

From the Pastor

My State Fair Experience

Attending the Nebraska State Fair is a fond childhood memory of mine. It is one of those things that my dad probably did more out of love for us kids than his own interest in attending (some work was always in need of his attention on the farm). Mom, however, probably relished the chance to see all the sights and use it all as a learning experience for us kids. I have not been to the State Fair in many, many years, and certainly not since it moved to Grand Island. So I was really keen to attend the State Fair this year. And it was very pleasurable for me. I enjoyed the easy-in, easy-out of the parking near the front main gate. I enjoyed seeing a couple of former parishioners and current parishioners. A big highlight was ordering a sweet treat at the UN-L Dairy Store, a place I worked at during several semesters of my college time in Lincoln. One neat thing about being a priest and wearing your collar is the random conversations which it provokes. A man working the carnival at the Fair stopped me and wanted to visit. He said his name was Andrew, and he really wanted me to pray for him. He asked, "You won't forget?" I place Andrew's intention for prayers in front of all you who read this. I don't know what is going on in his life, but the power of my prayers and yours could be a great moment of conversion for him, and us. *** I was never in 4-H as a kid, but I really enjoy seeing the industrious projects that 4-H's produce. I spent a lot of time looking at their projects. The insect collections brought back memories of two Entomology classes I took at UN-L. The vegetable displays brought back memories of helping Mom and Grandma tend their gardens. I enjoyed the smell of the livestock barn, something that a farm kid can uniquely appreciate. In another building, I had a good chat at the Nebraska booth of the Right-to-Life volunteer. I want to promote pro-life activities for our parishes, such as participating in the Life Chain which is always held on the first Sunday of October. *** I look forward to seeing the State Fair in future years!

Life is Worth Living Join Archbishop Lucas, Bishop Conley and Bishop Hanefeldt for the annual Pro-Life Banquet on *Friday, September 29 at 5 p.m.* featuring keynote speaker Wesley J. Smith. He is a Senior Fellow at the Discovery Institute, and the author of many books including *Culture of Death: The Age of "Do Harm" Medicine and Forced Exit: Euthanasia, Assisted Suicide and the New Duty to Die.* *** The Banquet begins with a social hour at 5 p.m. with dinner, keynote address and awards ceremony to follow. Go to the web site of the Nebraska Catholic Conference for more information on tickets for the banquet and conference: **www.necatholic.org**. The conference and banquet will be held at the Cornhusker Hotel in Lincoln at 13th and L Streets.

I Will Be on Spirit Radio The Good Book Club on Spirit Catholic Radio is a recurring program in which priests, sisters, and lay faithful discuss various passages of the Holy Bible. I am blessed to be asked to be on-air, live, on Monday, September 11. The passage I will be discussing is Proverbs chapter 2. The radio station airs at 91.5 FM and 102.7 FM, whichever happens to come in more clearly on your radio. You can also listen on-line at **www.spiritcatholicradio.com**. *** Spirit Radio's fall care-a-thon is coming up September 25-29. I hope many of you are able to support this great apostolate with your financial gifts.

First Funeral Funerals are a part of every priest's ordinary ministry. My first funeral as your pastor was last week at St. Joseph for Mr. Leonard Consbruck. You may have heard that Father Dennis Hunt was able to be present and con-celebrate the funeral Mass. I was amazed when I arrived in Giltner to see the parking lot and side streets filled with cars. When we went to the cemetery, cars lined the highway along which our St. Joseph Cemetery sits. Father Hunt and I walked from the church over to the Giltner Community Center for the funeral dinner. Since it was Labor Day, it was enjoyable to see a number of school-aged kids out in the streets of town. This is a testament to growing up in small towns, that there is a safety net of knowing your kids are out and about with the neighbor kids. I wanted to express my appreciation for the experience of praying with this particular family and their extended family and friends. More so, I know that this type of experience is one that I will see time and again. What I mean is that when a Christian person dies, we insert them into the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection. We pray them into the hands of our good God. Everything I experienced last week shows me that a good faith foundation is present in these parishes such that we know the importance of gathering in prayer at the death of loved ones.

Indulgence on September 13 As we published in a bulletin earlier this summer, a plenary indulgence can be gained for praying with a statue of Our Lady of Fatima on the 13th day of these months between May and October. On Wednesday, September 13, I will have my own personal Fatima statue on display in St. Mary Church for your own prayer time. I will first have Our Lady at St. Joseph Church for the daily Mass, and then bring her back to St. Mary's by around 9:00a.m. She will be available for you to stop by and pray with until I lock the church, around 8:30 p.m. To gain this indulgence, the customary acts of receiving Holy Communion and repenting of sins in Holy Confession must be observed. In addition, one must be free from the attachment to sin. The act of praying in front of the statue is stated in this way from the Holy See: "The pious faithful who visit with devotion a statue of Our Lady of Fatima solemnly exposed for public veneration in any church, oratory or proper place during the

days of the anniversary of the apparitions, the 13th of each month from May to October (2017), and there devoutly participate in some celebration or prayer in honor of the Virgin Mary. Those seeking an indulgence must also pray an Our Father, recite the Creed and invoke Our Lady of Fatima.”

