



Cathedral of St. Joseph

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Special Vocations Issue

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ENSURING THE GOOD STEWARDSHIP OF RESURRECTION CEMETERY

How We Can Take Ownership and Care with Great Dignity

Have you thought about where you will be buried? Do you know who will care for the grounds where you rest? Death is certainly a topic many of us avoid thinking about on a regular basis, but it is a sure thing for all of us. And beyond that, as Catholics, we know that death is not the end. It is a stepping stone into life eternal. Therefore, the Church directs us to care for the body after death with dignity and love.

"Burying the dead is a corporal work of mercy and thus something we are called to undertake as Christians," Fr. Jones says. "Also, since the Church teaches that we believe in the resurrection of the body, it is important for us to have an understanding of the dignity of the mortal remains of the human body."

Accordingly, Fr. Jones encourages us to consider Resurrection Cemetery as both the place we choose to be buried and as a place we choose to care for here and now.

"Resurrection Cemetery has been entrusted to us and to the other parishes in Jefferson City," Fr. Jones says. "As such, it is a gift bestowed upon us by the Church to not only maintain but, like the stewards in the parable who were given five or two talents, we are called to make the ministry and the witness of the cemetery grow so that all Catholics in our area will be encouraged to be buried in the consecrated grounds of the cemetery."

Resurrection Cemetery has deep roots in our Catholic heritage. It was established after St. Peter's original cemeteries reached capacity and now serves all three Jefferson City parishes. Oversight is shared by parish representatives through the Catholic Cemeteries Board to ensure continued care, planning, and prayerful dignity.



Resurrection Cemetery



St. Peter Cemetery #1



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A Spiritual Stewardship Journey Through Advent

The Advent season is a cherished time in the Catholic calendar, representing the period of preparation and anticipation leading up to the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. It serves as a reminder that the essence of Christmas transcends materialism and calls for a deeper spiritual connection. Stewardship – which emphasizes responsible and generous use of our time, talents, and treasure – provides a meaningful framework for Catholics to observe Advent in a way that honors the true spirit of the season.

Advent, which typically begins four Sundays before Christmas, is a time of reflection and anticipation. It symbolizes the period when the world awaited the coming of the Messiah, and it invites us to prepare our hearts and minds for the celebration of Christ's birth.

During Advent, Catholics are encouraged to allocate time for prayer and reflection, fostering a sense of mindfulness and spiritual readiness. Make a conscious effort to incorporate daily prayer and reflection into your Advent routine. Meditate on the significance of Christ's coming and how you can better live out His teachings of love and charity. Consider attending Advent retreats or joining a prayer group to deepen your spiritual connection.

Advent encourages the use of one's talents in service to others. Whether it's participating in charitable activities, visiting the sick, or helping those less fortunate, this is a perfect time to put your unique gifts to good use. Identify your unique talents and find ways to utilize them in the service of others during Advent. If you have musical abilities, join the choir to enhance the beauty of Advent liturgies. If you're skilled in crafting, create handmade gifts to share with friends

and family, emphasizing the personal and thoughtful nature of the season.

While the commercial world focuses on buying and spending, stewardship urges Catholics to evaluate their financial resources. Evaluate your financial resources and commit to a meaningful and generous offering during the Advent season. This could involve contributing to our parish's special Advent collection or donating to a charity that aligns with Catholic values. Remember, it's not about the amount but the intention and sacrifice behind your financial stewardship.

Consider dedicating time to volunteer for Advent activities in our parish, such as organizing events, decorating the church, or participating in a Nativity play. Advent is a time to build community and support one another. Reach out to those in your parish who may be in need, extend a hand of friendship, or provide assistance where necessary. By fostering a sense of unity, you embody the spirit of stewardship.

