



# SAINT PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

MONUMENT, COLORADO



APR/MAY 2024

## *"If She Can Do It...* **YOU CAN DO IT!"**

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 2 Stewardship of Time: *The Foundation of Our Faith Lives*
- 3 A Letter From Our Pastor
- 4 Meet Gage Parrish: *A Legacy of Service Without Fanfare*
- 6 St. Catherine of Siena: *Living a Life of Stewardship and Discipleship*
- 7 An Inside Look at Our Green Thumb Ministry: *Sharing Talents to Make Our Parish Grounds Beautiful*

Many of you here at St. Peter know Emma Reed and know she is an inspiration. For those of you who don't, Emma is a 21-year-old parishioner born with a neurological disorder. But the challenges she faces every day do not stop her from living the stewardship way of life and sharing her time and talents with our parish community in thanksgiving to God.

We are dedicating this edition of our parish newsletter to Emma, who serves with our Liturgical Art and Environment Ministry, and we hope you draw inspiration from these stories to share your gifts with God and this vibrant faith community. Emma personifies the following quote, which essentially can be a mission statement for us all: "If I can do it, you can do it!" And she is right! We all have gifts to share, and we hope Emma's story and the other stories of stewards in action in our parish will also lead you to realize that you can do it, too!



### ABUNDANTLY BLESSED: *Reflections on Emma Reed from Her Mom*



*Emma with her nurse, Joyce*

I was asked to write a bio on Emma, and one thing keeps returning to me when I think of Emma's true "essence." She approaches life and people with so much gratitude, grace, and benevolence, as charitable work is what feeds her soul. Given her sometimes horrendously difficult medical issues, her focus is always on gratitude for what she *does* have. She rarely focuses on what she does not have and what others do. She also focuses on what others do not have that she does. Hence, her charitable drive! Emma is also filled with grace and forgiveness for people who do not understand her or underestimate her. There is not one ounce of bitterness or judgment in this young woman with an old and wise soul. I am happy to list her various accomplishments and share the "story of her life," but instead, my short tribute to her here is what makes Emma, Emma.

I am abundantly blessed with Emma as my daughter. She has made me grow as a human being immeasurably! — *Kristen Gwatkin*



# STEWARDSHIP OF TIME:

## *The Foundation of Our Faith Lives*

A professor stood at the head of the class with a big glass jar. He put six big rocks in the jar with the rocks up to the edge and then asked his students, "Is the jar full?" They replied, "Yes."

The professor told the students, "No, it's not." He then pulled out gravel and put it in the jar. He then asked, "Now is it full?" The students once again replied, "Yes." The professor responded, "No, it's not." He reached down and pulled out sand, which he poured into the jar with the same responses. Then, he reached for a pitcher of water and poured it in, all the way to the brim. Then he asked, "Now is it full?" And the students replied, "Yes."

The professor then asked, "OK, what did you learn from this?" One student responded, "No matter how many things you've got in the jar, there's always room to put a little more in." The professor told the class, "No, that's not the lesson. The lesson is, if I didn't put the big rocks in first, they would have never fit!"

Most Catholics may ask how this can apply to our own prayer lives. Essentially, every person must decide what the "big rocks" are in his or her life. And prayer should be one of those big rocks in the jar.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has told us stewardship is part of discipleship and is a way of responding to God's call in every aspect of our lives. We refer to the three facets of stewardship as "Time, Talent and Treasure," and when we consider the importance of these three Ts of stewardship, the

"time" component comes first by design.

Stewardship spirituality is about trying to become more generous with our time, talent, and treasure. And there's a reason why "Time" is first. We need to take time to talk to God and take time to be quiet and seek to listen as He expresses His love for us and wants us to know His inspiration in our life.

There are many different forms of prayer. From weekly prayer such as the Mass, to daily personal prayer, such as a daily Rosary. Morning and night prayer are also important disciplines to maintain. Set aside a comfortable place in your home where you can find silence. Focus on a spiritual image and take time to center yourself with Scripture or other spiritual reading.

