

From the Pastor—May 19, 2019

Ordinations One of the great blessings of my seminary training and as a newly ordained priest was to work with new men who were discerning entering the seminary. Some went to seminary, and discerned that it wasn't their calling, and left before being ordained. Many of them to be good husbands/father or good single, Christian men to this day. *** This year, (Arch)dioceses across the United States will be blessed with the ordination of 481 new priests. Their average age is 33. I saw a statistic which stated over 40% of the new priests attribute entering seminary to someone (not a priest) encouraging them that they would be a good priest. If we wish we had more priests, could it be that we aren't asking/encouraging young men to think about entering seminary? *** In my memory, from being a kid into my adulthood, I cannot recall anyone from our parishes of St. Mary's and St. Joseph's becoming seminarians. I don't say this in a combative or denigrating way. I say it to raise awareness, however, and to state this: with the great faith in our Aurora and Giltner parishes, faith that I have experienced for two years now, isn't there surely some young men that might be called to go to the seminary? To you young men who are of the age to be discerning seriously a call to the priesthood, there is no more noble thing to do with your life, no greater way to make the world a better place, than to be ordained a Catholic priest. Remember, you can give the seminary a try. The priests and staff at St. Gregory's in Seward, and Fathers Matya, Mills, and Kane as diocesan vocations leaders, will help you so much to know if it is the right calling for you. *** I want to give a little bio, from my own experiences, of the men to be ordained for the Lincoln Diocese this coming weekend, May 24-25:

Father-to-be Tony Bedient I have known the Bedient family for some time, maybe 20 years. Tony, as our diocesan newspaper reports in its May 17th edition, was married for a brief time. Tragically, about six weeks after their wedding, a drunk driver hit Tony and his wife Jessica's car in west Omaha, resulting in Jessica's death and Tony being seriously injured. Tony was injured so badly that he couldn't attend her funeral, so Father Kubat was at his bedside at the Med Center in Omaha to celebrate Mass while Jessica's funeral Mass was being held at St. Patrick's in Gretna. But now—wow—Tony is becoming a priest. He is from York, so he is this year's most local ordinand.

Father-to-be Carson Kain Carson is a McCook native and loves that dear part of the State where he grew up. He served the Diocese in Totus Tuus (the summer catechetical program), and I met him in that capacity. He is a good man, and he will be a good priest.

Father-to-be Allan Phan Allan, as well, I met in Totus Tuus when he came to my parish. He is probably not as outgoing as the two new priests mentioned above, but I see him kind of like me, that he appreciates small group settings in which to have fun as he shares faith with people.

Father-to-be Andrew Schwenka The Schwenka family is from the tiny congregation of Holy Family in Heartwell. That of itself is special. It is made more special by Andrew's little brother, Christian, also being a seminarian for our Diocese. Andrew has studied for seminary in Rome at the North American College. While that experience has been life changing, I am sure, I imagine he is looking forward to being home here in Nebraska.

Deacon-to-be Robert Froesche! Robert is from Falls City. I don't know him very well, but along with Father Cy Rowan (Class of '15), they represent vocations to the

priesthood coming from this "hub" city of southeast Nebraska. It is a beautiful part of our State.

Deacon-to-be Caleb Hile While I don't know Caleb that well, I would comment that I don't remember our Diocese in my years of memory to this point ever having a priest named Caleb. And Caleb is just an awesome name from the Bible. Look up Caleb in the Book of Exodus and you'll see what I mean.

Deacon-to-be Robert Johnson Robert came to the school I served in Plattsmouth, to observe classrooms and teaching styles of our wonderful faculty there. It is interesting that we have two "Robert's" being ordained.

Deacon-to-be Alec Sasse Alec, as I have mentioned in a previous bulletin, will bring to his ordination day a very heavy heart—his little brother died an accidental death earlier this month in the family home. I do know that Alec's family has great faith, and his dear parents and his other brother will be smiling, crying, and emotionally roller-coasting their way through ordination weekend.

