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**A Word from Father Starman**

Dear Friends,

Fairly frequently Fr. Knecht and I will hear that someone is seriously ill, or going into the hospital for a medical procedure, and we'll ask the individual if they would like to be anointed. More often than not, the response is the blood drains out of their faces, and a cold sweat breaks out...then the statement, "I'm not dying."

Prior to the Second Vatican Council, the Sacrament of Extreme Unction (Sacrament of the Sick and Dying) was generally only administered just prior to the moment of death. The Council Fathers at Vatican II encouraged those Catholics who suffer from physical or mental illness, or carry any undo burden, to ask for the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, not to wait to the last minute. We can all use the grace that comes from the sacrament.

What follows is taken from the U.S. Bishops website:

*In the Church's Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, through the ministry of the priest, it is Jesus who touches the sick to heal them from sin - and sometimes even from physical ailment. His cures were signs of the arrival of the Kingdom of God. The core message of his healing tells us of his plan to conquer sin and death by his dying and rising.*

*The Rite of Anointing tells us there is no need to wait until a person is at the point of death to receive the Sacrament. A careful judgment about the serious nature of the illness is sufficient.*

*When the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is given, the hoped-for effect is that, if it be God's will, the person be physically healed of illness. But even if there is no physical healing, the primary effect of the Sacrament is a spiritual healing by which the sick person receives the Holy Spirit's gift of peace and courage to deal with the difficulties that accompany serious illness or the frailty of old age.*

*Anointing of the Sick is the sacrament that is received by those who are ill or suffering. By the sacred anointing and the prayer of the priest, the whole Church commends those who are sick to Christ. The sick person receives the Holy Spirit's gifts of strength, faith, peace, and courage, and his or her suffering is united with the suffering of Christ for the building up of the Church (Catechism of the Catholic Church [CCC], nos. 1520-23).*

Through the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, the Church carries out Jesus' mission of compassion and healing for the sick. The one who is ill can also be a minister to others. By uniting their suffering to Christ, those who are sick can be signs of faith and witnesses of Christ's Resurrection to the entire community (Pope John Paul II, *Christi fideles Laici [The Vocation and the Mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church and in the World]*, no. 54).

Ad Multos Annos!

*Fr. Bernard Starman, Pastor/President*

## Farewell Sister Rita!

*A special thanks to Mary Mlnarik for sharing this! This is the story that Mary shared at the last Catholic Daughters meeting with Sr. Rita. As Sr. Rita preferred to NOT have a farewell 'party' or reception, she did graciously agree to allow us to share this. Beautifully written & spoken, Mary! Thank you!*

Just over 116 years ago, the Franciscan Order of Sisters arrived in O'Neill. I believe since then, there has never been a time that the Franciscan Sisters have not been with us. With all that in mind I want tonight to visit about our very own Sister Rita Neyens, a Franciscan Sister, a member of St. Patrick's Parish, a member of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas, Court #697, and so important to us. Sister has been in O'Neill for the past 20 years. Earlier this summer, she made the decision to journey home to Alliance to be with her Sisters there. Sister Rita has been kind enough to briefly share her story with me and allow me to share with you.

Sister Rita graduated from Lynch High school at Lynch, Nebraska in 1943. After graduation she moved to Norfolk, with the thought of becoming a Benedictine Sister. She did not enter their order though, as they mostly spoke in German and that was very discouraging. Sister's dream was to also be a nurse, so she wrote to Marycrest in Denver and they invited her to join them, which she did. After being a novice for a year, she was able to finish her nurse's training and became a Registered Nurse.

Receiving her final vows, Sister moved to Pine Ridge Mission in South Dakota. After serving there, she was moved to Alliance to work at St. Francis Hospital for the next 15 years as Supervisor there. Sister Rita then moved to Hot Springs where she worked in the V.A. Hospital for the next 25 years. In 1996, Sister Rita moved to O'Neill where she joined Sr. Antonella, Sr. George, Sr. Agnes Marie, and Sr. Margaret. She went to work in the O'Neill Nursing Home and Sister told me that was very hard work. After 5 years, she decided to retire, but Dee Fritz quickly changed her mind and convinced her to come to the Evergreen Assisted Living and be part of their staff. Sister really enjoyed her work there and the people there as well. After 5 years, the need to take care of her sister became important, so she moved to Gregory, South Dakota to stay with Adeline.