For many, spending large portions of the day in silent prayer is not possible. But make it a priority to find moments of quiet throughout the day, and find ways to incorporate prayer amid your busy schedule. When you get into a vehicle, pray — before a meal, after a meal, if you're faced with a tough decision. Just pray!

Just as in any human relationship, communication is a central aspect of a vibrant relationship with God. Prayer is fostering this communion of love with God. He loved us into existence, and He wants us to enter into a loving conversation with Him. We've got to talk to Him. And we must listen to Him. He will take care of everything if you just trust Him. He's knocking at the door and waiting for us to open it in prayer.





*A Letter From Our Pastor*

## IF THEY CAN LIVE STEWARDSHIP AS A WAY OF LIFE, **SO CAN YOU!**

Dear Parishioners,

As we continue our journey towards embracing Stewardship within our parish community, the term “stewardship” has likely become a more frequent part of our conversations. I hope you’ve had the chance to delve into the stories shared in our newsletter, showcasing stewardship in action right here at St. Peter.

Perhaps you find yourself uncertain about what to make of it all. It’s natural to have questions and doubts as we navigate our understanding of stewardship. You may wonder why participation is necessary or how you can contribute more to God, especially when time, energy, and finances already feel stretched thin.

Let’s address these concerns head-on. Firstly, let’s remember that God is the ultimate source of the “three Ts” of stewardship — our time, talents, and treasure. Without Him, we wouldn’t possess any of these gifts. Reflect on how you receive these blessings. Do you feel entitled to them, always wanting more, or do you recognize God’s abundant generosity and express gratitude by giving back a portion?

God, in His boundless love and mercy, bestows these gifts upon us during our time on Earth, despite our unworthiness. As an expression of gratitude, we can offer Him a return on His investment. For instance, if God grants you a free Saturday afternoon, consider spending it in Confession rather than on leisure activities. If you have culinary skills, why not prepare a meal for a family with a newborn instead of indulging in personal pursuits? Financial decisions also play a part in stewardship. Do you squander your resources or take them for granted? It’s crucial to carefully consider what portion should be returned to God.

As you will see on the cover of this newsletter, we are dedicating this edition to parishioner Emma Reed, with a special theme for this issue — “If I Can Do It, You Can Do It!” Read about Emma with a reflection from her mom, Kristen, on the cover, and the other inspiring stories inside this newsletter that sum up the, “If I Can Do It, You Can Do It,” theme.

One of those stories is a profile of parishioner Gage Parrish and his family. What a fitting name this great family has, as they truly exemplify what “Parrish” stewardship is all about! Gage is currently working on all the church pews to repair and renew the kneelers, and he comes in and just goes to work without fanfare. Read more to find out how his actions and living out stewardship in the parish impact his faith life and about how he hopes his work inspires others to answer the call of holiness through stewardship.



We also have a story on our Green Thumb Ministry, and how parishioners Steve Hadfield and Bonnie Schmidt lead this group that works year-round to make sure our exterior grounds are taken care of. Read the piece to find out how their actions and living out stewardship in the parish impact their faith and about how they hope this work inspires others.

No matter where you currently stand in your stewardship journey, remember — it’s not about adhering to strict rules or mandates. It’s an invitation. No one is compelled to adopt the lifestyle of a good steward. However, recognizing the blessings God has bestowed upon us, regardless of where we are in our faith journey, should motivate us to give back through our time, talents, and treasure.

Out of love for our Creator and in gratitude for His countless gifts, let’s embrace this opportunity to explore stewardship together. Let’s make a commitment to try our best in giving back to God.

Peace,

Fr. Gregory Golyzniak,  
Pastor

## MEET **GAGE PARRISH**

### *A Legacy of*



*The Parrish Family*



*Gage and Mary Parrish*

Gage Parrish was raised with the understanding that service was a fundamental building block of life: his father was active in the Air Force and the Knights of Columbus, and his mother devoted time to their home parish office while raising seven kids. But after he and his wife Mary moved to St. Peter Parish eight years ago, he often felt like he was not as active in church ministry as he could be.

"I've often thought I could do more," he says.

"When Fr. Gregory gave a homily last fall on the importance of stewardship, it struck a chord with Gage. As he glanced around the church wondering where he could offer his time and talent, he noticed a small but significant defect with many of the pews.

