

## January 29, 2012 Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

<b>St. Stephen's Church</b>	<b>Rev. Tom Kuffel</b>	207 N. Union Ave.	Exeter, NE 68351
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Date	Time	Place	Intention	By	Feast Day
<b>Mon. Jan 30</b>	<b>7:30 AM</b>	<b>Exeter</b>	<b>Frank &amp; Virginia Sudrla</b>	<b>The Family</b>	
<b>Tues. Jan 31</b>	<b>7:30 AM</b>	<b>Exeter</b>	<b>Judy Geiger</b>	<b>Norm &amp; Monica Bristol</b>	
Wed. Feb 1	7:30 AM	McCool	Lyle Clark	Ron & Marcia Clark	
<b>Wed. Feb 1</b>	<b>6:30 PM</b>	<b>Exeter Hall</b>	<b>Gene Ruhl</b>	<b>Family</b>	
<b>Thu. Feb 2</b>	<b>10:30 AM</b>	<b>Care Center</b>	<b>All Souls</b>	<b>Diane Zeleny</b>	
Fri. Feb 3	7:30 AM	McCool	Doug Hayes	John & Jane Seigel	
Sat. Feb 4	8:00 AM	McCool	All Souls	Gene & Rose Ruhl	
<b>Sat. Feb 4</b>	<b>5:00 PM</b>	<b>Exeter</b>	<b>Irene Petracek</b>	<b>Diane Zeleny</b>	
<b>Sun. Feb 5</b>	<b>8:30 AM</b>	<b>Exeter</b>	<b>Frank &amp; Virginia Sudrla</b>	<b>The Family</b>	
Sun. Feb 5	10:00 AM	McCool	For the Parish		

### February Ministers

<b>Sat 4</b>	A-Gerry	L-Bob	S-Kirby & Jack	U – Joan K	G-Dave & Pat Erdkamp
<b>Sun 5</b>	A-Rusty	L-Children	S-Cameron & Eli	U & G – Children's Mass	Children will be assigned
<b>Sat 11</b>	A-Ron	L-Pat	S-Elliot & Mitchell	U – Bob M.	G-Bob & Kate Harre
<b>Sun 12</b>	A-Brad	L-Denice	S-Spencer & Caleb	U – Tess M.	G-Gerry & Vicki Geiger
<b>Sat 18</b>	A-Mark	L-Rick	S-Evan & Theron	U – Barry M.	G-Richard & Doris Nicholas
<b>Sun 19</b>	A-Roger	L-Kathy	S-Sam & Max	U – Lin & Melanie	G-Lin Schlueter Family

**Pray For:** Anthony Steven Kohel from St. Joseph, Lincoln, NE. He is in Pre-Theology 1 and is studying at St. Gregory the Great. He graduated HS in 2006 from Pius X.

**Prayer Intentions:** Claire White, Dick Snell, Dan Grant, Richard Perkins, Bill Hays, Jean Hoffman, Irene Petracek, Dawn Welch, Kelley Champion, Bernard & Lorene Zeleny, J.J. Dinneen, Taylor Thomas, Steve Lawson, Tim Becker, Joe Huber Jr., Patrick Hoarty, Carol Smith, Cindy Hogman, Zach Johnson, Lauren Dick, Stephanie Salyer, Mark Thomsen, Noah Lambrecht, & Military Personnel Jason & Lacey Hood, Rob Coffey, Jacque Erks, Anthony & Alex Due.

### St. Stephen's Church Support 01-22-2012

Adult Envelopes	\$1146.00	Loose Plate	\$34.36	Children	\$4.00	Total	\$1184.36
Number of Envelopes	\$1 - \$5 [ 0 ]	\$6 – 10 [ 7 ]	\$11 - \$20 [ 10 ]	\$21 - \$40 [ 12 ]	\$41 & Up [ 7 ]		

\*\* The actual budget for collections is \$85,305 for this fiscal year. It includes envelopes, loose plate, children, and special collections (i.e. Christmas, Easter, etc). On average, we need to collect \$1640 weekly in order to balance our budget. Check here weekly to see the actual collections compared to the budget. **Fiscal Year-to-Date we are at \$47,076 and we should be at \$49,200.**

### Announcements

**Birthdays:** Katherine White - Jan 29<sup>th</sup>, Mary Schlegelmilch - Jan 30<sup>th</sup>, Don Manning – Feb 1<sup>st</sup>, Claire White – Feb 2<sup>nd</sup>, Darleene Becker – Feb 4<sup>th</sup>, Crystal Becker – Feb 5<sup>th</sup>, Denice Kovanda – Feb 5<sup>th</sup>, Tanner Odvody – Feb 5<sup>th</sup>

**CCD: Jan 29<sup>th</sup>** – Regular Class. Youth Choir Practice after class at church. **Feb 5<sup>th</sup>** – Regular Class. Children's Mass. **Feb 12<sup>th</sup>** – Regular Class. **Feb 19<sup>th</sup>** – Regular Class. After Class – Rosary at church & confessions from 11-11:30. Pick students up at church.

