

## **From the Pastor—November 22, 2020**

**My Dad** Dad tested positive for Covid on November 9<sup>th</sup>. It has been quite a journey since then. I have been on the phone as the “first-call” from the nursing home for any change of conditions or treatments of my father. I have relayed messages back and forth with my mom and siblings. On Day 5 of Dad’s quarantine/isolation within the nursing home, it was his 93<sup>rd</sup> birthday. My mom and brother and sister were able to do a window visit, and they included me via FaceTime. Dad’s main symptoms have come with his lungs having congestion and a deep cough in response. But the lungs have improved vastly this past week, giving us much hope in his continued healing. I get the distinct feeling that the staff at the Good Samaritan home not only care for him, but that they love him. And for this, my family and I are grateful. Thank you for your prayers and please continue them—prayer works!

**Sisters’ Collection** Our diocese has been blessed for many years with two contemplative orders of nuns. The Pink Sisters, i.e. the Holy Spirit Adoration Sisters, reside in Lincoln near Bryan LGH hospital’s east campus. The Carmelite Sisters’ monastery is on a beautiful hill in Saunders County, southwest of Valparaiso. Each of these groups of sisters spend many hours each day in prayer—for us, the people of the Diocese of Lincoln. They rely upon us for their sustenance, and so we take up a collection once a year at Thanksgiving to assist them. Please be generous in the Contemplative Sisters collection this week.

**Advent** It seems that Advent each year kind of sneaks into our world very quietly and meekly, with our thoughts more directed toward Thanksgiving, Black Friday, and football. I want to encourage you, not so much to forego these events, but rather to make sure you give Advent your full spiritual attention. I think the Lord has much to say to us this year as we prepare our hearts for Christmas. In ordinary, non-pandemic times, it might be easier to have one eye on football’s epic match-ups and one eye on what is happening at church with lighting purple and pink candles. However, you may agree with me that Advent this year takes on special meaning. Have an open heart for what God might be ready to say to you. Have a quiet heart. Know that Advent is a great time to choose an extra penance or two. Make a good confession, or two. Don’t let Christmas and all its joy sort of make a last-minute appearance in your life. Like all good things, Christmas must be prepared for. Please know of my prayers for you.

**E-mail News Beginning** When the Covid hit last spring, I successfully communicated for a few weeks via sending e-mails to those for whom I have addresses on our parish database. However, my gmail system started massively kicking back my communications as “undeliverable”, which irritated me to no end. I am thankful to deliver to you what I think is a great solution, via an e-mail service called Constant Contact. Our members should begin soon to receive parish e-mail messages. At first, you may need to check your “spam” file in case your computer doesn’t recognize the Constant Contact as being part of your primary senders. The e-mails will contain links to the parish bulletin, familiar pictures of our churches, and ways to click to places on our web site that are helpful to you. I am looking forward to this new communication!

### **Two Plenary Indulgences**

**November** offers plenary indulgences one can gain for a deceased family member or friend or the Poor Souls. A

plenary indulgence, applicable only to the souls in purgatory, is granted each and every day of November to those who devoutly visit a cemetery and there pray, if only mentally, for the departed. A plenary indulgence is granted the faithful who, on All Souls’ Day or any day of November, devoutly visits a church or an oratory and recites an Our Father and the Creed. Requirements for obtaining a plenary indulgence include doing the work while in a state of grace, receiving sacramental confession within 20 days of the work (several plenary indulgences may be earned per reception), receiving Eucharistic communion (one plenary indulgence may be earned per reception), praying for the pope’s intentions (Our Father and Hail Mary, or other appropriate prayer, is sufficient), having no attachment to sin (even venial) – i.e., it is sufficient that the Christian makes an act of the will to love God and despise sin. If the requirements are not fully fulfilled, the work becomes a partial indulgence. *Modified for Covid* These indulgences have been modified during Covid-19 pandemic to be effective throughout the entire month of November. The Plenary Indulgence for those who visit a cemetery and pray for the deceased, even if only mentally, normally established only on the individual days from 1 to 8 November, may be transferred to other days of the same month, until its end. These days, freely chosen by the individual believers, may also be separate from each other; the Plenary Indulgence of 2 November, established on the occasion of the Commemoration of all the deceased faithful for those who piously visit a church or oratory and recite the “Our Father” and the “Creed” there, may be transferred not only to the Sunday before or after or on the day of the Solemnity of All Saints, but also to another day of the month of November, freely chosen by the individual faithful.

*For those who are homebound or restricted* The elderly, the sick and all those who for serious reasons cannot leave their homes, for example because of restrictions imposed by the competent authority in this time of the pandemic, in order to prevent numerous faithful from crowding into the holy places, will be able to obtain the Plenary Indulgence as long as they join spiritually with all the other faithful, completely detached from sin and with the intention of complying as soon as possible with the three usual conditions (sacramental confession, Eucharistic communion and prayer according to the Holy Father’s intentions), before an image of Jesus or the Blessed Virgin Mary, recite pious prayers for the deceased, for example, Lauds and Vespers of the Office of the Dead, the Marian Rosary, the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, other prayers for the deceased dearest to the faithful, or occupy themselves in considered reading of one of the Gospel passages proposed by the liturgy of the deceased, or perform a work of mercy by offering to God the sorrows and hardships of their own lives.

Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today, and forever. Stay well, stay strong, in Christ!
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**God Bless You!!!**

**Father Grell**