

# UPON THIS ROCK

## THE COMMUNITY VOICE OF ST. PETER CHURCH

ST. PETER CHURCH, NORTH RIDGEVILLE

FALL 2010

### The History of St. Peter Church

*“Thou Art Peter and Upon this Rock I Will Build My Church”*

*Editor’s Note: Part 2 of the History of St. Peter Church appeared in the last newsletter and covered the years from 1889-1909.*

Father Joseph Trapp successfully oversaw St. Peter Church for 11 years. During that time the Holy Name Society was established, electric lighting was added to the chapel and convent, and a new school building was erected. There were hardships during that time as well. With the onset of the World War I, 15 of St. Peter’s own young men were called to serve, and the Spanish influenza resulted in the closing of the school once again.

The Rev. John Rhein followed Father Trapp and administered the running of the church from 1921 until 1938, completing the construction of a new church with stained glass windows imported from Germany. A new rectory was also built. These are the buildings that we have come to know today. Saint Peter Church was proudly known for having the most modernly equipped buildings in the Cleveland Diocese. In addition to funding the stained glass windows entirely on their own, the parishioners



also helped to elect two of their members to the Ridgeville Township Trustees in an effort to protect the interest of Catholicism within the town.

In 1930 Sunday instruction classes for children who attended public school were added. Despite the fact that the Depression was creating great hardships for all, activities at St. Peter’s were ever increasing. In 1936, in an effort to provide Rhein with some much needed help, a new

assistant, the Rev. Joseph Buescher was appointed by the bishop. Sadly however, Rhein was hospitalized in 1938 and died at the age of 62 from a cerebral hemorrhage at St. John’s Hospital.

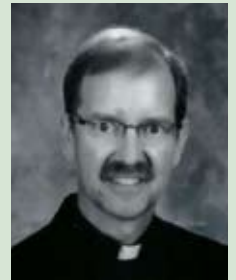
Rhein had served the parish community of St. Peter for 17 years and in loving remembrance of their pastor, who celebrated his first Mass with the parishioners on Christmas Day, the Christmas services were broadcast from the church tower for the first time ever. Songs celebrating the birth of Christ could be heard throughout the township that day.

Father Rhein is buried in the parish cemetery.

### Fr. Bob’s Corner

Dear Parishioners,

As a culture we value education. We understand that knowledge is the key that opens many doors. Whether we are in the workplace or the marketplace, the more we know, the better off we are.



Jesus understood the transformative power of knowledge. In one of his parables, Jesus described his word as a seed. “The sower sows the word.” (Mark 4:14) Jesus knew that his message had the power to transform the landscape of one’s life. He knew that if his message were to take root in a person’s life, it would make a person’s life truly fruitful.

Since its founding in 1875, St. Peter Church has valued educating the whole person. In 1876, one year after the church was established, St. Peter School was organized. In its earliest days the parish proclaimed the message of Christ at the celebration of the Eucharist and since that time the seeds of both natural and supernatural truth were sown into the hearts of our young people. They were given the keys of knowledge that open the doors of opportunity in

*Continued on page 2*

## Fr. Bob's Corner

God's kingdom and earthly society.

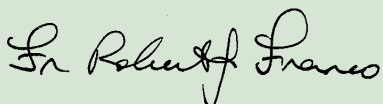
St. Peter's still believes in education. Though school was out for summer, St. Peter's Vacation Bible School flourished. Over 120 young people from preschool through fifth grade, along with many teen and adult helpers, participated in the "High Seas Adventure" and learned of the mighty love of God through the Sacred Scriptures. Many of our adult parishioners continued their growth in faith through the "Stump the Pastor" sessions and the *My Life with the Saints* book study.

As we approach the season of fall, our St. Peter School and preschool have reopened. Our Parish School of Religion (PSR) – the educational process we have for young people attending public schools – and Confirmation program will soon commence.

This year St. Peter's will also be offering an adult education component that will be held at the same time as PSR and will be held one Monday a month from October through April. These adult sessions are open to anyone. These classes will be geared toward assisting parents in understanding what their children are learning in religion/PSR class. They will also help parents speak with their children about the faith.

