

# Saint Peter Church

311 Bowdoin Street  
Dorchester, MA 02122



On the 23rd of August, 1873, the cornerstone of St. Peter's Church was laid by Bishop Williams. Work progressed so rapidly that the first Mass was said in the lower church on Easter Sunday, March 28th, 1875, and the upper church was finished and dedicated on February 18, 1884. The rapid construction of the church was matched by the rapid growth of the parish itself. Only twenty-five years later, in 1896, a mission church, St. Paul's, was built by Father Ronan, the need being occasioned by the fact that in the intervening twenty-five years, over 1,500 couples had been married at St. Peter's Church and 7,000 children baptized. St. Peter's Parish School was opened September 9, 1898, and staffed by the Sisters of Charity (Halifax), with an enrollment of 286 pupils. St. Peter's was always a parish of immigrants, new peoples coming to her doors in a constant stream. During the first half of the century, the immigrants were predominantly Irish and a pattern was established: families would settle in, educate their children and then move on to the own homes in the suburbs. In the mid to late 1970s and well into the 1980s a tremendous influx of new peoples came to St. Peter's Parish and neighborhood. The new immigrants today in St. Peter's Parish and neighborhood come from a variety of countries, including the Cape Verde islands and Haiti.

St. Peter's 2006 Steeples Program grant is a Technical Assistance grant and a Major Repairs grant. This means that they will be working with an architect and creating a comprehensive assessment of their building along with doing emergency repair work on their roof.