

## **From the Pastor—December 1, 2019**

**Adoration** Adoration this week in St. Mary's on Wednesday, December 4, 8:00 – 9:00 p.m.; and in St. Joseph's on Thursday, December 5, 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.

**Plan to Attend Guadalupe Mass** Our parishes are celebrating Our Lady of Guadalupe on December 12<sup>th</sup>. As we did last year, authentic Mexican music will accompany the Mass. I know it is a busy time of year, with many activities, but if you are free, this Mass is one that you don't want to miss. A social will be held afterward.

**Visitor** It turns out that Aurora is occasionally well-placed between here and there. A priest-friend of mine who serves in the western part of our diocese was planning to attend a funeral in St. Edward. So, he asked if he could spend the night in the rectory to break up the distance traveled. It was fun to host him; we are sports fans and friends, and we watched a Husker volleyball match.

**Prayerfully Consider Legion of Mary** If you want to join the Legion of Mary as an auxiliary member, please contact me. Our Legion of Mary will benefit from you as our prayer warriors, as you pray a Rosary daily and a few other prayers. You will grow spiritually by being responsible for giving time to prayer. Remember, our prayer to the Mother of God, Mary, is magnified because her soul magnified the Lord Jesus. Especially on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, December 9<sup>th</sup>, we will have a table set up for you to sign up as a Legion auxiliary member.

**The Word Among Us** Many of you have benefited from the publication The Word Among Us, daily, or during the privileged seasons of Advent and Lent. Our parishes placed an order for their Advent booklets, which you can look for in the back of church.

**Francis in Thailand and Japan** Our Holy Father, Pope Francis, went on an apostolic journey to the nations of Thailand and Japan last week. He will turn 83 later this month, and the Lord is blessing him with the health necessary to bring the Gospel and encourage Christians in places around the globe. It was interesting to see some of the coverage of Pope Francis's visit on EWTN. In one outdoor Mass in Thailand, the people were in summer clothing and fanning themselves, even as we were enduring a cold snap. I looked on my time zone app, and the Pope being in these nations was a full 13 hours ahead of Central Standard Time. Time zones have always fascinated me, how this giant world turns and changes days so differently across the vast distances. \*\*\* The Holy Father spoke much about peace, especially peace as it relates to the atomic bombs of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As I reflect upon these events, not having lived through them and not knowing well all of the circumstances, it is something that I take to prayer. How has your own life and experience taught you to respond to these bombs and their aftermath? \*\*\* Pope Francis lauded the missionary saints who had planted the Christian faith in these nations. He also admitted that as a young Jesuit priest, he had desired to be sent to Japan. This made his journey there more fulfilling, and he visited a Jesuit house of priests.

**Did You Ever Notice?** A parishioner recently walked out of St. Joseph's Church and did a double-take. He remarked to a family member that he had never noticed that one of the doors is not the ordinary width. I have noticed this too; have you? My guess is that the door was crafted this way partly because the width necessary to allow caskets to fit for funeral Masses. Or, architecturally, it may have been that one normal-width door and one a little narrower was a trend of the time. In any case, it is a unique characteristic, and I

was just wondering if you had ever noticed that.

**Where I Come From** My home growing up area in Gage County is nearby where several Indian reservations were located. My grandparents' land near Odell, and our land nearer Beatrice, has produced arrowheads found in the ground over the years. Somewhere in my childhood home, we have several examples of these. I hope someday we will have them closer at hand and be able to display them. It is part of our heritage as Americans, and it popped into my head as something I wanted to share with you. Perhaps your land has had these items show up? It brings up images of these Nebraska lands from when it was the frontier. And, like my note above in pondering nuclear warfare, it is something to prayerfully consider how our ancestors treated the Native Americans. Our own Bishop Conley has shared with us priests that he is partly Native American.

**Kids Say the Darnedest Things!** I was extremely grateful for the homemade birthday cards presented to me by our St. Mary's and St. Joseph's students in grades K-8. I wanted to share some of the comments from these cards which made me smile, with original spellings and punctuation:

"Thank you for teaching us about God."

"Do good things. See you at church on Sunday!!"

"I wish you had a great birthday. I hope you have great birthdays to come."

"You're the best preacher ever! Also I hope your wishes come true! Plus keep on loving volleyball and we all only believe in one God."

"Fr. Grell, you are cunning like a fox, and you are strong like an ox, as well as helpful like an owl, but still furious like a tiger on the prowl."

"Your 51, and that's amazing: You're a happy fun person who is an amazing priest! Thanks so very much for being an amazing person and role model. I always enjoy singing at mass with you!"

"Thanks for getting me into educating myself about God. I have also started learning about about unplanned. It is so sad. But because of you I think it is important."

"51 have some fun! Thank you for helping me throw Confirmation"

"Have an amazing birthday! Thank you making me have more faith in our religion!"

"I hope you have an amazing birthday. I hope it's the best! Thank you for helping me grow in my faith. Congrats. We enjoy you LOTS & LOTS"

"May you be blessed for ever! Thank you Father for impacting my life! Also for helping me through Confirmation and also helping me believe in my faith."

"You You are the Best!!! Thanks for making me holy. You are bright"

(Answers from Kindergarten to the question: "How old is Father Grell?"): 16; 50, 15, 20, 50, 60, 30.

**Thanksgiving Blessings to you all! And God Bless You!**

**Father Grell**