The celebration of Advent is not simply about counting down the days until Christmas but a journey of spiritual preparation, reflection, and anticipation. By embracing the principles of Catholic stewardship during this sacred season, Catholics can not only prepare for the birth of Christ in a more meaningful way but also enrich their own faith and the lives of those they touch. Through the responsible and generous use of time, talents, and treasure, Advent becomes a time to rekindle the true spirit of Christmas and strengthen the connection with Jesus. In essence, Advent serves as a reminder that living out Catholic stewardship is not just a commitment but a way of life that brings us closer to the heart of Christ.

A LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR

GIVING THANKS TO GOD FOR THE *Gift of Time*

Dear Parishioners,

The next several weeks are certainly a busy time for us as Catholics, good stewards, good citizens, and faithful members of the Church and our parish. There are celebrations and commemorations both inside and outside the Church that are momentous in terms of faith, citizenship, and living as people of thanksgiving and gratitude.

We celebrate Veterans Day to honor and thank all those men and women who served in the United States Armed Forces in one capacity or another. Indicative of the importance of this day, every year at 11 a.m. Eastern, a wreath-laying ceremony is held at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery.

We all understand that Americans celebrate a day of Thanksgiving on Nov. 27. What more can we say about this? It is a day that was faith-based from its very beginnings, and it is an indication of how much we have to thank God for in terms of the gifts we have received – our lives, our families, our Church, our Lord and Savior – everything we are and everything we have.

No sooner are Thanksgiving Day celebrations concluded than we turn the calendar page to the next month, and we begin that glorious season called Advent on Sunday, Nov. 30. This prepares us for and leads to Christmas. Indeed, this is both a busy and extraordinary time of year! Most importantly, however, we recall that the month of November is a time when we remember – in a very particular way – all of the faithful departed and the holy souls in Purgatory.

Beginning with the commemoration of All Souls'



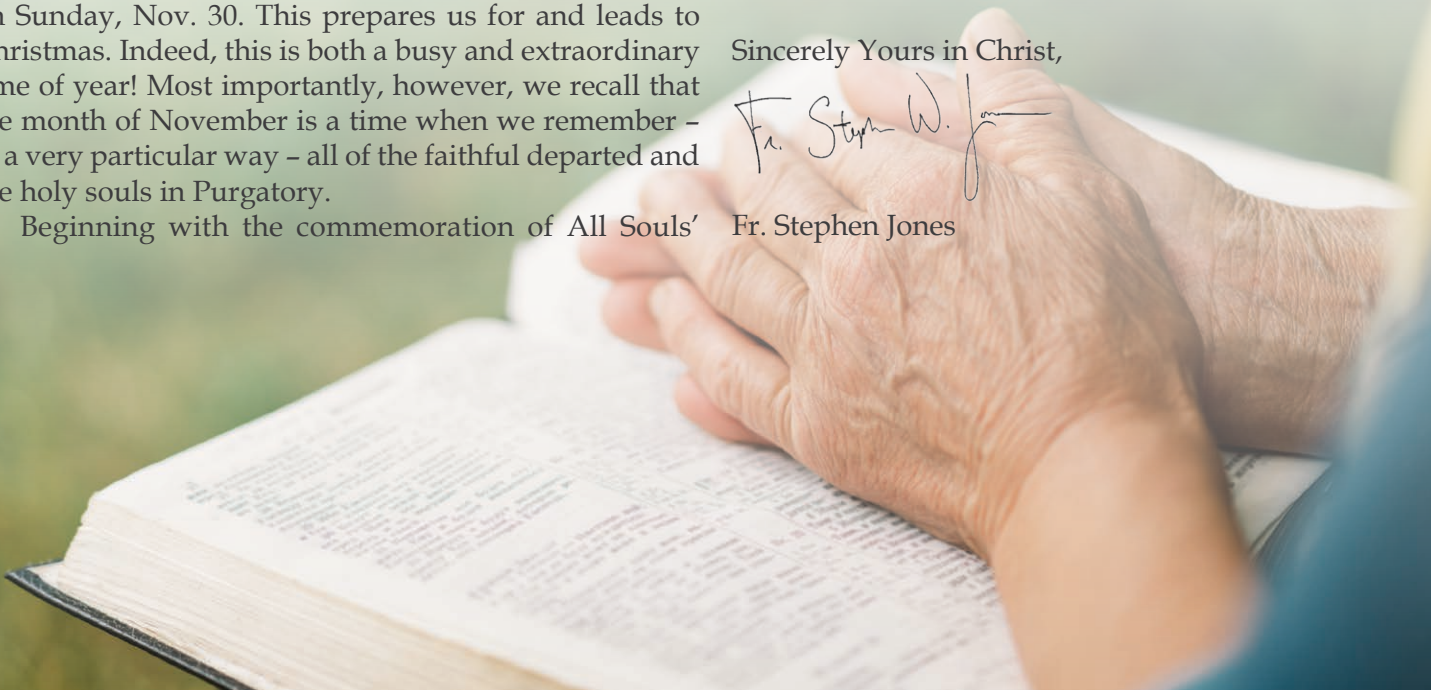
Day on Nov. 2, we spend the month focusing on those who have gone before us; on those whose gifts of time, talent and treasure have made our families, our Cathedral parish, and our diocese what it is today. In doing so, we pray for the continued repose of their souls, and we ask their prayers for us – that we might effectively live as Christian disciples who use what God has given us in our lives to the betterment of His kingdom.

