

St. Michael's & St. Mary's

FR. JOHN B. BIRKEL, PASTOR

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Third Sunday of Lent

March 8, 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 and Trish Endorf **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, 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, **Micah Braunsroth and Robert Froeschl**, in your prayers.

Ministers' Schedules for Next Weekend

	5:30 PM	8:00 AM	10:00 AM
Acolyte	Joe Busing	Jim VanWesten	James Huber
Lector	Randy Prellwitz	Bob Bachle	Charlie Barringer
Server	Paul Mach		RJ Suey
Server	Peyton Grubbs		Braden Suey
Organ/Piano	Mary Mach	Lorrie Hoffstetter	Mary Prellwitz
Gifts/Greeters		Richie & Rhonda Burkhart	Bob & Shirley Gibson
Collection	LeAnn Krause & Dave Panko		

Our Offering to God Last Weekend	St. Michael's	\$1862.00
	St. Mary's	\$1174.02
	St. Michael's Debt	\$ 240.00

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	March 9	12:10 PM	St. Michael's	Walter & Dorrine Milius+
Tuesday	March 10	8:00 AM	St. Michael's	Dan Birkel+
Wednesday	March 11	NO MASS	St. Michael's	NO MASS
Thursday	March 12	5:30 PM	St. Michael's	Marcellan Siegel+
Friday	March 13	12:10 PM	St. Michael's	Mary Naiman+
Saturday	March 14	5:30 PM	St. Michael's	Carmen Juarez
Sunday	March 15	8:00 AM	St. Mary's	The People of the Parishes
Sunday	March 15	10:00 AM	St. Michael's	Special Intentions

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

- **Mass time:** Please note: Mass time for Monday, March 9th at 12:10 pm, Tuesday, March 10th is at 8:00 a.m. and NO MASS on Wednesday, March 11th.
- **Holy Week Ministries at St. Michael's and St. Mary's:** At all Masses and liturgies of Holy Week we will need extra help with readers, servers, keyboardist and acolytes. There will be a sign-up sheet in the back of St. Michael's for people to volunteer for these times. There is also a sheet for men to sign up for Holy Thursday's washing of the feet and Adoration following Mass. At St. Mary's we will need an extra reader for Passion (Palm) Sunday and Good Friday. Please check your schedules and help if you possibly can.
- **Benefit:** There will be a Pancake feed benefit for Brandi Warnke, Sunday, March 8th from 11:00-2:00 p.m. at the 4-H Building. Free will donation.



- **Easter Flowers:** If you would like to donate money to purchase Easter Flowers this year, please place your money in the attached envelope marked “Easter Flowers” and drop in the collection basket.
- **“Day of Fasting and Prayer for Marriage”:** The institution of marriage faces grave and immediate threats in the state of Nebraska. Recent court decisions will soon require our state to deny the reality that marriage is the union of man and woman, as instituted by God the Father. Bishop Conley, along with Nebraska’s other bishops, have declared Monday, March 9th, a “Day of Prayer and Fasting for Marriage.” The bishops invite all Catholics to fast for marriage this Monday. May our sacrifice help to protect the institution of marriage in our state and in our country.
- **PCCW Meeting:** The PCCW will hold their monthly meeting, March 16th beginning with the Rosary at 6:30 p.m. immediately followed by the meeting in the center. *The program will be on Our Blessed and Beautiful Rome presented by Fr. John Birkel.* Lorraine Borch, Linda McMurphy and Louise Siegal are in charge of refreshments.
- **CCD:** Next week, March 11th, there will **not be** CCD Classes due to Spring Break.
- **“Rediscovering the Heart of the Disciple”:** We have only 4 of the “Rediscovering the Heart of the Disciple” books left for \$10.00. If anyone is interested please call Deborah at 402-424-3665.
- **Holy Week Retreat:** The Marian sisters will be hosting their annual Holy Week Retreat. The retreat will provide an opportunity for single young women (ages 17-35) to reflect on their identity as a daughter of God the Father during Holy Week. The silent retreat will be led by Fr. Sean Kilcawley and be held at Good Counsel Retreat House at Waverly, Ne on April 2-4, 2015. The cost is \$30 for students and \$40 for non-students. For more information or to register, please visit their website at www.mariansisters.org or contact the Marian Sisters at marian-vocations@cdolinc.net or phone 402-786-2750.
- **Stations of the Cross:** Stations of the Cross will be Friday, March 13th at 5:00 pm.

- **Working on Ministries Schedule:** We are working on the new ministries schedule for acolytes, lectors, keyboardist and servers for the months of April, May & June. If you have any special requests, please call Carolyn at the parish office, e-mail her at carolyn@stmichaelsfairbury.org or leave a note in the collection marked "Ministries".
- **Food Pantry:** We would like to thank everyone who donated food to the Blue Valley Food Pantry last month. 117#'s were delivered. Thank you for your generosity!
- **Annual Camp Kateri Benefit:** The annual fundraiser will be held on Saturday, March 14 (11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.) at Stone Creek Reception Hall (McCool Junction, NE). Traditional Irish music will be performed by Ellis Island. Lunch will be catered by Kerry's Restaurant (Steak Medallions or Grilled Chicken). Tickets are \$20 per person and \$200 for a reserved table for eight. For tickets, please email campkateri@yahoo.com or call 402-724-2596.
- **Knights of Columbus Meeting:** The Knights of Columbus will have their monthly meeting March 9th starting with Rosary at 6:30 p.m. followed by the meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the center.
- **Campin' with the Marians:** The Marian Sisters of the Diocese of Lincoln are sponsoring their annual summer camp, Campin' with the Marians, at Camp Kateri. Camps for girls entering grades 6-9 will be held June 21-24 and June 25-28. If you are interested, registration fliers can be found at www.mariansisters.org. This summer we are celebrating the year of consecrated life. Spaces are limited; please register ASAP as we fill up fast. If you have questions, you may contact Sr. Janelle at 402-440-9998. Counselors are also needed and the opportunity is open for girls who are entering 10th through college on an application basis. Please enquire about counseling positions at marianscamping@gmail.com.
- **SKY Camp 2015 is almost here!** Sign up your 6th-9th graders for an awesome camp experience at Camp Kateri Tekakwitha! Activities include archery, obstacle course, swimming, catechesis, campfires, and Mass! Space is limited for each camp, sign up at www.lincolndiocese.org!