**CCD Teacher's Meeting:** Sunday February 12<sup>th</sup> at 11:30AM at the Parish Hall.

**CYO: Feb 1<sup>st</sup>** – Starts with Mass at 6:30PM in Exeter at the Hall.

**Altar Society:** 2012 Altar Society dues are \$10. Please pay these as soon as you can. The January Basket is a \$150 gift certificate to Greg's Grocery donated by Ruth Ekeler and her daughters.

**Souper Bowl of Caring: Sunday, Feb. 6<sup>th</sup>** we will join churches all across the country and collect money and food for the hungry and homeless in our community. This year we will be collecting for Matt Talbot Kitchen & Outreach in Lincoln, NE. Please give generously on Super Bowl Sunday.

**Holy Hour:** Sunday February 12<sup>th</sup> at 5PM.

**Building Project Pledge Cards:** I ask everyone to sign and return their pledge cards as soon as possible.

At the Parish Council Meeting we discussed the plans and will ask Jim for clarifications or make changes. I talked with Sandquist Construction on Friday, a Lincoln contractor, to get a soft bid on the project. That is his estimate. On Feb 8, we will have another parish council meeting to discuss the adjustments or changes to the plan.

**R.A.K:** Random acts of kindness are a means by which we make a deliberate attempt to brighten another person's day by doing something thoughtful, nice, & caring for them. Kindness is a way of showing others that they count. A random act of kindness is a selfless act performed by people wishing to either assist or cheer up an individual person or people. It is a way to help people know and share God's love in fresh, true, & inspiring ways. It is a means by which we make a deliberate attempt to brighten another person's day by doing something thoughtful, nice, & caring for them. Anyone interested in joining our group, please contact **Pat Becker 402-266-4451** or drop your name in the R.A.K. box in the vestibule of the church. If you know of anyone who needs a little cheering up or assistance, please drop their name in the box. Or, if you have a special need, don't be afraid to ask! We want to help. "Kindness is more than deeds. It is an attitude, an expression, a look, a touch. It is anything that lifts another person."— C. Neil Strait

**Candle Intentions:** Write the name of the candle you want to burn & then put it in the collection or give to Marion G.

**Two Week Memorial Candle** (originally WWII Veterans – back of church) - **\$10**, **Six Day Candle** (by St. Joseph) - **\$3**

**Six Day Sanctuary** (by Tabernacle) - **\$5**, **Six Day Candle** (by Blessed Virgin Mary) - **\$3**

**Six Day Blue Candles** (in Vigil Candle Stand) - **\$2**, **Eight Hour Vigil Candles** - **\$0.25**

**Prayer – In time of Temptation:** O Lord, I am unclean like the lepers who begged you for purity. Cast out all demonic desires so that I may serve you in purity of mind, body, heart, and soul. I command this in the name of Jesus at whose name all will bow before Him, or flee. **Words to Humor:** "It is amazing how quickly the kids learn to drive a car, yet are unable to understand the lawnmower, snow blower or vacuum cleaner."

### Character development

The Ten Commandments were revered by the Israelites. Those commandments and the tablets upon which they were written connected them -- directly connected them -- with God Himself. To alter or tamper with them was, for the Jews, absolutely unthinkable. To hear Jesus expand on those commandments was, to say the very least, astonishing and amazing.

What Jesus taught was marvelous. It was luminous, enlightening, and brilliant. But how He taught was mind boggling because the way Jesus spoke was as God speaking. He didn't speak about God. He didn't begin by saying: Thus says the Lord..." No. He simply and directly spoke as only God would speak.

Nothing could be more astonishing than that. Either Jesus is who He claimed to be and demonstrated Himself to be, or else He was a charlatan, a fraud, and a liar. He is either God the Son made human flesh, or He is not. One has to choose. One cannot escape making that choice.

We've all heard of talk about evangelizing. Evangelizing doesn't mean that we have to go around town knocking on doors and preaching at others about our religion. It is something far less difficult and far less offensive than that. Evangelizing is as easy as simply, clearly stating the truth about Jesus telling folks "We have never heard anyone else speak with such authority."

### Pope Benedict

Luke the Evangelist has retained a precious element of the events of the Last Supper that enables us to see the moving depth of Jesus' prayer for his own on that night: his attention to each one. Starting with the prayer of thanksgiving and blessing, Jesus arrives at the Eucharistic gift, the gift of himself, and, while he is giving the crucial sacramental reality, he addresses Peter. "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail; and when you have turned again, strengthen your brethren" (Lk 22:31-32).

Jesus' prayer, when his disciples were about to be put to the test, helps them to overcome their weakness in their effort to understand that the way of God passes through the Paschal Mystery of the death and Resurrection, anticipated in the offering of the bread and the wine. The Eucharist is the food of pilgrims that also becomes strength for those who are weary, worn-out and bewildered. And the prayer was especially for Peter; so that once he had turned again he might strengthen his brethren in the faith.