Gage says, "I looked down the row of pews I was sitting in, and I noticed a lot of the feet of the kneelers needed replacing. And I said to myself, 'I can do that.'"

Many of the small caps of the kneeler feet had become damaged from wear and tear over the years, creating excess noise when parishioners lowered them to the floor. Gage decided he could change out the plastic feet and replace them with rubber, which reduced the noise and was more durable. As he got deeper into his work, he realized the problem was more pervasive than what he originally thought. Many of the kneelers themselves were excessively squeaky, so he decided to take the noisy ones apart and add lubrication.

"It's been a fun and rewarding project. Although my son pointed out, I'm going to have a hard time paying attention to the homily, because I will be listening for squeaky kneelers!" Gage says.

Gage explains that his handyman tinkering pales in comparison to his wife's involvement in the parish. Mary, a retired nurse, is very active in several ministries, including the Seven Sisters Apostolate, Praying Prodigals Home, and the Martha Ministry. She has also taught Faith Formation to seventh graders.

"She inspires me," says Gage.





# PARRISH:

## *Service Without Fanfare*

*"I looked down the row of pews I was sitting in, and I noticed a lot of the feet of the kneelers needed replacing. And I said to myself, 'I can do that.'"*

— GAGE PARRISH

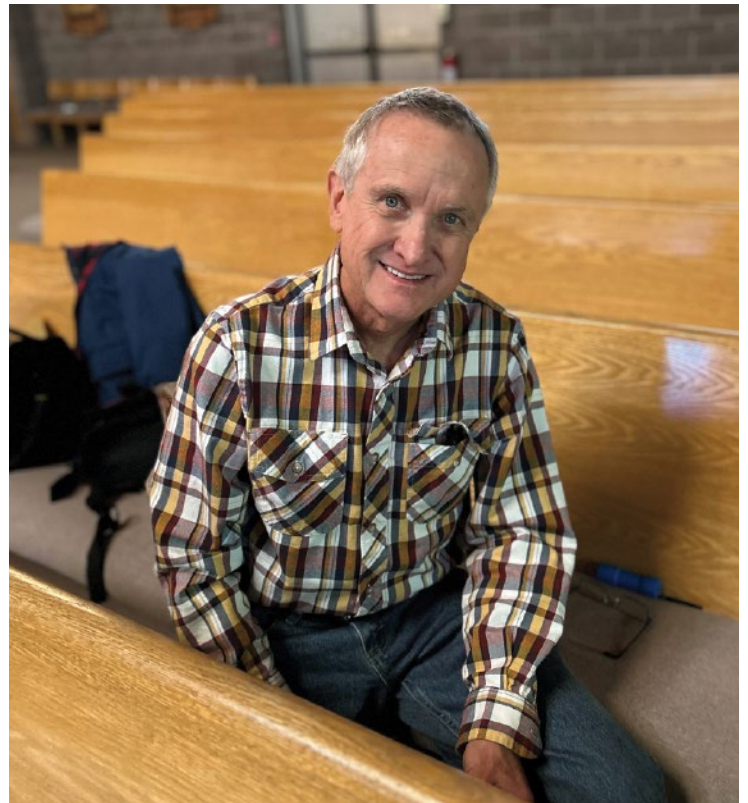
Gage and Mary met when they both served in the Air Force and celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary at the end of March. They have four children, Matthew, Andrea, David, and Daniel, and 10 grandchildren. A Lieutenant Colonel and an F-15 pilot, Daniel has preserved the family legacy of service in the Air Force, following the footsteps of his parents and grandfather. Gage and Mary are fortunate to be able to see Andrea and her family regularly in Monument, and they also enjoy taking the time to travel and visit their other children and grandchildren in Oregon, Arizona, and even Austria.

Gage says he and Mary began to take Bible classes in their retirement and embraced Matthew 25:31-36, the parable of the sheep and the goats.