- **2015 Blaze Retreat:** St. Joseph Catholic Church in Lincoln presents the 2015 BLAZE Junior High Youth Rally. This is open to all 7th and 8th graders in the Diocese. Featuring Bishop Conley and Catholic speaker and recording artist, Chris Padgett. Blaze will take place on April 18th from 9-5 and will cost \$25.00. Register at stjosephblaze.com. They will be raffling a mini iPod, a trip to Laser Quest and several other prizes.
- **The Fairbury Deanery Spring Open Meeting** will be held at St. Mary's, Odell, on Sunday, March 8. Registration (\$1) is from 1:30 p.m. to 2 p.m. with meeting starting at 2. Ann Jansky, LDCCW President, will be the speaker.
- **Operation Rice Bowls:** The next stop on our CRS Rice Bowl journey is the African nation, Niger, where we're reminded that life's joys and challenges are often seasonal. This week we pray for people who struggle to feed their families during the hungry season-when food is in short supply-and we commit to acting for the common good.
- **Pro-Life Legislative Day** will be Wednesday, March 18th at the State Capitol in Lincoln. Begin with coffee & rolls at 8:30 a.m. in the Wherry Rm., second floor. Hear from Senators about two pro-life bills being heard in Judiciary Committee that afternoon. Receive information packets & training to talk to your own State Senator that morning. Come for all or part of the day. All activities are free but please RSVP with number coming so we can plan. Contact Nebraska Right to Life @402-438-4802 or nebraskartl@gmail.com.
- **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>.



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

- **Thought of the week:** Do we recognize the gifts that God has given us?
- **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.
- **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. 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.
- **St. Mary's March Cleaning:** Ellen VanWesten
- **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.
- **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.

Lent & Fasting

Q. Someone asked a question about why we have Lent and also why we do not fast for the entire forty days. Could you please explain the message behind Lent and why we do not fast every single day of the forty days?

A: As Christians, in everything we do, we should have as our model Jesus Christ. Scripture tells us that "Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil and he fasted forty days and forty nights" (Matthew 4:1-2). The season of Lent is a commemoration of Our Lord's fast, which He undertook before entering into His public ministry. It was a time of preparation for the tremendous mission that lay before Him. To do this, He denied Himself food and water during those forty days and nights, relying instead only on God (with whom He was One) to sustain Him.

In the history of the Church, Lent has undergone much development and change, both in duration and in practice. In other words, it was not always forty days in length and the fast was not always observed the same way. For example, during the late second century, the season of penance before Easter was much shorter and some people fasted for one day, others for two days, and others for a greater number of days. The first clear mention and observance of the forty days does not come to us until the fourth century in the decrees of the Council of Nicea in 325 AD.

What we see from some of the earliest references is that originally the season of Lent was meant as a preparation for baptism or as a time in which people sought absolution from God for their sins. Even though fasting and abstinence were part of the practice, there was no uniform manner in which this was done. That came later. It was observed differently in various countries, and in Rome (where it had been customarily three weeks), it was eventually extended to six weeks, but always leaving out the Sundays. Because this made the Lenten season only thirty-six days in duration, with time it was lengthened by adding four more days, making it forty, in remembrance of Jesus' fast in the desert.

You ask in your letter why we do not fast the entire forty days of Lent. In reality, although Catholics are left to decide for themselves, the Church strongly recommends that we fast all forty days. On November 18, 1966, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, in keeping with the letter and spirit of Pope Paul VI's constitution *Pænitemini*, published some norms on penitential observance. In one part of the document, they specifically wrote about what is expected and recommended for all Catholics during the entire season of Lent. They stated: "We ask, urgently and prayerfully, that we, as people of God, make of the entire Lenten season a period of special penitential observance."

In addition to making it clear that we are bound by obligation to fast and abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday and to abstain from meat on every Friday of Lent, they also added the following: "For all other weekdays of Lent, we strongly recommend participation in daily Mass and a self-imposed observance of fasting."

Remembering that fasting is a form of penance and self-denial, we must keep in mind that we are urged to do this during the entire season of Lent, but it does not have to be a fast from food on all those forty days. For example, those Catholics whose health would be compromised, such as the sick, are not bound to observe the Church's laws of fast and abstinence. But there are many other ways in which we can show God how sorry we are for our sins. Among them are the following: being generous with others, visiting the sick and lonely, feeding the poor, studying Scripture, making the Stations of the Cross, praying the rosary, practicing self-control, and many others.

Even when the US Bishops made it no longer required to abstain from meat on all the other Fridays of the year, they never intended that the Catholic faithful should discontinue this practice. What they hoped was that people would continue to do it out of their love for God and not because they had to, and also to give us an opportunity to deny ourselves in other ways. Friday has never ceased to be a day of penance and self-denial, and abstaining from meat on that day is given first place, because it was on a Friday that our Lord died for our sins. Every Friday is a day to prepare for Sunday – the day that, for us who believe, is Easter every week of the year. And Sunday is never a day of fasting (not even during Lent). It is the glorious Day of the Lord!