After Adeline passed away, Sister Rita moved back to O'Neill and eventually to her new home on Hynes Street. Since she returned, Sister has given of herself in so many ways - visiting the sick and homebound and bringing the Blessed Sacrament to them weekly. Sister also served on the "Meals on Wheels" volunteer program for many years, and for the past 7 years she has served as a volunteer at Avera St. Anthony's Hospital Specialty Clinics (which she is still doing yet today!) Aside from all of those things that keep her busy, Sister is a woman of prayer, praying for your family and my family and her family, for our priests, for our country, for her sisters, for our parish and schools, for the youth attending Poland's World Day of Peace, for Pope Francis . . . it's continuous.

I asked Sister what biggest change is today from when she entered the order. She never had to even think about it. She said "It was so much more strict back then." She told me the veils came off in the 60s, as more Sisters (including herself) were driving, and you couldn't see to the side with the veil on. Some of the changes they went through had to be so hard for them.

With Sister Rita leaving O'Neill, a wonderful tradition of Franciscan Sisters serving our parish, school, and community comes to an end. And so we honor you Sister Rita; we thank you and your Sisters that gave so much for our school and parish. We wish you peace, joy, and so much love as you make your new home in Alliance. God Bless you Sister Rita, today, tomorrow and always. Thank you Sister . . . we love you.

*If you would like to send Sister Rita a greeting, you may send it to this address:*

Sr. Rita Neyens  
Marian Residence  
1104 Toluca  
Alliance, NE 69301-2448



## Finance Committee Update

### June 22 Minutes Summary

- Financial Reports were reviewed. We are projecting a \$5000 surplus to end fiscal year, but have one more payroll to go out. We should end the year pretty close to in the black.
- The Market is beginning to show signs of recovery from last year.
- No increase for planned giving for this coming year. St. Joseph's Amelia is increasing to \$10,000.
- Phyllis Laetzel has left one quarter of her estate to us, to be split evenly with grade school, parish, and high school.
- The Seeing the Present Campaign has brought in just over \$1.3 million so far. We still have 1 ½ years remaining but have collected approximately 72% of pledges to date.
- The \$10,000 Raffle/Casino Night ended up with income of \$14,245, after expenses.
- We received \$13,500 in scholarship/grant donations for St. Mary's Scholarship & Grants fund, which is just a little bit short of the \$14,000 given last year.

Finance committee Members: Ryan Berg, Kevin Barlow, Frosty Peetz, MJ Kernsebrock, Randy Hupp, Carol Sibbel, Rebecca Gaughenbaugh, and Matt Winkelbauer.

## Parish Council Update

Prior to the August meeting, St. Patrick's Parish Council last met in April. Those minutes were already shared in a previous newsletter, so there are no current minutes for the council this month.

Parish Council Members: Father Starman, Sue Pongratz, Ron Mejstrik, Gary Pistulka, & Brenda Podany

## Newsletter Sponsors

Would you (or your business) be willing to sponsor the cost of a monthly newsletter? It costs us approximately \$175 to send out this monthly newsletter, and we would greatly appreciate sponsors to off-set these expenses. We have had very positive feedback regarding the monthly newsletter, especially from our home-bound folks who simply don't get to mass as often as they would like. Your support helps us to continue to stay connected with them on a regular basis! Please contact Jennifer at 402-336-1602 or [jennifermwallwey@gmail.com](mailto:jennifermwallwey@gmail.com). Thank you!

## School Board News *May 11 Minutes Summary*

- Booster Club reached the goal to fund the new bleachers, and they were put into the high school gym in July.
  - Thank you to the Class of 2016 for purchasing an AED for the school. One more may need to be purchased.
  - Thank you to Jennie Schneider & Paula Atkeson for directing the spring play in April.
  - Student Council President is Logan Connot, and vice-president is Jack Reiman.
  - DJ for prom this next year needs to be told to bring clean versions of the music.
  - Athletes of the year for 2015-2016 were Sydney Hupp, Riley Sibbel, and Marcus Schneider.
  - New Hires for the school: Candi Schindler, Kindergarten; Brittany Boyle, 6th grade; Marlene Zurovsi, Art.
  - Catholic School Excellence Fund (Technology) Grant was used to do the wireless upgrade, and a \$60,000 memorial in Jesse Peetz's name will be used for further technology/computer upgrades & needs.
  - Thirty-one preschool children are anticipated for 2016-2017.
  - New board member election will be held in August.
- School Board Members: Cameron Everitt, Ranell Otte, Julie Barlow, Ann Crumly, Ann Krotter.