From a stewardship perspective, I would like you to not only participate and focus on all the particular things that are about to happen, but also on one of our special gifts – the gift of time. The gift of time, which we all receive from God in equal amounts, is precious because it is a non-renewable resource. Although some of our time is committed because of family responsibilities, work responsibilities or simply personal needs, we have an element of free will with how we spend a certain amount of it. We need to spend some of that time in prayer, in thanksgiving, in worship, and in works of mercy and ministry. Our time is perhaps more precious than any material gifts we receive from the Lord. How are we doing with that gift?

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fr. Stephen W. Jones". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Fr. Stephen Jones



Cathedral of St. Joseph

A LOOK AT *Priestly* AND Answering the Lord's Call to Serve

Christ calls each one of us to Himself. It's who we are — His people — and we are here to grow closer to Him. As St. Augustine aptly said: "You made me for yourself, O Lord. And our hearts are restless until they rest in thee."

For many of us, that calling involves getting married and raising families. But for some, the calling is different. Christ calls some among us to follow Him as priests and religious — to cling to Christ as their bride and to serve the Church in an extraordinary manner. Those men and women offer themselves to the life of the Church in an utterly selfless manner. Without their gifts, we wouldn't have the sacraments. Without their gifts, we wouldn't have some of the most diligent missionary work both here and around the world. In truth, without their gifts, the Church would not be whole.

Some of those men and women come from right here in our parish, and we wanted to highlight their stories.



Fr. Greg Meystrik

Fr. Greg Meystrik grew up here. His family moved to Jefferson City and joined St. Joseph when he was 2 years old. It was here that Fr. Greg says his heart

was opened to the possibility of the priesthood. It was here that, while living out his faith within the life of the parish, he was able to say "yes" when he heard Christ calling him.

"My parents were very involved in the parish," Fr. Greg says. "Dad was involved in CCD and the men's association, and Mom was involved in the women's association. We lived close by and were up at the church a lot. So, my brother and I served as altar servers quite regularly."

In turn, the family's home life was one in which priests were regularly invited for dinner, and family prayers were prayed daily. This all helped Fr. Greg see

the priesthood as a gift and to be open to the possibility of Christ calling him to serve as such.

Now, 35 years into his priestly vocation, Fr. Greg says he remains utterly grateful that God called him.

"I continue to enjoy the heck out of it," he says. "I have joy in ministry that comes from the Lord. It was at the Cathedral that I remember being encouraged to find joy in the life God calls us to, and I am still finding so much joy today."

