

From the Pastor—October 13, 2019

Adoration Come and adore Our Lord, on Wednesday, October 16, at St. Mary's, from 8:00 - 9:00 PM!

Life Chain Around 75 people, many from our parishes, participated in the Hamilton County Life Chain. Nineteen different Nebraska county license plates saw our witness for life, as well as nine other states. A light reception and sort of de-briefing happened after the Life Chain at Escape Aurora. It was a good day.

“Slow down, slow down, slow down” I remember a TV ad from the late '70's, early '80's with the tag line of “Read my lips—slow down, slow down, slow down.” The ad was probably on Channels 10/11 (our Grell “go-to” station), and was probably sponsored by a traffic safety organization, quite possibly the Nebraska Department of Roads. The spokesman who said the words was a man with a very grim-looking face. I wasn't a driver yet, but I think the timing of the ads was for when speed limits started to be increased, here in Nebraska and in other states. Does anyone of an age as me remember these ads? *** I mention this ad because these days of October bring not only a variance of weather, but the doubling-down of already busy lives into the frenetic pace of harvest season. We are Nebraskans, and the harvest affects us all, whether or not we directly work in the noble profession of farming and crop production. Please know of my prayers for all of you actively out there in the fields. I give a blessing from the road as I drive past anyone I see doing field work. I pray my blessing that your safety is supreme in all your undertakings, and that your machinery works well (or is quickly repaired), and that the weather cooperates. For all of us who share the roadways with harvest traffic, the admonition I remember from the childhood TV ad is apropos: slow down, slow down, SLOW DOWN. You don't need in-depth knowledge of the laws of physics to know that a loaded semi-truck cannot accelerate as quickly as a car, truck, or SUV. Tractors and grain-carts and combines, with SMV (slow-moving vehicle) signs and flashing lights need to be respected, to the utmost. It is ok, just fine in fact, to follow harvest implements for a ways until you are *totally* sure that it is *totally* clear and safe to pass them. It is better to leave for your destination a few minutes early so that you can travel more slowly when you share the highways and gravel roads with heavy implements. To me, too, I consider that we are Christians even (or especially) when we are behind the steering wheel. You give extra witness to the peace of Christ when you are extra cautious as you drive. If we all joined arms in pledging to drive more patiently, more slowly, the wider culture would take note. For those of you traveling with young eyes and ears, you don't want them to catch road rage comments from your lips that you were hoping were inaudible. *** Maybe my comments here are off-based and you shake your head in disagreement as you are reading. And maybe your car will end up behind mine, as I slowly follow a combine for ¾ of a mile till I see that it is turning onto a gravel road or into a field. And maybe my ways will cause your blood pressure to rise more than if I went ahead and passed the SMV so that you could pass it too. I don't know if I am right or wrong; I am just suggesting what I consider a prudent way to approach the reality of harvest time in Nebraska. Folks from LA, New York, D.C., or Miami would unleash very choice words if a combine or tractor appeared on their morning or evening commute. It seems like we as Nebraskans who love our fellow Nebraskans who bring in the harvest can do well by them and SLOW DOWN.

Confirmation Prep I stepped in and happily did

some preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation for our students last week. Our parish has three high school students from two families who moved here from the Omaha Archdiocese. They moved too soon to be confirmed there, and too late to be confirmed at our Diocese's usual age of 5th grade. So, they will be confirmed, but not on our night of October 28th. The reason being that their high school schedules don't work with that, and so a few days prior they will be confirmed with the class from the Beaver Crossing and Utica parishes. I enjoyed going over the faith with these students and their moms. I also enjoyed addressing our roomful of students and speaking to them about Bishop Conley, who he is, where he grew up, and how he came to be our Bishop. I found an audio clip of him reading a document that he wrote, and I played a short portion of the recording for the students to know what his voice sounds like. *** I want to put out a request for parish leaders to be at the ready to help me the night of Confirmation. I am pretty sure that we will have an overflow crowd, and so will want to utilize the hall space to set up chairs and project the image of the altar upon the wall. Also, having parish leaders be present will be so helpful and charitable, to welcome our guests who may be unfamiliar with our church and to answer questions that may arise. Please, if you are a parish leader, and you know that you can help, plan to show up. Only the Lord knows what status the harvest will be on October 28th, but it could be that the Lord requires a slice of your time on that day to be at church and make sure all goes according to plan.

Latin parts of Mass The Bishop has made it clear that, if parishes are able, the parts of Mass for the conferral of Confirmation are to be sung in Greek (the Kyrie “Lord Have Mercy”) and in Latin (the Sanctus “Holy, Holy”, the Agnus Dei “Lamb of God”, and the Pater Noster “Our Father”). To help us prepare for this, I am going to have our Sunday Masses these next several weeks have these parts of Mass sung as indicated in these languages. *** One way to process this: the first Mass, celebrated by Jesus, was probably in Our Lord's everyday language, Aramaic. Over time, Greek would have become a dominant language that the Mass was celebrated in. Latin came onto the scene as the language for Mass later. At the Council of Trent (1545-1563), it was mandated for the universal Church that all Masses would be prayed in Latin, a mandate that was held until 1969 (or thereabouts). For the vast majority of Christendom, Mass in English has been the exception, not the norm. Interesting perspective, I hope you agree.

Seven Sisters Please find more information at: <https://sevensistersapostolate.org/home>.

Bishop's Appeal for Vocations Mike and Linda McQuiston in St. Mary's and Ron and Cindy Consbruck in St. Joseph's are leading our appeal to support seminarians in our Diocese. Thank you for your generosity!

Updated Census at Mass Our first of two census weekends was October 5-6. The numbers came in at: 5:00 (SM)—59; 8:15 (SM)—109; 10:45 (SJ)—92.

God Bless You!

Father Grell