## St. Joseph's Altar Society

### August 14 meeting summary

- Discussion on donation made for pro-chastity speaker Jason Everett that was made last fall. Father will find out what the plans are.
- The 92<sup>nd</sup> Annual OACCW (Omaha Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women) Convention will be held at St. Patrick's Catholic Church in Fremont on September 26th. Juanita Homolka and Cathy Minchow plan to attend.
- St. Joseph's Altar Society will be hosting the Rural Northwest Deanery Council of Catholic Women's Fall Meeting on October 11<sup>th</sup>, at the Chambers Community Center, with mass held at St. Joseph's. Father Starman will be the afternoon speaker.
- Motion was made & approved to purchase a new Mary statue, up to \$500, for outside the church.



We thank Dick & Mary Mlnarik for sponsoring the cost of this month's newsletter! Your generosity is greatly appreciated!



# What's Happening

September 4

Labor Day—Parish Office Closed

September 8, 7:30 pm

Altar Society meets in St. Mary's Commons

September 30

7:00 pm—Homecoming Football vs.  
Elkhorn Valley @ SMH

*Mark Your Calendars!*

Sunday November 6—  
Annual Parish Auction!!!

## Sister Alma Celebrates 60th Jubilee

Sister Alma Janousek, a native of Brainard, NE, celebrated 60 years as a Notre Dame Sister on July 10 with family, friends, and her religious community at a Eucharistic Liturgy & reception. Sr. Alma professed vows on August 13, 1956. She is the daughter of the late John & Anna (Ratkovec) Janousek.

Sr. Alma served in the Omaha Archdiocese as a teacher and principal at Assumption School from 1957-1960 and St. Adalbert School from 1960-1961. Her education career, spanning 24 years, also took her to Clarkson, Dwight, Wahoo, and Weston, NE, the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation at Our Lady of Lourdes School in Porcupine SD, and Cedar Rapids, IA. From 1985-2012, she served as a Chaplain at Valley Hope Treatment Center in O'Neill.

Sr. Alma is retired and living at Immanuel Courtyard in Omaha, where she continues her ministry of prayer & presence. She is active in the community there and leads prayer services for the residents and encourages them to grow in their faith.



## An Everyday Steward is “Committed”

*Jennifer Wallwey, Development Director*

*Taken from a book & blog entitled “Everyday Stewardship” by Tracy Earl Welliver.*

I had a conversation with my daughter about the responsibility she had to cultivate and give back with increase to God those gifts given to her. She wanted to argue that to just be proficient in the use of those gifts was enough. Of course, she was just 15 at the time and as a typical teenager had no real desire to push much harder than necessary. I don't think she was ready to understand the value of perseverance and pushing onward to a goal. As she gets older and increases in maturity I pray for her to really become committed to becoming the best she can be at whatever she does, because I know she has been given many gifts.

Being *committed* to growing in maturity as a disciple is an important characteristic of an Everyday Steward. This is a commitment to striving to be better today than we were yesterday, and better tomorrow than we are today. We are also committed to getting back up and trying again when we fail to be the person God created us to be.

No one reading this is perfect. No one reading this has achieved a level of spiritual maturity to the point that we make the right call every time. But hopefully many of us are committed to working hard toward spiritual growth. Jesus asks each of us to work hard to become the saints God created us to be, just like he asked the woman caught in adultery in John's Gospel to go forth and sin no more. He knew she had failed along the way, but to not get up and change her life would be the real sin. It is sin that keeps us from truly cultivating that which we have been given. However, God is committed to us and offers second chances. We need to be committed to Him.



 Sign up for our e-NEWSLETTER Would you prefer to receive this newsletter/calendar via email, so you can print it out yourself, and save the parish a little money? We would be glad to put you on an email only list for this monthly newsletter. Please contact Jennifer at [jenniferwallwey@gmail.com](mailto:jenniferwallwey@gmail.com) to have your email address added to the list!

## Coming Soon. . .

- Watch for a new & updated look to both St. Mary's & St. Patrick's websites! The website address is the same, but we hope you will find it more user friendly & easily navigated!
- The playground fundraiser is being resurrected as the need has grown! Details to come soon!