

St. Michael's & St. Mary's

FR. JOHN B. BIRKEL, PASTOR

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First Sunday of Lent

February 22, 2015



St. Michael's and St. Mary's Parishes would like to extend a warm welcome to all who are visiting us or are new to the area. If you are not currently registered at St. Michael's or St. Mary's and consider this your Parish, please call the Rectory at 729-2058.

St. Michael's	PO Box 406, Fairbury, NE 68352	Phone: 729-2058
St. Mary's	5th & Amanda Streets, Alexandria, NE	
St. Michael's Prayer Chain	Carmen Juarez: 729-3623	
St. Michael's/St. Mary's Secretary	Carolyn Osborne: 729-5387	Mobile: 300-0148

St. Mary's Parish Council: Peggy Niederklein, Rhonda Burkhart, Donna Rut, Daryl Anderson, Trish Endorf **Trustees:** Bob VanWesten and Bob Bachle

St. Mary's PCCW: Deb Vanwesten

St. Michael's Parish Council: Brenda Mannschresk, Doug Kapke, LeAnn Krause, Dave Panko, Dave Banahan, Bruce Busing, Chad Mans, Matt Umland, **Trustees:** Randy Prellwitz and Keith Mach

St. Michael's PCCW: Lorraine Borch

Knights of Columbus: Joshua Whitney

CCD Coordinator: Carolyn Whitney

Parish News & Upcoming Events

BULLETIN: If you have news for the bulletin, please call the Rectory 729-2058 or contact Carolyn 729-5387 or email carolyn@stmichaelsfairbury.org News must be in Thursday by 10:00 AM to be in the week's bulletin.

ADOPT A PRIEST: Our Deanery is taking part in the "Adopt a Priest" program. St. Michael's has adopted **Fr. Leo Seiker**; please keep him in your prayers.

SEMINARIAN'S OF THE WEEK: Please keep our Seminarian's of the week, **Dale Alder and Wade Bakhit** in your prayers.

Ministers' Schedules for Next Weekend

	5:30 PM	8:00 AM	10:00 AM
Acolyte	Steve Graff	Jim VanWesten	Randy Prellwitz
Lector	Keith Mach	Rhonda Burkhart	Charlie Barringer
Server	Connor Gerth		Paul Mach
Server	Brock Beed		Joey Whitney
Organ/Piano	Carolyn Osborne	Lorrie Hoffstetter	Mary Prellwitz
Gifts/Greeters	Mary Kay Bedlan	John & Donna Rut	Kenny & LeAnn Krause
Collection	Bruce Busing and Dave Banahan		

Our Offering to God Last Weekend	St. Michael's	\$ 2211.00
	St. Mary's	\$ 231.00
	St. Michael's Debt	\$ 150.00

Please pray for: Betty (Morgan) Brackle, Bob Seigel, Iola Busing, Rose O'Keefe, Vonja Scheer, Lorraine Callison, Doug Wiedel, Leona Gaydusek, Norma Bernasek, Jim Cortney, Rozella Prellwitz, Zachary Rowe, Noelle Salazar, Bernie Boerner, Paul Prellwitz, Brad Eveleth, Kathy Blobaum, Bob McCord, Ed Lytle, LeRoy Prellwitz, Rita Stone, Catherine Nutsch, Graysen Snyder, Brandi Warnke, Darren Martinez, Military Personnel, all the unborn children & their parents, pro-life legislation, and anyone else who maybe ailing. *If you or someone you know would like our parish family to join you in prayer for their special needs, please contact the parish office.*

THIS WEEK'S MASS SCHEDULE

Monday	February 23	NO MASS	St. Michael's	NO MASS
Tuesday	February 24	12:10 PM	St. Michael's	Norman Medina+
Wednesday	February 25	12:10 PM	St. Michael's	All Souls Day Intentions of Jim & Elaine Cortney
Thursday	February 26	5:30 PM	St. Michael's	All Souls Day Intentions of Joshua and Carolyn Whitney
Friday	February 27	12:10 PM	St. Michael's	Bill & Arlene Wagner+
Saturday	February 28	5:30 PM	St. Michael's	All Souls Day Intentions of Jim & Betty Williams
Sunday	March 1	8:00 AM	St. Mary's	All Souls Day Intentions of Jim & Ellen VanWesten
Sunday	March 1	10:00 AM	St. Michael's	The People of the Parishes

Confessions	St. Michael's	Saturday	4:45 PM to 5:15 PM
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Daily Mass: Please check Mass schedule carefully for Mass times this week!!!