Deacon-to-be Joseph Wahlmeier Joe will not be ordained a deacon in Lincoln. He is studying at the North American College in Rome, and that seminary ordains deacons in the fall of their fourth year of theology. God willing, Joseph will be part of a priesthood class of six a year from now. His family is a well-known part of the Catholic community in Hastings. His dad is a vet, and Joe has a huge number of siblings.

Deacon-to-be Brian Wirth Brian is from Nebraska City. His family are long-time residents of that area. For their family to have a priest will be something of rightful pride for his immediate and extended family.

Behold, your Mother I intend for this note to be interpreted two ways. 1) I hope all of you dear mothers had beautiful times with your families on Mother's Day. My family is going to try to get together today (May 19th) to see our Mom and Dad. 2) Remember the month of May as being a special time to stir devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. She is so beautiful and so close to us as our mother. She knew Jesus better than anyone...the color of his eyes, the way his hair combed across his head, the way his face would light up and smile with good humor, the way he walked, his mannerisms as a young boy and as an adult man. Mother Mary wants to help us on our daily journey. She accepts our failings and weaknesses, and she uplifts our joys and successes. Pray the Rosary. Dear young families who read this, pray the Rosary as a family. You will see great fruit in the young men and women who you are forming in your home.

St. Joseph Capital Expense Fund A member of St. Joseph's came to me last week with a donation to begin a fund for future capital expenses. The donation was in the amount of \$50,000. I am so appreciative and thankful. For now, I have placed this money in a savings account with our Diocese of Lincoln "bank", which we refer to as the "Diocesan Savings and Loan (DIAL)". The money is ours; I or any of my successors as parish priest can retrieve the money when we need it. It receives a better interest income in the DIAL than it would in our checking account or in most commercial banks. *** I have a need to gather our St. Joseph's Parish Council and Trustees, to gain their advice and consultation for projects and plans. Please know that I intend to meet with you, St. Joseph Council, and that I appreciate the intermittent, one-on-one times I have consulted you in various matters.

St. Joseph Re-plated Chalice St. Joseph has what I refer to as a "parish chalice". I distinguish it in this way from my own personal chalice. My chalice was gifted to me by my

parents when I was ordained on May 25, 1996. My chalice comes with me from parish-to-parish; I will use it till I die. But most parishes have what I would call its parish chalice. In my opinion, it looked like the St. Joseph's chalice had not been re-plated for a long time. It had lost its luster. The family of Clyde and Rita Obermeier were willing to donate the cost of re-plating the chalice and the communion paten which holds the large host during Mass. I want to thank them for this memorial gift. With their approval, I had the chalice engraved with the following dedication: *"Re-plating of Chalice and Paten completed in the Year of Our Lord, 2019, in loving memory of John Kline, who served as master carpenter of the first St. Joseph, Giltner, Church in 1902. By Clyde and Rita (Kline) Obermeier"*. I am grateful for this donation.

IRA Earnings to St. Mary's Parish members of St. Mary's recently named St. Mary's as the beneficiary of their IRA earnings. They designated their gifts to go toward Debt Reduction for our parish hall expansion. I am grateful for this gift, which totaled nearly \$7,000.

St. Mary's Repair of Bell/Ciborium Veil The liturgical container which contains the hosts for distribution of Holy Communion is called a ciborium. You may have noticed in St. Mary's that the decorative, reverent covering that veils over the lid of the ciborium has not been in use lately. Part of it needed to be sewed, as lace was falling away from the main silky material. A parish member did this sewing for us, as well as re-attaching the gold-lacing which adorns the rope of our "call-to-worship" bell which I ring at the beginning of each Mass. I am grateful for the skills of this parish member. *** As I grew up, my mother tried to teach me how to sew, but I was too stubborn. I thought my talents were far more necessary for driving tractors and rounding up cattle. Oh, my immaturity! For young men reading this, if your mom or grandma offers to teach you how to sew, please learn how. It will serve you well.

