

St. Michael's & St. Mary's

FR. JOHN B. BIRKEL, PASTOR

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Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

July 5, 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 **Trustees:** Bob VanWesten and Bob Bachle

St. Mary's PCCW: Deb Vanwesten

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

St. Michael's PCCW: Lorraine Borch

Knights of Columbus: Dan Arner

CCD Coordinator:

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.
- **SISTERS OF THE WEEK:** Please keep our Sisters of the week, **Sr. Michael Mary of the Cross and Sr. Emma** in your prayers.

Ministers' Schedules for Next Weekend

	5:30 PM	8:00 AM	10:00 AM
Acolyte	Bruce Busing	Jim VanWesten	Randy Prellwitz
Lector	Keith Mach	Rhonda Burkhart	Lorraine Borch
Server	Paul Mach		RJ Suey
Server	Aldo Ramos		Braden Suey
Organ/Piano	Mary Mach	Lorrie Hofstetter	Mary Prellwitz
Gifts/Greeters		Bob & Donna Milius	
Collection	Bruce Busing & Dave Banahan		

Our Offering to God Last Weekend		Adult	Plate	Children
	St. Michael's	\$1318.00	\$73.30	\$9.00
	St. Mary's	\$215.00	\$20.00	
	St. Michael's Debt	Last Week	Total	
		\$200.00	\$5505.00	

THIS WEEK'S MASS SCHEDULE

Monday	July 6	12:10 PM	St. Michael's	Walter & Dorrine Milius+
Tuesday	July 7	7:15 AM	St. Michael's	Bill & Arlene Wagner+
Wednesday	July 8	NO MASS	St. Michael's	NO MASS
Thursday	July 9	5:30 PM	St. Michael's	Steve Wilson+
Friday	July 10	12:10 PM	St. Michael's	Rosalie Hamm+
Saturday	July 11	5:30 PM	St. Michael's	Doug Endorf+
Sunday	July 12	8:00 AM	St. Mary's	Robert Smith+
Sunday	July 12	10:00 AM	St. Michael's	The People of the Parishes


Confessions	St. Michael's	Saturday	4:45 PM to 5:15 PM
	St. Mary's	Sunday	7:45 AM

Daily Mass: Please check Mass schedule carefully for Mass times this week!!!

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, Brad Eveleth, Kathy Blobaum, Bob McCord, Ed Lytle, Rita Stone, Graysen Snyder, Brandi Warnke, Darren Martinez, Marie Kosmacek, Tatum Broeders, 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.*

NEW ITEMS



- **Congratulations and Welcome** into the family of God of St. Michael's Parish to Lane Joseph Panko, son of Dave & Aleece Panko. Lane is being baptized this Sunday.
- **Class on the Natural Law**, similar to the Saint Thomas Aquinas course. Each class consists of an approximately 30 minute video & discussion, Monday at 12:40 in the center.
- **Parish Council**: Next weekend we will begin the election process for new Parish Council members. We will provide paper & pens & offer a chance to vote for a member of the parish. The following week, we will have an election from among the top nominates.
- **July 4th**: Be sure to thank God for our freedom and for those that have lost their lives fighting for it. 
- **Bulletin**: Please have information for next week's bulletin in by Tuesday, July 7th at 5:00 p.m. Carolyn will be out of the office July 9 thru 13th.
- **Thought of the Week**: Praising God for all that has been done for us, is part of a life of Stewardship.
- **Have you wanted to make a pilgrimage to the CA Missions?** Fr. Christopher Barak is leading a pilgrimage from October 1-13, 2015. A highlight will be Mass at the tomb of our newest Saint-to-be, Blessed Junipero Serra, founder of the California missions, who will be canonized in September when Pope Francis visits Washington. We will visit 11 Missions and many other beautiful CA sights from San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego. Interested? For more information/itinerary please call Tekton Ministries Toll Free: 866.905.3787 or email: pilgrimage@tektionministries.org or Maryann: mspahni@inebraska.com
- **Word Among Us**: We have FREE copies of the Word Among Us for the **month of July**. Please pick yours up today and take home for daily devotions.



