

From the Pastor

Meeting in...Goehner! I use an exclamation point here in no way to express any bad will toward the little town of Goehner in Seward County. It's just that while I have driven a gazillion times past the Goehner exit on I-80, I had never visited the village until last Sunday. It turns out that Goehner has an eating establishment by the name of Chez Bubba. After scrutinizing this restaurant via the World Wide Web, my family decided to gather there to celebrate my brother's birthday. Mark turned 43 on September 8th, so he, Mary (my sister), Bob (her husband), and Will (Mary and Bob's child) all met me at Bubba's. The trip is about halfway between where my Lincoln family lives and where I live (on 10th Street in Aurora). We sure had a good time at this unique little restaurant. For a Sunday lunch time place, I would recommend it. A little park is beside Bubba's for a pick-up basketball game or swings and teeter-totters for the young or young-at-heart. I swung on the swings a little bit! Mark is a lifelong bachelor to this point in his life, so our family enjoys celebrating his birthday. Mom and Dad find travelling somewhat difficult, so they did not join us. But I did see Mom and Dad since my last bulletin note, which you will see as you read on...

My Day Off I travelled to our family farm for my day off this week. I had a few business-type errands to address in Beatrice, including stopping by my parish of Baptism, St. Joseph's. I spoke for a few minutes with pastor, Father Robert Barnhill, while I was there. By lunchtime, I was at our kitchen table with Mom serving dinner! It was great to visit Mom and Dad. And Dad had a little project for me. It seems the front tire of his John Deere 3020 (the tractor I learned to drive on as a child) was flat. Dad had started loosening the six bolts holding the tire on, and I helped him pull off the tire. We then went to the local tire place that we have always gone to in Beatrice. I rolled the tire (successfully) into the repair shop, something I haven't done in many years. Kind of like riding a bicycle, it seems one doesn't forget how to roll a tire! While the tire was being fixed, Dad and I had a good talk with the long-time manager of T.O. Haas, Ralph Tvrdy. After the tire was repaired with a new tube, Dad and I got the tire back onto the 3020. While I was at home, our neighbor who swaths and bales our 34 acres of native, virgin prairie grass was there working on the annual hay production. (This

prairie is a pride of our family, being untilled ground. One time when I was in high school, a group from the UN-L College of Agriculture came and did a tour of our prairie.) At the end of the day, I had a beautiful drive back to Aurora. The sky was hazy (maybe from the wildfire smoke?) and so the setting sun was HUGE on the horizon as I drove west. I was very happy to have a good day with my parents (at my home-home), and also very happy to have a beautiful people like you all to return home to.

My Bosses' Pictures I don't know the origin of this custom, but many parishes in the U.S. and around the world have a prominent placement of pictures of the current Pope and the Bishop of the Diocese. Recently, both St. Mary and St. Joseph have upgraded these displays. We proudly follow who you might call my bosses, the Holy Father, Pope Francis, and our Bishop, His Excellency, the Most Reverend James D. Conley. Have you noticed their pictures in our St. Mary's and St. Joseph's? Have you noticed similar pictures in other Catholic churches you have visited or attend on a regular basis? Thank you to those who helped upgrade these pictures in our parishes!

My Pilgrimage I am going on pilgrimage next week, September 21-25. With my sister, we will attend the Beatification of Father Stanley Rother in Oklahoma City. You may have seen or heard of this priest, who was martyred by anti-Catholic forces in a civil war in Guatemala in 1981. I have known of Father Rother for years and years, as he attended the same seminary as me, Mount St. Mary's in Emmitsburg, Maryland. By order and mandate of Pope Francis, Father Rother will be elevated to the title of "Blessed", which is one step below becoming a Saint in the Church. This will be only the third ceremony of this type held on the soil of the United States, for two reasons: 1. Our country is relatively young at 241 years and so we haven't had many saints. 2. Ceremonies like this by custom have usually happened only in Rome until the last couple of decades. Since I have never seen a Beatification, and since I feel close to Father Rother as a fellow alumnus of Mount St. Mary's, I am looking forward to attending the special Mass on September 23. The Mass itself will be broadcasted live on EWTN, beginning at 10:00 a.m. I know you would enjoy watching it. I will be concelebrating the Mass along with many other priests and bishops. My sister and I will have a great time

driving to Oklahoma and back, and we have several relatives that we are looking forward to visiting along the way. Since this pilgrimage is a very holy time of prayer, please know that I take all of your intentions with me. If you want to tell me or write to me any special intentions, I would welcome them. While I am away these several days, a missionary priest will be offering the weekend Masses. Read on for more about his important mission.

