Father Matthew Koperski, pastor of St. James Catholic Church in Kearney, will be the featured speaker at the upcoming Magnificat brunch on Saturday, Jan. 9, 2010 at Valentino's, 55 East River Road in Ogallala, at 9 a.m. (M.T).

Father Matt's message, based on Matthew 18:20 "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them," is the foundation for his message, "Encouraging Vocations."

The son of John and Janet Koperski, Father Matt was born in Farwell, receiving his early elementary education at the Farwell Public School and St. Peter and St. Paul Catholic Schools.

He said his early education provided an important learning environment for both intellectual and spiritual growth. His continuing education included attendance at the Kearney junior and senior high schools. In his junior year, the family moved to Ogallala and he graduated from the Ogallala High School in 1990.

Father Matt attended the University of Nebraska for three years, and completed his final year at St. Meinrad, Ill., where he received his bachelors degree in biology and philosophy.

Over the next few years, he worked at Boys Town and Chadron State College. "Finally," said Fr. Matt, "I felt the need to complete my studies for the priesthood."

To do this, he returned to St. Meinrad, Ind., where he received a master of divinity degree prior to his ordination to the priesthood for the Diocese of Grand Island.

Since his ordination, Father Matt has been involved in parish ministry at St. James in Kearney, the Newman Center at UNK, Spiritual Director of Higher Ground; and most recently, Director of the Office of Vocations.

To make a reservation for the Magnificat Brunch, contact Dorie Lee at 34285 Road 750, Elsie, NE 69134 or call her at 308-228-2342 or contact her by e-mail at jimdor@chase3000.com

In the Ogallala area those interested in registering, can sign up at either Ben Franklin Craft Store or Silver Thimble Sewing Center. Both stores are on North Spruce Street.

The registration deadline is Monday, Jan. 4, 2010.