

From the Pastor

Eclipse This week, on Monday, we will experience the Great American Solar Eclipse. It is something that has been much spoken of; I personally have been looking forward to it for a long time. I encourage you to approach this time of eclipse as a gift of God from the heavens, which He created. Be in awe of God's goodness. Say a prayer to prepare yourself for the "oohs" and "aaahs" that will be spoken of with those with whom you watch the eclipse. Pray that unbelievers in God or in Jesus may be led by a spirit of conversion to see the Divine Providence of this eclipse rather than some kind of accidental event. I have attached an article that spells out the "Catholic way" to approach the eclipse. Please read it.

Will at Pius! As I share with you more about my family, you should know that this week was monumental with my nephew beginning his high school career at Pius X in Lincoln. My sister and husband adopted William when he was two days old, and so to see him come to this point is a wonderful event in our family. I mentioned in my Assumption homily that I taught at Pius years ago, 1996-1999. This experience of mine gives me a unique perspective into our diocese's largest Catholic high school. The twelve Catholic K-8 elementary schools in the City of Lincoln all support Pius to offer the students a continuance of their Catholic school education. It results in the kids coming to know other Catholics from around the entire city and area of Lincoln. The approximately 30 students from Will's 8th grade graduating class at St. Teresa's will meet new friends and have many new experiences as offered at Pius. Please keep my nephew in your prayers!

Family Connections Including my deacon year, the Bishop of Lincoln has placed me in seven different assignments. In each one, I have had relatives! Our family is one that counts extended lines of relationship very meaningfully. I wanted to share with you who I am related to here in our parish...and I hope I don't miss anyone! Lucille Meier of St. Mary's is a first cousin to my grandpa, Frank Hajek. My grandpa died at age 87 in 1983. Frank Hajek was the son of Joseph and Anna (Masek) Hajek, while Lucille Meier is the daughter of John and Clara Masek. Anna (my great-grandma) and John (Lucille's dad) were sister and brother. Both the Hajek and

Masek families originated from Odell in Gage County upon arrival from the Old Country, the current-day Czech Republic. I have kept in contact with Lucille Meier and her son, Dan, through the years. *** The second family connection is to Brent Janda and Rene Ostdiek of St. Mary's. Brent and Rene are brother and sister. Their parents are Bob and Brenda Janda of Sacred Heart Church in Lawrence, where I served as pastor, 2005-2013. Using my grandpa, Frank Hajek, again as a reference point, Brent and Rene's great-grandma was Frances (Hajek) Hubl. Frances and Frank were first cousins, as their parents, respectively, were Frank and Mary Hajek and Joseph and Anna Hajek. And this Frank and Joseph were brothers who came to America in 1866. With Brent and Rene's parents and parents-in-law all living in the Lawrence area, I came to know their families through the years I served as pastor there. *** So, if your head is spinning, that's ok. But those of you who like family connections will understand the special nature with which I am proud to call these people relatives.

Godteens/Godparents We kicked off our school year of high school Godteens/Godparents this past week. The 9-12th graders met with their parent/adult leaders at the Aurora High School...we thank Huskie Nation for providing a place to get together. The rainfall the night before forced our move to the dry, indoors location. We had pizza and I had a chance to address the kids. I enjoyed getting to see their enthusiastic spirits, and I look forward to spending time with them throughout the school year. I am so grateful for the support given to the Godteen/Godparents by our parish. I want to send a special call-out to any students from St. Joseph to become involved. This is the place for you to live and love your faith, and to form close friendships in Christ with your peers. It is a winning situation, and I want as many kids as possible to participate.

Tuesday Night Rain My cell phone alerted me halfway through the night on Tuesday night/Wednesday morning of a flood warning. I went back to sleep, figuring my rectory would take a flood of Noah-like proportions to affect me! I was so surprised on Wednesday morning to see my rain gauge measure at precisely 5.00 inches. The morning Mass on

Wednesday was at St. Joseph's; it was rather beautiful to hear the tat-tat-tat of the rain hitting the roof while we prayed the Holy Sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross down below. I must tell you that St. Mary's showed a couple of leaks due to the rain. Wet ceiling tiles were found in the office area of the hall and in the south central area of the dining room. A parish council member called Ziemba Roofing to come and check the roof. Either through the council or the bulletin, we will let you know what the roofing company found in their investigation.

Closest Pizza Hut in Diocese At my last assignment, I boasted that in Plattsmouth I had the privilege of the closest rectory to a Dairy Queen in the whole Diocese of Lincoln. Here in Aurora, I can claim to be the closest rectory to a Pizza Hut! Not to downplay the other eating establishments, but Pizza Hut has been a family favorite since my childhood. We always went to Pizza Hut in Beatrice to celebrate birthdays and Mom and Dad's anniversary. So, I have enjoy "the Hut" a couple of times recently, walking right over to a great meal!

St. Joseph Planters Someone volunteered to place some silk flowers into our planters in front of church...thank you!!! When I notice the US Postal Service with flower planters and a pharmacy and other places of commerce, I just know how pleased the dear Lord is when we beautify His holy house in any way we can.

Bishop Conley on Charlottesville Bishop Conley writes the following: "*Racism, white supremacy, and anti-Semitism are absolutely opposed to the truth of the Gospel. Racism is a dangerous evil: a lie sown by Satan, which seduces, and confuses, and ensnares. The Evil One seeks to divide us from one another and from the Lord, by sowing and exploiting prejudice, stereotypes, and fear.*" To see Bishop's entire article, go to our Southern Nebraska Register print and web editions.

State Fair Pro-Life Elsewhere in this bulletin, please see information on volunteering for the pro-life booth at the Nebraska State Fair. If you have some time to give, this is a great exercise of stewarding your time as a great witness to the beauty of human life.

Spirit Catholic Radio When it comes to understanding current events in a Catholic way, I recommend "Kresta in the Afternoon" on Spirit Catholic Radio. It airs from 3:00-5:00 each weekday. The secular news media can leave us very frustrated and almost hopeless. But when a program like this airs interviews with people who are analyzing situations with Biblically-based teachings of Our Lord Jesus, it makes one breathe a little easier and recover courage and hope. You would do yourself a favor to tune in, or to go to Al Kresta's web site of www.avemariaradio.net to listen to past episodes.

Daily Mass and Confessions Have you considered coming to Holy Mass more than just on Sundays? I invite you to this worship and adoration with/of our good God. Some of the religions formed from the Dispensationalist movement of the 19th century have no idea of what it is to worship the Lord Jesus on a daily basis. Daily Mass represents a more intimate time to converse with the Lord. And Confessions are offered prior to Mass, which may work better for you than our weekend Confession schedule. Please note: you could stop by for Confession even if you don't have time to stay for Mass because of other responsibilities. *** Another distinct option is to attend Holy Mass on Saturday morning. Whatever your weekend plans, starting off with Mass would only improve upon things. And if your weekend Mass with family is planned for Saturday evening, you are allowed to receive Holy Communion at Mass twice in one day. *** Please prayerfully consider what I am encouraging.

St. Joseph CCD I have listened to feedback from several parishioners about our CCD classes at St. Joseph. One challenge we have is setting a day and time when I can be present to spend time with the students and offer the sacraments. Also, the youth are spread out over various grade levels. Our Diocese of Lincoln has specific curriculum devised per grade level, and it can be adjusted to the local situation in each parish. I need to figure out how I want to best serve our students and families. In the meantime, we have time to plan how to provide a great year of learning to our students. To equip yourself with the diocesan guidelines, please go to this link: <http://www.lincolndiocese.org/parish-ccd/1-8-ccd-curriculum>.

God Bless You!

Father Grell