

From the Pastor—April 7, 2019

Distortion and Redemption I received the following feedback from parish members who attended Father Kilcawley's talk on Wednesday:

Reaction #1—"If you missed Father Kilcawley's presentation last night, I highly encourage each of you to watch the presentation on You Tube! It was SO good and Father Kilcawley was SO REAL!! I promise you, it is worth the 1.5 hours of your time!!"

Reaction #2—"Thank you for providing the opportunity to hear Fr. Kilcawley speak last night. There was so much good information shared, and it's so important for parents to be aware of these issues, and how to talk to our kids about them."

My Reaction—While I have heard Father Kilcawley give this talk before, I never weary of hearing his witness to the Gospel's Great Good News of Jesus Christ's victory over sin and death. Father said that God the Father loves the Son such that the Son entrusts Himself to the Father. We are called to do both, i.e. love others and entrust ourselves to our Father in heaven. The second seems to be much more difficult than the first. We love others—our parents, children in our lives, our best friends—but do we ourselves trust our very lives into the Father's hands as an act of love? *** Father Kilcawley used an example that I remember vividly; the image of the party line. In our little area of Riverside Township, Gage County Nebraska, about four or five other families shared the phone line with us. If they were on the line talking, we could not call out nor receive calls (seriously...those of you who know are nodding your heads as you read this). This system, ironically, is turned on its head in the modern world. Today, four or five phone lines are in one household with each having the ability to make calls or receive them simultaneously. The old party line system actually brought us together such that we probably had times to break in to another conversation and kindly ask our neighbor to hang up if we had an urgent call to make. The technology has divided and distorted our views of ourselves and of ourselves in relation to others. People talk, or text, or facetime, or instant message others in their own household and do not in person interact. It rings so true to me, even though I don't like it. It makes me sad that families whom I love (YOU!) fall into this; it makes me mad at the Devil as he loves every minute of distortion that he heaps upon us via our own lack of self-control. *** Father brought resources for teaching human sexuality to young people, for an intended age as young as lower elementary school. The theory he proposed, which I agree with, is that if we don't teach our kids about sexuality, they are going to learn about it from someone we don't want them to learn it from (like YouTube videos, Netflix programs, friends at school, etc.). Parents, you at Baptism were given the candle lit from the Jesus-Paschal candle, and were told, "Receive the Light of Christ. This light is entrusted to you to be kept burning brightly." The Evil One, Satan, wants with all his might to blow that candle out. Parents, you are first line of defense to protect that light and keep your children safe from darkness and sin. *** Do not lose hope! The most wayward child can be renewed, re-lit with the Light of Christ. Didn't Nebraska's own Father Flanagan used to say "there is no such thing as a bad boy (or girl)"? *** Here is one version of Father Kilcawley's YouTube video. Other versions are good too. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VV7IZNfdSgQ>

Safe Haven Join Bishop Conley by praying the prayer handed out last weekend to create in every family and church family a safe haven for all. Pick up the "Equipped"

book as well.

Tax Season and Home to Beatrice A dear St. Joseph's Beatrice parishioner has assisted me with my taxes for the majority of my priesthood. I made my annual "pilgrimage" to see her on Monday. Her parents, now deceased, are of the same generation as my parents at the Beatrice parish. She knows the IRS tax code in her sleep☺, and she knows all of the unique ways the code applies to clergy. It was good to get my business in order, and then I went six miles south and one mile east to our family farm. I just love watching the horizon toward evening in the southern and western sky. Even in a rural community like Aurora, I cannot see this because I live in town and trees and houses cover it over. And I don't take the time to drive a mile (or less) to watch it for myself. But my times at home afford me this peaceful sight; I am grateful. Mom and Dad say "hi" to you all!

Gone Bananas! Our parish women of St. Mary's did an awesome thing last Saturday morning. They fed a huge group of students from the Grand Island Diocese in our parish hall. The students spent the night at The Leadership Center and bussed in to GICC for their retreat day. I encouraged our ladies that this opportunity was important for us to say "yes" to. We did a good thing! One of our women said it like this: *"The turnout of helpers and casseroles this morning was absolutely amazing. Thank you, thank you! We fed 254 or so people very well, and quickly!"*

Theology on Tap I participated in "Theology on Tap" with Bishop Emeritus William Dendinger and Father Don Buhrman. Find the video on facebook by searching for "Theology on Tap – Grand Island" and then scroll down to the March 25th posting. See especially Bishop Dendinger's answer to the first question of the evening, "Why is the Vatican in Rome and not Jerusalem?" His Excellency masterfully answered it.

April 19th Silence Plan now to live Good Friday, April 19, as silently as possible. Be prayerful at home and at church. Celebrate at church the celebration of the Lord's Passion. Forsake your iTunes, iHeart, Spotify, Pandora, radio, and Netflix; instead, watch TV station EWTN to see Good Friday programming. Be very quiet and prayerful that day...all for Jesus.

What should we do for Lent? These final two weeks of Lent are referred to as "Passiontide". The Church calls upon us to enter more fully into the suffering and death of Christ, all with a view to His glorious resurrection from the dead. We cover the statues in church, so as to make our minds more able to unite ourselves to Jesus on the Cross. Think of the statue-covering like something we needed to do on the farm: pulling with a log chain our pick-up until the motor would turn over and start. The statues being draped over starts our mind thinking more about Jesus. We walk with Jesus on His Way to death...and prepare to bask with Him in his triumph over death and sin.

God Bless You!

Father Grell