

From the Pastor—November 8, 2020

Parish Debt Paid Off With our Covid times, it is difficult to capture well the joy and the pride that St. Mary's ought to have in having this month paid off our entire debt to the Diocese. While we as a parish need to celebrate this remarkable accomplishment in a proper way, I at least want this bulletin note to suffice for getting the word out there. One detail I can share is that the loan for our 2014 remodel of the church and hall was scheduled to last for 10 years, until 2025. Paying it off a full five years early, amidst Covid, is truly a feat that we all ought to be most proud of. Call it a miracle of grace! A miracle at 9th and P Streets, Aurora! Please know of my thanksgiving and esteem. Congratulations!!!

Cemetery Records Caretaker Our parish of St. Joseph's is grieved by the unexpected death of Patrick Ormond. We pray for his soul. Patrick and his family have served for many years as caretakers of the records of plots and burials at St. Joseph Cemetery, i.e. the Giltner Catholic Cemetery. This includes going out in all kinds of weather to mark the graves for the gravediggers when a plot is needed for a burial. *** I foresee that some one person, or preferably a couple of people, are needed to volunteer for this honorable job of marking the graves. Perhaps another one or two persons could keep the records. Finally, having an electronic copy of records in the rectory here in Aurora is needed, as well as keeping in the St. Joseph Church a current map of the plots already purchased and the current burials. These tasks come under the *corporal and spiritual works of mercy to bury the dead and pray for the dead*. Those who volunteer would ideally make up a cemetery board of 3 to 4 people, who would meet occasionally with me and determine best practices and policies for our Catholic cemetery. In this month of November, when the universal Church bids us to consider the needs of prayer for the faithful departed, your volunteering and/or prayer for our Giltner cemetery's needs are greatly appreciated.

New Copier In recent weeks, the St. Mary's office has been blessed with the purchase of a new Savin brand copier. It is technologically-sound to match with the new computer of several months ago purchase to raise the level of our quality of office output. The copier is quite user-friendly; I think CCD teachers have already used it for their classroom needs. I appreciate the generosity of our parishioners for this step-up in technology; this copier really serves the needs of both parishes. Thank you!

Voting Was Like Confession I went on Election Day to the Farr Building, which is actually not so far away ☺, on the county fairgrounds campus. The place was humming with voters while I was there! I was impressed with the workers for my Ward 3 precinct; a friendly wave and hello from a worker at the next precinct over added to the pleasantness of the experience. Several parishioners were in line to vote, and it was good to speak to them. *** I had a sense that with the import of this year's election, the scene sort of felt like a big confessional! People spoke in hushed tones, went to a private booth or cubicle to vote, and felt renewed by exercising their citizen duty to cast their interior determination of the best candidates. My analogy to a confessional is just my own opinion; you can take it or leave it. In any case, we pray for all newly elected officials at the local, state, and federal levels. May God bless them!

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!

God Bless You!!!

Father Grell