

THE CATCH



In This Issue

LENTEN MISSION

AT-MASS STEWARDSHIP

GET READY TO SING
AGAIN!

A PASSION FOR
RE-EVANGELIZATION



LENTEN MISSION

BY MARIO TONEGUZZI

A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY WITH THE DIVINE COMEDY

Parishioners at St. Peter's are being invited this year to take a journey with writer Dante, through his literary treasure *The Divine Comedy*, as part of their own Lenten spiritual journeys.

The parish is offering a virtual mission during Lent with Bishop Barron leading people in a series of six videos discussing Dante's fall to the depths of hell and then his resurrection to purgatory and ultimately paradise.

"The spiritual journey through Lent is integral to our life and it will actually tie in a little bit with this course that Bishop Barron is going to present online with us this Lenten season," said Fr. Jonathan Gibson, St. Peter's pastor.

"I think the whole thing about Lent is that it's a journey and this is one of the fundamental themes that we see

throughout the Bible. We are pilgrims and we truly are on a journey."

Fr. Jonathan says a passage in St. Matthew's Gospel (Chapter 7) puts it well: "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it."

The key for Fr. Jonathan are the two verbs in the passage. When Jesus talks about the wide road, that's easy and many take it. It's there. It's obvious. But the road that leads to life is hard and there are few who find it.

"That's the key difference. In our life as Christians, and particularly during the Lenten season, we're invited into this consideration of this more narrow way that is one we need to find. And within our Catholic tradition, this has been an emphasis for 2,000 years that this season of Lent provides a special opportunity for us to think about *The Way*," he says.

The Way has three components to it - a deepening life of prayer, a greater attentiveness in the giving of alms and fasting.



The Divine Comedy was completed by Dante Alighieri in 1320 just before his death in 1321. It's his vision of the afterlife where he travels through Hell, Purgatory and Heaven, accompanied by three people on his journey - the first is the philosopher Virgil who represents reason, from there he meets Beatrice who embodies the fullness of theology, then St. Bernard of Clairvaux who represents mysticism and a devotion to Mother Mary.

Continued on Page 2

This program falls nicely into part of the initiative Pope Francis has taken in advance of a Synod that will happen in 2023 as he is inviting the Church universal to engage in important conversations with the theme of Walking Together as the Church.

People are invited to consider two fundamental questions of the Synod: How have you experienced journeying together as the Church? What steps does the Holy Spirit invite us to take in order to grow in our journeying together?

During Lent, St. Peter's will also be offering its parishioners two opportunities, most likely in virtual meetings, to consider these questions.

"We are moving into a post COVID experience and what is it going to mean for us to grow in our journey together," says Father Jonathan. "I see this very much as part of our Lenten invitation for 2022."

The Bishop Barron series at St. Peter's will begin March 8 at 7:45 p.m. to 9 p.m. through the Zoom platform. See the bulletin and website for registration.

St. Peter's will once again be offering the Stations of the Cross devotion every Friday during Lent and there is hope the Church will be able to do the Outdoor Way of the Cross on Good Friday morning which is April 15 this year.

Lent begins this year with Ash Wednesday on March 2.



AT-MASS STEWARDSHIP

BY JOY GREGORY

VOLUNTEERS ENERGIZE MASS AT ST. PETER'S

The Catholic Mass gives the faithful a place to bathe their hearts and minds in the sacramental gifts offered by the liturgies of the Word and the Eucharist. The next time you attend Mass at St. Peter's, in person or via the internet, close your eyes and give thanks for one more sacred gift: Catholic stewardship. While it's easy to participate in a Mass without thinking about all of the faithful stewards it takes to offer that sacred service—we cannot experience any Mass without their contributions.



At St. Peter's, many stewards contribute to the sacred moments Catholics hold dear. While some roles have changed in the pandemic, and others might not be needed at a typical morning Mass, traditional Sunday Masses require ushers, lectors, altar servers, collectors and collection counters. The celebration also requires Eucharistic ministers, audio-visual support, music ministers and sacristans.

With current restrictions, St. Peter's has more than 30 active Eucharistic ministers, says Stephen Cross. He manages that group's schedule and helps prepare lay parishioners to be Eucharistic ministers. A long-time parish volunteer, Cross says he is humbled by the act of giving Holy Communion to fellow parishioners.

There is a small sense of service, but for me personally, it's an act of significant connection with the person receiving Communion. What also resonates with me is that connection to Christ all the way back in time."



The protocols that helped keep us all stay safe also brought us closer together.

All of the at-Mass ministries have a coordinator, explains Volunteer Coordinator Kathy Ervin. Each ministry manages its own volunteers, but can reach out to Ervin for support. Ervin, who's also a Eucharistic minister and chairs Finance Council, says her own stewardship roles at St. Peter's have changed over time. These days, she also helps with Faith and Bible studies, managing some groups on her own and working with Parish Council chair Dixie Hawkins on others. Led by what she learned during the pandemic, Ervin recently helped start a new ministry for Spiritual Direction.



Dorothy Beaulieu enjoys being part of the Decorating Committee led by Lilo Casasbuenas. That committee is especially busy for Easter, Christmas and all Marian feast days. Like many of that group's volunteers, Beaulieu once offered to lend a hand, then stayed involved when she realized how much she enjoyed the people and the work, especially since it contributes to how parishioners experience Mass at St. Peter's.

