin to announcements at Mass, the band called for musicians of all ages. Many members of the parish were instrumental in making it a reality, including Lisa and John Fogarty, Leigh and John Ebberwein, and Msgr. Costigan.

“The main reason the LifeTeen Praise Band will be successful at St. Peter is because we have 100 percent buy-in from Monsignor,” Ron says. “Because of his full support, the band has been able to provide a musical format that gets young people excited.”

Since September, the LifeTeen Band has played at the 5 p.m. Mass on the third Sunday of each month. The band members gather bi-monthly to practice, and they use music from the liturgy planning guide provided by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The band members include Ron Winders, who plays drums; Brandon Jacques, who played with Ron in the Athens praise band and is the lead vocalist; Frances

LifeTeen Praise Band *continued from page 4*



Frances Beidler



(from left) Mike McLaughlin, Kevin Wertz, Bob Buckley, Brandon Jacques, Ron Winders, and Frances Beidler

Beidler, who plays keyboard; Kevin Wertz, who plays guitar and is a vocalist; Mike McLaughlin, who plays guitar; Eddie Seginack, who plays percussion; and Bob Buckley, who plays bass.

“We’d like to add more singers and players, and any experience level is fine as long as your heart is in the right place,” Ron says. “We’d really want to add a violinist or a cellist. We also need sound engineers.”

The LifeTeen Band has also spent time with the parish’s LifeTeen group. They’re reaching out to the

youth of Blessed Sacrament and hope to connect with more youth in the area.

Our young people might not be able to attend a concert or a conference, but they have an opportunity right here at St. Peter to connect with Christ, with other faithful people their age and with the Mass in a different way.

“I can see them identifying with the LifeTeen Mass,” Ron says. “The dedication of volunteers has provided the young people of our parish and the Diocese of Savannah a

unique opportunity to worship God and have a deeper relationship with Him in a Mass and a celebration that was designed for them!”

If you feel called to give your time and talent as a vocalist, musician or sound engineer, or have questions about the band, please contact Ron Winders at rwinders2@yahoo.com or 404-247-6585.

Come join the LifeTeen Praise Band as we worship God together on March 15 at the 5 p.m. LifeTeen Mass!

“Young people today are faced with so many challenges, and they are even looked down upon for being Christian. This is serious. This is the future of our young people, and we need to connect with them however we can.” – Ron Winders, LifeTeen Praise Band Coordinator

Stewardship of the Cross

The liturgical year is such a gift to us. As we turn the pages of the calendar, reflecting on the life of Christ, we have the opportunity to consider the most sublime events in the history of mankind. Of these events, perhaps none is more beautiful and worthy of contemplation than the one we are about to commemorate — Jesus' sacrifice of Himself for us on the Cross.

It is fitting and, at the same time, paradoxical. It is fitting that God should do it, because only an infinite God could rid us of the infinite debt we owed by our sin. It is paradoxical that He not only did it, but wanted to do it out of pure love for us, His lowly creatures. What is Jesus trying to show us? Even more staggering, what is He really asking when He exhorts us, in turn, to take up our cross and follow Him?

Jesus freely gave His life for the Church, and He calls us to do the same. Some of us may in fact give our entire lives for the Church. But for most of us, this giving takes place by a series of daily actions, both large and small, of Christ-like, sacrificial love — specifically, by giving our time, talent and treasure for the good of the Church. And yet, by joining these actions with His, we have the chance to participate in that very same sacrifice. This month, let us take the time to examine our hearts and actions in light of Jesus' as we journey with Him toward the Cross.

Jesus gave Himself unselfishly and excessively.

Consider the manner of His sacrifice — one drop of Christ's blood would have been more than sufficient to

save the entire human race, and yet Our Lord Jesus chose to shed every last bit. From start to finish, Jesus showed us by His passion that He wanted to do more than what was merely sufficient. If there was more He could give, He gave it. He never stopped to count the cost or to look for what He could get in return.

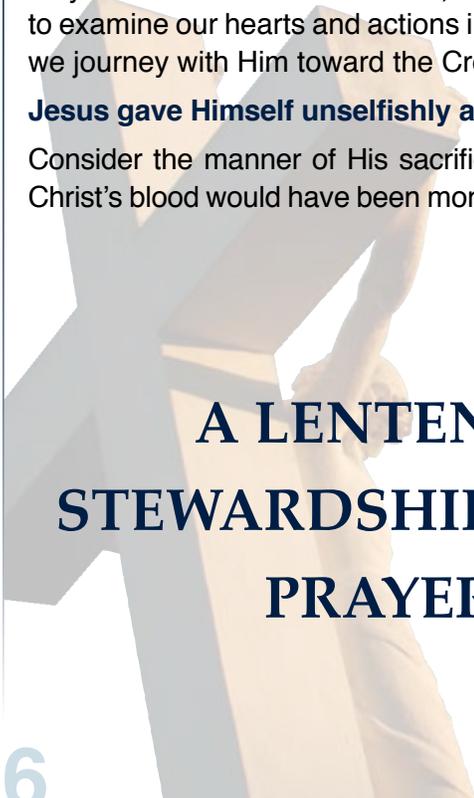
Jesus made His sacrifice a supreme act of love for the Church.

Counter-cultural even to this day, Jesus actually upheld sacrifice as desirable — the most perfect way to show our love: "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (Jn. 15:13). In His infinite wisdom, Jesus now offers this path to us as the way to holiness: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily and follow me" (Lk. 9:23).

