

From the Pastor—September 15, 2019

Adoration Come and adore Our Lord, on Tuesday, September 17, at St. Mary's, from 8:00 - 9:00 PM!

Blog? It occurred to me recently, or maybe someone suggested to me, that this "From the Pastor" column in essence serves as my personal blog. If you, like my parents, are non-internet and don't intend to become internet-users, a blog is short-hand for "web log". The 'web' in this case refers to the World Wide Web (i.e. www) and the 'log' refers to a recording of happenings of significance in the life of the author. While I don't plan to change the title of "From the Pastor", I want you to be aware that this column is meant to be read as commentary from me, commentary sometimes pertinent to the life and flow of the parish, but not always. I do express my opinion in this column, but I strive to shape my opinion according to the mind of the Church. I would not want to lead anyone who reads this astray in faith matters, for I am the shepherd of you, the sheep. I wanted to share this epiphany that I experienced, and I welcome you to keep reading my blog!

Ministerial Association You may know, or not, that Hamilton County has a Ministerial Association, of which St. Mary's and St. Joseph's are members. As of August 21, 2019, the Association includes 22 churches served by 20 pastors/ministers/reverends. Many priests work with such Ministerial Associations to get to know fellow reverends on a social and personal level, to share with each other our commonality of interests and desires to serve our flocks. I have found thus far that the Hamilton County Ministerial Association is well-run and well-organized. When I attend the meetings, I hear unfamiliar terminology, but I probably use words that the others might not understand (like diocese, Eucharist, or homily). We maintain minutes and agendas, which you could ask me if you ever wanted to see or for the purpose of bringing an item to the group. For example, last week at our most recent meeting, I promoted the upcoming talk on Sept. 22 about How to Stop Human Trafficking, as sponsored by our St. Mary's Altar Society. The other members, from what I could tell, were quite favorable about announcing this event to their congregations. Common topics we cover include keeping our Food Pantry well-stocked. We maintain a bank account as a general fund for people who may need vouchers for needs in times of financial difficulty. Our last meeting included a talk from the Chamber of Commerce and Justice Rhoden; I was interested in how she gave us tips for the Chamber assisting our congregations in building awareness of our events. It is always good to gather with fellow believers in the Lord Jesus.

Legion of Mary From invitations I sent in the Postal Service mail, nine people from our St. Mary's and St. Joseph's attended an introductory meeting about the Legion of Mary on September 6. A couple of others who are interested indicated that Saturday did not work for them to attend. Many, many months ago, I did a series of short bulletin notes about the Legion. I have indicated to parish leaders that I want to begin the Legion here in our St. Mary's and St. Joseph's communities. It is all in hands of Mother Mary; but I certainly hope/pray that she wants the Legion to happen here. The Legion's primary mission is to grow the holiness of its members. Membership can be in "active" status or "auxiliary" status. Now, please read this carefully: *if I did not invite you, that does not mean you are not welcome to join our Legion of Mary efforts.* I felt that a personal invitation from me to specific people would be the best way to build some initial momentum. Certainly, the Legion of Mary, if

successfully supported, can last for years and decades in a parish. In other words, you could join the Legion at any time into the future. The Legion takes seriously the commitment of its members via the Legion Promise. Even with the Promise, I know that there is room for people to belong to the Legion for a while, and then to be less involved during times of great need in their families' lives. Please ask me about the next Legion meeting scheduled, because we are rather "fluid" right now in terms of a day/time to meet while we get our feet on the ground.

Priest Family Day A grand gathering of priests and their parents, siblings, nieces, and nephews was held last Sunday in Lincoln at the John XXIII Diocesan Center. I was joined by my sister. It is so fun, and even healthy, for priests and priests' families to gather. I can tell you more about it if you ask. Suffice to say that it was worth the trip into Lincoln.

Mark's Birthday After Mary and I attended the priest family gathering, we went to my brother's office in the Haymarket area of Lincoln. It was Mark's 45th birthday that day! As my parents become more restricted in their travel, Mary and I were glad to provide some birthday family cheer. Mark's law firm represents people who are injured on the job, what you might know as "workman's [worker's] comp" cases. He was busy last week for an important hearing in front of the Nebraska Court of Appeals for one of his clients. I don't say this to sound uppity; it's just that imagining my little brother in such a role of importance in the life of his client is something that I am rightfully proud about. Mark won't hear the Appeals Court verdict for about six months.

Loving Life Coalition A group of pro-life minded people, not from our parishes, approached me in January and wanted my guidance in promoting all things which uphold the dignity of human life. I have gladly accepted them as friends and collaborators, as they look to the Catholic Church living and promoting the Gospel of Life. As our group grows, we are placing all things in the Hands of Jesus. So far, the Lord has enabled our group, called the Loving Life Coalition (LLC), to bring the Gosnell movie to 12th Street Cinema and to the Giltner Community Center. Another goal is to host showings of the movie Unplanned. We recently became "Facebook official"; search for "Loving Life Coalition Hamilton County, NE" and like us there and be informed there of our endeavors. And, if you would like to actively participate in this Coalition, I invite all who read this to our next meeting, on Monday, September 16, 6:30pm, at St. Mary's Hall. While I don't schedule parish meetings on my day off (Mondays), this important pro-life work is a passion of mine which doesn't disrupt my day off.

Sick Call Priests are "on-call" wherever and whenever needed. This past week, I was awakened and called to the emergency room at our Aurora Hospital. A man (not from our parishes) had just died. It was humbling to walk into that setting and bring Jesus to bereaved loved ones. I strive to pray, by name, for all who are on our prayer chain, as well as others not on the prayer chain. If you or loved ones are sick, please call me and ask me to come.

God Bless You!

Father Grell