

From the Pastor—November 4, 2018

Mass Times Change I asked your prayers for the change in Mass times which I have been weighing in recent months. During my time of vacation, I felt your prayers coming upon me to help me. I am proposing that beginning with Advent, we change the early Sunday morning Mass to 8:00 a.m. and hold it at St. Joseph's, Giltner. The second Sunday morning Mass will be changed to St. Mary's, at 10:30 a.m. I believe this to be reasonable in many ways. Probably one of the main advantages is that I will plan to be in the confessional by 7:15 a.m. at St. Joseph's. Often, confessions have been delayed or not held because I couldn't make it in time. Spreading the gap between Masses to 2.5 hours will help me to pray and sing and celebrate with St. Joseph's and then have enough time to return to St. Mary's for confessions at 9:45, followed by a more relaxed entry into praying and singing and celebrating with St. Mary's. Sunday mornings have made me rushed and anxious; I am hoping this change will help me to serve you better. I want to hear your feedback to this change, which does NOT affect the Saturday, 5:00 p.m. Mass at St. Mary's. If I discern that the Holy Spirit is "greenlighting" this change, I will publish it officially in the local newspaper and on our parish web site. It will also go up onto our diocesan web site and www.MassTimes.org. Thank you.

Fall Festival I was so grateful that Father John Rooney from the St. Gregory the Great Seminary in Seward could come to pray Holy Mass at St. Joseph's on October 21. It gave me a chance to serve as spiritual father to our parish members and guests at the Fall Festival at St. Mary's. I asked the kitchen cooks to prepare me some gluten-free waffles to use with my authentic Vermont maple syrup, which does not have fructose corn syrup added to it. It was so enjoyable to welcome people and get to know guests and parishioners better. I was called upon to announce the raffle prize winners as our youth drew the names. That was fun for me. It was obvious to me that, even though this event raises funds for the Altar Society and is organized by our wonderful women, it is truly a parish-wide effort which embraces all. I am so grateful to you for putting forth such a beautiful celebration.

To Illinois and Back My vacation began on Monday, October 22. I am so grateful for Father Chris Kubat, who serves as Executive Director of Catholic Social Services, who came and prayed the three parish weekend Masses on October 27-28. I drove what you might call a "lightning strike" schedule, moving in and out of many different areas and circumstances rapidly. It was fun to do it this way, and it seemed to prolong the time away because of so many different experiences. I started off in Waterloo, Iowa, where I visited a first cousin of my father. She and her husband live on an acreage a little north of Waterloo. She, Mary, had had a stroke last December between Christmas and New Year's, and so it was good to see her and to see her progress. The stroke debilitated her significantly, but she has been very good at rehabilitation. Her speech is still affected. Her speech therapist has given her tongue twisters sentences to say, which Mary referred to as "my homework"! I next ventured over to Dyersville, IA, and saw the beautiful twin-spired St.

Francis Xavier Basilica there. Just down the road from Dyersville is Cascade, Iowa. It is here that my namesake, Bishop Loras Lane, was born in 1910. He became a priest for the Dubuque Archdiocese, and later an auxiliary bishop for Dubuque and the Ordinary of the Diocese of Rockford in Illinois. My dad named me after Bishop Lane when he heard of the name while working in Rockford in the 1950's. I was hoping to find Bishop Lane's childhood home, but I did talk to people who knew the family, which was really cool. I next went into the City of Dubuque, which is such a pretty and historic town on the banks of the Mississippi. There, I visited a retired priest name Father Loras Otting. Yes, we share the same name! I have seen him and corresponded with him over the years. He was surprised to see me. He and I, and every person named "Loras", were ultimately named for the famed pioneer bishop of Iowa, Bishop Mathias Loras. Bishop Loras became the bishop of Iowa in 1837 and spread the faith with great zeal until his death in 1859. After I saw Father Otting, I drove to Rockford. There, I prayed at Bishop Lane's grave and spent time in the Cathedral of St. Peter, where he had served as bishop from 1956-1968. This year is the 50th anniversary of his death, which was the factor that made me want to spend my vacation driving to Rockford. I turn 50 in a couple of weeks, so you could say that I was making a pilgrimage out of my vacation. It was a preparation for the next 50 years, if the Lord should see fit to grant me such a long life! I finished my days of lightning-strike driving by visiting the tiny town of Richmond, Iowa. It is located near Iowa City. My Hajek ancestors (my maternal grandparents) first settled at Richmond in 1866 before coming to Odell, Nebraska, twelve years later. I saw the church that my great-grandfathers had helped to build and in which my grandpa's dad had received his First Holy Communion. To think of this family coming from Bohemia in current-day Czech Republic was a wonderful time of faith-building for me. I spent the weekend, after all this traveling, with my parents in Gage County. Seeing Mom and Dad and having good visiting time was very beautiful. I concelebrated the 10:00 Mass at St. Joseph's with our local pastor, Father Bob Barnhill. He was so gracious to recognize me and make me feel welcome. It is good to be back with you! I am grateful for your prayers.

Bishops' Pro-Life Conference I attended the Pro-Life banquet last Friday. Our three Nebraska bishops were present, which was really cool. The speaker was Dr. George Delgado. He spoke of how about 35% of all abortions are done with chemical, oral medicine rather than surgically. He has found a way to reverse the chemical abortions by injecting large amounts of progesterone. Please see www.abortionpillreversal.com and help get the word out that even after starting the abortion chemically, it can be reversed. Dr. Delgado's work reverses the effects of Mifeprex or RU-486. This is wonderful pro-life work.

Pray for U.S. Bishops Please read the letter from Bishop Conley on the reverse side of this page. Please pray for our bishops during their upcoming General Assembly.

Voting We must exercise our right to vote, and be informed voters. These leaders need our support and

prayers as they strive to govern us with justice. Don't become cynical to the political wrangling. Please, turn out to vote this Tuesday.

God Bless You!

Father Grell