

PASTOR'S NOTES

As Advent 'morphs' into Christmas —

With this being the shortest possible Advent season and the Christmas season lurking on the horizon, here are some activities to keep in mind so that Advent ends well and we step into Christmas prepared:

1) Final Advent Reconciliation Services:

Monday, December 18th - 7 p.m. @ St. Leo's;

Thursday, December 21st - 7 p.m. @ St. Anthony's in Fargo

2) St. Leo's Advent Bingo – **Wednesday, December 20th starts at 6:30 p.m.** after Simple Supper – Put on by our RE students. Proceeds go to local Food Pantry – all families and parishioners are welcome.

3) St. Leo's Christmas decorating & set-up – begins **after the 8:30 a.m. Sunday Mass on December 24th** – no beverage & bite that Sunday, but goodies will be served for all who help decorate the church and Spirit of Life center – everyone welcome!!

4) upcoming liturgies —

~ Dec. 23/24 – regular Sunday/weekend Mass schedule for 4th Sunday of Advent;

~ **Sun., Dec. 24th – 5 p.m.** – Christmas Eve Mass at St. Thomas

~ **Sun., Dec. 24th – 9:30 p.m. [Carols at 9 p.m.]** – Christ Eve Mass at St. Leo's

~ **Mon., Dec. 25th – 10 a.m.** – Christmas Day Mass at St. Leo's

~ Dec. 30/31 – regular Sunday/weekend Mass schedule for Holy Family Sunday

~ **Sun., Dec. 31st – 5 p.m.** – Holy Day Mass at St. Thomas for Mary, Mother of God

~ **Mon., Jan. 1st – 10 a.m.** – Holy Day Mass at St. Leo's for Mary, Mother of God

The second semester of Advent . . .

On this Sunday [December 17th] we begin the second part of Advent where our attention becomes focused on the one who will fulfill the hope that has been engendered in Advent's first part. This second part of Advent focuses on the seven (7) attributes of the one whose coming will change the course of human history! The song – O Come, O Come, Emmanuel – proclaims these 7 attributes. This song is characterized by its 'O' antiphons. The origin of this song goes back to an anonymous monk of the 7th or 8th century, who was seeking to deepen his preparation for the great solemnity of Christmas and especially the person of Jesus, the Messiah.

The 'O' antiphons are composed of seven poetic verses each of which describes in greater detail what it means for Jesus to be our Savior. The antiphon that introduces the Gospel for each day beginning December 17th proclaims one of these seven 'O' antiphons.

The traditional order of the seven 'O' antiphons describe Christ as: *Wisdom, Lord of Might, Rod of Jesse, Key of David, Radiant Dawn, King of Nations and Emmanuel* {*'God with us'*}. There is an interesting note to this ordering of the seven 'O' antiphons when they are translated into Latin. The Latin translation for each of the above antiphons are: **Sapientia, Adonai, Radix, Clavix, Oriens, Rex and Emmanuel**. If you take the first letter from each of these Latin words and reverse them they spell out the phrase — ERO CRAS — which translates "**Tomorrow I shall be there**".

After seven days of proclaiming the great attributes of Christ and asking him to come in the 'O' antiphons, it seems so fitting that ERO CRAS comes to fulfillment in the Christmas feast. In these last days of this Advent season may the seven 'O' antiphons lead our meditations on the one who comes at Christmas – Wisdom from on high; Saving Lord; Flower of Jesse' stump; Key to heaven; Dayspring who puts death to flight; King who is Prince of Peace; Emmanuel [*'God with us'*].



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Casselton ND
347-4609

St. Thomas Catholic Church
401 Third St. North
PO Box 22
Buffalo ND
633-5150



THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT December 17, 2023



Weekend Mass Schedule for St. Leo's and St. Thomas

1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays: 8:30 am St. Thomas, 10:30 am St. Leo's

2nd & 4th Sundays: 8:30 am St. Leo's, 10:30 am St. Thomas

Every Saturday: 5:00 pm at St. Leo's

Mass Intentions for the week of Dec 17:

Mon - Dec 18 – 9:00 am – +**Eugene Dooley** by Don & Janie Dooley

Tues - Dec 19 – St. Thomas– 9:00 am – **For the health of relatives** by Cynthia Comprendio

NO MASS at St. Leo's

Wed – Dec 20 – 9:00 am – +**Souls in purgatory**

Thurs – Dec 21 – 9:00 am – **For peace in Israel & Ukraine**

Fri – Dec 22 – 9:00 am – +**Jim Kieffer** by Stan & Angeline Mathias

Sat - Dec 23 – 5:00 pm - Helen Franck by Bill & Mona Franck

Sun - Dec 24 – St. Leo's - 8:30 am - For the people of our parishes

St. Thomas - 10:30 am -

Sun - Dec 24 - Christmas Eve - 5:00 pm - St. Thomas - +Bob Killoran by Joe & Kelly Boyd

Sun - Dec 24 - Christmas Eve - 9:30 pm - St. Leo's

Mon - Dec 25 - Christmas Day - 10:00 am - St. Leo's - +Fr. Al Bitz

Parish Staff:

Pastor: Fr. James Ermer

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Secretary: Delores Grommesh

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RE Coordinator: Patty Roth

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Prayer Chain:

Kelsey Lako: 701-793-7088

Maintenance: Paul & Sherry Radermacher

Phone: 701-793-7740; 701-793-7798

St. Leo's Directors: Dave Glennon & Micah Bartholomay

St. Thomas Directors: Gary Milbrandt & Flint Kasowski

Sacrament of Reconciliation at St. Leo's

4:00 - 4:45 pm Saturday

at St. Thomas

8:00 - 8:15 am

before all 8:30 am Masses

~ Anytime by appointment

~ Communal Services during

Advent and Lent

New Members: If you are new to the area, we would love to have you as a registered member. To register as a new member of the parish, please visit with Fr. Ermer after Mass.