Living Liturgically The upcoming week is blessed with ways of living liturgically. St. John Chrysostom’s feast day is September 13. His name means “golden-tongued” because of his beautiful preaching. You could google search one of his writings and read it on his feast. *** September 14 is the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. This is a wonderful day to meditate before a crucifix. Great saints like John Paul II were able to spend many hours simply gazing upon the cross and loving Jesus in his redemption of mankind. We may not be as contemplative as JP II, but we can still conjure up within our souls a great deal of love for all that Jesus did for us on the cross. *** September 15 is the memorial of Our Lady of Sorrows. Mother Mary loved Jesus more than anyone, so she suffered more than anyone in seeing him die upon the cross. Whatever sorrows we have, and many of us carry many sorrows in our hearts, we can give them to Mother Mary on this day especially. Devotions to the Seven Sorrows of Mary can be google-searched and prayed within our families. We can also pray the Chaplet of Seven Sorrows, which consists of seven “decades” of seven invocations. I have a special Rosary for this chaplet, and it can be prayed with a google-search for it or perhaps found on a good liturgical app, such as iBreviary. *** Live and love Jesus liturgically!

School Sisters Those of you in the CCD drop-off line on Wednesday evening probably noticed the two religious sisters who stopped by to visit. They are from the School Sisters of Christ the King, which is the order begun by our 7th Bishop, Glennon P. Flavin. These nuns teach in our Catholic schools, and love religious education. The two sisters who stopped by were Sister Mary Fidelis and Sister Marie Caritas. Many of our kids were fascinated to ask the Sisters questions. I was in college at UN-L with Sister Mary Fidelis. She grew up between York and McCool Junction, where her parents, Bill and Susan Dunavan, still live. Her brother, Father Tom, is a priest of our diocese, currently serving in Falls City. Her younger sister is also a nun, with the remaining brother and sister being married and living near Wahoo. *** I speak of Sister Fidelis’ home area as a mention to all families that priests and sisters come from good Catholic families. Any one of your families may be the seed bed for a future religious vocation. Please pray for one of your children, and many of our parishes’ children, to hear and answer God’s calling to give their lives as a priest or sister.

RCIA (Catholic Instructions) It is getting to that time of year when we offer classes for those who want to know more about the Catholic faith. These classes sometimes conclude

with people becoming fully a member of the Catholic Church. I am seeking for some helpers to assist me in leading these classes. I have a great resource of curriculum from our diocesan web site, courtesy of the Office of Religious Education and Father Andrew Heaslip. The actual teaching materials are present there in Power Point format, and can be photocopied off. The liturgical parts of the RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) is something that I can explain and lead those who volunteer to help. The biggest contribution which you might be called to is to be a welcoming, joy-filled person who can help create a community of friends within the class. Can you help? Please call me.

Diane You have seen her name on the front of our bulletin, but she has not been officially announced. Diane Schleichardt applied and received our parishes’ position as secretary and bookkeeper. Diane lives in rural Phillips and has been a wonderful addition to our parish community. She has been involved in several parishes over the years, and recently worked in a similar position at the St. Mary Cathedral in Grand Island. Please kindly welcome her when you have a chance! *** We thank Tracy Galusha and Theresa Regier for their time spent serving our parishes as secretary and bookkeeper, respectively. They have each assisted in the transitional time to help train Diane in what she needs to know. Please prayerfully thank God for Tracy and Theresa’s service to our parishes.

Needed: Seven Sisters On Saturday morning, September 30, I hope to encourage some prayerful women to go to Lincoln to St John's Parish, 7601 Vine Street, for a Morning Recollection sponsored by the Seven Sisters Apostolate. This is a Catholic Ministry which covers us Priests in Holy Hours of Prayer. Janette Howe, Foundress of the Seven Sisters Apostolate, will be our speaker. Those women currently a part of the Apostolate are encouraged to attend, and women who want to learn more about becoming a "sister" in this beautiful Apostolate of Eucharistic Adoration and Prayer are invited to join us. Please contact Diocesan Coordinator Rhonda Litt at **402.525.6396** (text or call) for more information. Visit the website www.sevensisterapostolate.org. Priests are subject to many promptings from the father of lies, the Devil, and so we need prayer more than you might think. I would love to have seven (or more) sisters of prayer at St. Mary’s and seven (or more) sisters of prayer at St. Joseph. Mark September 30 on your calendars if you would like to be my sister in prayer!

God Bless You!

Father Grell