- **Knights Pancake Feed:** The Knights of Columbus will be sponsoring a pancake feed, Sunday, July 5th following Mass in the parish center. Please join them for pancakes and sausage this weekend.
- **Miniature Quilt Auction:** Sunday, August 23rd at 4-H building at Jefferson County Fairgrounds. 2:00 p.m. Quilt Preview & Treats; 2:30 p.m. Auction. Free Admission.
- **Peters Pence Collection:** Thank you for your generous support of our Holy Father's charitable works in the Peter's Pence Collection. Your contributions will be combined with those of our brothers and sisters around the world to help Pope Francis provide essential relief to people in need. Your generosity is an act of solidarity with the universal Church, answering the call to be a witness of charity. May God bless you! If you haven't contributed towards the Peter's Pence Collection, you may still drop your envelope in the collection.
- **Endow in the Lincoln Diocese:** Endow (Educating on the Nature and Dignity of Women) is an educational apostolate created for the "woman in the pew." The Endow ministry brings women of all ages together for prayer, study, and friendship. Grab your sister, mother, or another friend and plan to join us for one (or more!) of these great events. ***Ladies Night Out***-Friday, July 17th at 7:00 p.m. at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, North Platte, NE. ***Facilitator Training***-Saturday, July 18, 9-a.m.-3 p.m. at St. Patrick's Parish Hall, McCook, NE. ***Information Night***-Sunday, July 19th at 6:00 p.m. at Blessed Sacrament Parish Hall, Grand Island. For more information, see the flyer on the bulletin board.
- **Make a Pilgrimage to visit a Religious Community** in celebrations of the Year for Consecrated Life: July 8-16, Novena to Our Lady of Mount Carmel, 7 pm weekday Masses at Carmelite Sisters at Carmel of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, 9300 Agnew Rd, Valparaiso; Sunday, July 12, 3-4 pm Open House & Vespers at School Sisters of Christ the Kings at Villa Regina, 4100 SW 56th St., Lincoln.
- **Ministries Schedule:** New ministries schedules are on the back table of the church. Please pick yours up today.



- **Please note:** Summer vacation continues but there is never a vacation from God. Make sure to include Him in your travel plans. Bills still need to be paid, however, please remember to consistently contribute your parish offering during the summer months.
- **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.
- **St. Mary's Cemetery Fund:** The cemetery fund for St. Mary's Cemetery is in need of some new funds as the summer growing season draws near as does the need to pay for the mowing. If you would like to replenish the fund, please put your donations in your church support envelope that is marked "Cemetery Fund". Cemeteries require funds for maintenance purposes. Any help you can give will be greatly appreciated.
- **July Church Cleaning for St. Mary's:** Denise Anderson
- **Mass times when you are traveling:** Traveling?? There are web-sites to find the time of Masses at different locations. <http://masstimes.org>
- **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 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.

4th of July and Freedom: Freedom to Think

What follows here are some questions that are frequently asked about God and his basic attributes. Since we have freedom to know and to make choices, the following questions and their answers can help us to know and choose a little better. These questions are answered by Doug McManaman, an educator and theologian from Canada.

If God created everything, then who created God?

Of course no one created God. For if God was created, He'd be a creature (created), and so He wouldn't be God. His creator would be God. But then who created His creator? If He too was created, then He isn't God, but a creature of God. To be God is to be the creator of all creatures. So God is not Himself a creature. He is **uncreated**. He always existed. He cannot **not** exist. And so He did not come into existence, nor will He go out of existence.

But I can't imagine that! How is that possible?

