

From the Pastor—January 19, 2020

Adoration Schedule No Adoration this week in St. Mary's and St. Joseph's, as I will be attending the March for Life in Washington.

Day of Prayer and Fasting See the reverse side of this page for ways to observe this coming Wednesday, January 22nd, as a day called for by our United States bishops to pray and fast for an end to abortion.

March for Life The March for Life will be held Friday, January 24, and I am attending. I am pretty pumped to go! I will fly to Washington, D.C., on Wednesday and return to Aurora in time for Saturday evening Mass at 5:00 p.m. on January 25th. I will see my good friend who serves the Arlington (VA) Diocese and stay in his parish for two nights. Here are some points for you to consider about the March:

My Attendance During my years in the seminary, 1992-1996, the March for Life was a regular part of our schedule. The seminary would bus all men in the house, about 150 of us, to Washington, which was only about 70 miles away. We slept overnight in the Dominican House of Studies near the National Shrine, and we helped lead a holy hour at the Shrine. Being in the Mass at the Shrine was such a highlight; thousands filled every nook and cranny of this, the largest church in the Western Hemisphere. Then, and I forgot now how, we made our way to the Mall area, near the Washington Monument. Finally, we marched down Constitution Avenue and finished at the steps of the Supreme Court. It was always such a great experience. I went back to the March maybe eight years ago; this will be my first time attending it since then. *** Our Diocese of Lincoln is sending several busloads of youth and chaperones to the March. Even though I am flying, I hope to meet up with our diocesan group.

Social Media People post on social media at a voluminous rate before, during, and after the March. I will try to do the same, so you could try to follow me on Twitter or Facebook. Common hashtags for the March include: #WhyWeMarch and #MarchForLife. Follow official March for Life platforms such as: Facebook--March for Life; Twitter--@March_for_Life; Instagram--@marchforlife

Watch on TV If you are fortunate to receive EWTN on your cable TV plan or satellite network, or if you have good wi-fi to watch EWTN on platforms like their YouTube channel, Mother Angelica's network will provide wall-to-wall coverage of the March for Life.

Pray Please pray for all the pilgrims who are traveling to D.C. for this celebration of life. A couple years ago, before I came to be with you all, you may remember that a huge blizzard hit the East Coast as the March was finishing. Many buses got stuck on the Pennsylvania Turnpike, including a few from our diocese and from our UN-L Newman Center. It made national headlines to see these buses with hundreds of youth, who prayed together, sang together, made snow angels together, while they waited for snow removal crews to re-open the Turnpike. Bottom line: your prayers are most beneficial and even necessary for the success of those pilgrimaging to D.C. to stand up for precious human life.

City Council Members of our Hamilton County Ministerial Association who serve congregations in Aurora are afforded the opportunity to lead a prayer prior to the monthly meeting of the City Council. I was honored to do this prayer last Monday. It was cool to see the workings of the Council and to see a few familiar faces around the table.

Backpack Program Our most recent Ministerial Association meeting shed attention upon the Hamilton County

Backpack Program. Through many generous donations, and many volunteers, this program provides food to 35 area families. I learned that some congregations focus upon a certain food and provide that food each month. For example, a congregation could supply 70 bottles of syrup/month for breakfasts or 70 cans of spaghetti sauce/month. Would our parishes of St. Mary's and St. Joseph's want to commit? With this note, I intend to roll out the idea for you to think about and pray about. The communication we were given was signed by: Pat Pickering, Jo Gilson, Shelly Maul, and Beth Andrews

KC Christmas Dinner Our Msgr. Hugh Campo Council 8010 of the Knights of Columbus held our annual Christmas dinner last Sunday. It was a joy to be with brother Knights and, in some cases, their wives. We enjoyed a catered meal and each other's company.

Religious Education Grant In this week's bulletin, you will notice an amount received by our parishes for religious education. I believe this amount is intended to benefit both parishes of St. Mary's and St. Joseph's; I don't know what the trend of the parishes has been in the past in the usage of these funds. It seems that the funds would most appropriately be used by the CCD program and Godteens program. The grant originates from the Crossing the Threshold campaign of 1999-2000, initiated by Bishop Bruskewitz. Parishioners' donations back then were designated for return to the parishes for use in the catechism of youth. The Catholic Foundation of Southern Nebraska is the caretaker of these funds; the amount given us is based upon the Foundation's investments and our share as a percentage among the 135 parishes in the Diocese.

The Catholic Corner [*repeated note*] I have begun an endeavor which gives me joy; it "fills my bucket," as the saying goes. I started a newspaper column called "The Catholic Corner." It debuted in the Aurora News-Register recently. DISCLAIMER: Due to a generous gift from my parents, this column is funded by me, personally, and reflects no expense to St. Mary's or St. Joseph's parishes. *** In the column, I hope to write a short reflection on some aspect of Catholic life. It seems that in every age of Church history, people experience confusion about what the Catholic Church is and what she teaches. I hope to write a cheerful description of Catholic life in this column. I am grateful for the opportunity!

Quick Trip Home For my day off last week, I traveled to see my parents. It was an extremely quick trip. Mom had had a problem with the microwave oven, and I wanted to see what I could offer them in problem-solving. A good repairman works out of Beatrice, and we were able to secure his service call. The problem should be solved with a new unit, as the repair on the current one would not make it worth the effort. It is always good to see my parents! I was able to anoint them and give them Holy Communion from the tabernacle of St. Joseph's in Beatrice.

Many New Year Blessings to You!!!

Father Grell