

## **From the Pastor—May 5, 2019**

**Unplanned in Grand Island** As I have stated in the bulletin recently, I am glad for the graces at work through the movie “Unplanned”. This true-life story of an abortion facility director turning 180-degrees to the side of pro-life is impacting our nation and the world. I saw the movie for the second time a week ago Friday when it was at The Grand on 3<sup>rd</sup> Street in Grand Island. (This was my first movie I’ve attended at The Grand, and it truly is a great theater.) One estimate, which I would agree with, is that about 275 people were at the Friday night showing. The movie made me cry, for the second time; odds are that it will make me cry as many times as I see it. \*\*\* One may argue: “I am already pro-life; why should I see this movie?” To which I would answer that it is important that the movie industry (i.e. Hollywood) notice us as we “vote” with our ticket purchase for movies which can impact our culture for the good. Also, seeing the movie as an already pro-life person encourages you and “steels” you to be more pro-life. \*\*\* Dear parishioners, I sense more and more that we must be more activist in spirit and action in the pro-life movement. In our own State Capital and our diocesan See City of Lincoln, an average of 20-25 abortions are performed every Tuesday, surgically, at 48<sup>th</sup> and Old Cheney Road. When I say surgical abortions, I am distinguishing from abortions from the RU-486 pill. Statistics show that almost 40% of all abortions are due to this pill, rather than to surgical methods. Taking the abortion pill is seen as being more private, and it is. Yet, severe complications can arise from such oral medications and women suffer greatly as their little child passes. \*\*\* Why should you see Unplanned? If statistically the abortion figures are correct, more than likely, someone in your immediate family has had an abortion...and you probably don’t even know about it. You should see Unplanned to know that there is hope after abortion (see: HopeAfterAbortion.com). Also, Abby Johnson, the Unplanned’s main actor, started an organization called “And Then There Were None (see abortionworker.com)”. Abby Johnson’s goal is to bring everyone who currently works at an abortion facility out of the industry and help them find a job which respects and promotes life. If abortion facilities close down because of lack of employees, if abortion becomes not only illegal but unthinkable, truly our great nation will be even greater. Otherwise, our nation risks losing its soul. For, if we can kill the totally most innocent person on the planet, a baby in its mother’s womb, who is to be surprised when innocent people are killed in schools, shopping malls, and places of worship? We must get on our knees and pray. \*\*\* After the movie in Grand Island, I was approached by a couple of students from St. Cecilia High School in Hastings. They wanted me to take their picture with the Unplanned movie poster and marquee in the background. I was happy to oblige, and I encouraged them that they are the pro-life generation who will help our nation to end abortion. These young people gave me a great deal of hope.

**Senior Mass** Our annual Senior Mass was held at St. Mary’s last Sunday. This Holy Mass recognizes the graduating seniors from our parishes of St. Mary’s and St. Joseph’s. We remembered in a special way our loved one, Nicolas Pachta, who died in February of his junior year in a traffic accident. One of our graduates has attended Giltner High School, while the others are from Aurora High School. The junior (11<sup>th</sup> grade) class helped with the Mass through being greeters, servers, reader, and ushers. I am especially grateful to Tim and Molly Elge who have sponsored this Class of ’19 these past four years. Theirs, and many of you reading

this, is an act of great generosity, opening their home to these students these past years to teach the Catholic faith and to grow together in love for Jesus. \*\*\* To those of you who have students coming up through the middle school years, I encourage you to plan now to have your child(ren) take part in Godteens. You will be amazed at the bond these students will form with each other and with their sponsoring couple. Remember, Godteens is intended for students of both St. Mary’s and St. Joseph’s. In fact, families living in Giltner have sponsored Godteens in the past, and (as I understand it) the Aurora students rather enjoyed the road trips to Giltner on Wednesday nights for meetings. \*\*\* We must love our youth, who so often have forces placed upon them which impede their view of God’s love for them.

**Father Barak’s Coverage** Last Saturday, I journeyed to Howells, Nebraska, for a wedding. The wedding was between Laura McQuiston, daughter of Linda and Mike McQuiston of our parish, and Bryan Mejstrik of Howells. The couple was kind enough to invite me, and so I went. Father Christopher Barak was here for the 5:00 PM Saturday Mass in my absence. He was assigned to care for St. Mary’s and St. Joseph’s many years ago, around 1996-1997. \*\*\* Full disclosure: I missed the wedding Mass at St. John Nepomucene in Howells due to my not knowing that Highway 15 south of Schuyler was closed (presumably due to the extensive flooding in March). I detoured 33 miles extra, cutting down through David City, then east on 92 and north on 79, up through Prague and North Bend. I was at peace with my misjudgment of choosing the best route, and I enjoyed myself a great deal at the Howells Ballroom for the dinner and reception.

**St. Catherine of Siena** I recently read a biography about this great saint, written by noted 20<sup>th</sup> century author Sigrid Undset. Highly recommended reading.

**Wednesday Holy Hour(s)** I prayed a Holy Hour in front of the Blessed Sacrament this past Wednesday in thanksgiving for our CCD teachers and Godteen sponsors. It was timed such that I prayed before Jesus and thanked Him for all of you at the same time frame that you have given Him in helping teach our youth this past school year. Thank you, one and all! \*\*\* I feel moved to make these Wednesday evening Holy Hours regular and open to all. Please stop by between 6:30 and 8:00 PM this Wednesday.

**Cast Your Net** This weekend, we will begin our 2019 Charity and Stewardship Appeal in St. Mary’s and St. Joseph’s. If you wish to make a down payment, or payment in full, you may do so by check and sign your pledge card after Mass. Or, many have signed up for ACH withdrawal directly from an account at their bank to the Charity and Stewardship Appeal. You may also ask the Appeal representatives at the Diocese to send you reminders and space out your pledges over these next months. \*\*\* Our goal for St. Mary’s this year is **\$8,790.00** while St. Joseph’s is **\$1,650.00**. Please be generous as your means allow.

**God Bless You!**

**Father Grell**