

SAINT *Vincent de Paul*



CATHOLIC CHURCH | SEWARD, NEBRASKA

THE ANNUAL LIFE CHAIN

A WITNESS TO THE VALUE OF ALL LIFE

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Sometimes it's easy to tune out information that's difficult or unpleasant. It's more convenient to stay in our comfortable world, giving little or no attention to things that don't appear to directly affect us. But sometimes, we're forced out of our rosy lives; forced to face the reality that surrounds us.

Parishioner Nicki Wintz had always been pro-life, but while she was pregnant with her third child, something shifted.

"That's when I really dove into the pro-life issue," says Nicki, "I knew what it was, but I researched more, to see what abortion was all about."

Today, Nicki serves as one of the co-chairs of the Pro-Life Ministry at St. Vincent de Paul, which helps to promote the annual Life Chain event, in Seward. Life Chain is a national event, which takes place in thousands of



The annual Life Chain event is an opportunity for people to gather in peaceful and prayerful protest of abortion.

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cities and towns across the U.S. each year, on the first Sunday in October.

Life Chain is a peaceful, prayerful protest that invites people to consider the reality of the harm done in abortion. Hundreds gather to hold signs with messages such as “Pray to End Abortion,” and “Abortion Kills Children.”

“A human is a human, throughout all stages of development,” Nicki says. “We want to debunk all these misconceptions about ‘it’s just a blob of cells’ or ‘it’s OK up to a certain point in development.’ We want to get people thinking.

“Our culture is so loud with ‘My body, my choice’ and it’s ‘so liberating’ but I don’t think people truly understand what is happening, and that’s really sad,” she adds.

For those who are pro-life, but have never been involved in an active way, the Life Chain is a perfect way to become involved.

“It’s a peaceful, prayer public witness,” Nicki says. “Maybe in your heart you know it’s wrong, but you’re not sure how to express it. [At Life Chain] you’re just going down there, and people know why you’re standing there. You don’t have to say anything, you just stand there and be a witness.”

Prayer is also a significant part of this event, with some people praying individually, silently, and others offering a Rosary as a group.

“I think our prayers are more powerful than we

realize and sometimes you don’t see the immediate response but it works,” Nicki says. “There’s power in prayer.”

The Life Chain is a family-friendly event and open to people of all ages. Many of the young people who are involved in our high school God Teen Groups attend with their peers. All of those who gather provide a powerful witness, bringing light to an issue surrounded by darkness.

“We as Christians need to be a light in the darkness here on earth — revealing the truth,” Nicki says. “Once people understand what is actually happening, they’re more likely to stand up and say, ‘That’s not right.’ We need to be a light in the darkness for other people.”

Nicki encourages other parishioners to come and participate in the Life Chain event this year, even if it’s out of their comfort zone.

“I always think of John Paul II saying, ‘We weren’t made for comfort,’” Nicki says. “It’s uncomfortable putting yourself out there. Try to break out of that and do something for somebody else. This is such a selfless cause, you’re not getting something out of it, but someone else is benefitting from you being there.

“Someone driving by might be contemplating an abortion, and they might see your witness and maybe that’ll change their mind,” she adds. “You never know what seeds get planted from simple things like this.”



For more information on the Pro-Life Ministry at St. Vincent de Paul, please contact our co-chairs, Nicki Wintz at nickiwintz@yahoo.com and/or Erica Ostgren at e.ostgren@gmail.com. The Life Chain event will take place on Sunday, Oct. 6 at 2 p.m., downtown at the Square. Signs will be available at the end. You can also learn more about the efforts of the Seward County Pro-Life Council at www.facebook.com/sewardcountyprolifecouncil.



YOUR WILL BE DONE ON EARTH

Dear Parishioners,

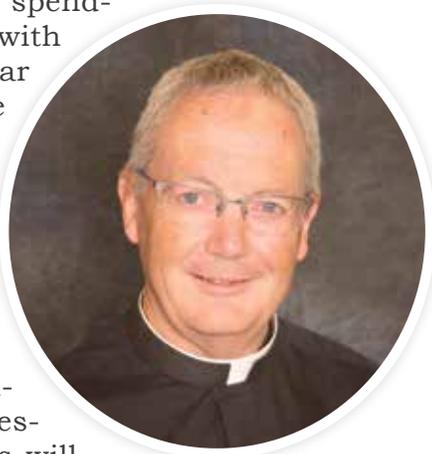
The tradition of the Church has been to recite the Lord's Prayer three times a day. This tradition is still active as the Our Father is recited in the official prayer of the Church in morning and evening prayer and then again during daily Mass. Those who recite Morning and Evening prayer and attend Mass daily are carrying on this tradition and I think it is worth reflecting on the reason for the tradition.

The Our Father is a prayer of petition and one could argue which of the seven petitions is most important. I suppose it probably depends on the day and our primary needs of the day, yet the overarching petition is the will of God. Knowing God's will for us, and being able to accept and trust His will for us are probably the most often asked questions and desire of our heart.

