

From the Pastor—February 2, 2020

Adoration Schedule Adoration this week in St. Mary's on Wednesday, February 5, 8:00 – 9:00 p.m. Adoration in St. Joseph's on Thursday, February 6, 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Spring Confirmation Schedule The sacrament of Confirmation is conferred in many parishes during the spring months. With Bishop Conley recovering from tinnitus, insomnia, and anxiety/depression on his medical leave of absence, a question on priests' minds was how would all of these Confirmation Masses be held? Thankfully, the schedule is covered by generous men of God, as an e-mail from the Chancery revealed this week. It showed Bishop Emeritus Fabian Bruskewitz taking the lion's share of the Confirmations. Bishop Emeritus William Dendinger (Bishop D.) of Grand Island is helping out, including at my home parish of St. Joseph, Beatrice. Bishop Hanefeldt is also pitching in his assistance. And finally, our Apostolic Administrator, Archbishop George Lucas is covering a few Confirmations, including one at Seward. I think it's just great that these Bishops can exemplify "Nebraska Strong" when it comes to helping out their brother bishop.

March for Life in D.C. Thank you for your prayers as I attended the March for Life! The day of my flight was the day that most schools around here had a snow day. Needless to say, my drive to the airport was somewhat difficult. But I made it in time, and my priest-friend, Father Matthew Zuberbueler, picked me at the Reagan National Airport. We went to his rectory at St. Anthony Church in Falls Church, VA, in the Diocese of Arlington. I hadn't yet visited him in this assignment, which he began in 2017, the same as my first year with you all. We enjoyed a couple of meals together and watched some TV. A couple of 1980's era programs were quite enjoyable, since both of us came of age in high school and early college in that grand decade. The two programs were the William Shatner TV drama, T.J. Hooker, and the murder mystery program, Hart to Hart, starring Robert Wagner and Stephanie Powell. We also watched Lone Star Law, which, being's as how Father Matthew is a native to the Nation of Texas, was a source of great enjoyment as well. *** I joined up with our Lincoln

Diocese group on my second day. We brought four busloads of high school youth via our Youth Ministry Office, headed by Jeff Schinstock. To plant a seed: it would be GREAT if any of our high schoolers of St. Mary's and St. Joseph's would want to attend the March next year. Our Lincoln group of students, chaperones and eight priests had a Mass together, along with priests and people from Wichita Diocese, from the Dakotas, from Minnesota, and from Wisconsin. This Mass was at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. I posted a group picture of our Lincoln group on the Facebook page for St. Mary's Godteens (by the way, "like" us at this page, to build on the 62 likes we currently have!). I took some quiet time after the Mass, visiting special chapels in this enormously-large church. I was able to go to Confession at the Shrine to one of our diocesan priests, which was really cool. *** The March itself was overwhelming. I had marched during each of my four years at Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg, MD, 1993-1996. This is my

second time to march since seminary days. This March had the unique status as the first-ever to have a sitting president address the pro-life attendees. President Trump gave a spot-on speech. My friend, Father Matthew, who gets his share of the dealings of government and politics, remarked, "The President got this one (i.e. pro-life and saving babies from abortion) right, even if you don't agree with hardly anything else he says and does." I could hear the President's speech with my own ears, but I was not in direct line of sight to see him. You can imagine the Secret Service security detail that was protecting him, and all of us marchers, from any nefarious-intentioned people. *** Sights and sounds of the March included talking to a couple of seminarians-turned-priests who I haven't seen in years. I met Bishop Burbidge of my friend's Arlington Diocese. I saw EWTN's broadcaster, Teresa Tomeo. And, I appeared quite unknowingly in a clip on EWTN News, at the foot of the Supreme Court! I will put that link here for you to watch, and I will post it on the St. Mary's Godteens Facebook page. Many priests, seminarians, and religious sisters were in attendance. A group ahead of where I marched had a small band, with which they played energizing music and chanted pro-life slogans. As we marched along Constitution Avenue, it was a surprise when I looked up at the upper floor of the U.S. Department of Justice. There, I saw U.S. Attorney General William Barr! He was waving very genteelly and supportively to us marchers down below. The picture I took of him is on my personal Facebook page. *** One of the very most interesting conversations I had was with a man from Papillion who is a post-abortive dad. He had an affair, stepping out on his wife and two children. The woman whom he dated became pregnant; she decided to abort their child, against his will. It was a tortuous story to hear. We prayed together on the plane. His wife has forgiven him, but I am sure they would appreciate your prayers for healing. His birth-son's due date is this week, which will be a huge trigger of emotions for him.