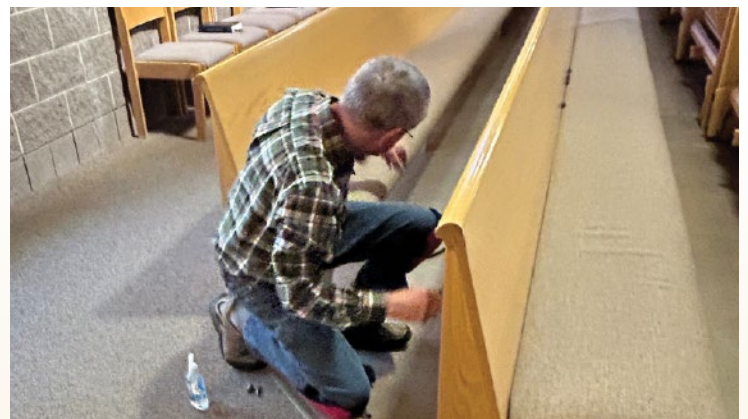
"We will ultimately be judged by how we respond to God's grace, by the things we do and do not do," Gage says. "Jesus tells us that we are actually helping him when we do good for others. There's always a calling to do more."

Gage encourages parishioners to listen to the tugs of the heart to become involved in service to the Church, no matter how small or insignificant it may seem.

"I know it's hard for my friends to believe, but I was hoping to just get in and out without calling attention to myself," Gage says. "But if it encourages others, that's great. If a guy like me could tackle a project like this, anyone can get involved. I may have hesitated initially, but once I started I realized there was no reason for the hesitation. Simply do it; it's so easy once you get started. There's plenty of opportunity to contribute and God is always calling. Everything we have is from Him, so it makes sense that we ought to give back."



*Gage Parrish sitting on the fruits of his labor, the culmination of a project to renovate our pews.*



*Gage Parrish put his handyman skills to work in the spirit of stewardship to renovate the pews in our church.*

# ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA

## *Living a Life of Stewardship and Discipleship*

As Catholics, we often look to the lives of saints for inspiration and guidance in our own faith journeys. St. Catherine of Siena, whose feast day is celebrated on April 29, stands as a remarkable example of someone who not only embraced her faith, but also exemplified Catholic stewardship and discipleship in profound ways.

Catherine Benincasa, later known as St. Catherine of Siena, was born in 1347 in Siena, Italy. From an early age, she displayed a deep devotion to God and a remarkable sense of piety. Her life's journey was marked by an unwavering commitment to the Catholic faith, love for Christ, and a strong desire to serve others.

One of the most significant aspects of St. Catherine's life was her dedication to serving the poor and marginalized. She tirelessly cared for those afflicted by the bubonic plague, demonstrating a selfless love and compassion for the suffering. This act of charity and service to the needy resonates with the Catholic principle of stewardship — using one's resources and talents to help those less fortunate.

In our modern context, St. Catherine's example challenges us to actively engage in acts of charity, volunteerism, and social justice. By following her lead, we can transform our communities through service and outreach, reflecting the love of Christ to those who need it most.

Catherine's life was deeply rooted in her faith and unwavering obedience to the teachings of the Church. She played a pivotal role in convincing Pope Gregory XI to return the papacy to Rome from Avignon, France, during a tumultuous period in the