I think it is fitting to end this letter with the words of St. Peter as he ended his second letter: *But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory now and to the day of eternity. Amen!* (II Peter 3:18)

Sincerely in Christ,



Fr. Bob Franco  
Pastor, St. Peter Parish

## Knights of Columbus active men's organization

The Knights of Columbus is a fraternal organization of Catholic men, named in honor of Christopher Columbus. Through a joint venture, men of St. Julie Billiart and St. Peter parishes who are members of Knights of Columbus Council #7970, provide activities for others in the community and for their church.

The Knights have sponsored events that range from the youth activities of the Squires, boys ages 10 to 18, to the Hooked on Fishing program, to pancake breakfasts. Community activities also include support for the Lucy Idol Center and families in need. K. of C. members can be seen frying fish for fish dinners, grilling chicken for the annual chicken barbecue during North Ridgeville's Corn Festival and flipping pancakes for church-sponsored breakfasts.



The North Ridgeville K. of C. Council began in 1982 with just 41 members. Today, the Council draws members from both St. Peter's and St. Julie's parishes, and boasts a membership of 188. The initial leaders were Grand Knights Bill Comerford and Gary Crone. The present Grand Knight is Chris Nagel.

Throughout the world, the organization has 1.7 million members. Any man interested in joining the K. of C. may contact Ted Laponi at [tlapponi@oh.rr.com](mailto:tlapponi@oh.rr.com) or Chris Nagel at [cnagelmol@aol.com](mailto:cnagelmol@aol.com). Meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month.

## New teachers join school family

On entering St. Peter School, visitors are greeted by a bulletin board declaring the school's theme for the 2010-2011 school year, "All Are Welcome." In keeping with that theme, the school announced the addition of three new teachers to the St. Peter School family.

Marilyn Verbas, well-known throughout the school as a substitute teacher extraordinaire, will now be teaching at the junior high level. She brings a wealth of teaching experience to her new position. Debby Sisson was the third grade teacher at St. Charles Parish in Parma before going on maternity leave. She

will assume the same role at St. Peter School. Stacie Schwark comes to the school from Sts. Cyril and Methodius in Lakewood, which closed at the end of the past school year. She will be the new preschool teacher.

Former preschool instructor, Holly Trampush, will be teaching the first graders, as Molly Reichle is on maternity leave.

St. Peter Parish warmly welcomes these three new teachers and asks God's blessings on them and Mrs. Reichle, as well as the rest of the staff, students and families for the upcoming school year.

## Tilling the soil and cultivating friendships in parish garden



Steve Loparo, 10, shows off a watermelon that is ripening in Peter's Garden.

Churchgoers get a chance to pick up some of the fresh vegetables after Mass.

What could be more fun than getting down and dirty to plant your very own garden and watch as tiny plants send out shoots that eventually develop into fruits and veggies.

Some members of St. Peter Parish did just that in the spring and if you look beyond the school playground, you'll see some crops that have that good-enough-to-eat- look, with others well on their way.

According to Vince Loparo, chairman of the parish garden committee, the idea began taking root when Fr. Bob Franco, the pastor, mentioned having a "community garden." Loparo mulled the idea and when he asked Father Bob where he wanted the garden, he knew turning the site into tillable soil could be a challenge.

"The ground was full of weeds, 5 feet high in the summer and 3 feet of snow in the winter," he said. But Loparo figured he could use his tractor to work the ground and Tom McCleary volunteered his brush hog to aid the soil preparation. Before long the garden committee was making plans for spring planting and

volunteers were eager to get started.

"Mike Valletta came up with a list of guidelines," Loparo said, adding that the committee didn't want to limit the types of foods to grow in the garden, with one stipulation, there was to be nothing "permanent."

Eventually 12 parishioners began plotting their spaces; some handling two plots and others, three. "Each person was responsible for their own garden," including watering, when necessary, the chairman explained, adding. "All the community garden plants were donated."

