

From the Pastor—March 11, 2018

Mom and Dad I visited my parents last Monday. It was great to see them, first stopping by the farm where Mother fed me lunch. I instructed her on how my food needs to be prepared with my latest dietary needs, and she did a wonderful job! We then went to the Good Samaritan Society (Home) in Beatrice and had a good visit with Dad. He was walking with only a cane for assistance as we arrived! The physical therapist was keeping a close eye on him, but this is the first I have seen him walking without a walker since his hip fracture—it was great to see! After therapy, Dad wanted to introduce me to a couple of new residents who eat at his table. We walked over to their rooms, with Dad leading the way! Mom also wanted me to meet a woman whose niece was a favorite teacher of mine in high school. After a good afternoon with my parents, I drove north to Lincoln and then west toward Aurora with a beautifully incredible sun and cloud formation in the horizon's sky!

The Grells of Lincoln I was away last Saturday evening for the 5:00 p.m. Mass to attend a Grell family gathering in Lincoln. (I am thankful for Father Mark Pfeiffer from Exeter taking my place here in Aurora.) My brother, sister, and I drove together once I arrived in Lincoln. The occasion of our family celebration was my dad's first cousin's 90th birthday. Since Mom and Dad cannot travel easily, we kids represented them. The cousin's name is Millard Grell; he goes by "Mel". He was a teacher, principal, and superintendent for a number of years in Nebraska and Iowa, so some of you in the education field may have encountered him. He and his siblings settled in Lincoln after having come from the Beatrice area. Millard's dad, Bob, and my Dad's dad, Frank, were brothers. It turns out that Millard's sister-in-law, Carol, is a native to Aurora. We spoke to other family members in a fun way, including the other Mark Grell in Lincoln, besides my brother. I guess their mail has gone to the wrong address a time or two! It was a fun evening with family, and getting to see my nephew, Will. William the teenager was not enthralled with the idea of a family gathering at a senior living residence, so Mary let him stay home☺.

Our Study Day On Tuesday, when the snow squall and almost-hurricane speed winds whipped through parts of our area, our diocesan priests were making our way to Seward for our Study Day. I was blessed to drive safely through the weather; the Bishop said a few of the priests called in that they didn't want to chance the wintry driving. The speaker for us was a priest from the Archdiocese of Denver. He was a delightful man! He spoke about how we must be good stewards of our resources. One thing I learned from him is that besides the traditional "t's" of giving our time, talent, and treasure, we must also make gifts of prayer, vocation, and the earth. The last one, the earth, is fascinating to think about—how we (especially on our farms and pastures, acreages and gardens) must pass on the beauty of the earth for future generations. Our speaker, Father Andrew Kemberling, has a book about stewardship published by Our Sunday Visitor; I hope to study it and teach you more about the stewardship way of living—it is beautiful!!!

March 26 Our annual diocesan Chrism Mass is beautiful! It will be held in Lincoln at the Cathedral on

March 26 at 5:00 p.m. The holy oils are blessed at this Mass and priests celebrate and renew their priestly promises.

March 27-28 Penance services at Seward St. Vincent's (6:30 p.m.) and York St. Joseph's (7:00 p.m.) will be held on March 27 and 28, respectively. These will be opportunities to receive God's mercy in Holy Confession, with around 8 or 10 of us priests at each service.

March 29 Holy Thursday Mass is so beautiful! Plan to attend this night commemorating Our Lord's Last Supper and prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane.

March 30 Try to keep Good Friday, March 30, reserved to meditate and live your day quietly with the Lord. Families should strive to be quiet and prayerful, together, at home and at church. Accompany Jesus to the Cross.

March 31 Remember, on March 31, the Easter Vigil is not allowed to begin until after the sun sets. Therefore, no 5:00 p.m. Mass will be held that day. The Easter Vigil will show the Light of Christ conquering sin and death! Several new Catholics will be welcomed into the Church! I hope many of you desire to attend this first celebration of the Lord's Resurrection under the night sky.

April 1 Easter Sunday will be glorious! Come and be with our parishes as we celebrate the Paschal mysteries which make sense of our fallen world!

April 8 Over about the past 20 years, Divine Mercy Sunday has taken off as a beautiful celebration on the first Sunday after Easter Sunday. Plan to celebrate God's mercy on this day in our parishes!

Legion of Mary Here is my fourth entry about the Legion of Mary. The meetings each week begin with the priest (or presiding Legion member) leading the prayers and Rosary. The first order of business after the Rosary is to study the Legion of Mary handbook. Next, roll call is conducted followed by the reading of minutes from the last week's meeting. The number of auxiliary members is given, as well as the treasurer's report. Then, reports from the members' apostolic works are given. Great confidentiality is required by the Legion members as they discuss how the people they visited received the Gospel of Jesus. After the reports, the Magnificat is recited and the priest gives a short (less than 5 minutes) exhortation of encouragement called an allocutio. The next week's works are then assigned, as well as any other business needing to be addressed. A secret bag is passed in which small offerings are given by the members who are able to give toward the materials which the Legion members will give out on future visits (Rosaries, medals, pamphlets, etc.). The closing prayers are then led by the priest. The meetings last around one hour. Could you be called to be in the Legion of Mary?

Spring Cleaning A number of St. Mary's parishioners went through closets and drawers in our hall last week to cull out and clean and re-arrange our resources—thank you!!!

Rosary Sunday Our parishes will celebrate Rosary Sunday on March 17-18. Please have hearts open to hearing the message of Mother Mary in the Holy Rosary next weekend.

God Bless You!

Father Grell