Sr. Kathleen Wegman, SSND



Sr. Kathleen Wegman, SSND remembers first feeling a religious vocation stirring in her heart when she was in grade school. Her family became members of St. Joseph when she was in fifth grade due to the establishment of the new parish and her family home being within the new parish boundaries. While attending the parish school, Sr. Kathleen was intrigued by the Irish Sisters of Mercy who had chosen to leave their homeland to teach in Jefferson City. In 1964, Sr. Kathleen began attending Helias High School and was taught by the School Sisters of Notre Dame.

"I remember they would talk about their sisters in Honduras and other places around the world, and I thought, 'Why would these nuns leave their home

Religious Vocations

Live in Our Cathedral and Diocese



country to teach us?" she says. "It made me realize how special they thought each one of us was. It really piqued my interest in an international congregation."

Additionally, as Sr. Kathleen lived life with her family at home, her parents made it very clear that the faith was first and foremost. They prayed together as a family, went to Mass, and, together, they were very instrumental in the life of the parish and school.

"Everyone rallied together to make the new parish and school work," Sr. Kathleen says of the early years of St. Joseph Parish and School. "We painted classrooms and got things set up. At the time, I didn't realize we were in a makeshift church. It just felt like a parish family."

In 1973, when Sr. Kathleen took her final vows as a School Sister of Notre Dame, she was excited to live the life God had called her to — to be a part of that community and to minister around the world and to God's people wherever she was sent.

"The biggest joy of this life is my relationship with God," Sr. Kathleen says. "My relationship with the other sisters and the chance to serve God in many places around the world have always been wonderful elements of this life."

Sr. Kathleen returned to her home diocese after being away for 40 years at the invitation of Bishop John R. Gaydos to serve as Chancellor and Delegate for Religious, Director of Pastoral and Charitable Services, and to coordinate and oversee the staff and ministry at the Chancery. Sr. Kathleen finds joy in working with people and enabling them to reach the fullness of their potential, as well as in assisting groups of people in their development as a community of faith.



Fr. Greg Oligschlaeger

Fr. Greg Oligschlaeger moved to the Cathedral with his family when he was 5 years old. In second grade, he remembers Sr. Christina asking the class who would like to be a priest or a nun.

"That is what first put the thought into my head," Fr. Greg says.

From there, God continued to gently call him to the priesthood as he simply lived his life.

"I was an altar server, and I remember thinking, 'You know, I would like to do what Father is doing,'" Fr. Greg says.

Then, as his parents continued to raise him in the faith, and stewardship was simply a part of the way they lived, Fr. Greg and his siblings would help the Carmelite sisters when they needed it, and would clean classrooms after the school year. They simply did what needed to be done when it was asked of them, and this life of service planted seeds for Fr. Greg, helping him to see the joy in serving Christ.

In eighth grade, with plans to play football for Helias High School, Fr. Greg went on a come-and-see visit to St. Thomas High School Seminary, and it was then that the seeds that had been planted began to really sprout.

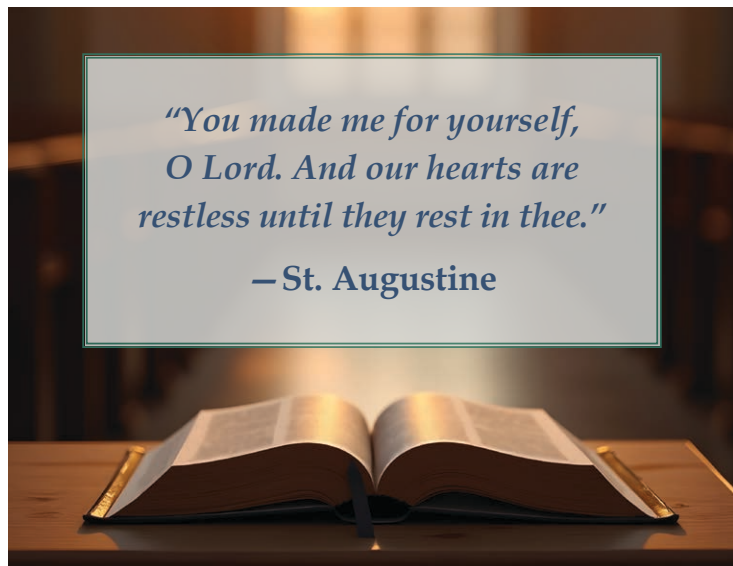
"I remember thinking, 'Maybe I should go here instead,'" Fr. Greg says. "My classmates were very supportive, and that was instrumental."