Pandemic lessons

Ervin encourages parishioners to call the parish office if they think they'd like to take on an at-Mass stewardship role. Some opportunities may be temporarily limited by the pandemic, but most ministries want to bolster their ranks. She also expects at least one volunteer-run program started in the pandemic to assume a new focus in the months ahead.

In the early days of the pandemic, parishioner and long-time CWL member Jan Myhre stepped up to organize the "how" of public health protocols that included wearing masks and registering to attend Mass.



When Myhre left to take another role at the Diocese, Ervin assumed the role of Safety Coordinator—and was pleasantly surprised by the experience. The simple act of checking people into Mass and then guiding them to a pew helped make St. Peter's an unexpectedly kinder and more connected community, says Ervin. "There's no doubt about it. The protocols that helped keep us all stay safe also brought us closer together."

While the details are still being worked out, St. Peter's efforts to make the parish a safe and welcoming space in the pandemic set the stage for a new welcoming committee, says Ervin. As with other volunteer roles at Mass, interested parishioners can leave their names with parish office staff.

AND THE PEOPLE WILL SING (AGAIN!)

BY JOY GREGORY

MUSICIANS AND SINGERS WELCOME

Anyone who has attended a Mass at St. Peter's knows the parish is blessed with an especially-vibrant music ministry. What you might not know is that every choir is looking for more instrumentalists and singers, especially as the parish transitions out of some health protocols, says Penny Winnick, Music Ministry Coordinator. She also directs the 11:30 a.m. choir.



Each of the Sunday Masses at St. Peter's (including 5 p.m. Saturday), features a unique choir. Most daily services also have an instrumentalist who leads Mass attendees in prayerful song, says Winnick.

During the pandemic, St. Peter's closely followed Diocesan directions that were enacted to stem the transmission of COVID-19. Those directions restricted the way sacred music could be used to support the liturgy.

Behind the scenes, however, music ministers still met, albeit via the internet. Those meetings, typically attended by choir directors, helped maintain relationships.



They also gave choir leaders a chance to talk about which choirs would serve at special Masses like Easter and Christmas, says Winnick. At a meeting held in early February, for example, choir leaders discussed the Lenten Masses and Easter celebrations.

"The choirs operate quite independently, but we share a commitment to presenting beautiful music that faithfully serves the liturgy and invites participation from the congregation," explains Winnick.

Parishioners interested in joining a choir can contact Winnick directly, or reach out to the parish office. They can also approach choir leaders after Mass.

Server's Prayer

Loving Father, Creator of the Universe

**You call all people to worship
To be transformed by the power of
your Spirit.**

**I thank you for having called me to
assist In the Holy Sacrifice
of the Mass.**

**May I be worthy of the trust placed in
me and through my example and
service bring others closer to you.**

**I ask this in the name of
Jesus Christ your Son
who is Lord forever and ever.**

Amen

FRANCESCA AMBROSINO'S PASSION FOR RE-EVANGELIZATION

BY MARIO TONEGUZZI

GOD'S CALLING FOR HER

Francesca Ambrosino has a passion for re-evangelization and, in her role as Sacrament Coordinator at St. Peter's, her mission is to give parents the tools and knowledge they need to pass along the faith to their children in preparation for their sacraments.

Ambrosino, who was previously at St. Michael's in the same role, has been at St. Peter's since September of last year where she takes care of school-aged children for First Reconciliation, First Communion and Confirmation.

"I tag team with the priests and we do the teaching," she says. "What that looks like right now is we've just been teaching the parents because we don't have capacity for kids here right now.

"The parents go home and teach the kids."

The 25-year-old is a graduate of Notre Dame High School in Calgary and then took a degree in Social and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Calgary before completing her education at the St. Therese Institute of Faith and Mission in Bruno, Saskatchewan where she received a Diploma in Catholic Studies.

"I knew that I wanted to get into some kind of Catholic ministry work. I didn't know what that was when I finished school. Then the opening came at St. Michael's . . . I grew there and I loved it but it was only part-time and when St. Peter's was hiring, I decided I'd come here," says Ambrosino.



"My passion when it comes to evangelization is for the new evangelization and the new evangelization is aimed towards re-evangelizing Catholics and especially I like working with adult Catholics. I didn't know where that passion would take me but the Lord did.

Our approach is that when you evangelize or re-evangelize the parents, that's when it will trickle down to the children because there's only so much you can teach a child unless their parents are supporting them. I mean, that's the first Church. What we try to do is reach the parents and from there you reach the children. This is where God has brought me right now."



"When Ambrosino was young, she attended the Our Lady of Grace Church which at the time served the city's Italian community. Then as she grew older she attended Ascension parish because it was in the neighbourhood she lived.

She says the critical moment in her life came in her first year at the University of Calgary where she encountered the Catholic Christian Outreach group.

"I took faith studies with them. I got involved in their events and from there it was my everything," adds Ambrosino.

"Being a Catholic has made all the difference in my life. Especially during university. It's such a critical time when everyone's looking for themselves and they're trying to figure stuff out. It gets you through everything. The wonderful thing about CCO is they're very particular about teaching people about a personal relationship with Jesus, which I think is missing in a lot of Catholics' lives. There's no understanding of what personal relationship means and that's what's carried forward in my approach to teaching. That's the first and most important thing I'll teach every parent. It's a personal relationship with Jesus because that's the foundation of our faith."