

From the Pastor—April 14, 2019

Changes, Stepping Out in Faith My last parish assignment in Plattsmouth gave me a great opportunity to serve and become friends with many families who had served our nation in the military. Some were currently in military service, and others were employed as government contractors closely related to their former military positions. Living in the Plattsmouth area kept them close to Offutt Air Force Base in Bellevue. I learned of the many and varied assignments which their military careers had taken them to, all over the world. One thing I learned, besides growing in appreciation for those who have served our country, is that life-transforming changes are always possible, if not probable. With the growth our world has seen in the latter half of the 20th century until now, rare is the family who is born, raised, and lives in one place for its entire life. *** Indeed, change is something that I as a priest regularly deal with. From 1991, when I entered the seminary, until now, I have lived at 11 different addresses. *** Due to real life, vocational changes, and career opportunities, a volunteer CCD coordinator for our parishes of St. Mary and St. Joseph is needed. Also, a male volunteer to partner with our female Godparent for the rising 12th grade class is needed as a Godteens sponsor. *** Both of these positions are vital to the growth in faith of our youth. The CCD coordinator in our parishes works closely with me for scheduling and organizing our teaching staff for Wednesday night classes for grades K-8. Also, I appreciate this person to oversee the Totus Tuus summer school. It could be that we have co-coordinators, to split the duties between two people. *** The Godteens sponsor is responsible for helping to teach lessons to the 12th grade class. A tenet of Godteens is that the youth see modeled in their Godparents adults who are in love with Christ Jesus and are not afraid to live their faith “out loud”. Often, relationships formed in Godteens during the formative high school years extend into adulthood in a beautiful way. *** Each year, adjustments to the teaching staff of CCD are made; some who have taught in the past may have had family situations change such that they cannot teach again next school year. It is very important that the CCD coordinator be in place soon so as to help fill the volunteer CCD positions for the coming school year. The coordinator and I in a sense recruit, with kindness and understanding, parish members who we feel would be a good fit for teaching. My own philosophy which I hold to is that I would rather someone volunteer of their own prayerful discernment for any ministry or outreach in our parish rather than feel he or she is forced to serve. The sort of old-time stories I hear of the priest asking someone to serve and the person saying “yes” ONLY because Father has asked seems not to be well-suited for our day and age. *** In all things, God loves a cheerful giver. For all that we have been blessed with, whether it seems abundant or diminished, we must keep our fixed on Jesus and “do whatever He tells us” to paraphrase Mother Mary’s words to Our Lord at the wedding feast of Cana. I look forward to seeing the Holy Spirit work in the lives of our people to keep volunteerism strong in the coming months and years.

First Holy Communion I was so pleased with our 14 young people who received the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ for the first time last Sunday. No First Holy Communicants were of age this year in St. Joseph’s, but we look forward to a regular stream of youth in coming years in Giltner. I hope to print in the bulletin later the names of our First Holy Communicants. Please join in prayerful thanks to the catechists who prepared this group of 14: Mrs. Angela

Meyer, Mrs. Lorena Rodriguez, and Mrs. Alison Morrow.

Gosnell Movie in Aurora About 50 citizens of Hamilton County and the vicinity viewed the showing of “Gosnell” last week on Wednesday at the 12th Street Cinema. That day, if you recall, was so blustery and cold, with precipitation. The weather may have kept some away. Working on bringing this movie to our area has been an energizing activity for me. A group of concerned citizens has approached me since January to brainstorm and create a sort of think tank as to how to proactively promote life and defend against a culture which is toxic to life. Pope JP II called this worldview a “culture of death”. This is the second time I had seen Gosnell; it was more moving to me than the first time, in large part because of the release of “Unplanned”, which is still in theaters. Ask me if you would like to be a part of the group which brought Gosnell to Aurora. We especially are intent on giving our youth the message of life so that they may truly become the greatest pro-life generation our nation has ever seen.

Distortion and Redemption Remember, Father Kilcawley’s talk from April 3rd was so excellent and well-received. You can view it on-line. One version is at the link below, and other versions which you may find by searching the internet are good too. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VV7IZNfdSgQ>

Holy Week Day-by-Day

Holy Monday Attend the Chrism Mass in Lincoln at the Cathedral at 5:00 PM. Read the daily Mass readings. Pray intently. Plan for your Easter confession.

Holy Tuesday Join Bishop Conley and an expected 3,000 people in prayer at the Planned Parenthood facility at 48th and Old Cheney in Lincoln from 2:00-3:00 PM. Read the daily Mass readings. Pray intently.

Holy Wednesday (Spy Wednesday) Reading the daily Mass readings will show you how Judas Iscariot spied on Our Lord so as to deliver Him into the hands of the Pharisees and scribes. Pray intently.

Holy Thursday Pray intently. Watch the Pope’s Mass on EWTN. Attend Holy Thursday Mass at our parish or make plans to attend at other parishes.

Good Friday Live this day as silently as possible. Be prayerful at home and at church. Celebrate at church the celebration of the Lord’s Passion. Lock down most all technology. But do watch TV station EWTN to see Good Friday programming. Fast if you are 18-59 years old. Abstain from meat if you are 14 or older. Be very quiet and prayerful that day...all for Jesus.

Holy Saturday You are encouraged, but not required by Church law, to fast and abstain until the evening celebration of the Easter Vigil. Jesus is in the tomb this day. Quietly spend time praying intently at the tomb.

Easter Sunday Rejoice! Christ has conquered sin and death! His Resurrection is our only hope to enter Heaven! Be of good cheer, no matter your life situation, and know that the Church loves you and Jesus welcomes you!

God Bless You!

Father Grell