

From the Pastor—June 16, 2019

Priest Jubilees When a priest has been ordained for a milestone number of years, he, like a married couple, often has a party or reception of some type to celebrate his anniversary. I attended two of these receptions in the past couple of weeks and want to share with you about them.

Father Bernie Kimminau – Father Kimminau is a native to Superior, although his family has strong roots in the Lawrence area. I came to know him in the early '90's when he was a seminarian. I almost immediately liked him as a friend, and he is a big reason why I wanted to try studying in the seminary. We hit it off because of common likes, such as the Kansas City Royals, and because of a common sense of humor (he is a very funny person who makes me laugh to this day!). Father Kimminau has been at many parishes in his priesthood of 25 years, including Lincoln, David City, Appleton, Dawson, Schubert, Morse Bluff, Cedar Hill, and his current assignment of Curtis, Wellfleet, and Farnam. He decided to hold his 25th anniversary celebration in Lincoln. It consisted of a simple meal prepared by friends of his, at the John XXIII Diocesan Center in Lincoln, with informal visiting among the attendees. Because of my connections with his native area, I was able to see former parishioners of mine, as well as common friends I share with Father Bernie. He, like me, is also a frequent guest on Spirit Catholic Radio.

Msgr. Adrian Herbek – Monsignor is a priest of our Diocese who was ordained in 1959—that is a whopping 60 years of serving the People of God! His jubilee reception was held at his native parish, Our Lady of Assumption in Deweese. There, his nieces who live in the area prepared a full sit-down meal, complete with a head table for Monsignor, his two sisters, and his sister-in-law. Since this parish was one that I served along with Lawrence from 2005-2013, I have known for a long time the affection that Monsignor has for Deweese and its people. He gave a little talk, especially noting how he is coming out of retirement at the Bishop's request to serve St. Joseph's in Friend, for at least a year. Msgr. Herbek is 85 years old but is in fine health. When he was ordained by Bishop James Casey in '59, the policy of the Diocese was to hold the Ordination ceremony in the new priest's native parish. So, Deweese was visited by throngs of relatives and friends of the young Adrian Herbek that day as one of their own was ordained. The church which Monsignor was ordained in has since been replaced by a newer church. It was in the social hall of this new church that we held his 60th anniversary reception. Monsignor has been a mentor to me and a number of other priests, especially in his promotion of Catholic schools. He is also a wise administrator of parish business and property, and I look up to him in his skillful handling of these components of serving as a pastor.

Return to Former Parishes As alluded to in the preceding note, I recently visited a former parish where I formerly served, namely, Our Lady of Assumption in Deweese. I must say that I arrived rather unexpectedly from their point of view...if an RSVP was needed, I hadn't taken the time to return it. So, it was a joy to see people's surprised faces as they recognized me! I found many parishioners who have faced many of life's ups and downs since I left Deweese in 2013. One of the pillars of the parish is a dear man who I haven't written or phone-called since I left Deweese; it was a joy to re-connect with him. Others who I talked to were quite special, as a special pastoral "knowing" of their situations in life illuminated within me such that I was able to "connect-the-dots" with them from where their lives were at when I was transferred away in 2013. *** I also returned this past week to

Church of the Holy Spirit in Plattsmouth, my most immediate assignment prior to coming to be with you all here in Aurora and Giltner. It was a simple visit, but it was my very first visit back and so was very meaningful. My successor, Father Michael Houlihan, was conferencing with the secretary and bookkeeper when I arrived. So, the four of us got caught up on many things, as the same secretary and bookkeeper are working there who served along with me during my four years there. In fact, I hired the bookkeeper in my first year there at a time when it was crucial that we have someone able to keep pace with the many changes which the Diocese has asked of parishes. One parishioner stopped by the office while I was there, a dear woman who is 90 years old. She continues a ministry of helping lead the Rosary and Communion services in the nursing home that she helped with during my four years in Plattsmouth. She was quite surprised to see me! I enjoyed seeing the re-arrangement of office area at the rectory, a change that I had dreamed of while I was there but never saw through to completion. Also, new carpet has been placed in the office areas of the rectory. It was a joy to see Father Houlihan (who some of you may remember for his many years of serving in St. Michael's, Hastings) and to know that my former sheep are under his strong shepherdly care. *** I also stopped to see a Plattsmouth parishioner who has been praying for me ever since my picture first appeared in the seminarian brochure in 1991. She is nearing 80 years old and cannot live in her own home due to many medical complications. When I was assigned to come and be with you all in Aurora and Giltner (my two-year anniversary is this week, June 19, 2017), I meant to visit her before I left. But it didn't work out, and I have felt since then that I needed to see her and make up for not properly saying good-bye to her. We had a great visit. We laughed a lot and cried a little, as good friends do. She is one of the prayerful powerhouses which form many of us priests into becoming who we are. Please pray often (even daily) for priests and future priests.

Blessed Water for Pregnancy I shared with parishioners this week an ancient blessing of drinking water for God's aid in bringing a pregnancy to healthful completion and the new child to Holy Baptism. It is a beautiful blessing and custom in our church that has fallen away from common knowledge and usage. This married couple, who are in their first trimester, revealed their good news and were open to receiving this blessed water. In faith, I am happy to place their inside little one under God's holy protection. I also used a blessing upon their inside baby which is fairly new in the Church, promulgated in 2011 or so. *** I don't often know who might be newly pregnant in our parishes; if you are, and you would like these blessings, please let me know.

Youth Unite! For our youth aged 14-22, these Wednesday evenings are serving our wonderful young people. The evenings are 8:00-10:00 PM. Please sign up, parents or non-parents of current youth, to be present in church at prayer before the Blessed Sacrament the entirety of the two hours, in one-hour shifts. Confessions are offered during the holy hour, after the catechesis and Q&A, and Bobby and Alyssa Jacobs provided praise and worship music last week. See you at Youth Unite! on June 19!

God Bless You!

Father Grell