Msgr. Jim Reinert, part 2 As I returned from the March for Life, I was laser-focused to make it to York on time for Msgr. Reinert's funeral Mass of Christian burial. Were any of you there? I barely made it in time, hurriedly vesting in the vestibule area of St. Joseph's and walking into my reserved priest-pew as the opening procession with Monsignor's casket took place. Unfortunately, this meant that I was not able to view his body; I have always had a draw toward doing this, and as a priest, I can say special prayers in the presence of the body. *** Bishop Emeritus Bruskewitz was the main celebrant of the Mass. About 60 priests con-celebrated, which I thought was a superb turnout, considering that many of us had Saturday vigil Mass duties in our parishes. *** Monsignor John Perkinson was the homilist for the Mass. "Perk", as we priests call him, did excellently. He and Msgr. Reinert are about the same age and are good friends. Msgr. Perk reminded us of how Msgr. Reinert had assisted during 9/11 in New York City. His assignment at the time was helping the Vatican's Permanent Observer office to the United Nations. Msgr. Reinert gave blood to the Red Cross, who were in emergency mode on that fateful day in 2001. Monsignor also labored to hear Confessions and anoint the sick on 9/11, as New York, and our nation,

reeled from this insidious attack upon all that we hold dear. Msgr. Perkinton told of how Msgr. Reinert gave himself over to teaching, both in the Catholic school and in the CCD program at York. Msgr. Perk mentioned what it took me a while to figure out: that Msgr. Reinert had a rough, gruff exterior, but inside was tender and very compassionate. A special notice of Monsignor's loyalty to friends was also acknowledged during the homily. It seems that Msgr. Reinert and his closest friends and fellow Class of '75 graduates from Beatrice High School would meet on a quarterly basis. Monsignor at one of their recent meetings did not tell them of his cancer diagnosis because he didn't want to ruin the festive/happy nature of their get-together. Indeed, a number of this group of friends from Beatrice High was in attendance at Monsignor's Rosary/Wake and funeral Mass; for those of them who are not Catholic, seeing the Bishop and all of us priests surely was something they'll not soon forget. *** Monsignor Reinert's dear mother, Lorene, was in attendance, as well as his brothers and brother-in-law. One of his nieces read the Intercessions; when she broke down a bit, she said, "Uncle Jim would tell me to 'buck up'!". It was a light-hearted moment in our otherwise solemn celebration.

Upcoming Dates Remember Ash Wednesday falls on February 26th!

Soup Dinner Fellowship I enjoyed the Knights of Columbus soup dinner last Sunday. It is always good to have fellowship with each other. The weather cooperated, and we looked to have a pretty good showing.

Grocery Store Blessings From time to time, I run across some of you at the Aurora Food Mart. It is always an occasion for me to remember that it is only due to your generosity that I can go shopping there and purchase the food and items that I need for my day-to-day sustenance. Your donations to the collections help your priest in many ways, as mentioned here, and for covering the bill for my personal health insurance and my retirement pension. Thank you...I cannot thank you enough!

Mom's Birthday My mother's birthday was last Saturday, January 25th! She can't believe she is 84 years old! Please keep her and my dad in your prayers.

St. Joe's School on KWBE-1450 AM I happened to find out that the local radio station in Beatrice, KWBE, was interviewing some students and staff from my elementary alma mater, St. Joseph School. I was able to listen live via the Tune-in app to the teacher of the 5th grade students and the current principal. Also, to hear the eight members of that class (which is the highest grade level at St. Joe's) meant a whole lot to me. Their appearance on KWBE (or Kwee-Bee, as locals call it) was occasioned by Catholic Schools Week.

God Bless You!!!

Father Grell