Aurora 4R Graduation Having attended numerous graduations over the years, I have a sense of "best practices" for commencement ceremonies. Aurora High School does an exemplary job with their Commencement. I attended the Aurora graduation last Sunday and it lasted a shade over an hour. That is an efficient pace, especially considering the 100+ students' names called as they jubilantly walked across the stage to accept their diploma. Add in senior speakers, choral and band enhancements to the ceremony, and the Superintendent's words, and an hour-long ceremony is quite a feat. The ceremony was professional. *** I have written in this space before about how I am intrigued by Nebraska license plates and how they indicate the vehicle's county of origin. As I attended Aurora's Commencement, I saw the following county-plate numbers: 8, 9, 15, 25, 60, 78, 84, and, of course, 28. This diversity of Nebraska counties (and many others that I didn't see) shows how a school like Aurora in our great State has a loyal following from west to east. *** Congratulations to all graduates of Aurora High School, and to the faculty, administration, and staff!

Spirit Radio Morning Prayer A creative outlet of mine is the opportunity to be on Spirit Catholic Radio for their Morning Prayer segment. This coming week, you can hear my meditations on Scripture at 7:10, 8:10, and 10:15 (give or take a few minutes). The meditations are available at spiritcatholicradio.com shortly after airing. Please pray with me that something I say over the airwaves may be helpful and lead others to encounter Jesus.

Lent is Over...Now What? St. Paul in his preaching and forming of Christian congregations in the Acts of the

Apostles focused a lot on the Kingship of Jesus. He wanted to show how Our Lord came to be the King of the Universe. He had to respect the emperors and kings of his day in Rome, Athens, and Constantinople, yet he was bold to say there was a King greater than any they had ever seen. Paul proclaimed that Jesus is the only King worthy of giving our lives over to. In these 50 days of Easter, it is good for us to meditate on Jesus' Lordship/Kingship in our lives. As I heard a speaker say recently, Jesus is either our Lord in all parts of our lives...or he is not our Lord at all.

Wednesday Holy Hour The holy hours I have been holding on Wednesday at St. Mary's will not occur this week due to the speaking appearance of Father Sid. Please come and hear his testimony at 7:00 PM on Wednesday.

What to Wear? I was prayerfully thinking about writing something about proper attire (clothing) for attending Holy Mass. As if to confirm my prayer, this very question was asked and answered in the May 17th edition of the Southern Nebraska Register. I have printed it on a special insert in this bulletin. *** Sometimes priests find themselves angered by what people wear to Mass. Sometimes people find themselves angered by how priests direct what clothing they ought to wear to Mass. I don't want anger on either side, yours or mine. Several times in my priesthood, I have had youth come to Mass in uniforms from playing a sport. I get that; when coming from or going to a competition, it might be the best/only option. Or, I remember someone telling me that they discovered their cows were out as they drove to Mass. I understood that their "Sunday best" clothing may have gotten soiled; I get that. I heard Father Mitch Pacwa on Catholic radio speak about how some cultures consider it a sign of respect not to wear shoes into someone's home or into church; I get that. I think my main message to you would be to be aware of what you wear. Remember for Whom you are attending Mass...for Jesus.

Year #3! Careful readers of the Southern Nebraska Register and/or the Lincoln Diocese web site will note that my name was not listed this past week in the clergy assignments. So, it looks like Bishop Conley needs me here at St. Mary's and St. Joseph's as I begin my year #3 with you all. To which I say, YAY!!! ☺.

Cast Your Net We are in the third week of our 2019 Charity and Stewardship Appeal in St. Mary's and St. Joseph's. St. Mary's sent in our first mailing to the Diocese of your donations this week. For St. Joseph's, I will soon be sending in those donations. Thank you!

God Bless You!

Father Grell