As many of you know, I read the whole Bible last year, and in January I began reading it again. I am currently finishing the book of the prophet Jeremiah. As I was reading it I wondered why people did not listen to Jeremiah. The things Jeremiah told the people were messages from God. The fact that what he predicted, happened, confirmed that God was speaking to Him. Yet they failed to listen to him, and in the end of the book, their failure to listen to God through Jeremiah brought about disaster to the people and to Jerusalem.

We do not have a prophet to guide us, instead we have the gift of the Holy Spirit and the assurance that God hears our prayers and He answers them in various ways. Clarity to the

question about His will comes to us by spending time daily in communication with Him. Our daily prayer life requires spending time in silence with Him, so we can hear the answer to the question about His will for us. I am convinced more and more that spending time in Church, in the presence of Jesus, that we get the answer to this question. Knowing God's will is the way to heaven for us, and it is the way that we help others in our lives get to heaven. The long tradition of a triple recitation of Lord's Prayer is not restricted to priests, religious and those attending daily Mass. Everyone can and everyone is encouraged to make that a spiritual practice. When doing so, take your time as you recite the prayer, then spend time in silence listening to God and then thank the Lord for the answers to your prayer. God Bless you. Sincerely yours in Christ,



Msgr. Robert Tucker
Pastor

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ABOUT OUR

Once again, it's time for our Annual Stewardship Renewal. Every year, someone asks, as you may have asked yourself, "Didn't we just have a Stewardship Renewal? Aren't we sufficiently 'renewed' by now?" Yes, we had a Stewardship Renewal last year, and we're going to have one next year, too! This is an annual occurrence — part of the rhythm of parish life at St. Vincent de Paul. Just as the Church proposes a time of spiritual renewal each Lent, we believe in the importance of a yearly examination of commitment. Is the Lord asking you to give more time, talent, or treasure to our parish this year?

*Commitment Weekend is
October 12-13. Don't forget to bring
your Commitment Card to Mass!*

How do I use my Commitment Card?

Your Commitment Card allows you to make commitments to prayer, parish ministries, and of-fertory giving. It is designed to be used by the whole family.

Time Section: Except for the ill and homebound, everyone should be able to check "Come to Mass on Sundays and Holy Days." Try to check at least a few other items. Daily prayer should be a priority for every person trying to grow closer to God.

Talent Section: You can either sign up for new ministries or re-commit to your current ministries. Be sure to write your first name next to the ministry! This is especially important if the card is being used by more than one person.

Treasure Section: Clearly print how much money you plan to give each week or month to our parish. Try to take a step toward giving five percent of your income to St. Vincent de Paul.

My age or physical limitations prevent me from being active in the parish. Should I still turn in a Commitment Card?

Yes! The first section of the card — Stewardship of Time — is the most important because it allows you to make commitments to *prayer*. Even if you can't join a ministry or make it to Mass on Sunday, you can still pray for our parish. Your spiritual support has tremendous value in the eyes of God.

One time I turned in a card, but no one ever called me when I signed up for a ministry.

If this happened in the past, please forgive us! And don't give up on filling out your Commitment Card! We have a very good plan to call every person interested in joining a new ministry. If for some reason the ministry leader does not call you within four weeks of turning in your card, let the parish office know.

How much should I give?

Your gift is entirely dependent on how much God has given you. At St. Vincent de Paul, we ask that you give five percent to our parish, one percent to the diocese, and four percent to other charities. Why a percentage of income? First, because the tithe (10 percent) is a scriptural benchmark that the Church has honored for centuries (see Malachi 3:10). Secondly, we give a percentage of income because it is a common-sense standard by which everyone can equitably support the parish. Most of all, we give because we believe God comes first in everything, even finances.

What if I can't fulfill my financial pledge?

While our pledge is not a "contract," we should all make a good-faith effort to fulfill it. Of course, if your financial circumstances change — if you lose

ANNUAL STEWARDSHIP RENEWAL

your job, for instance — then the amount of money you give the Church will change, too. Likewise if you get a raise or bonus. The biggest reason many people don't fulfill their pledge is that they attend Mass at another parish when they go on vacation, attend a wedding, etc. If you're out of town, just make up for the missed Sunday when you write your next check to the parish. Using your envelopes is a good way to see which Sundays you missed.

I don't even go to Mass very frequently. Why turn in a Commitment Card?

Because this is your chance to turn over a new leaf! Why not make a commitment to God to come to Mass every Sunday, and then write down that commitment? Even if that's the only commitment you make, take a step forward. Jesus Himself is waiting for you!

What happens if I don't return my Commitment Card?

We will mail you a reminder letter that includes an extra Commitment Card (in case you misplaced yours). Make every effort you can to participate. Our Stewardship Renewal is a very important annual event in the life of our parish. You and your family are part of what makes St. Vincent de Paul a great community! Most importantly, your commitments are actually promises to Christ Himself. All of us are called to give back to God a portion of what He has given us.

Every parish family receives a special "Stewardship Package" in the mail that further explains our parish's vision of stewardship. It includes a booklet that describes every ministry in the parish, as well as your Commitment Card.