Fr. Bob blessed the plots, but despite the invocation, the next morning it was discovered that deer had paid a visit and devoured six tomatoes. However the parish gardeners were not deterred and before long the first zucchinis were ready for harvesting, followed by cucumbers, lettuce and eggplants. Along the way, the gardeners learned a hint that it is hoped will keep deer from trespassing next year – Irish Spring soap. Loparo said he cuts the bars into fourths and attaches each to a stake. When the soap color fades, it's time for a replacement.

Two months after the first plants went

into the ground, Sunday Mass-goers were treated to a table of fresh produce available just outside the church. The homegrown edibles were free for the taking, but a jar stood nearby for parishioners who wanted to donate to next year's "seed" money. Some of the garden's bounty will also be used for the outreach community meals.

A few weeks ago pumpkin seeds were planted in a section separate from the main garden to allow room for the vines to roam and under McCleary's watchful eye the ripened pumpkins are expected to be used as fundraisers. "He's an expert pumpkin grower," Loparo said, adding that there are small pie pumpkins and large ones that can be turned into jack-o-lanterns.

The parish garden has had an added benefit beside producing vegetables, the chairman said. Visitors to the cemetery have been drawn to the site and it's become sort of a "meeting place," Loparo said. "We have met so many nice people; we're not only growing food, we're bringing people together."

## Women of all ages and all stages welcomed in friendship

The Mothers' Club of St. Peter Church is not for mothers only, which is why the phrase, "Women in Friendship" has been added to the group's original name.

"A lot of people thought it was just for mothers," Mary Lou Cole, the club's co-treasurer and historian, said. But rather it is a Christian effort to welcome women of all ages, at all stages of life – married, unmarried, divorced, separated, widowed and with or without children.

Mim Nagy founded the organization and opened its first meeting on Nov. 26, 1990 at the Fathers of St. Joseph in Avon. As they celebrate the beginning of the 20th year of the Mothers' Club, Nagy has been honored as its matriarch.

Cole explained that the purpose of the association is to enrich one another's lives.



"We are a place where you can be yourself and where you can grow in friendship, love, knowledge and creative spirit," she said. "We are not a place where people will be judgmental, critical or give advice."

The twice-a-month meetings consist of speakers, crafts, programs, outings, holiday parties and a wide variety of other activities.

Presently, the women are attending Fr.

Bob Franco's classes on the lives of the saints, which Cole finds very interesting. As to be expected, attendance increases during the summer months, while in the winter with darkness descending early and the weather often hazardous, members sometimes opt to stay at home.

Cole explained that the club is well-structured and consists of bylaws and a board. The present board is comprised of Dolly McAndrews, who serves as chairperson and treasurer, Kathleen Forthofer, spiritual director, Betty Vencel, recording secretary and Cole.

Women of all ages are invited to join the Mothers' Club – Women in Friendship, which meets the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month at 7 p.m. in the Galilee Room in the Parish Center.

## PTU gearing up for Family Fun Nights

It's Saturday night. You want to get out of the house and have some fun with your kids, but you don't want to go broke in the process. What's a parent to do?

Go to St. Peter Parish Family Fun Nights!

Sponsored by the PTU, Family Fun Nights are open to all parish families – not just the parish school – and offer fun, family-oriented activities and monthly movie nights at little or no cost to the participants.

"Our goal is to bring families together for fun activities that everyone can enjoy," said Laura Krese, committee chairperson. "We want to focus on having a good time, build a sense of community among our parish families, and create lasting



memories for them."

The first Family Fun Night will be Sept. 18 at 7:30 p.m. in the gym. There will be an ice cream social and the movie

*Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs*. On Oct. 15, there will be a Fall Festival with a costume parade, crafts, games and refreshments, as well as horse and wagon rides and a pumpkin patch, courtesy of

St. Peter's Garden Committee. That month's movie night, featuring the film *Casper*, is set for Oct. 23 at 7 p.m. in the church basement.

Take your favorite board games and some snacks to the gym on Nov. 13 at 7 p.m. and go to the church basement on Nov. 20 at 7 p.m. to watch *Curious George*. Plans are in the works for the Scholastic Book Fair to be held on one



of these two dates, so parents may be able to sneak in some early Christmas shopping!

