

St. Peter Catholic Church

HURON



Huron's only Catholic church continues to focus on serving others over a century after its inception. The church formed in the late 19th century and its members number about 1,200 people.

In December 1887, after years of fundraising occurred, one lot of land was purchased by Father M.S. Smith for \$300, according to the church's website. Before then, mass occurred in residents' homes. The church cost about \$3,000 to build and the church was dedicated in June 1890. Two more lots of land were purchased, making way for a school and pastoral residence. In 1910, St. Peter Catholic Church became a part of the Toledo Diocese.

The parish continued to grow and construction of St. Peter School and a convent began in 1952. Both were dedicated in April 1953 by Bishop George Regring. "The school contained four classrooms on the upper level, and the lower level (formerly the gymnasium) was used as a temporary church with a seating capacity of 500 (people)," the church's website states. "The Sisters of St. Francis came to St. Peter's to administer the new school."

A new church was needed

By the mid-1950s, four classrooms and a cafeteria were added to St. Peter School. With almost 830 families in the parish by the late 1960s, leaders considered a new church building.

"Under the leadership of Fr. William Pfeifer, a new church, designed by Thurman Peabody of Norwalk, was constructed," according to the website. "The circular church, which features twelve arches that represent the twelve apostles, was erected in order to conserve space on the small lot and also to bring the people of the congregation closer to the altar for a feeling of unity."

This new church building, which cost \$660,000, was dedicated in November 1969 by Bishop Donovan with seating for 900.

The parish's most recent construction project took place in 2012 when an anonymous donor gave \$1 million dollars to build a new gymnasium.

"Construction began that spring, and the building, named 'The Rock' was dedicated in January 2013," the website states. "Planning and construction then began on the old gymnasium in the school building to build new rooms for preschool, music, art, reading, and speech. These rooms began being used in early 2014 and the old pre-school was demolished during spring break 2014."

Right now, the parish is raising funds to repair the church and school's windows and roofs, which will cost more than \$1 million. Anyone can donate through the church's website, Father Jeff McBeth said.

The church's congregation contains people who are "active, generous and hospitable." "The cool thing about our parish is that we get a lot of visitors throughout the year," he said. "There's always unfamiliar faces and we have a lot of committed people from here in town, too. Some who attend here are from multiple generations, so it's a nice mix of folks and they're really committed to their parish."

McBeth, of Toledo, is the parish's pastor of five years. He's liked living in the area. "I love the town, the people, walking on the pier — it's a great place to be," McBeth said.

Bible studies, activities for children and teens, volunteer opportunities and more are available at the church. Close to Christmas time, anyone can participate in a "sharing tree" opportunity where participants take an ornament, representing a child in need, off a Christmas tree. By doing so, a Christmas gift based on provided suggestions will be bought for the child. "We give them opportunities to grow in their faith and share it with others," McBeth said. "A lot of parishioners are active in the Huron community and beyond in outreach, like with a community meal twice a month and the community food pantry.

St. Peter School is connected to the parish, and the people are very supportive of it. "There's a lot going on," McBeth said. "People take ownership of what they want to do. It's a pretty dynamic community."

Get to know Huron St. Peter Catholic Church

Address: 430 Main St., Huron

Phone: 419-433-5725

Facebook page: St. Peter Catholic Church, Huron (@stpeterhuron)

Web site: stpetershuron.org