WELCOMING CHRIST

SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH
2019 Commitment Card
My Offering of Time, Talent & Treasure

First & Last Name

Phone

Email

Spouse: First & Last Name

Spouse: Phone

Spouse: Email

Address

City State ZIP



GOOD STEWARDSHIP OF OUR SOCIAL MEDIA

When we are talking about the idea of stewardship and how we care for the tools and gifts we have been given, it is not often that we stop to have a conversation about how we are caring for and using the gift of social media to positively spread Gospel values. However, this is an appropriate topic for us to consider when we are talking about the many young people, as well as adults, who gather online on a frequent basis. Therefore, it is important for us to think about how we are using the amazing gifts of technology.

If you are frequently online — especially on Pinterest — there is a popular acronym that you may have already come across. While it is used in many different contexts, it seems very appropriate to follow as we find ourselves posting statuses and pictures on various social media sites. The acronym is T.H.I.N.K., and it invites us to consider what we are saying and sharing, and whether or not it should be said!

Is what we are posting:

True? Are we sharing factual information or a rumor that we heard, and if we think our information is factual, what is our source? Is it trustworthy?

Helpful? Is the information we are sharing something that can be useful to another person? We don't need to over-examine all of our content to consider its "educational factor," but is the content we are posting going to help someone learn about

us, learn about a place or an activity, think about the world, reflect on life, engage us in laughter, and so forth?

Inspirational? There is certainly no requirement to be a poet or an artist, but social media has become a wonderful outlet for positive self-expression. "Positive" is the key word — are we posting to inspire others about the good in our world, or are we posting to cut someone down or to simply rant?

Nice? Have we considered the feelings of others when we include them in a status or post a picture of them? Will they be embarrassed? Are we using social media to humiliate and intimidate others, or are we using it to try to better the world and the lives of others?

Kind? What a great tool to compliment, show gratitude, and build the self-esteem of those you care about!

People often speak of social media in a negative way because of the content they see posted. T.H.I.N.K. is a great way for us to remind ourselves that we can be good stewards of our own social media use. A major part of living out the Gospel has to do with the positive way we approach this life and bring God's light and love to others — and we can do just that by sharing an uplifting status on Facebook, a Tweet of gratitude to a friend, or a beautiful image of God's inspiring creation on Instagram. What a great way to build the Kingdom of God!



ROSARY LEADERS

HONORING OUR LADY THROUGH HER BELOVED PRAYER

In her various apparitions around the world, the Blessed Mother has continuously pleaded with the faithful to pray the Rosary as means to both glorify God and redeem mankind. To Blessed Alan de la Roche, for example, Our Lady once said: “When you say your Rosary, the angels rejoice, the Blessed Trinity delights in it, my Son finds joy in it too, and I myself am happier than you can possibly guess. After the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, there is nothing in the Church that I love as much as the Rosary.”

Through its simple repetitiveness, the Rosary leads us to meditate upon the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord and Savior — to see Christ’s salvific mission through the eyes of His mother and to allow her to guide us closer to her Son.

Parishioner and Spirituality Committee member Tania Breiner says that through the process of praying the Rosary, we help gain greater peace for ourselves, our community, and the world.

“The Rosary is a powerful way to pray with Our Lady,” Tania says. “Mary has asked us many times during her apparitions to pray the Rosary daily. This special prayer can bring peace, not only in our world and community, but also in our families and within ourselves.”

Here at St. Vincent de Paul Parish, we have a longstanding tradition of praying the Rosary daily as a community before the 7 a.m. weekday Masses. Seeking to honor Our Lady as well as spiritually unite our parish family further, Tania and her fellow members of the Spirituality Committee recently decided to begin leading the Rosary before weekend liturgies as well.

“The Rosary is a powerful way to pray with Our Lady... This special prayer can bring peace, not only in our world and community, but also in our families and within ourselves.”

— TANIA BREINER, SPIRITUALITY COMMITTEE



Parishioners praying the Rosary together before Sunday Mass.

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ROSARY LEADERS

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“This was actually something that had been done years ago but had fallen away,” Tania says. “So I am happy we have been able to start it back up again.”

Led by Rosary leaders approximately 20 minutes before each of the three weekend Masses, this is a special time for us to come together as a parish family, seeking out Our Lady’s aid and intercession. Tania says it’s also an excellent way to draw closer Christ as we prepare to meet Him more intimately in the Eucharistic celebration.

“I believe it’s important for us to pray together as a parish,” Tania says. “Uniting ourselves in prayer helps to unite us as members of God’s family. It’s a good way to help us grow closer to God and to each other. Each week, it seems there are a few more people who come to Mass early to pray together.”

LITURGY SCHEDULE

Daily Masses: Monday thru Friday at 7:00 a.m., Saturday at 8:00 a.m.

Sunday Obligation Masses: Saturday at 5:30 p.m., Sunday at 8:00 a.m. & 10:00 a.m.

Confession: Monday thru Saturday: 20 minutes before each daily Mass, Saturday: 4:30 to 5:20 p.m., Sunday: 7:30 to 7:50 a.m. & 9:30 to 9:50 a.m. Other confession times available by appointment.