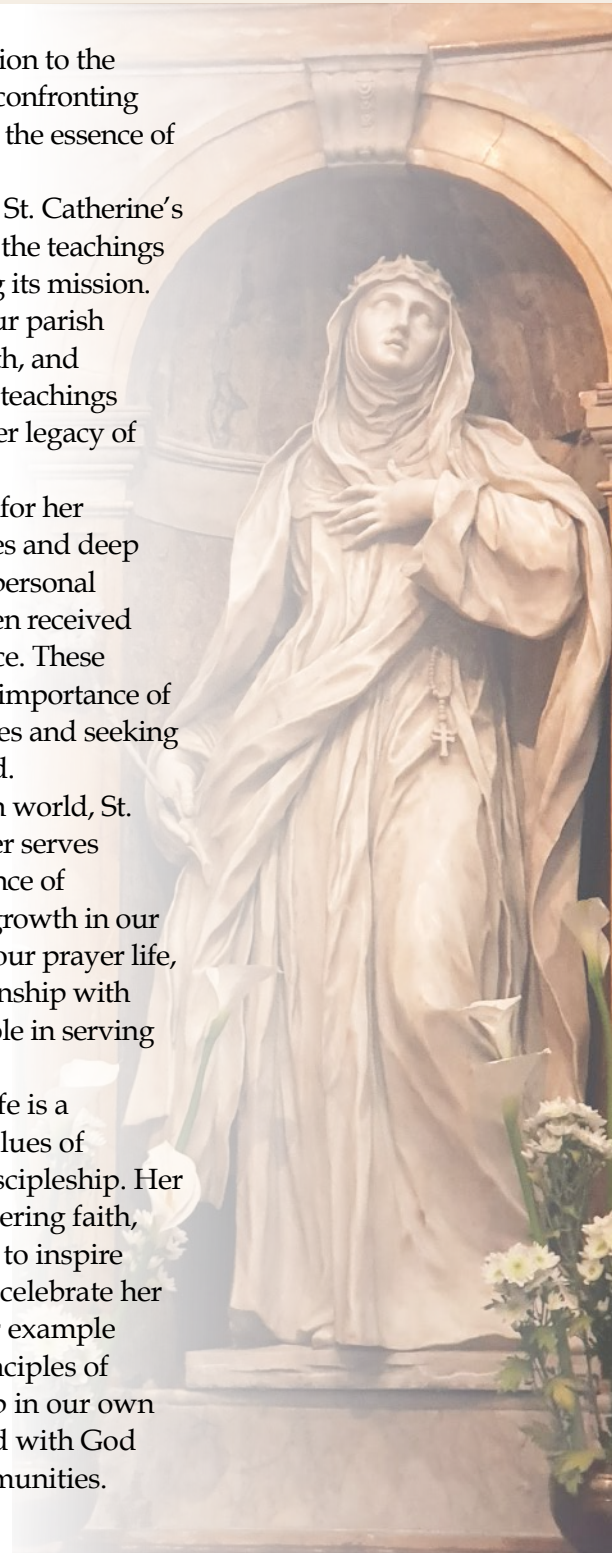
Church's history. Her dedication to the Church, even when it meant confronting powerful figures, exemplifies the essence of true discipleship.

Today, we can draw from St. Catherine's example of being obedient to the teachings of the Church and supporting its mission. By actively participating in our parish communities, sharing our faith, and upholding the traditions and teachings of the Church, we continue her legacy of faithful discipleship.

St. Catherine was known for her profound mystical experiences and deep prayer life. She had a strong personal connection with God and often received spiritual insights and guidance. These experiences remind us of the importance of nurturing our own prayer lives and seeking a closer relationship with God.

In our fast-paced, modern world, St. Catherine's devotion to prayer serves as a reminder of the significance of contemplation and spiritual growth in our faith journey. By prioritizing our prayer life, we can strengthen our relationship with God and better discern our role in serving others as Catholic stewards.

St. Catherine of Siena's life is a testament to the enduring values of Catholic stewardship and discipleship. Her dedication to service, unwavering faith, and spiritual depth continue to inspire Catholics worldwide. As we celebrate her feast day, let us reflect on her example and strive to live out the principles of stewardship and discipleship in our own lives, strengthening our bond with God and enriching our faith communities.







## An Inside Look at Our **GREEN THUMB MINISTRY** *Sharing Talents to Make Our Parish Grounds Beautiful*

The landscape around our church says a lot about who we are. While the church itself points to the divinity of Christ and His presence with us in the Eucharist, our care for the landscape around the church is a sign of our love and care for Christ and His house. Volunteers bring together their love for gardening and a willingness to put in some hard labor to bring beauty and love to our parish grounds.

The Green Thumb Ministry has been caring for the parish grounds over the years under the leadership of various parishioners who enjoy giving their time and talents for something we can all enjoy. Founded by Steve and Suzan Sery, Mark Yoder took over the ministry until 2014 when Steve Hadfield and Bonnie Schmidt took the lead.

"It's an opportunity to serve our Lord and our St. Peter community in a tangible and visible way as well as to give others that same opportunity," says Steve. "I enjoy the opportunity to get to know other members of the St. Peter community."