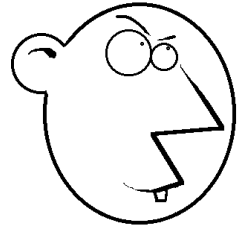
It is true that you and I cannot imagine that. For everything in our experience has had a beginning. And our imagination is limited to what can be imagined, and what can be imagined are material things and their movements. Material things have a beginning, a middle, and an end. But God is not a material and created thing. And so He cannot be imagined. And as for your second question (How is that possible?), it is impossible for it to be any other way. There must be a First, uncaused or uncreated cause of all other things. Let me go over a concept first employed by Aristotle and later developed by St. Thomas Aquinas. You might find it a little difficult, but it isn't as difficult as it appears at first. It explains how there cannot be an infinite series of causes, as we were discussing above. You all know the concept of cause and effect. The baseball is moving in the air **because** it was thrown by somebody. Somebody threw the ball, that is, caused it to move. The ball did not move itself.



In the same way, there cannot be an infinite series of causes when it comes to God. Who created God? Another God, who was created by another God, who was created by another God...etc. No, this is not possible. First of all, no one can create in the true sense of the word. To create means to bring into being from nothing. Human beings *produce*, but they do not *create*. We bring things into existence from already existing matter, such as the desk from already existing wood. But you and I were created. You and I did not exist one hundred years ago. We exist now. We came into being from nothing. We were not sperm, nor were we an ovum, and neither were we a twinkle in our parents' eyes. We weren't. God alone creates from nothing, and He always existed and is forever unchanging, not subject to time and place.

How is it that God can already know our choice before we have really made them? Does this limit our free-will?

Not really. God is the First Cause of all that is. Whatever exists, God is the First Cause of its being. But God is also the First Perpetuating Cause of all that is. Just as I cannot bring myself into existence, I cannot preserve my existence. Certainly I can eat and take care of myself, but that is not quite the same as preserving my existence. For in order to eat and take my medicine, for example, I have to be made to exist, and I have to be preserved in existence, and the food that I eat must also be perpetuated in being. So when a being acts, its actions exist because God is the First Cause of that being. Now, in order for me to make free choices, I need an intellect that understands alternatives and a will which enables me to apprehend the good in each alternative. But that is the kind of being that God has created in bringing me into existence. So in order for me to make free choices, I require that God cause me to be and preserve me in being. This does not limit my freedom, but is the condition for its existence. And of course God knows all that He causes. Hence, He knows my choices.



But my evil choices are not really caused by God. Again, this is difficult to explain. An evil choice is a deficient choice. It lacks something that it ought to have. God did not force me to decide on this evil alternative. I decided on this alternative. I stopped deliberating on one of the available alternatives, and I chose that alternative on which I stopped the deliberating process. I could not have deliberated without God causing me to exist, that is, without God causing my intellect and will to exist. But I chose to desist, to stop, to quit deliberation.

For example, before me is the alternative to skip class and smoke pot. We'll call that alternative A. The other alternative is to skip class and not smoke pot. We'll call that alternative B. Or, I could go to class. We'll call this alternative C. Alternative C has some risks. My "friend" may get upset that I chose not to go with him. Alternative B and A have risks. My parents may receive a call from the teacher, and then they'll be very upset with me. Alternative A seems to promise acceptance, alternative B promises acceptance, without the risk of getting involved in pot. Alternative C will mean that I will not get behind in math. Each alternative offers some good not contained in the other.

Free-choice involves the deliberation on all these alternatives and the decision to stop deliberating. Alternative A is clearly the worst alternative. God, as the First Cause of all being, enables me to deliberate. But I am the one who stops deliberating. God is the First Cause of all the action involved in my choice, I am the secondary cause of all the action. But I am the first cause of the deficiency in my action, that is, the evil that is in that action. Evil, keep in mind, is not a positive entity. Evil is a minus, not a plus. It is a privation, a deficiency, a lack of something that should be there. God cannot create what is not there, but I can be the cause of what is not there by my choosing to stop deliberating on the worst alternative.



It is in this way that man is the cause of evil.

