



# St. Michael's / St. Mary's

FR. JOHN B. BIRKEL, PASTOR

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St. Michael's PO Box 406, Fairbury, NE 68352

St. Mary's 5th & Amanda Streets, Alexandria, NE

Confession schedule: Saturday 4:45 PM to 5:15 PM

18<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time

July 31, 2022

**BULLETIN:** If you have news for the bulletin, please call the Rectory 402-729-2058 or email st.michael.fairbury@gmail.com.

Deadline for additions -Wednesday by 9:00 AM.

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

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 (402) 729-2058.

St. Mary's Parish Council: Duane Bartek & Ritchie Burkhart *Trustees:* Bob VanWesten and Bob Bachle

St. Michael's Parish Council: Chris Higgins, Bethany Hansmire, LeAnn Krause, Mary Prellwitz and John Ragland.

*Trustees:* Chris Goeking and Randy Prellwitz

St. Michael's PCCW: Mary Prellwitz

St. Mary's PCCW: Deb Vanwesten

**Knights of Columbus:** Randy Prellwitz

**CCD Coordinator:** Georgann Friedrichsen

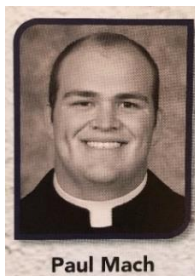
Parish collection data: July 24, 2022			Debt Reduction		Loan Payment	
Adult	\$1,390.00	\$415.00	Loan Total as of January 2022		\$34,720.69	
Loose Plate	75.00		Joy of the Gospel Rebates		\$4,386.07	
Online Giving	57.00		Debt Reduction Envelopes		\$7,262.00	
Cemetery	300.00		<b>Due Dec. 31, 2022</b>		<b>\$17,360.33</b>	
Holy Day Building	110.00		<b>AMOUNT TOWARDS DECEMBER 2022 PAYMENT</b>		<b>\$11,648.07</b>	
Debt Reduction	100.00		<b>PARISH FINANCIAL INFORMATION</b>			
Total	\$2,032.00	\$415.00	It takes \$2,039.84 a week to run St. Michael's Parish.			
			Operation Cost per week		\$2,039.84	
			This Week's Collection		\$1,632.00	
			<b>Shortage</b>		<b>\$407.84</b>	

## PLEASE PRAY FOR:

Jo Nease \* Mary Kay Bedlan  
Derek Lempka \* Jeanette Steele  
Helen Koll

## PRAY FOR VOCATIONS

SR. MARY CHIARA from Gretna, NE, and SR. JOHN MARION from Kearney, NE are both in 1<sup>st</sup> Vows with the School Sisters of Christ the King Religious Order.



Paul Mach

PAUL MACH is the son of Keith & Mary Mach of St. Teresa Parish in Lincoln, NE but grew up here at St. Michael's Parish in Fairbury, NE. He is in his 1<sup>st</sup> Year of Theology at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary in Philadelphia.

Mass Intentions for August 1 <sup>st</sup> - 7 <sup>th</sup>		
Monday	NO Mass	If you have any emergencies, Please contact Beatrice-402-223-2923 Wymore 402-645-3160 or Hebron 402-768-6293 Jeanette Steele
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday	9:00am	Jeanette Steele
Saturday	10:00am	St. Michael's: Funeral Lisa-Loda (Jean DeWald)
	5:30pm	Special intention of G.G.
Sunday	8:00am	St. John Vianney Association Members
	10:00am	People of the Parishes
	Noon	Latin: The Seven Sisters
St. Michael's Minister's Schedule for Aug 6/7		
	5:30pm	10:00am
Acolyte	Luis Ramos	Randy Prellwitz
Lector	Ronn Brackle	Randy Prellwitz
Server	Aldo Ramos	
Music	Mary Prellwitz	LeAnne Krause
St. Mary's Church Cleaning for August Rhonda Burkhart		

ST MICHAEL'S has a chapel. We have daily Mass in this chapel. It is located under the church. It is accessed through doors on the west end of the church.

I SEND OUT MY HOMILIES Daily via email. If you would like to receive them, please email me at

[frbirk1@hotmail.com](mailto:frbirk1@hotmail.com)

**PLEASE NOTE:** If you receive a booklet called “National Sunday Law” by A. Jan Marcussen, please know this is garbage.

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS MEETING** Monday, Aug. 8<sup>th</sup>, Rosary 6:30pm and meeting at 7:00pm.

**DON'T BE FOOLED BY “NICE” LEILA**

**MILLER** As a teen in the 1980s, I was at a moral crossroads. I was a typical, poorly catechized Catholic, playing around with serious sin, and my conscience was slightly bothering me. I had a sense of right and wrong (because relativism was not yet all the rage), but I saw God as a permissive parent who was too “loving” to enforce His own boundaries. However, before I waded further into sin, I thought it best to seek out the holiest friend I knew, Marianne, to get some advice.

Marianne was a practicing Catholic who was caring, kind, sober, and chaste. Always cheerful and patient, she openly spoke of her love for Jesus, went to Mass every Sunday, and was one of the few people I knew through my K-12 public-school years who seemed to be very devoted to Catholicism—certainly much more than I was. It seemed reasonable, then, for me to go to Marianne with my question: Should I continue on this path of serious sin or turn around? Of course, I did not phrase it that way, but she and I both knew that our Faith held these actions to be sinful.

Marianne leaned over and touched my forearm. “Leila,” she said, looking directly into my eyes and smiling warmly, “I just want you to be happy.”

I am 55 years old now, but I still remember her face, the classroom, the surroundings, and the peace of that moment. Those words were all I needed to hear from my most moral friend. I didn’t look back, and for the next ten years, I continued in ever-deepening mortal sin.

I didn’t fully understand that by listening to my friend’s soothing words, I was placing myself into the hands of the devil. She was so nice! She loved me! But in truth, I was a living example of St. Ignatius’ First Rule of the Discernment of Spirits (emphasis mine):

In the persons who go from mortal sin to mortal sin, the enemy is commonly used to propose to them apparent pleasures,

making them imagine sensual delights and pleasures in order to hold them more and make them grow in their vices and sins. In these persons the good spirit uses the opposite method, pricking them and biting their consciences through the process of reason.

I fell into the trap that ensnares many souls today: believing that if a person has a pleasing personality, is affable, attentive, and “accepting” (whatever that means), then the person is good. Somewhere along the line, Catholics began making crucial judgments based on feelings rather than reason. We are lulled by a hearty laugh, a twinkling eye, a hug with a knowing smile. We get sucked in by a sense that someone loves us, even though we are being led down a garden path.

The friendly person who accepts us, the one who reaches out to “accompany” and affirm us—that person may not always have our best interests at heart. And sometimes a person who does want the best for us is harming us unknowingly despite his good intentions. We cannot know by outward appearances or our emotions whether or not the other is truly being Christ to us. The only standard we can use to measure another’s advice and guidance is whether or not that advice conforms to objective truth and goodness.

However, because we have been conditioned to use our feelings as a gauge for what is true, discernment has become difficult. The one who laughs at our jokes, is affectionate, and is interested in what we have to say appeals to our senses; we are drawn to him, we like how we feel when we are with him, we want him to like us. We even find it harder to resist or say no to such a person, even when we know we should.

Most of us know on some level that a person’s agreeable personality traits and a natural likeability do not equate to virtue and trustworthiness, but we tend to sideline reason when the “nice” makes us feel good. And even when we see the red flags and become uneasy, the high cost of questioning the “nice” (e.g., loss of friends, status, respect) makes us lose the courage to resist.

Cont. Next week.....