

From the Pastor—September 29, 2019

Adoration Come and adore Our Lord, on Thursday, October 3, at St. Mary's, from 8:00 - 9:00 PM!

A Thank You and a Request For over a year, I was blessed with a holy hour offered for me on every day of the week. Seven women volunteered out of love for the priesthood to pray for me, either in front of the tabernacle or in their homes. I thank them, and Liz Schwartz who organized them. *** These women were my Seven Sisters, my prayer warriors who held the armor of prayer over me and placed me in the mantle of Mother Mary. Now, I humbly ask for the profound commitment of a new crew of Seven Sisters. Priests engage in spiritual warfare with every Mass we say, every Confession we hear, every blessing we give, and every witness we make. Every public appearance in the community is a witness to Jesus; we are never not priests. Therefore, the enemy wages battle by virtue of our office of the priesthood. If your priests do not serve in all the ways that you would wish and desire, it could be that he succumbs in small or large ways to the temptations set before him on a regular basis, temptations not to pray, temptations not to address administrative duties, temptations not to be welcoming and cheerful to all the lay faithful regardless of age or prominence, regardless of those deeply committed Christians or those on the fringes of the parish and community. *** I feel it is imminently necessary that I receive coverage in prayer from a new group of Seven Sisters, as soon as possible. I am like a warrior without armor, susceptible to attack. Indeed, I have noticed recently the loss of prayer to cover over me and it has shown in ways that you may not (or may) have noticed. Please find more information at: <https://sevensistersapostolate.org/home>.

Bishops' Pro-life Banquet I attended this annual gathering last Friday, September 20, at the Cornhusker Hotel in Lincoln. The Nebraska Catholic Conference, which sponsored the banquet, is the lobbying arm of the three Catholic bishops of Nebraska for matters in our State Legislature, such as family life, marriage, and Catholic schools. The Conference is celebrating its 50th year, having been founded on January 2, 1969. A state-wide newspaper at the time questioned what the Catholic bishops could possibly hope to accomplish and why such a lobbying arm was needed. History has shown that our Nebraska bishops were visionary and that this state-wide newspaper was not. Keynote speaker at the banquet was Greg Schleppebach, who many of you remember from his weekly column for many years in the Southern Nebraska Register. He now holds a position in the Secretariat of Pro-life Activities for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Greg told us that 45 States of the Union have Catholic conferences, similar to Nebraska's. He gave some history of our Catholic Conference, such as its lobbying in regard to Initiative 300 in 1982. He spoke of Father Joseph Walsh suggesting in the early 1990's that Nebraska's Catholic Conference initiate Project Rachel to start up here (Project Rachel is for post-abortion counseling and healing, and it is available to you, 24/7, and anyone who you may know of at: www.HopeAfterAbortion.com or 1-888-456-HOPE [4673].) Schleppebach also recounted various speakers who had preceded him over the years as keynote speaker at this banquet, including Cardinal John O'Connor (archbishop of New York), Congressman Henry Hyde, Dr. Bernard Nathanson, Raymond Arroyo, and Mother Angelica. He also said—and this was news to me—that the Nebraska Catholic Conference had almost secured a speaker by the name of

Mother Teresa...now known as *Saint* Mother Teresa of Calcutta! She was planning to come one year, but then circumstances beyond her control caused her to have to cancel. *** Mainly, I want to share Greg Schleppebach's message, which I've heard him say time and time again but which never fails to move me, is that in the pro-life movement, we operate from the point of victory. Jesus Christ has defeated sin and evil, and Mother Mary has crushed the head of the serpent by her fiat ("yes") to God's calling. We must, however, participate in this victory by our prayer and fasting—something which I know personally I don't do nearly enough. Precious babies are not protected in their mothers' wombs; beloved elders and ill people are not receiving sufficient health care because our society deems them of little worth. We must participate, actively, in the pro-life movement.

Human Trafficking Talk I enjoyed hearing Sister Margaret Nacke present on human trafficking last Sunday. Thank you to our St. Mary's Altar Society for sponsoring her talk. Around 40-50 people were in attendance, some from outside of our two Catholic parishes. Sister gave us stark, deplorable, aspects of the sex trade, such as: the average age of girls trafficked is 13; people are trafficked to harvest their organs; more slaves are in the world today than at the highest peak of the African slave trade; 900 people *per month*, in Nebraska, are sold for sex; tattoos are often placed on victims as a "branding" to identify them; "throwaway kids" is the term for families who sell their children because they don't want them; the roles in the trafficking trade are victim, trafficker, pimp, buyer, and bystanders. *** This is a major scourge in our society.

My Week on the Care-a-thon I was blessed to assist Spirit Catholic Radio on their Care-a-thon. During my time frames, I helped to interview Bishop James Conley, Lieutenant Gov. Mike Foley, Kay Wessel, Father Gary Coulter, Joy Martin, and my cousin Amy (Rut) Buresh, and her husband, Shane. Amy and Shane are both blind; they have two "sighted" children. Their story is remarkable! *** You can donate to Spirit Radio at SpiritCatholicRadio.com or by texting the word "pledge" to 797979.

My Medical Procedure I had a medical, outpatient procedure in Lincoln on Wednesday. It is a flare-up of what bothered me last March and April. I will have a couple of follow-up appointments. I can tell you more if you wish to know. Please pray for me.

My Time Away I am going to be away a few days, from Sunday evening through to Wednesday. I'll tell you all about these vacation days in a future bulletin.

Census at Mass The first two weekends of October are designated for counting the number of people at weekend Masses.

Loving Life Coalition You are welcome to become involved in the Loving Life Coalition (LLC) of Hamilton County. E-mail them at LovingLifeCoalition@gmail.com or by liking them on Facebook at "Loving Life Coalition Hamilton County, NE".

God Bless You!

Father Grell