NEW ITEMS

- **Picture:** Fr. John is looking for a picture of the inside of St. Mary's that shows the altar with the side decorations around the tabernacle. The original photo will be returned.
- **Spaghetti Dinner...** at St. Joseph Catholic Church Parish Center in Beatrice, Sunday, March 1 from 4:00-7:00 p.m. Dinner includes spaghetti with meat sauce, salad, garlic bread and dessert. The parish center will be beautifully decorated to give you an Italian atmosphere while you enjoy your dinner. Advance tickets are \$9.00/Adults and \$3.00/Children 3-12. Tickets at the door are \$10/Adults and \$3.00/Children 3-12.

- **Action Alert:** Your immediate action is needed to stop a bill in our State Legislature that would be harmful to our society and that would attack religious freedom. LB 586 would make "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" protected classifications under Nebraska's employment laws. All persons, including those who experience same-sex attractions, have inherent human dignity and must be treated with respect. But LB 586 would require employers, including entities and schools of the Catholic Church, to affirm sexual activity outside marriage between a man and a woman, and gender identity as a social construct. Employees could not be prevented from promoting such lifestyles. Employers who fail to comply with the new law could be put out of business through lawsuits and monetary damages. There is no religious exemption for the Church or employers of conscience, and proposed amendments do not provide sufficient protection. Please call or e-mail your senator as soon as possible by phone or e-mail with the message: Please oppose LB 586. More information is available, and you can e-mail your senator quickly and easily online, at www.necatholic.org ("Take Action"). Senators can also be reached by calling the Capitol at (402) 471-2788.
- **A Special Wedding Anniversary Mass** and reception for all married couples will be held Sunday, March 8 at 2:00 p.m. at the Cathedral of the Risen Christ in Lincoln. Bishop James Conley will be the Main Celebrant and Homilist at the Mass for this "Joy and Hope" celebrations of Christian Marriage. Special recognition will be given to those couples married 10, 25, 40 and 50 years or more. Family guests are welcome. To register call the Family Life Office (402)488-2040.
- **The Holy Father wants to hear from you!** All Catholics in the Diocese of Lincoln are invited to participate in a survey, in order to assist the 2015 Synod on Marriage and Family Life. The results of our survey, along with similar surveys from around the world, will be discussed by Pope Francis and the bishops present at the synod. Your thoughts on marriage and family life will help the Universal Church to support families and to proclaim the gospel. The survey can be found at www.lincolndiocese.org<<http://www.lincolndiocese.org>.
- **Class on Saint Thomas Aquinas** will be Tuesday's during Lent at 2:00 p.m. in the Parish Center. There is no reading with this course! A 25 minute video & discussion.

- **Stations of the Cross:** Stations of the Cross will be Friday, February 27th at 5:00 p.m.
- **Word Among Us:** We have FREE copies of the Word Among Us for **Lent**. Please pick yours up today and take home for daily devotions for the season of Lent.
- **Lenten Reflections:** Each day from Ash Wednesday (February 18) through Easter Sunday (April 5), Fr. Robert Barron will send you a short email with an uplifting spiritual reflection. The reflections will be available in both English and Spanish. In addition, you'll receive exclusive videos found nowhere else, free giveaways of his DVD's and books, and special discounts on new and exciting resources. The best part of all? It's totally FREE! Just head over to LentReflections.com and sign up.
- **Soup Supper:** Sunday, March 1st, 4:30-7:00 p.m. at the Steele City Presbyterian Church. Soup, sandwiches and pie will be served. Free will offering.
- **Palms:** We will be collecting the palms for last year. If you would like to bring them back, please lay them on the back table in the church.
- **Operation Rice Bowls:** Our journey with CRS Rice Bowl begins in Tanzania, where a simple soybean is changing lives! What actions can you take this Lent to change lives—at home and around the world? ***If you haven't received your rice bowl, there are some on the back table in the church.***



- **Knights Fish Fry:** With Lent, comes the Knights Fish Fry. Mark these dates on your calendar: March 6, and March 20. Serving from 5:30-7:00. Let's support the Knight's by attending!!!

- **Catholic Press Month:** February is Catholic Press month. We will take up our annual collection to pay for the cost (\$15.00) of the Southern Register. Please help us offset the cost that is charged to our church each year. ***Envelopes are inserted in your offering envelopes this year.*** These can be dropped in the collection basket anytime.



