

From the Pastor—March 4, 2018

State Basketball When I was growing up, I had great dreams of our Southern High School basketball team qualifying for the State Basketball tournament. If you follow Nebraska high school basketball, my alma mater probably does not connect in your mind with this tournament. Southern District #1 has never qualified since becoming a consolidated in southern Gage County in the late 1960's. But my priesthood has been marked with local teams from my parishes qualifying for state, including and especially this year! Congratulations to the Aurora and Giltner boys! To make it possible for me to attend the Huskies and Hornets opening round games, I am moving the Thursday morning Mass to 6:30 a.m. And not only that, but the parish will offer coffee and a doughnut after that Mass in case you too are heading east to Lincoln for the state tournament. The Mass will end around 7:00, and your guardian angels will help you get to the basketball venues in time for the opening tip-off! Hope to see you Thursday, either at Mass, in Lincoln, or both places!

March 6 This Tuesday, almost all of the priests of the Diocese will gather at St. Gregory the Great in Seward. We will have fellowship and catechesis throughout the day. Please pray for us!

March 26 If you have never attended our diocesan Chrism Mass, you would love to see it. 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. This year, our former Pastor (1997-2001), Father John Keefe, celebrates his 50th anniversary of ordination! Please attend this great Mass!

March 29 Holy Thursday Mass is so beautiful! I will be releasing our schedule of Holy Thursday Mass and Adoration hours soon. Plan to attend this beautiful 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. Accompany Him to the Cross. I will announce soon our parishes' schedule for Good Friday.

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. This Mass, probably beginning at 8:30 p.m., 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! I can't wait to see how our parishes celebrate the Paschal mysteries!

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!

Stations at Wednesday Night Lights Once again, our 95 CCD students and their teachers prayed beautifully at Stations. Interestingly, this group about exactly fills the main pews of St. Mary's. My goal is that what we refer to as "the wings" would also be full. Please know that you are welcome (and you will be edified by our

youth) to attend our 6:30 p.m. Stations on Wednesday. This devotion is a good time of prayer to invite a seeker of truth to come with you—they may really enjoy the quietness and meditation of the Passion of Our Lord Jesus.

Theology on Tap Doug Barry from our Diocese of Lincoln will be speaking at Theology on Tap in Grand Island on Monday at 7:00 p.m. His talk will be held at the Chicken Coop in Grand Island and is sponsored by the GI Diocese.

Rev. Billy Graham The Rev. Billy Graham died last month at age 99. Do you remember watching his crusades on TV? We watched them in the late 1970's as I was growing up. Even though Billy Graham was not Catholic, he influenced my love for Jesus at a young age. Thank you, God, for the life of this man.

Legion of Mary Here is my third entry about the Legion of Mary. The active members of the Legion of Mary attend weekly meetings. Our world shrinks from this commitment ...which is precisely why Mother Mary desires us to commit to it if we are able. Legionaries' meetings are concise and prayerful; they nourish the active members in their good works done at the request of the pastor. The weekly meetings nourish their spiritual lives greatly. The auxiliary members promise to pray every day for the active members' good works. The auxiliary members thus are essential to the success of promoting the name of Jesus Our Lord through His Holy Mother. Could you be called to be in the Legion of Mary?

Timberlake A neat occurrence happened last Friday at Timberlake, near Marquette. The students from the Newman Center at the University of Nebraska-Kearney held a retreat at this campground familiar to many of you. The retreat featured Our Lord coming to the students in Holy Mass and Adoration. Confessions were also offered, and I was blessed to help out. The priest from Central City helped, as well as the Newman chaplain at Kearney. So, there was one priest present from each of the three Nebraska dioceses! It was cool!

Rosary Sunday Our parishes will celebrate Rosary Sunday on March 17-18. This is in preparation for the Eucharistic Family Rosary Crusade which Bishop Conley is inviting us to in 2019. Please have hearts open to hearing the message of Mother Mary in the Holy Rosary on this weekend.

Avoiding Meat at Tournaments *[edited and re-printed]* Catholics age 14 and older are called to observe the law of abstaining from meat on Fridays of Lent. I remind you to resist the urge to order a hot dog or hamburger if you attend events which feature concession stands on Lenten Fridays. Hopefully, many of these events consider our Catholic faith and offer a meatless option. Such events don't excuse us from living out our Catholic faith.

Good Friday *[edited and re-printed]* Good Friday is a great day to avoid extra activities, especially if you are in a position of organizing activities for people of any age. Families should strive to be quiet and prayerful, together, at home and at church. Please do what you can to meditate and live quietly as we observe Jesus's death upon the Cross.

God Bless You!

Father Grell