Bonnie joined the ministry in 2012 at the suggestion of Mark Yoder.

"I thought the Green Thumb ministry might be a good fit and a way to give back to my parish for all the joy and support it had given me over the years," recalls Bonnie. "With my gardening tools and kneeler in hand, I showed up and this season will be my 13th to be involved with the Green Thumb ministry."

While some projects require maintenance throughout the year, such as the flowers around the statue of Mary that Bonnie maintains, other projects are one-day events that require the help of many hands. Individual parishioners volunteer, as well as members of the Knights of Columbus and Boy Scout Troop 17, who helped replace most of the mulch around the church with rocks. Youth of the parish earn service hours by helping with the Green Thumb ministry.

Between May and November, the Green Thumb Ministry has about five big clean-up days for a fresh start after winter, to prepare the grounds for big events, and to clean up leaves in the fall.

"For the group events, we break into small teams so we can socialize, get to know each other, and enjoy praying through action," says Steve. "We always seem to be blessed with rain and sunshine to help things grow and some gentle winds to blow away any little spots of debris that we might have missed."

Though it requires physical labor, the volunteers find the work rewarding and refreshing. Bonnie recalls the wisdom she received from a small child who pointed out the little star shapes made by the many fallen twigs from the large cottonwood tree.

"Now, gathering a bucketful of twigs becomes easier for me because I know that I'm really gathering a bucketful of stars," says Bonnie.

*Experienced and beginner gardeners are invited to volunteer with the Green Thumb Ministry.  
Contact Steve Hadfield at [hadfieldsm@gmail.com](mailto:hadfieldsm@gmail.com) to get involved.*



NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
COLO SPGS, CO  
PERMIT NO. 406

Saint Peter Catholic Church  
A Parish of the Diocese of Colorado Springs  
228 North Cascade Avenue | Colorado Springs, CO 80903  
(719) 481-3511 | petertherock.org

**WEEKEND MASSES:**

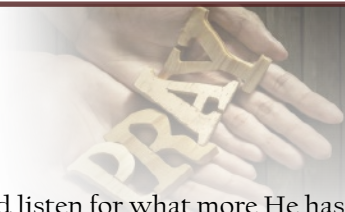
*Saturday Reconciliation: 3-4 p.m.*  
*Saturday: 5 p.m.*  
*Sunday: 8 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 5 p.m.*

**DAILY MASSES:**

*Monday-Friday: 8:15 a.m.*  
*Tuesday and Thursday: 5:30 p.m.*  
*Reconciliation offered Tuesday and Thursday: 4:45-5:15 p.m.*

**STEWARDSHIP RETREAT**

*Be Not Afraid*



Reflect on God's goodness and presence in our lives and listen for what more He has in store for each one of us! Whether you have attended many retreats, or if this will be your first, take this step to re-energize your faith and your life by re-connecting with our Lord Jesus Christ, who wants you to know Him deeply and to give you His peace. The retreat will include Mass, inspiring talks by Fr. Michael Troha from the Diocese of Cleveland, time for quiet reflection and brief small-group discussion.

*Two Spiritual Opportunities for You!*

Continental Breakfast & Lunch will be served | No Cost To Attend

**STEWARDSHIP RETREAT**

*St. Joseph the Good Steward*



This spiritual retreat is a powerful opportunity to pull away from the demands of everyday life and spend time with God and with one another. During our retreat, discern how God is calling you to use your gifts for His people, right here, right now. The retreat will include inspiring talks about St. Joseph, the Good Steward, by Msgr. Robert Tucker from Seward, Nebraska. There will be time for quiet reflection and brief small-group discussion.

**SATURDAY, APRIL 13**

**8 A.M. - 2 P.M.**

**HOLY APOSTLES  
CATHOLIC CHURCH**

*4925 North Carefree Circle*

**Please RSVP by April 4  
(719) 481-3511**

**SATURDAY, APRIL 27**

**8 A.M. - 2 P.M.**

**ST. PATRICK  
CATHOLIC CHURCH**

*6455 Brook Park Drive*

**Please RSVP by April 18  
(719) 481-3511**