- **Food Pantry:** During the month of February, we will be collecting food for the Blue Valley Food Pantry. Please give from your heart to help those in need!
- **Thought of the week:** Living as a steward takes great love and trust.
- **St. Michael's PCCW Booklets for 2015:** If you haven't received your new PCCW Booklet, please stop by the back of the church and pick yours today. Remember the annual dues of \$5.00 are due March 1st.
- **Pope Francis "Rediscovering the Heart of a Disciple":** The PCCW will be sponsoring a 4-week study on Pope Francis "Rediscovering the Heart of a Disciple". The cost of the book is \$10.00. The dates for the study are: February 23 @7:00 p.m.; March 2 @ 7:00 p.m. and March 10 @7:00 p.m. Please call Carolyn at 729-2058 to request your book. If you have any questions about the study call Deborah at 402-424-3665. Everyone is welcome to join in the study group.
- **Handicapped Parking:** A request has been made for additional handicapped parking spaces in front of the Church. We are working towards that end; for now, if you are not in need, please try and leave the spaces near the front for those who are in need.
- **CCD:** Classes are from 6:45p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Please do not drop your children off before 6:35 p.m., because there will not be any adult supervision. ***Parents, please remember that if your child will be receiving one of the sacraments in the next two years, that they must be attending CCD classes to receive the sacraments.*** Please remember to enter the driveway on E street and exit on 8th street.
- **St. Michael's Debt Reduction:** Our loan for the operation of the school is: \$156,243.00. We plan to make payments of \$17,360.33 each year for nine years to pay off the debt. The Bishop has made our loan so that it does not accrue interest. ***Envelopes are attached to this week's bulletin.***
- **St. Mary's February Cleaning:** Deb VanWesten

- **St. Mary's PCCW:** The annual dues of \$5.00 are due March 1 for the St. Mary's PCCW and can be paid to Donna Rut. All ladies of St. Mary's Parish are automatically a member of the PCCW. Any donations will gladly be accepted also. The dues and donations will be used to purchase supplies for the altar.
- **Our Lady of Good Counsel Lenten Retreats:** Don't be left out for the upcoming Lenten Retreats. Feb 27-March 1, Fr. Mark Cyza will speak on "Friends of the Cross" for men and women. March 13-15, Fr. Troy Schweiger will speak on "A man after God's own Heart" Man to Man, men only. March 27-29, Fr. Gary Coulter will speak on "Discipleship in Mark" for men and women. You can register at www.goodcounselretreat.com or call 402-786-2705.
- **Census:** *If you haven't returned your census slips, please do so as soon as possible. The census papers help us get an accurate count of the members of the churches. If you have misplaced your copy, please call Carolyn at 729-2058 for a replacement.* If you know your Sacrament information, please include that also. Please return them in the collection basket or drop off at the parish office.
- **Best Choice Labels:** Please continue to save your labels and put them in the container at the back of the church. For every 1000 labels we collect, we receive \$30.00.
- **Website:** You can find St. Michael's/St. Mary's website at www.stmichaelsfairbury.org. You can view the weekly bulletins and monthly calendar.
- **Guide to Planning a Catholic Funeral:** On the back table, are copies of "A Guide to Planning a Catholic Funeral". The booklets have Scripture readings, music selections and a planning guide to help you plan for funerals. **You may fill these out now, so your family will know what your wishes are, in the time of passing and it will be something they will not have to worry about.** You may turn them in to the office or you may keep at your home.

COMMUNION RAIL

We are considering restoring the Communion Rail in Saint Michael's.

First, the two main objections I've heard over the years about Communion rails are:

1. What about those who can't kneel? Answer: No one has to kneel. There have always been people who could not kneel.
2. It makes a barrier between the Priest and the people. Answer: No, it provides a place where people may meet and receive their Lord.

Here is a partial explanation of the purpose of a Communion rail:

Denis McNamara, author of *Catholic Church Architecture and the Spirit of the Liturgy* (Hillenbrand Books, 2009) McNamara traces church architecture roots to the Temple of Solomon: The large room corresponded to the church nave; the Holy of Holies, an image of heaven, corresponded to today's sanctuary. They were separated visually by the great veil, which was torn when Christ died.

"[The altar rail] is still a marker of the place where heaven and earth meet, indicating that they are not yet completely united," McNamara explained.

"But, at the same time, the rail is low, very permeable, and has a gate, so it does not prevent us from participating in heaven. So we could say there is a theology of the rail, one which sees it as more than a fence, but as a marker where heaven and earth meet, where the priest, acting *in persona Christi*, reaches across from heaven to earth to give the Eucharist as the gift of divine life."

Please pray about this and, if you wish, let me know what you think. Please, also, feel free to ask me questions about it.

