

Where Heaven Meets Earth

Restoring the Sacred at St. Peter Church

No one would believe this parish
was heading anywhere but down.

God had other plans.

 STORYTEL
ON ASSIGNMENT

www.heavenmeetsearth.tv

FEATURED ON
EW/TN

Where Heaven Meets Earth

Restoring the Sacred at Saint Peter Church

DOCUMENTARY PROFILE

Produced and Donated by StoryTel Foundation, a 501c3 non-profit.



StoryTel Foundation
10506 Burt Circle
Omaha, NE 68114
www.storytel.org
brian.whittaker@storytel.org
office: (402) 502-9258



FILM SYNOPSIS

It started with a simple idea.

ON ASSIGNMENT investigates how a poor Catholic parish became a thriving and vibrant church again after more than 40 years of steady decline.

Originally built in 1886, Saint Peter Catholic Church grew to become one of the biggest and busiest parish in the diocese of Omaha, Nebraska. But in the 1960s, huge chunks of the neighborhoods north and south of the church were razed to make way for the construction of interstate 480, forcing hundreds of parishioners to move away from St. Peter's.

In the years that followed more and more parishioners moved west to the suburbs, St. Peter's school closed, and the resulting lack of donations led to years of deferred building maintenance causing the church to fall into disrepair.

By the time a young priest on his first assignment as pastor arrived in 2004, no one would believe this place would survive, let alone thrive, but Father Damien Cook was inspired with an idea that would prove God had other plans for Saint Peter Catholic Church.

"I was blown away because I knew the backstory. I remember going to St. Peter's as a kid and looking around thinking, there are no other kids here but me."

— Joe Kenney, St. Peter's Parishioner

"Not only did the video capture the heart of St. Peter, but the quality and beauty of its filming inspired so many people."

— Rev. Damien Cook, St. Peter's Pastor

Where Heaven Meets Earth

Restoring the Sacred at St. Peter Church in Omaha

World-wide Television Premiere on EWTN
April 30, 2013, 5:30pm CT

 STORYTEL
ON ASSIGNMENT
www.heavenmeetsearth.tv



PRESS RELEASES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Brian Whittaker
Telephone: 402-686-0303
Email: brian.whittaker@storytel.org

OMAHA PARISH TO RECEIVE INTERNATIONAL SPOTLIGHT ON EWTN

OMAHA, Neb., April 15, 2013 – Saint Peter Catholic Church (St. Peters) of downtown Omaha, Neb. announced today that they have been featured in a documentary called, “Where Heaven Meets Earth,” a film that shares the story of St. Peter’s parish will appear on EWTN, Global Catholic Television Network on Tuesday, April 30, 2013 at 6:30pm ET.

The documentary, a \$100K film project, produced and donated by StoryTel Foundation, investigates how this poor Omaha parish became a thriving and vibrant community again after more than 40 years of decline. Originally built in 1886, Saint Peter Catholic Church grew to become one of the biggest and busiest parishes in the diocese of Omaha, Nebraska. But in the 1960s, huge chunks of the neighborhoods north and south of the church were razed to make way for the construction of interstate 480, forcing hundreds of parishioners to move away from St. Peters.

In the years that followed, more and more parishioners moved west to the suburbs, St. Peter’s school closed, and the resulting lack of donations led to years of deferred building maintenance causing the church to fall into disrepair.

By the time a young priest on his first assignment as pastor arrived in 2004, no one would believe this place would survive let alone thrive, but Father Damien Cook was inspired with an idea that would prove God had other plans for Saint Peter Catholic Church.

“I’ve been amazed to see the progress people have made over the last few years, and the numbers of people we have had at the masses through mostly word-of-mouth,” said St. Peter’s pastor Father Damien Cook. “The congregations have grown and flourished to the point that at one of our masses the church is completely full with standing room only, which amounts to over 800 people. For our neighborhood, in our situation, in just six years’ time, this is radical growth.”

Created to entertain viewers around the world with an incredible, true story and spur them to action for God, the film has incidentally helped the parish raise \$3 million and is expected to raise even more when it airs on EWTN, though it wasn’t intended to be a fundraising video.

It is one of the many projects recently completed by [StoryTel](http://StoryTel.org), a private non-profit media foundation, as part of their mission to, “inspire viewers to restore the sacred,” says President of StoryTel and “Where Heaven Meets Earth” director, Don Carney.

