



**You hold the key...**

You've worked so hard  
with blood, sweat and tears,  
May faith, hope and love  
Calm all of your fears.  
Let this key be your reminder  
of the support and the love  
from St. Peter Parish  
and from heaven above,  
Please come back to visit.  
We can't wait to see you again,  
to hear all of your stories  
as young women and men.

*You will always have a home at St. Peter Parish in  
Kirkwood. While you are away, we hope that you  
will find a second home at:*

St. Francis Catholic University Church  
at the University of Alabama  
811 5th Ave  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401  
[www.stfrancisuofa.com](http://www.stfrancisuofa.com)

*You can also visit [www.bamacatholic.com](http://www.bamacatholic.com) to  
explore the many opportunities to connect with  
other students, learn about service opportunities  
and grow in your faith.*

## SAINT PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

June 30, 2017

Dear Joseph,

I can remember vividly the summer of 1964, the year I graduated from high school and went off to college. It was a great summer! I got my first real job. No more cutting the grass for all the neighbors. I worked for the St. Louis County Health Department as a rabies inspector if you can imagine that! My job was to canvass neighborhoods to see if folks had their dogs vaccinated for rabies. If they didn't I gave them a 72 court summons to produce the rabies certificate or tags or face a stiff penalty. It made me unilaterally unpopular in every neighborhood I canvassed. My district that summer was Berkeley, Missouri in North County.

It wasn't all work that summer. I went to the New York World's Fair, the last really great World's Fair. It was terrific and I enjoyed every minute of the two weeks we were there. I also remember my cousins taking care of an old house for a family here in Kirkwood for the whole month of August. What was so great about the house was that it had an in-ground pool. We took total advantage of it swimming every night and all weekend long, ordering pizzas from Luigi's, and listening to KXOK radio, the rock n' roll station that everyone listened to all day long. I can especially remember the number one song that summer that the DJ on KXOK played every hour on the hour, *The House of the Rising Sun* by The Animals. I loved that song and every time I hear it my mind flashes back to the summer of 1964 and that pool....and college!

1964 was the summer I entered the seminary college. I certainly looked forward to it but I also had a good deal of anxiety, too. Entering the seminary especially back then meant not only leaving home but a whole lot of other things, too. Your social life took a different turn for sure. In 1964 entering the seminary was, in many ways, like joining the military with its strict discipline, demanding academics, long hours of study, and a huge change in lifestyle. As that August droned on the more nervous I became. Such a new experience as college always is can be somewhat unnerving. While I was very comfortable with my choice of vocation to the priesthood and I never looked back once I began the seminary, it was a new adventure for sure.

I just want you to know that St. Peter Parish will be praying for you as you transition away from your families, Kirkwood, and the familiar. I hope and pray that you stay in contact with the Church in some way, especially by going to Mass and receiving the Eucharist. If you have issues find a priest or minister on campus that can guide you through your doubts, concerns, or questions.

I have known most of your class of 2017 since you were in kindergarten and have watched all of you grow into wonderful young men and women. I am so excited for you as you enter this phase of your life but I know all this can be somewhat stressful. Take this "key of St. Peter" as a symbol of our remembering you, praying for you, and our love for you. Let that key continue to unlock the treasures of our Catholic faith and the spirit of the St. Peter Parish family. We look forward to your return to us whenever you come back to pray with us. God bless!

Peace and all good,

Monsignor Jack and all the people of Saint Peter Parish