

Bishop E-news: 10/5/18

Archbishop McCarrick: I want to thank so many of you—even throughout the world—for your kind words in support of the decision for Archbishop McCarrick to reside at St. Fidelis Friary in Victoria. Obviously, I have also received many complaints. I thank you as well. You have opened my heart and eyes to a new way of seeing things. My episcopal motto is “Rich in Mercy.” I never would have guessed that I would be called to live it out this way. I often pray, “God I give you permission to do whatever you want in the Diocese of Salina.” Be careful what you pray for! The more I reflect on this, the more I realize this is all part of God’s will and providence in a mysterious way. Somehow, God wants to heal Archbishop McCarrick’s heart in Victoria and perhaps, in some way, our hearts too. I find this situation ironic because leading up to his move here I felt a lot of resentment in my heart toward Archbishop McCarrick and his role in the scandal. However, the Lord continued to put on my heart the question, “What if he comes to you for confession? Would you treat him with *My* mercy?” The whole world seems to know Archbishop McCarrick and his sins. Who would want that? Here he is. Placed before us. I know it’s a simple question; but, what would Jesus do? We need the eyes of faith in all this; not to see as the world sees, but as God sees. Jesus was constantly berated by the scribes and Pharisees for eating and being with sinners. Jesus’ hope was to bring them to conversion and for them to experience his mercy. Even though Archbishop McCarrick may have failed in a serious manner in his ministry as bishop, he does need our prayers and a proper place to receive God’s mercy in prayer and penance. All I want for him is to experience conversion and go to heaven—and that’s the same for all of us. In my experience, people do not repent when they are constantly berated for their sins. They repent through the Christ-like gaze of love and mercy.

Phone call: Our prayer for Archbishop McCarrick is for his conversion. We also continue to pray for all the victims of his failure and anyone who has been abused. A few days ago, I had the privilege to talk with a man who had been sexually abused by a priest roughly 40 years ago. He lives in another state. However, he is very familiar with the Victoria-Hays area. Obviously, he was greatly affected when he found out that Archbishop McCarrick was residing at the St. Fidelis Friary. Even though he has experienced a lot of healing, many thoughts stirred up in him. My heart ached for him and the pain and suffering he has experienced over the years. We had a very pleasant conversation. He was very kind and compassionate. At the end of our conversation, he said to me, “I forgive you.” I was deeply touched by his magnanimity and compassion. I also ask all of you for your forgiveness for any angst and pain this decision has caused you. I am celebrating Mass at the Basilica of St. Fidelis soon to meet with the parishioners. It is also my intention to celebrate a Mass of Healing at every parish in the diocese within a year. I will have more information on this soon. Come Holy Spirit! We need your guidance as we deal with this critical issue in the Church.

Column: Fr. Andrew Rockers, who is the pastor in the Goodland area, wrote a column on the Archbishop McCarrick situation. It’s a good read. Also, included on our website is a couple of short stories of mercy. I hope you have time to read them. I think you will like them.

Our Lady: Pope Francis has encouraged the faithful to pray the Rosary every day during this month of October. I want to encourage you as well. It’s something I do every day. I remember visiting Our Lady of Fatima in Portugal, Spain, and being encouraged by her words to “pray the rosary every day for peace.” We not only pray for peace in the world, but for peace in our families and for peace in our hearts. Another suggestion that has been given to me numerous

times is fasting for the conversion of the world and for our own conversion. This could be by fasting, by eating less food one day a week, or perhaps even refraining from using unnecessary electronics.

Special Masses: I hope to see many of you at some special Masses coming up in our diocese. The white Mass for all those in the public health field is set for the feast of St. Luke, October 18, at 7:00PM in our Cathedral. Anyone can attend. Additionally, there are two marriage anniversary Masses in October. The first is on Sunday, October 21, at St. Elizabeth's Parish in Salina. The second is Sunday, October 28, at Immaculate Heart Parish in Hays. Both Masses are at 3:00PM. It's for couples celebrating their anniversary of one year or any year that ends in a "5" or "0."

Youth Synod: In Rome, there is an important synod taking place with our youth. I am praying for this endeavor. Speaking of our youth, the parish religious education courses have begun. Please pray for our children and adults who give so much of their time in this endeavor.

Saint quote of the week:

Next Thursday, October 18, is the Feast of St. Luke. His Gospel is known as the Gospel of Mercy:

Luke 6:35-38 *But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful. "Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you."*