To learn more about the documentary, Where Heaven Meets Earth visit: www.heavenmeetsearth.tv

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FOUNDATION DONATES \$100K FILM PROJECT TO OMAHA PARISH

OMAHA, Neb., April 15, 2013 – StoryTel, a private, nonprofit media foundation dedicated to inspiring viewers to restore the sacred, announced today that its latest completed production, a \$100K film project donated to St. Peter Catholic Church (St. Peters), of Omaha, Neb., will appear on EWTN, Global Catholic Television Network on Tuesday, April 30, 2013 at 6:30pm ET.

The documentary, “Where Heaven Meets Earth,” investigates how this poor Omaha parish became a thriving and vibrant church again after more than 40 years of decline. Created to entertain viewers around the world with an incredible, true story and spur them to action for God, the film has incidentally helped the parish raise \$3 million and is expected to raise even more when it airs on EWTN, though it wasn’t intended to be a fundraising video. It is one of the many projects recently completed by StoryTel Foundation as part of their mission to, “inspire viewers to restore the sacred,” says President of StoryTel and “Where Heaven Meets Earth” director, Don Carney.

“In a broad sense, restoring the sacred means embracing the whole of Catholic tradition,” said Carney. “So when we encourage people to restore the sacred, it can translate into anything from helping people to grow closer to God, or supporting the rehabilitation of physical structures like a church or school, to helping protect the life of a child in the womb. We work with many different organizations and causes to restore the sacred by impacting viewers with our films.”

Since its founding in 2008, StoryTel Foundation has worked on a wide variety of projects that are in some cases donated entirely to the organizations with which they work. Their documentaries, fundraising videos, and web videos have helped raise funds and other crucial support, always encouraging new connections with Christ.

“Less than a year after completing our documentary “St. John Cantius, Restoring the Sacred,” we learned from a young, new seminarian of the Saint John Cantius religious order in Chicago, that it was our documentary that actually motivated him to join. Those are the types of stories we love to hear; proof that the impact of a single film can reverberate for years to come.”

About the New Documentary, “Where Heaven Meets Earth, Restoring the Sacred at St. Peter Parish”

“Where Heaven Meets Earth,” a \$100K-documentary film project, produced and donated by StoryTel, not only relates St. Peters’ history, decline and current state, but has also moved donors to support the parish’s massive restoration effort.

The documentary is part of StoryTel's "On Assignment" series, which is the foundation's investigative TV series produced for public broadcast and DVD distribution. Initially commissioned for the church as a three-minute video to highlight the parish rebirth, StoryTel Foundation decided to expand the documentary for their TV series when they discovered what an amazing story the parish's journey had become.

"St. Peters had a dwindling congregation and a church building that had fallen into disrepair," said Carney. "But as a result of the efforts of Father Damien Cook, a young Priest on his first assignment as pastor, to bring people into a closer relationship with Christ the church has begun to experience a wonderful transformation."

The story of St. Peters' rise to new life is not only interesting it is incredible.

"Father Cook arrived in 2004 and quickly set out on a mission to restore the sacred at St. Peters," said Carney. "He began celebrating parts of the mass in Latin, which he included in both Spanish and English masses. In all that he did, he sought to reestablish the mystery, awe and wonder of God, and did so by bringing reverence and sacred music to the ceremonies, traditions and liturgy of the Catholic Faith both in the sanctuary and in the community as well. Before long, parishioners were inviting their friends and coming with their families until the pews became more and more full, eventually with standing room only at some masses."

The documentary film project was a perfect fit for StoryTel Foundation.

"StoryTel's mission is to inspire people to restore the sacred, and restoring the sacred is exactly what Father Cook was—and is—working so diligently to do at St. Peters," said Carney. "We very much looked forward to the opportunity to work with Father Cook, but it turned out that he was familiar with StoryTel's work as well."

While interviewing Father Cook for the "Where Heaven Meets Earth," Carney learned that, interestingly enough, it was a DVD of StoryTel's documentary, "St. John Cantius, Restoring the Sacred" that actually inspired Father Cook to visit St. John Cantius in Chicago while on a trip, and moved him towards his effort to renew the aging St. Peter Church building.

It is in this way that StoryTel's work seems to have a ripple effect that extends far beyond the boundaries of a single film or fundraising project alone.

"We not only want our film projects to further the mission of the organizations we work with, but we also want to help people connect and collaborate with God to further His work," said Carney. "We have found, time and time again, that while a film can help solve an *immediate* need, like raising funds, it can also motivate a person to restore the sacred in their own life, and then inspire others do the same—and so on, and so on. The concept of restoring the sacred can overcome cultural divides and remain relevant across the barriers of time. There is no telling how far the message will travel and how many lives it will impact along the way."