Tell the kids to be extra good,

because Santa will be coming to St. Peter's for breakfast on Dec. 12; if that doesn't get you in the Christmas spirit, try watching *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* on Dec. 21 at 7 p.m. in the church basement. Be sure to check

the church bulletins and PTU newsletters for further information on these great activities, as well as events being planned for 2011.

Contact Laura Krese at [ptumomsrock@yahoo.com](mailto:ptumomsrock@yahoo.com). or call (440) 353-9542 with questions or to help with an event.

Let the family fun begin!

# St. Peter Parish Picnic



Photos: Mary Ann Tipple

## Bishop celebrates couples married 50 years or more



The Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist in Cleveland was the site of a special celebration on July 25, when Bishop Richard G. Lennon offered Mass for husbands and wives in the Cleveland Catholic Diocese who have been married 50 years or more. Three of the more than 250 couples attending the liturgy are members of St. Peter Parish – Joe and Joyce Solomon, whose 51st wedding anniversary was June 13; Robert and Shirley Veh, who marked their golden anniversary on June 4 and Tom and Carol Klear who were married 50 years on Aug. 6.

In honor of the occasion, each registered couple received a printed blessing on their marriage, along with a photo of the bishop. The prayer read:

*“Look down from Heaven with favor, O Lord, and bestow your blessings upon (names inscribed) who celebrate their Golden Jubilee of Marriage. They thank you for their many years together, your helping them throughout their life together, and you being with them in their need. May they continue to abide in your love, experience the joy you give them, and grow in their love for one another. Through Christ our Lord, Amen.”*

In his homily, Lennon continued the theme of God’s blessing, noting God’s commitment to life and the “precious gift” of creation. He stressed to the couples the special blessing they have enjoyed through the many years of their marriage and asked that, as their lives together continue, they use wisely, “the blessing God has given...what a witness.”

## Serving God’s people gives Koberna ‘joy and peace’

The next time you see Cheryle Koberna, ministerial assistant at St. Peter Parish, be sure to ask about her newest grandchild, Benjamin. Born several days before this interview, the proud grandmother was beaming as she discussed the latest addition to her family.

Koberna and her husband, Dale, celebrated their 32nd anniversary in August and have four children – Jackie, Jessica, Stephanie and Kyle – and three grandchildren, Zachary, a fifth grader at St. Peter School, Emily 2 ½ and baby Benjamin. She is employed full time as a senior project manager for AT&T Corp. and performs her duties as ministerial assistant on a volunteer basis. It was volunteering during her children’s school years that gradually made her realize God was calling her to serve others.

“I really enjoy serving the people of God,” Koberna said. “It’s a way for me to give of my time and talents. I love working with everyone here, I don’t consider this as work; plus, it gives me a lot of joy and peace.”

As ministerial assistant, Koberna’s duties are many and varied. She is in charge of the 10th grade Confirmation program, the Junior High Youth Group and Advent Prayer and Breakfast program. She maintains the parish Web site, co-ordinates the parish calendar (her most challenging task) and handles the training and scheduling of all lecturers, Eucharistic ministers, children’s liturgy ministers, and altar servers. She also plans many of the parish prayer services, which is her favorite role, as well as, “whatever else needs to be done,” she says laughing.

Koberna’s major hope for the parish is that every parishioner will realize that God has given him or her a special gift



and that the gift will be used for the good of the parish.

“What a huge difference that would make for St. Peter’s. I get so excited when I see new names and faces becoming involved in our ministries.”

On a personal level, she is working part time toward a degree in pastoral ministry and is on track to become certified within the next two years. Then Koberna plans on retiring from AT & T to make pastoral ministry her full-time career. “Hopefully, I can remain here at St. Peter’s, but I am open to wherever the Holy Spirit calls me.”

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

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Please submit news articles by November 1

## A Window into a Saint's Life

### *First woman to be canonized in the 20th century*

St. Rita of Cascia was born in 1386 at Rocca Porrena, Italy to Antonio and Amata Lotti. Since the couple was advanced in years, Rita's birth seemed an answer to their prayers.