Luke the Evangelist recalls that it was the very gaze of Jesus in seeking Peter's face at the moment when he had just denied him 3 times which gave him the strength to continue following in his footsteps: "And immediately, while he was still speaking, the cock crowed. And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord" (Lk 22:60-61).

Dear brothers and sisters, by participating in the Eucharist, we experience in an extraordinary manner the prayer that Jesus prayed and prays ceaselessly for every person so that the evil which we all encounter in life may not get the upper hand and that the transforming power of Christ's death and Resurrection may act within us.

### Homily – The Path Well Trodden (Chapter 7)

**"If you want to be good at something, study the best" (Matthew Kelly, p. 79).**

"When we pursue what is good, true, beautiful, and noble, with honesty and integrity, we are holy, yes, but this is also when we are most fully alive in most truly ourselves. This is our essential purpose in life: to be the best version of yourself."

Jesus tells us that the path to heaven is a narrow road; there is not much room for distraction or confusion. But our world and its philosophies of Individualism (pride and selfishness), Hedonism (Lust and gluttony), and Minimalism (sloth and jealousy), divert our focus from the narrow road.

We easily think that as long as I am not a murderer or an adulterer, I travel the road. However, Satan does not tempt us where we are strong. He tempts us where we are weak. He knows us better than ourselves and trains his temptations on our faults, flaws, and failings. He knows what will interest us to abandon the narrow path to heaven. He uses the common sins to disrupt us: the Seven Capital Sins. These seven sins: pride, anger, jealousy, greed, lust, gluttony, and sloth, induce us with some sort of attraction or enticement. We believe that somehow they are good for us. They will bring us to the truth and make us noble. This is the seduction of Satan. He makes us believe that this vice will satisfy our desire to be fulfilled. He makes evil look good!

That is why Catholics need to develop a lifestyle that is not of this world, but of God's world. Scripture and the teachings contained in Scripture are explained in the lives of the Saints, the Catechism of the Church, and a host of other materials so easily available for us to develop and use. Yet, how many Catholics read the lives of the saints, study Scripture, watch Catholic programming, or listen to Catholic radio? Many Catholics don't. Many are filled with the philosophy of our times.

Sadly, these three philosophies have also worked their way into the lives of most Catholics, and as Catholics we have carried these philosophies like a disease into the Church. It is there not uncommon for modern Catholics to judge Sunday Mass, the Church and Catholicism by what they get out of it. This attitude is the fruit of individualism. Similarly, most modern Catholics have abandoned almost every Catholic tradition that is not self-gratifying or that requires any exercise of discipline. This attitude is the fruit of hedonism. It is also very common for people to think, *I go to church on Sunday, and I always say grace before meals. Isn't it enough?* This attitude is, of course, the fruit of minimalism. We are often asking ourselves, "What is the least I can do and still be Catholic? And, what is the least I can do and still get to Heaven?"

If coaches and athletes, employees and employers, or husband and wives lived according to these philosophies, they would fail time and time again. Why is that so many marriages fail? Businesses go bust? Or teams with talent, never succeed? This attitude is not the narrow road to truth, beauty, goodness, and nobility. It is not the gate to heaven. This philosophy is the philosophy of losers in any religion or undertaking. Heroes excel at doing something good. As Catholics, we are to be good, even great.

Take a look at any successful person, including the lives of the saints; they did not follow any type of philosophy as this. They sought cooperation, discipline, and greatness. Their example breaks us of the satanic spirit of the world and inspires us to be the best we can be.

Hero worship is part of any culture. Every culture has its heroes. Today, we worship athletes, movies stars, musicians, and entertainers. But do we venerate saints? Do we worship Jesus? NO! Jesus did not want us to worship Him as some rock star; He wanted us to follow Him on the narrow road. He did not come to solve our problems, a common belief for most Christians. He came to show us the way. We are to cooperate with Him, imitate his lifestyle becoming co-redeemers.

But this is not what most people want. Most people want hero worship. They want to be a fan, not a player. They don't want to engage in the hard discipline of the narrow path. Most people want to be comfortable in their walk of faith. Yet, that is exactly what Jesus attacked. He makes our lives uncomfortable for some of his teachings are not comforting. He asks us to discipline ourselves; that is to learn the truth about ourselves, our faith, and about Jesus Himself, and then follow Him.

#### *Meditate On:*

*Spiritual combat is another element of life which needs to be taught anew and proposed once more to all Christians today. Whatever the less discerning theologians may say, the devil, as far as Christian belief is concerned, is a puzzling but real, personal and not merely symbolical presence. It is a secret and interior art, an invisible struggle in which we engage every day against the temptations, the evil suggestions that the*

*demon tries to plant in our hearts. The more one understands the holiness of God, the more one understands the opposite of what is holy, namely, the deceptive masks of the devil.*