To learn more about the St. Peter Catholic Church project or StoryTel Foundation's work visit:

www.heavenmeetearth.tv

EMAIL ANNOUNCEMENT



StoryTel Documentary About St. Peter's Church, Omaha, Set to Premiere on EWTN!

April 30 at 2:00am & 5:30pm CT

St. Peter Catholic Church of the downtown Omaha, Neb. has been featured in the documentary, "Where Heaven Meets Earth, Restoring the Sacred at St. Peter Church," which will soon air on EWTN Global Catholic Television Network to millions of viewers all around the world!

The documentary investigates how this once aging parish has risen to new vibrancy by restoring the sacred and embracing the whole of Catholic tradition. StoryTel, a nonprofit media foundation, produced the film so that the story of St. Peter Church will go on to inspire many others to restore the sacred in their own parish, life, family and community.

For more information please visit: www.HeavenMeetsEarth.tv

PS ALL ARE INVITED TO A SPECIAL BIG SCREEN SNEAK PREVIEW!

This new 30 minute StoryTel documentary about St. Peter's Church will be shown on a special big screen with an excellent sound system on Sunday, April 14th, after the 8am, 9:30am and 1pm Masses in St. Peter's School Gymnasium. **Special Big Screen Sneak Preview Showtimes: 9:15am, 11am, and 2:15pm in St. Peter's School Gym on Sunday, April 14th.**

BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENT



St. Peter's Documentary to Premiere on EWTN!

NEW AIR DATE: April 30 at 2:00am & 5:30pm CT

St. Peter Catholic Church in downtown Omaha has been featured in the documentary, "Where Heaven Meets Earth, Restoring the Sacred at St. Peter Church," which will soon premiere on EWTN the Global Catholic Television Network to millions of viewers all around the world!

The documentary investigates how this once aging parish has risen to new vibrancy by restoring the sacred and embracing the whole of Catholic tradition. StoryTel, a nonprofit media foundation, produced the film so that the story of St. Peter Church will go on to inspire many others to restore the sacred in their own parish, life, family and community.

For more information please visit: www.HeavenMeetsEarth.tv

RADIO ANNOUNCEMENT

FOR LOCAL CATHOLIC RADIO

Support for programming is provided by StoryTel Foundation.

And StoryTel's new documentary film, *Where Heaven Meets Earth*, featuring St. Peter Catholic Church of downtown Omaha, is set to premiere on EWTN April 30th, at 5:30pm Central.

StoryTel produced and donated this new film to help St. Peter's and to inspire millions of EWTN viewers around the world with the true-story of how this once dying parish became a thriving and vibrant church again after more than 40 years of decline.

Be sure to tune in to "Where Heaven Meets Earth" on EWTN April 30th at 5:30pm Central.

BIO SKETCH



StoryTel President, Don Carney

Directing, Producing, Interviews, Story

Don Carney oversees StoryTel Foundation and directs most of its films. He is an expert in bringing teams of creative people together and loves working with them to tell the stories of people who say "yes" to God's work in the world.

Don has a long history in the entertainment, film, and video

industries. He spent many years as an entertainer with the comedy / variety band, the *Magic If*. He worked in Hollywood for a time, and then produced educational videos for the California Correctional System for 12 years. During that time he also volunteered his time in Catholic Radio, and was a popular emcee at many Catholic events, drawing on his comedic talent and experience. A pro-life activist, he eventually became a successful independent film producer with a focus on pro-life causes.

Don currently lives in Omaha with his wife, who he met at a Pro-Life demonstration, and their children. He spends his free time with his family, chauffeuring his eight kids from one sports activity to the next.



St. Peter's Pastor, Rev. Damien J. Cook

Having moved from Ohio to Omaha, NE, at the age of 6, Fr. Cook grew up in St. Robert Bellarmine Parish.

He graduated from Creighton University in 1995 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in philosophy, theology, and Latin and later obtained Master of Arts in Theology and Master of Divinity degrees from Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg, MD.

Fr. Cook was ordained a priest in June of 1999 for the Archdiocese of Omaha. Fr. Cook served as a parochial vicar at St. Cecilia Cathedral in Omaha from 1999 until 2002 and at St. Patrick Church in Fremont from 2002 until 2004.

Fr. Cook was installed as pastor of St. Peter Church on the Solemnity of St. Peter and St. Paul on June 29, 2004. Fr. Cook was also the director of the Respect Life Apostolate, the pro-life office of the Archdiocese of Omaha, from October of 2005 until July 1, 2012.