Mission COOP Each year, over 150 missionary dioceses and religious orders request permission to come to our Diocese of Lincoln to appeal for financial support. This appeal is a major source of funding for the missionaries who our Diocese accepts to solicit funds from our parishes under what we call the “Mission Cooperative Appeal.” I have since childhood always been amazed to think of the Catholic faith in other parts of the world; our family routinely prayed for missionaries. Some missionary priests who speak in our parishes may ask for additional support, such as sponsoring a seminarian for several months, in addition to their appeal at Mass. Our diocesan regulations do not allow this so that people will be able to support the needs of other missionaries who will give appeals in our parishes in the future. The reasoning for this is that we must give each different group each year a fair chance to receive our support. *** I am happy to announce that our missionary priest this year is Father Suman George from the Diocese of Satna in the State of Madhya Pradesh in the Northern part of India. I looked up this area of India, and it looks to be smack-dab in the center of mainland India. It is landlocked. By my knowledge of Father Marneni, he is a good deal south of this area, but by Indian standards, not terribly far away. The information I received from Father Suman George states: *“Even though the population of Satna is over ten million, only 3,000 belong to the Catholic faith. The majority of the population belongs to the Hindu religion. We extend our support to everyone irrespective of their religious beliefs. Health Care Centers such as hospitals and dispensaries run by the Diocese help the poor people in the remote areas. Infant mortality and malnutrition are very high in this State of Madhya Pradesh due to lack of medical care. The diocese is initiating programs to address these issues. Being a mission Diocese, we are in great need of financial support to do our further missionary activities and*

humanitarian support for the poor and the needy.” *** I will state to you that I am very appreciative of the missionary work St. Mary’s and St. Joseph’s have supported, directly, to Father Marneni in the past three years. At the same time, we need to continue to support in some way any and all missionary activity, especially as directed by our Diocese of Lincoln through this Mission Coop Program. I will state, as well, that we need to take care of our own evangelization and missionary efforts locally, both at St. Mary’s and St. Joseph’s. We also need to support our Bishop and our Diocese of Lincoln, as you will see in reading on...

Bishop’s Appeal for Vocations We have 39 seminarians studying for our Diocese of Lincoln. Being blessed with this outstanding number of men studying to become priests brings with it, this year, an estimated cost of \$1.3 million. That may seem like a lot, but for those of you with children and grandchildren in college or graduate school, the number of \$1.3 million probably does not surprise you. The men who study at St. Gregory the Great in Seward, in what we call “college seminary”, are asked to pay \$5,000 toward their first year of study. The remainder of their first year of study, around \$15,000, is paid by the Diocese through the generosity of people like you. The men who study in the theology seminaries in Philadelphia, Maryland, and Rome, are not asked to pay their graduate studies...we, the people of the Diocese, fund their approximately \$25,000-\$30,000 cost of education for one year. Did you know that when a man is ordained for the Diocese of Lincoln, he is debt-free from his seminary studies? This is a great blessing. YOU, the people of St. Mary’s and St. Joseph’s, back in the years 1991-1996, gave donations to help educate ME to become a priest. And I am ever so grateful!!! *** Because the cost of educating the seminarians is \$1.3 million, Bishop Conley is asking the 135 parishes in the Diocese to donate \$800,000 of that cost. The remaining amount is covered by “burses” people have set up in their wills or other bequests. Our parishes have been given an assessment from the Diocese that we will owe toward the Bishop’s Appeal for Vocations. If we do not raise that full amount, we will be required to pay for it out of our general funds. I will share the amounts needed from each parish in next week’s bulletin. I would suggest that each one reading this considers a gift of \$50-\$100 toward the Bishop’s Appeal for Vocations, which will be taken up the

weekend of September 30-October 1.

Money, money, money Does the Catholic Church only care about receiving your donations of hard-earned money? The answer is categorically: No. It may seem that way at times, but I think a careful and prayerful examination of your heart and mind before Our Lord Jesus will tell you otherwise. We as two parish communities probably need to continually look at our level and spirituality of using our wealth for the benefit of all of God's people in our area. Please know that I hope to, over time, give you the spiritual tools you need to know about the biblical guidelines given to us in God's Word about how to use the treasure of financial gifts that each has been given.

The 13th Day Our students from the two parishes in Grades 4-8 had a movie night this past week in CCD, complete with popcorn and pop! We watched the first half of The 13th Day, the movie about the three children in Fatima, Portugal, who were given the apparitions from heaven from Mother Mary. I think the kids enjoyed it, as we projected the movie on the wall in the hall, and outputted the audio through the speaker system in the hall. We will complete the movie next week. At the end of the CCD time, all of the children in grades K-8 gathered in church to pray to Our Lady of Fatima. It was beautiful to see a church packed with young people, on their knees, entrusting themselves to Jesus in prayer. And Jesus's mother was very pleased, too!

RCIA (Catholic Study Class) I have one solid volunteer to assist in teaching and moderating the Catholic Study Class called "RCIA". We plan to start up the week of October 2nd and meet weekly. Be looking for more details. And is there one or two more people in either of our parishes who could take a leadership role? Please know that this class is open to Catholics and non-Catholics. With me being the new pastor, you may be interested to take the class again if you have already taken it. All would benefit from a review of their own Catholic faith. Prayerfully consider joining us!

Welcome, Dear Friend! The thought came to me to address people in this bulletin space who might not be at Mass to pick up a bulletin. My words here would be words that YOU could take and share with people. These people are dear friends of Jesus, and so they are dear friends of ours. And so, I say, "*Dear Friend, hello!*

If the everyday life that you are living weighs heavily upon you, please know that the Churches of St. Mary's and St. Joseph's are praying for you. We believe in Jesus as the one who helps us to take up our cross and follow Him. We welcome you, dear friend, to share with any of us Catholics your prayer intentions. We welcome you to come and sit in our churches, which are a silent refuge from the world. You are a friend to us, and I as pastor already pray for you. We are not perfect people ourselves, and so we don't expect you to be perfect, either. We love you in the love of Christ Jesus! Sincerely, Father Loras Grell and the parishioners of St. Mary's and St. Joseph's."

God Bless You!

Father Grell