Today, as pastor of St. Joseph in Pilot Grove and Ss. Peter and Paul in Boonville, Fr. Greg says that his vocation as a priest is a privilege and a blessing.

"It is a privilege to be invited into people's homes and their family life," he says. "It is a blessing to walk with people in joys and in sorrows and to serve them as best I can."

*"You made me for yourself,
O Lord. And our hearts are
restless until they rest in thee."*

— St. Augustine



Cathedral of St. Joseph

HOW FAMILIES *Impact Vocations*, AND Growing in Faith and Discernment

“Praying for an increase in vocations to the priesthood and religious life must include praying for strong families rooted in faith.”

— Sr. Kathleen Wegman



When it comes to discerning God’s call, the reality is that the men and women considering vocations do not grow up in a vacuum. They are influenced, first and foremost, by their families, and often it is the life of the family lived as a “domestic church” that gives them the ability to be open to Christ’s call and the willingness to say yes when He does call them.

“Praying for an increase in vocations to the priesthood and religious life must include praying for strong families rooted in faith,” says Sr. Kathleen Wegman.

In fact, Sr. Kathleen, Fr. Greg Meystrik, and Fr. Greg Oligschlaeger all pointed to the lives their families lived and their parents’ examples as hugely influential in their openness to a religious vocation and in their discernment process.

We sat down with some of their family members to get their takes. What we found is that, for as much as these three priests and religious have been influenced by their families, their family members say that they have been impacted beyond measure.

The Meystrik Family

“Too often people think that if their family member becomes a priest, they are losing something,” says Steve Meystrik, Fr. Greg Meystrik’s youngest brother. “But that’s not true! You gain so much more than you can imagine.”

As a young boy, Steve remembers spending time with his great uncle, a Benedictine priest, who would visit with their family every summer and stay for a week.

“He had a huge impact on Fr. Greg,” Steve says. “He was a spiritual giant in our family. And now, Fr. Greg is that for us. He is a spiritual giant for my children, and they adore him!”



Steve recounts the innumerable times in which Fr. Greg’s vocation has impacted the life of his family, and it brings him to tears.

“He married my wife and I,” Steve says. “He baptized all of our children. He gave three of them First Communion. I remember the night before one of my daughters received her First Communion, she wanted to go to Confession one more time. So Greg came over to the house, and he heard her confession right there in the living room. It was beautiful. He also gave last rites to my dad. Watching him live his vocation has been so special for us. Our family wouldn’t be the same without Greg’s vocation.”

For his part, Steve says he makes sure to pray daily for his brother.

“Our priests need our prayers,” Steve says. “They also need to be included in our lives. Invite them into your homes. Include them in your celebrations and in your sorrows. Having them around impacts our families, and that is where many of these vocations come from.”

HOW VOCATIONS *Impact Families* ent in the "Domestic Church"

The Wegman Family

Mark Wegman, Sr. Kathleen Wegman's younger brother, cannot remember life before his sister was a nun.

"I was 2 years old when she became a Sister of Notre Dame," Mark says.



And growing up with his sister as a Sister, as it were, has impacted him greatly.

"I don't think I would be the person that I am today if my sister hadn't chosen the path that she did," Mark says. "I was not only influenced by her, but by the other sisters

of Notre Dame. All the sisters we met were remarkable people. They enriched my life and solidified my faith."

What's more, Mark says he is sure that, for as much as Sr. Kathleen's vocation has impacted him, every member of their family would say the same.

