

From the Pastor—June 23, 2019

Gretna Girls Almost all of you have heard of the one-vehicle accident which claimed the lives of four juniors-to-be at Gretna High School. One occupant of the car survived but is expected to recover. *** I have traveled the road which these young women were on. It is the main paved road if one wishes to travel from Springfield to the southern edge of Bellevue. Platteview High School is located on this road. The road also gives easier access for those traveling from south, east, or west who wish to go north on 72nd Street or 84th Street into the Omaha metro area. *** Perhaps some in our parish have connections to these grieving families. At publishing time of this bulletin, I have not had a chance to hear of any such connections. *** Life is so precious. God is the giver of all life, and our lives are in His hands until such time as He calls us to Himself. Why now, why these young women? I as pastor do not have a special pipeline to God's throne to come back to you with an answer. What I can tell you is that God is good. And that He is mighty and gracious and loving and merciful. Of these and many other of His qualities, I am certain and I pray God that I keep this certainty of faith until my last breath of this life. *** Life is short, whether you are 100 years old (like our oldest parishioner at St. Mary's) or whether you are a newborn. Life is short, but eternal life is the real life. This life is a shadow; we are only a faint image on this earth of what God has in mind for us in eternity. *** Parents and children of such age as these Gretna girls, I implore you to love each other. Get past petty things that might come up in your conversations and households. Work through the big things, reaching out for the help you might need to overcome them. Love each other by seeing Christ in each other. If you do this, in some small way which is unintelligible to our senses, you will be consoling the hearts of these grieving Gretna families.

Volunteering It cannot come down to, "Father will get somebody to do it." It cannot be this way. And here's why. Several times, more than I would like to admit, I have been very coarse if not downright rude and vicious (in thought and/or deed) to parishioners over my 23 years of priesthood. What do I mean by this rather startling statement? I mean to say that I have misjudged someone who I thought would be a perfect fit to give more of their time, to give more of their talents. And, yes, even to give more of their treasure and material wealth which they have received from God. I have been called out, and rightly so, when I have asked for too much of parishioners. Let's say I have asked them to do tasks X, Y, and Z. They have responded back, "Father, I can do X, but I cannot do Y and Z because of _____." Whatever their reason has been, I am not in a position to say whether that reason adds up to me. In fact, how dare I think that I can judge whether their reason is sufficient for them to decline on doing tasks Y and Z! That is arrogant of me, and I have fallen into such arrogance, even with some of you, dear souls of St. Mary's and St. Joseph's. And I ask your forgiveness. *** Let me speak of volunteering from a slightly different angle. In our parish families, it is not us and them. It is not "we do this, they do that." Rather, it is all us, together. It is we who approach things, and not a divided sense of each group accomplishing its own things. We must be we; we must be us to each other, for we are us. We are NOT us and them. *** Now, or in the past, or in the future, when you see or hear that volunteers are needed for something, let's pray and approach it as us, all together, finding solutions. It may be that a solution is to be a "co-volunteer", meaning that you and someone combine to do the task at hand. It may be that

we meet and determine a differing style of fulfilling tasks X, Y, and Z. Lots of you have lots of experience with finding lots of solutions, and lots of ideas coming together can solve most anything a parish has to approach to solve together. Please prayerfully consider what I say here, and let's be "us", together, building the Kingdom of God here in St. Mary's and St. Joseph's.

Eucharistic Adoration and Litany The Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ, called "Corpus Christi" in Latin, is a grand day to celebrate the Lord's True and Real Presence with us. After Masses this weekend, we will have a short time of Adoration, for which you do NOT have to stay if you are not able. Within the short time of Adoration, we will pray the Litany of the Most Blessed Sacrament, which is included in this bulletin. I ask all of you to pray this litany, at home or in church, because I think it is eye-opening to see the words and formulate in our hearts and minds what a gift we have in the Holy Eucharist.

Living Liturgically What a grand week this is! We celebrate the Birth of John the Baptist on Monday, June 24th. Then, the Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart is Friday. Following that, before we head into the 12th Sunday in Ordinary Time, we celebrate the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul on Saturday. Look up the readings for the Masses on these days. Consider the great celebrations which are out of this world for us to consider and pray upon.

Royals in Omaha! I want to say more seeing the Royals beat the Detroit Tigers on June 13th in Omaha; time does not allow for now.

I-80 Collar Series The Capital Clergy (i.e. Lincoln diocesan priests) defeated the Omaha Padres (i.e. Omaha diocesan priests) by a score of 27-11 last Sunday. I will try to speak more about this in a future bulletin.

Overheating My thermostat is quite unique. Last Saturday night, on a day which wasn't really super-hot, I became overheated during the 5:00 p.m. Mass. I am sorry for this, as this condition has afflicted and affected me for over 10 years. Please bear with me if you see me seeming to act not-like-myself, as it could mean I am suffering from this condition.

June 19th=2 years! This past week, on June 19th, I marked the completion of two years with you all! As I begin Year #3, please keep me in your prayers as I keep you in mine. Together, we can do great things!

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 have provided praise and worship music these past two weeks. See you at Youth Unite! on June 26!

God Bless You!

Father Grell