Jesus gave Himself willingly and even joyfully.

"No one takes [My life] from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have the power to lay it down, and I have the power to take it again" (Jn. 10:18). At the first Eucharist, Jesus even went so far as to say, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you" (Lk. 22:15). Needless to say, the Passover sacrifice to which Jesus referred was not a symbolic one, but was in fact His very Body and Blood He would give for us through the sacrifice of the Cross.

Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make our hearts more like Yours.



A LENTEN STEWARDSHIP PRAYER

*"O my God, teach me to be generous:
to serve You as You deserve to be served;
to give without counting the cost;
to fight without fear of being wounded;
to work without seeking rest;
and to spend myself without expecting any reward,
but the knowledge that I am doing your Holy will."
— St. Ignatius of Loyola*

Parishioners and
Parents Offering
Support to Our School

St. Peter the Apostle School Board



(Back row, from left) Bill Bell, President Cheryl Ducey, Scott Nelson, Brian Thorstad, Helena Russell. (Front row, from left) Michelle Gavin, Kathleen McCarthy, Vice President Lori Hrabie, Secretary Connie Baran, Kerry Richardson, Fr. Paul, Sebastian Verdis, Principal Joe Thomas.

Many of us are familiar with the age-old phrase, “It takes a village to raise a child” – this is certainly the case as our faculty, parents and parish community offer their own unique gifts to provide our children with a strong Catholic education. But this is especially true when we consider the St. Peter the Apostle School Board, which serves the school in many essential ways.

The St. Peter the Apostle School Board is made up of 11 voting members – who serve for three-year terms – and numerous ex-officio members. Each member brings their unique perspective to the group, and together they offer the school support through advice and new ideas.

“The School Board is made up of a diverse body of people that make it well-rounded,” says current School Board President Cheryl Ducey. “We are advisory in nature, so we are basically trying to give advice to the principal, vice principal, and Msgr. Costigan. We have a feel for what is going on in the community, because we are parents or parishioners who are involved in the parish. We get feedback from the community and can say what the parents are looking for. Those of us in public education, like me, have our ear to the ground as far

as what’s going on in education, so we can bring that back to the School Board. We try to bring our diverse backgrounds and knowledge of the community and the parish into one room and hash out ideas and give advice.”

The School Board is divided into several standing committees that work together to plan and support all aspects of school life, and to make sure the many working parts of the school are running smoothly.

“The Policy and Planning Committee looks at the three to five-year long-term plan for the school,” Cheryl says. “The Catholic Identity Committee promotes the Catholic identity throughout the parish and school. We have a Buildings and Grounds Committee, and they are constantly looking around the school campus and prioritizing the needs of the school. The Marketing and Development Committee is a huge one – they are looking for ways to market and promote the school. The Finance Committee works in conjunction with the principal, assistant principal, parish finance head, Monsignor, and the parish bookkeeper to develop our budget. Then the Executive Committee is made up of our pastor, the president, vice president and secretary of the School Board, and the school principal. If need be, they are called together

for matters of importance, then bring their decisions back to the School Board as a whole.”

For Cheryl, serving on the School Board these last three years has been a great privilege. Both of her children were baptized and confirmed at St. Peter the Apostle, and attended St. Peter the Apostle Catholic School through the eighth grade, so Cheryl sees her time on the School Board as a way to give back to the parish and school, which she says have given her family so much.

“It’s important to me to give back to the school and church,” Cheryl says. “I am very proud of St. Peter and its record, and I think it’s done great things for our children. I just love the great faith-based Catholic education. We are producing wonderful young adults. They win numerous leadership and academic and sports awards. It’s a very well-rounded education and school, and I’m very proud to be a part of it. I consider St. Peter to be a treasure, and I want to help it grow and maintain viability. Hopefully it’ll be around for my grandchildren!”

For more information on the St. Peter the Apostle Catholic School Board and the wonderful work that they do to support our school, please contact Cheryl Ducey via email at cheryl.l@live.com.



Saint Peter the Apostle

Catholic Parish

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Upcoming Events *continued from front cover*

March 31

Chrim Mass at Cathedral, 7 p.m.

April 2

Holy Thursday Mass, 7 p.m.
(followed by Exposition of Blessed
Sacrament)

April 3

Good Friday Stations of the Cross, 3 p.m.

Chaplet of Divine Mercy, 4 p.m.

Liturgical Services and Veneration of the
Cross, 7 p.m.

Live Stations of the Cross by the Youth

April 4

Holy Saturday, Anticipated Mass of the
Resurrection, 8 p.m.

April 5

Easter Sunday

Masses at 7:30 a.m., 9 a.m. (Children's Choir),
10:30 a.m. (Adult Choir) and 12 Noon

Chaplet of Divine Mercy, 3 p.m.

April 6

Parish office closed

April 6-10

Chaplet of Divine Mercy, 6 p.m.

April 11 & 12

Chaplet of Divine Mercy, 3 p.m.

April 12

K of C Second Sunday Breakfast

April 18

First Communion Retreat, 9 a.m. to noon

April 19

Contemporary Mass, 5 p.m.

Saturday, April 25

2015 Spring Extravaganza *Dancing through the Decades and Cash Raffle*

*Live music by
The Rouges, Dinner,
Ballroom Dance Show,
and Silent Auction.*

Event tickets \$35 each

Cash Raffle tickets \$50 each

Win \$5000 or free tuition for
a year! Plus other cash
prizes!

Space is limited.

***Buy your tickets from
the church office or at
saintpetertheapostle.com***