"We, as a family, were so proud of the vocation she chose," Mark says. "We all offer our prayers for her constantly. Some people would offer her financial support when they could. Every member of our family proudly offers her our prayers."

The Oligschlaeger Family

"It is an absolute honor to be his mother," says Margaret Oligschlaeger, of her son, Fr. Greg Oligschlaeger.

When Margaret reflects on what it was like watching her son hear his call to the priesthood and pursue his vocation, she is brought back to a time when Fr. Greg was an 8-year-old boy.

"Sr. Christina was his second-grade teacher, and she saw something in him," Margaret says. "She gave him so many opportunities to read at Mass and do other things that helped him begin to discern the priesthood."

Beyond Sr. Christina, Margaret says that she and her husband, Paul, worked to create a family culture rooted in faith so that the idea of a religious vocation was never foreign to her children.

"We hosted many dinners that our priests and extended family attended, which gave our kids many opportunities to be around priests outside of church," Margaret says.

So, when Fr. Greg told her he was considering the priesthood, Margaret was more than happy to support him in every way she could, particularly through prayer and encouragement.

And now, as Fr. Greg lives out his vocation, Margaret says his priestly impact has changed her.

"Greg's vocation encourages me to keep in touch with the Lord," Margaret says. "I often think, what did Gregory give out of his love for Christ? He gave his whole life. That calls me to grow closer to the Lord."

Additionally, Margaret tells of different ways in which Fr. Greg's ministry has physically brought her and the family peace and comfort.

"When my husband died 22 months ago, Greg would come visit with me, and when I was resting, he would be setting up people to come be with me over the next few days," Margaret says. "That is part of the gift of his ministry. He has an ability to take care of people who are hurting."

Margaret noted that his care extended to the rest of the family during this time of mourning, explaining how he had a special ability to use his dry sense of humor to make their hearts feel lighter, while spiritually building them up through the sacraments.

Watching her son live out his vocation has brought her immeasurable joy.

"It is pretty overwhelming in the best way," Margaret concludes.

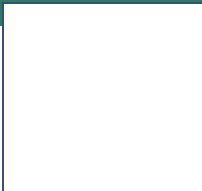
Pray for our priests and religious. Pray for their families. Pray for those discerning and their families as well. May God continue to bless the life of the Church with more priests and religious who are devoted to lives lived for Him, and may we be ever grateful for their "yes"!





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ENSURING THE GOOD STEWARDSHIP OF RESURRECTION CEMETERY *continued from front cover*

Since being placed under the care of the diocese in 2020, we have been slowly making changes to its operations in order to get more parishioners involved. Last year, all three pastors of the parishes in Jefferson City were asked to be part of the cemetery’s board. Being on the board has opened Fr. Jones’ eyes to the needs of the cemetery and the need for us to take ownership of it and ensure its care.

“When the cemetery was an individual entity, it was viewed as such, and no concern was given by the average parishioner or pastor for its upkeep and future expansion,” Fr. Jones says. “The parish and parishioners really need to adjust their outlook to understand that this cemetery belongs to our parish even though it is not physically located on our campus.”

We need to take ownership, and we need to get involved — what this looks like is evolving. The board is continually considering what needs the cemetery



St. Peter Cemetery #2

has and how people can help with them. So, opportunities will arise in the coming months, and these will be published in the bulletin. Be on the lookout for ways you can serve.

“Right now, we try to provide assistance to the cemetery on an as-needed basis — like clean-up opportunities and putting flags at the gravestones on Labor Day and the Fourth of July,” Fr. Jones says.

What’s more, in the near future, Fr. Jones says they hope to have board members visit each parish in Jefferson City and share the history of the cemetery along with its needs and its future plans. Take the opportunity to find out more and get involved.

“It is our goal to ensure that all parishioners in Jefferson City understand that this is their cemetery, and so all parishioners have a responsibility to ensure a stable future for the cemetery,” Fr. Jones says.