

From the Pastor—July 26, 2020

Spiritually Starving—No. 6 Our discussion of the Eucharist moves this week to paragraph 1333 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church. It states that *“at the heart of the Eucharistic celebration are the bread and wine that, by the words of Christ and the invocation of the Holy Spirit, become Christ's Body and Blood. Faithful to the Lord's command the Church continues to do, in his memory and until his glorious return, what he did on the eve of his Passion: “He took bread. . . .” “He took the cup filled with wine. . . .” The signs of bread and wine become, in a way surpassing understanding, the Body and Blood of Christ; they continue also to signify the goodness of creation. Thus in the Offertory we give thanks to the Creator for bread and wine, fruit of the “work of human hands,” but above all as “fruit of the earth” and “of the vine” - gifts of the Creator. The Church sees in the gesture of the king-priest Melchizedek, who “brought out bread and wine,” a prefiguring of her own offering.*

Bread and wine must be present at every Catholic Mass; Catholics use what the Lord himself used. The bread must be made from wheat flour and water—no flavorings may be added. The wine has to be made from grapes. Both the bread and wine are usually purchased at Catholic goods stores, to ensure the right substances are used at the Holy Mass.

Dr. David Anders often teaches on Called to Communion that the bread and wine are signs, but they are more than signs. The signs of bread and wine mean that the substances truly taste like bread and wine. However, after the priest offers up these signs, prays the Holy Spirit upon them, and utters the words of consecration, the substance of bread, the substance of wine, are no longer present upon the altar; the Lord himself is there in his Sacred Body and Most Precious Blood. This is a miracle beyond comprehension. I feel blessed and privileged to have had devout Catholic parents who taught me about the Eucharist.

When you come to Holy Mass, offer up your life along with the bread and wine. Listen carefully to the priest as he makes the offering. Listen for the prayer over the gifts which comes right before the “Lift up your hearts” dialogue between priest and people. If you don't understand what is really happening during the Mass, ask the Lord for the gift of faith to believe it. After all, there are many things we don't understand in life, such as gravity. However, we all believe that gravity exists. Think of the Eucharist in this way.

I hope to continue these Catechism paragraphs and commentary into the future. My commentary is in regular print, while the precise text of the Catechism is italicized.

Senior Mass St. Mary's was happy to host the annual Senior Mass on July 19, for our graduated 12th grade students. It was a beautiful occasion, with a short pulpit talk from Keli Margritz and the handing out of Bibles engraved with the names of the students.

My Mother Visited! On Thursday, July 16, my Mom came to spend the afternoon with me. It was so good to show her around St. Mary's and St. Joseph's. The trip of over 100 miles is difficult, from our family farm at Blue Springs to here. So, I enlisted a good family friend to serve as a chauffeur for my mother. (Dad is recovering from a fall at the nursing home in Beatrice, so he couldn't come.) It was refreshing to let my mother see where I live. It was her first time to the parish, as

far as she can remember. She and Dad came for an anniversary celebration of Clarence and Lucille Meier some years ago. That was Mother's only other trip to Aurora, until last week. We went to visit Lucille at her Aurora residence and really enjoyed our talk with her. Lucille's mother was a Hajek, and Hajek is my Mom's maiden name. In fact, Lucille grew up only a mile away from where my mother grew up, northwest of Odell. Lucille was already grown up during my mom's childhood, being 18 years older. But Lucille remembers my grandparents very well. Mom took a lot of pictures and I drove her around a little to see some sights around Hamilton County. It was a very good day.

Pull Motion for Pro-Life Bill Did you watch the live stream of the Legislature on Tuesday as they debated the pull motion for LB814 (the Dismemberment Abortion Ban)? It was riveting. I've been a Nebraskan since 1968 (when I was born!), and I have never watched a full debate in our Unicameral from motion to final vote. (Although, during our compulsory 4th grade field trip to the State Capitol, we may have watched a debate.) It took the better part of two hours. LB814 would ban abortions by dismemberment, which is currently legal in the State of Nebraska. This is all that it would ban, just this one method. However, those who are not pro-life were very vocal during the floor debate. Our own local State senator, Curt Friesen, gave a speech in favor of the pull motion, and followed that up with his vote for the pull motion. He wouldn't have had to give a floor speech, but he chose to. I had contacted his office and talked, live, to a staffer of the senator's over the phone. I also e-mailed him. I intend to write him a written thank you for his speech and his vote. If you didn't hear, the pull motion carried with 30 votes (only 25 were needed)! Perhaps Sen. Suzanne Geist, the LB814 sponsor, knew from her colleagues that the pull would pass. I wasn't for sure, however. After some outlandish pro-abortion speeches from a minority of senators, it was like reality TV for me as the final votes were tallied. The bill still has a ways to go...perhaps close to 15 hours of floor debate along with the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd readings of it, with a possibility of amendments being added and the like. At least it is on the floor, however.

The Next Two Saturdays It is wedding season! Many weddings have been postponed because of the virus. The next two Saturdays, August 1 and 8, I will be attending two weddings in exactly this postponed category. I have asked Father Chris Barak to come and offer Mass in my place. I will not be away overnight.

Assumption is Non-obligatory This Year The Holy Day of the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary does not carry an obligatory call to attend Mass this year, since August 15th falls on a Saturday. I will still offer Mass for the Assumption in both parishes.

Father Don The funeral Mass for Father Don Larmore will be Tuesday, July 28, at 2:00 p.m. at Blessed Sacrament in Grand Island. The burial will be in Giltner.

God Bless You!!!

Father Grell