

St. Joseph Church

Rev. Bernard Starman, Pastor
 Rev. James Weeder & Rev. Joseph Sund, Associates
 Deacon M.J. Kersenbrock
 Atkinson, Nebraska
 402-925-2122, Emergency/After Hours---402.340.0277
 www.stjosephatkinson.org
 www.holtboydcatholic.org

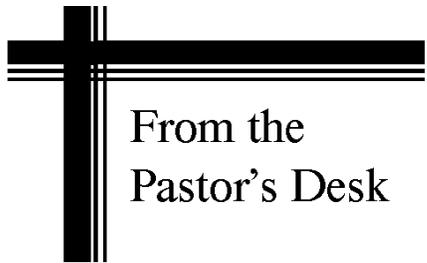
4th Sunday of Lent 03/22/20

Mass Intentions

Monday NO MASS
 Tuesday At St. Boniface
 NO MASS @ Good Sam
 Wednesday + All Souls
 Thursday At St. Boniface
 Friday + Ed & Marianne Jansen
 Saturday NO MASS
 Sunday + Art Laetsch

These Masses will be offered privately by our priests

	Saturday	Sunday	
 Mass Schedule	Atkinson, St Joseph	No Mass	
	St. Boniface, Stuart	6:00pm	10:30am
	St Patrick, O'Neill	5:00pm	9:00am
	St Joseph, Amelia	No Mass	11:00am
	Ss. Peter & Paul, Butte	No Mass	10:30am
	St Mary, Spencer	5:30pm	No Mass
	Assumption, Lynch	No Mass	8:30am
	Sacrament of Reconciliation for Ss. Joseph and Boniface: One half hour before each weekend Mass or by appointment		



From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Parishioners and Friends of the Catholic Parishes of Western Holt and Boyd Counties:

My hope and prayer is that all are adapting well to this process of "social distancing". Fr. Sund, Weeder and I along with Deacon Kersenbrock, continue to explore opportunities to help our parishioners to remain at least remotely connected to their faith lives and spiritual homes.

All our churches currently remain open for individuals to stop in for private prayer and adoration. We simply ask that people not congregate by the governor's order in groups larger than ten and maintain the 6-foot distance between individuals.

We've created an additional Facebook page for our realigned parishes, which we will use to live-stream Masses, daily reflections and potentially the rosary, and possibly even Eucharistic Adoration. Please like and follow "The Catholic Parishes of Western Holt and Boyd Counties" on Facebook.

For those who may be getting a little case of the cabin fever. Here are some ways to stay connected.

1. Make a couple of phone calls to elderly family members, friends and neighbors to check in on them and see if they need groceries, prescription pickup, or just conversation.
2. Some extra time praying for healthcare workers, medical researchers, and government leaders as they lead us through the pandemic.

Fourth Sunday of Lent in Cycle A gives us the second gospel reading from John [9:1-41] in as many weeks. This week we have Jesus healing the man born blind. The story is masterfully and artfully complex yet succinct. Drama abounds and intrigue develops with each verse. Fundamental themes and metaphors such as light versus darkness, sight versus blindness, knowing versus not knowing, and more, including willful ignorance in the face of demonstrable evidence, all are woven together in this gospel passage that is the source of tremendous insight and wisdom.

The story opens with popular wisdom of the day expressed by the disciples. Basically, they ask, "Whose fault is it?" that the man is blind. Jesus rejects such attribution, which parallels the attitudes he expresses in the Gospel of Luke. It is not that bad things happen to bad people. Such thinking, which infects many religious and non-religious people, is not new in our day. Jesus is far removed from any "prosperity gospel" (good things happen to those who are good), as it might be understood today.

After Jesus heals this blind person, those who knew him could not believe their own eyes! Indeed, they said it was not the same person. Only when the man who was formerly blind says that he is one and the same do the onlookers ask how this happened. The situation escalates quickly to the Pharisees when the reader is informed that all of this took place on a Sabbath, a holy day on which no work is to be done. This theological riddle puzzled the Pharisees, who viewed Jesus as a sinner because he did not keep the Sabbath. Yet how could a sinner make the blind see? When faced with such testimony from the man who had been blind, who proclaimed Jesus a prophet, it seems best to deny the testimony!

The story continues unfolding, as those who are considered learned deny straightforward evidence that is presented to them. Believing in Jesus would upend the worldview of those who profess to know the Scriptures and the ways of God.

Rather than see this only as an account of a sign that Jesus performed, we would do well to ponder its application to us. How often do we reject plain evidence because it does not reconcile with what we "know" to be true? It is difficult to change one's mind, especially if that means changing many other attitudes and thoughts as well.

In this weekend's gospel story, as in so many, Jesus takes the initiative. He creates cognitive dissonance in the minds and hearts of many, demanding that they make a decision for or against him. When do we face such encounters with Christ? What is our response? Do we deny what everyone can plainly see? Or do we undergo a change and enter into a new life with Christ?

Giving up habits and ways of thinking can be difficult. Imagine making a change to something simple, such as a banking account with direct deposit and automatic bill-pay. Once a structure has been established, linking accounts, deposits, and debits, it can be cumbersome to make a change, close the account, and open a new one. If we encounter such difficulty with a matter as simple as a bank account, imagine what we encounter—even at a subconscious level—when we change a way of thinking about something as central as religion, meaning, and purpose.

Ad Multos Annos,

Fr. Bernard Starman

Pastor

The HARVEST IS GREAT, LABORERS ARE FEW----Taking the vocation crucifix this week—Ben Sholes Family. The week of March 29—Pat & Sandra Kennedy.



Emma Lou Gunther, Darrin Wedige, Gianna Slaymaker, Lois Tunender, Nathan Boyle, Garrett Scholz, Marilyn Morrison, Blakely Bouska, Miranda iJames, John Gilg, Phil Fritz, John Mathis, Jerry Schaaf, Michelle Bulau, & Phil Schmaderer.

New CDs...from Lighthouse Catholic Media have been placed in the Koisk in the back of church...suggested donation \$3.00 per CD. **Featured this week...** 'Saint Paul the Great'---**Jason Evert**. Discover the five great loves of Pope Saint John Paul II as Jason evert, renowned Catholic speaker and author, shares remarkable stories about this saint's life from those who knew him, including bishops, students whom he taught, and Swiss Guards who interacted with him daily. Jason presents a wealth of insights about this holy man who promoted devotion to Divine Mercy and Marian consecration, helped defeat communism in Europe, wrote the Theology of the Body and embraced young people like no other.

LITURGICAL MINISTERS

	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
EMHCs		
LECTOR		
GIFT BEARERS		
ORGANIST		
SERVERS		
<u>APRIL</u> <u>USHERS</u>		

THE LORD'S PORTION---03.15.20

Adult envelopes (31)	1,459.00
Loose cash	45.00
Loose checks (1)	35.00
Midweek deposit	91.00
Online donations (2)	<u>111.94</u>
TOTAL	1,741.94
Budget...Sunday	3,561.58
	-1,819.64
Home Missions (4)	135.00