Rita brought much joy to her parents. She was a cheerful, amiable and pious and spent much time in prayer. When she was 12, she wanted to consecrate herself to God. Pious though her parents were, they refused her pleas, and instead at 18, gave her in marriage to the town watchman, an ill-tempered young man. The couple had two sons, who inherited their father's temperament.

After 18 years of marriage, Rita's husband was murdered by an old enemy. His sons swore vengeance on their father's killers, but through Rita's prayers, they forgave the offenders, however both sons died shortly afterward.

Rita's former desire to consecrate herself to God in the religious life returned. Three times she asked to be admitted to the Augustinian Nuns, but her request was refused each time and she returned home to Rocca Porrena.

One night, as Rita was praying, she heard someone knock on the door and call her name. Miraculously she was transported to the Augustinian Monastery. Astonished at the miracle, the nuns received Rita into the monastery.

St. Rita lived an austere life and performed severe penances. After hearing a homily on the Passion of Christ, she returned to her cell. Kneeling before her crucifix she prayed, "Let me, my Jesus, share in Thy suffering, at least



of one of Thy thorns." Her prayer was answered. Suddenly one of the thorns fell from Christ's crown of thorns and imbedded itself in her forehead so deeply that she could not remove it. The wound became worse until gangrene set in. Because of the odor from the wound, she was denied the companionship of

the other sisters for 15 years.

When St. Rita was dying, she asked a relative to bring her a rose from her old home at Rocca Porrena. Although it was not the season for roses, the relative found one in full bloom. For this reason roses are blessed in the saint's honor. She died May 22, 1456 and in life and after death she has worked many miracles.

When St. Rita died, her cell glowed with heavenly light, while the great bell of the monastery rang out. A relative, who had a paralyzed arm, touched her sacred remains, and was cured. A carpenter, who had known the saint, offered to make the coffin and immediately, he recovered the use of his stiffened hands.

After her death, St. Rita's face became radiant, while the odor from her wound was like that of the roses she loved. Her body has remained well preserved to this day.

St. Rita of Cascia was the first woman to be canonized in the Great Jubilee at the beginning of the 20th Century, on May 24, 1900. She is pictured in the stained glass window on the west side of St. Peter Church – the second window after the confessional.

## Knowing Your Faith

### *Special instruments are used in Benediction*

You have seen them used numerous times at Mass or during Benediction but what exactly are a **monstrance** and a **thurible**?

The monstrance, also known as an ostensorium, is a portable receptacle used for the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and its use dates back to the 13th century. The Blessed Sacrament is placed in a lunette to hold it in an upright position so it can be placed in the monstrance and clearly seen. Monstrances are typically made of gold or silver with crystal or glass employed to allow the contents to be easily distinguished. Many lunettes are surrounded, like the sun with rays focusing the eye to the Blessed Sacrament. Monstrances have also been used to exhibit relics of a saint.



The thurible or censer is a vessel suspended by chains and is used to burn incense at solemn Mass, vespers, Benediction, processions and other celebrations of the Church including Christian burials and Ordination. A thurible is a cup or bowl shape that rests on a firm base. It is made up of a hollow movable pan for holding ignited charcoal, a lid or covering, and four chains that are approximately three feet long. Three of the chains connect around the bowl to a disc; the fourth is used to raise and lower the lid on the censer and also connects to the disc.

The proper way to carry a censer/thurible is to grasp the chains just under the disc. The censer must be kept six or eight inches from the ground and is swung back and forth creating a current of air that disburse the scent of the burning incense.



## Save the Date

Labor Day  
September 6

Fall Festival  
October 15

Thanksgiving  
November 25

Advent Starts  
November 28

Outreach Meals  
Last Wednesday  
of the Month

## 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 - 4:40 p.m. Saturdays

## Community

Holy Name Society

Knights of Columbus

Mothers Club

Parish Life Commission

Social Justice Commission

The Vincentians

Senior Saints

## 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

### Deacon:

Rev. Mr. Don Jankowski

### Principal:

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

### Music Director:

James Akoury

### Ministerial Assistant:

Cheryl Koberna

### Director of Religious Education:

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

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