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Please join in praying the Rosary  
25 minutes before the Saturday evening  
and Sunday morning Mass times.

## PARISH EVENTS/MEETINGS


**Mon., Dec 18 - 7:00 pm - Advent Reconciliation Service at St. Leo's**  
 Wed., Dec 20 - 6:30 pm - Advent Family Bingo, 6:00 pm Simple Supper  
 Wed., Dec 20 - 7:45 pm - KC meeting at the rectory  
**Sun., Dec 24 - 5:00 pm - Christmas Eve- Mass at St. Thomas in Buffalo**  
**9:30 pm - Christmas Eve- Mass at St. Leo's, Carols begin at 9:00 pm**  
**Mon., Dec 25 - 10:00 am - Christmas Day- Mass at St. Leo's**  
 Sun., Dec 30 - 5:00 pm - Mary, Mother of God Holy Day- Vigil Mass at St. Thomas  
 Mon., Jan 1 - 10:00 am - Mary, Mother of God Holy Day- Mass at St. Leo's



**GIFTS for THE CHILD:** At the main entry of the church is a crib that is accepting all sorts of baby supplies, e.g. diapers, wipes, blankets, and toiletries. These items will be brought up in procession at our 9:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Mass and then be donated to some of the agencies that work with expectant parents/single moms. Monetary donations can also be turned in to the parish office.

There will be **NO Beverage and Bite** on **Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup>** after the 8:30 am Mass.

### Upcoming Ministry Schedule

|                                                                                   | Saturday Dec 23<br>5:00 pm<br><i>St. Leo's</i>                                                                                                                                                           | Sunday Dec 24<br>8:30 am<br><i>St. Leo's</i> | Sunday Dec 24<br>10:30 am<br><i>St. Thomas</i> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
|  |                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                              | Alecia Killoran                                |
| <i>Lector</i>                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                              |                                                |
| <i>Eucharistic Ministers</i>                                                      | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Please see<br/>Sign-Up Sheets<br/>in the<br/>Church entry.</p> </div> |                                              | Keith Biggers<br>Kristi Hovelson               |
| <i>Altar Servers</i>                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                              | Abigail Killoran<br>Piper Koller               |
| <i>Offertory Collectors</i>                                                       | <i>Volunteers needed</i>                                                                                                                                                                                 | <i>Volunteers needed</i>                     | Travis & Darcie Besette                        |
| <i>Gift Bearers</i>                                                               | <i>Volunteers needed</i>                                                                                                                                                                                 | <i>Volunteers needed</i>                     | Jim Biggers Family                             |
| <i>Lead Rosary</i>                                                                | Michelle Kappes                                                                                                                                                                                          | Sandra Keller                                |                                                |

## NEWS AND NOTES

**Special prayers and blessings** to the faithful couples that help us see the presence and faithfulness of God in our lives:

**Jack & Rosemary Line - 55 years on Dec 21**  
**Leo & Alexia Kieffer - 56 years on Dec 28**

**Prayers and Sympathy:** Our Parish communities extend our deepest sympathies to Bonnie Haglund and her family on the death of her husband, Steve and to Tony Roth and his family on the death of his Aunt, Marion Kostelecky.

*Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. — Matthew 5:4*

**Join us to sing from the choir loft!** "Choir Sunday" will be **Sunday, Jan. 21<sup>st</sup>** at the 10:30 am Mass. Anyone middle school and older is welcome to sing. We will meet in the choir loft from 9:30-10 am that day to run through these songs: #494, #761, #393, #387, #599, #559. YouTube is a great way to practice at home beforehand. Music with harmony parts available-ask Wanda Mangin.

**Parents are reminded** - there is a crying room area for fussing and crying children in the church's entry behind the large glass window. That area has a good speaker so as to continue participating in Mass.

**Church Decoration for the Christmas environment:** Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup> after the 8:30 am Mass. Young and old are welcome to help. It typically takes about an hour if we have many volunteers. Contact Sheyenne Bierscheid at (701)552-1751 with any questions. Please consider you and or your family helping out.

**Holy Family Sunday:** On Sunday, December 31<sup>st</sup> (Holy Family Sunday) at the 10:30 am Mass Fr. Ermer will be doing a blessing over your household religious objects, such as: rosaries, crucifixes, bibles, medals, statues, etc. Please bring your items to be blessed and place them on the table at the front of the church.

**Humanitarian assistance for the Holy Land Special Collection:** Envelopes for this collection are located on the tables behind the back pews of the church. Funds raised will be sent to the Latin Catholic Patriarch of Jerusalem and the Catholic Near East Welfare Association. Please make checks payable to St. Leo's and return either in the collection or to the parish office. Thank you.

**St. Leo's Ministry Schedule for December 23<sup>rd</sup>/24<sup>th</sup> and December 30<sup>th</sup>/31<sup>st</sup>:** Because the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> weekends of December are holiday weekends (*and people usually travel*) there will be sign-up sheets in the church entry to help fill the schedule for those weekends. **If one of those weekends** is your normally scheduled weekend and you are going to be here we ask that you **please sign up for your regular time slot**. This will greatly help us in the planning process. Thank you for your help.

### This week's Stewardship moment:

*"Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus." ~ 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18*

This scripture reading sums up Stewardship. "Rejoice always" means place your trust in God; He will provide all that you need. "Pray constantly" means prayer should be a running conversation with God throughout the whole day, every day. "Give thanks in all circumstances" means even in bad situations, thank God. Suffering a little bit helps build empathy for others in similar situations and shows our dependence on God.