

PASTOR'S NOTES

The Ascension — no small mystery of faith!

The Acts of the Apostles tells us that after Christ's Resurrection from the tomb he appeared to his disciples "over the course of 40 days" and spoke to them about the reign of God. Then he ascended into heaven. **This 40th day become known as Ascension Thursday** and for centuries was a holy day of obligation in the Catholic Church. A number of years ago most diocesan bishops in the United States moved this solemnity and holy day from Thursday to the 7th Sunday of the Easter season. This was done to ensure that the mystery of the Ascension would be celebrated when a large number of the faithful gather in worship of God. Since the 7th Sunday of Easter (*which is actually the 43rd day of the Easter season*) was the closest to this 40th day after Easter, the 7th Sunday of Easter was replaced with the celebration of the Ascension of the Lord.

Therefore, we have today's celebration - the Ascension of the Lord.

What is the significance of the Lord's ascension into heaven??

First and foremost it celebrates the 're-opening' of access to God's life and happiness. Access to heaven had been closed since the sin of our first parents in the Garden of Eden. When God expelled them from the garden of Eden, God "*stationed the cherubim and the fiery revolving sword, to guard the way to the tree of life.*" [Gen. 5:24]

Furthermore with Christ's Ascension the old regime has passed away and a new one has come to pass. What is radically new is that in Christ's Ascension, he now sits **bodily** at the Father's right hand because the Son became incarnate (*took on human flesh*) and now the glorified flesh of his humanity is imbedded into the Godhead. When we rise and stand before the throne of God we shall see the human face of Christ.

Also with Christ's Ascension he sits exalted in heavenly power. The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches "*There Christ permanently exercises his priesthood for he 'always lives to make intercession' for 'those who draw near to God through him'*" [Heb. 7:25]. *As 'high priest of the good things yet to come' he is the center and principal actor of the liturgy that honors the Father in heaven*" [Heb. 9:11]. [CCC 662]

Lastly, Christ's Ascension to the Father's right hand inaugurates the Kingdom of God in history and fulfills the vision given to the prophet Daniel where the Son of Man is given a dominion which will not pass away nor be destroyed [Dan. 7:14]. As the Creed says, it is from there he shall come to judge the living and the dead.

With all of this being said, the Ascension of the Lord gives focus and direction to our spiritual lives. It teaches:

- (a) we are a pilgrim people, simply sojourners in this land. Our real home is heaven. Do not get too attached to the things of this world. They are passing realities. As St. Paul reminds us, "*We do not fix our gaze on what is seen but on what is unseen. What is seen is transitory; what is unseen lasts forever*" [2 Cor. 4:18], and "*Our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we also await a savior, the Lord Jesus Christ*" [Philippians 3:20].
- (b) at the end of time, if we find ourselves counted among the saved, like Christ we, too, will receive glorified bodies and find ourselves at the throne of the Father. What we do now in our earthly flesh is of great consequence. If our flesh is to be glorified, we must now live in the flesh in ways that are in keeping with what our glorified existence will someday be.
- (c) as our patron saint, St. Leo the Great, so richly said when speaking about the Ascension, "*And so our Redeemer's visible presence has passed into the sacraments.*" Christ has not abandoned us in the Ascension, but lives more fully in the sacraments of his Church.

Such is the glory of the Ascension!



St. Leo's Catholic Church
211 Langer Ave North
PO Box 340
Casselton ND
347-4609

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



The Ascension of the Lord May 21, 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 May 21:

Mon - May 22 - 9:00 am - **NO MASS**

Tues - May 23 - 9:00 am - **+Souls in purgatory**

NO MASS at St. Leo's

Wed - May 24 - 9:00 am - **+Tyson Jewison** by Darin & Judy Hamre

Thurs - May 25 - 9:00 am - **+Vince Bachmeier** by Bea Bachmeier

Fri - May 26 - 9:00 am - **+Shirley Marek** by Monica Qvale

Sat - May 27 - 5:00 pm - +Craig Hocking

Sun - May 28 - St. Leo's - 8:30 am - For the people of our parishes

St. Thomas - 10:30 am - +Larry Zaun by Tom & Camille Marcotte

Parish Staff:

Pastor: Fr. James Ermer

E-mail: james.ermer@fargodiocese.org

Secretary: Delores Grommesh

Phone: 701-347-4609

E-mail: stleo@casselton.net

RE Coordinator: Patty Roth

Phone: 701-347-4609

E-mail: dre@stleosnd.org

Website: www.stleosnd.org

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.

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

PARISH EVENTS/MEETINGS

Sun. May 21 - 11:30 am - **St. Leo's** Graduation brunch after 10:30 am Mass honoring 2023 graduates
 Wed. May 24 - 7:45 pm - KC meeting at the rectory
 Thurs. May 25 - 12:00 pm - Casselton Ministerium meeting in the Spirit of Life Center
 Mon. May 29 - Memorial Day- 9:00 am - Daily Mass at St. Leo's
 Sun. June 4 - Fr. Ermer's 45th Anniversary of Priestly Ordination
 Tues. June 6 - 7:00 pm - Social Concerns committee meeting at the rectory
 Tues. June 13 - 7:00 pm - Cemetery Committee meeting at the rectory


Prayers and Sympathy: Our Parish communities extend our deepest sympathies to Susan Schmidt and her family on the death of her husband, David.

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



Help Support our Cameroon Card Mission: Cards are available for purchase in the magazine rack in church entry. There is a wonderful selection for all occasions available for purchase. Cost of cards is 50¢, please place money in envelope provided and return to parish office. All proceeds go to the mission.

Upcoming Ministry Schedule

	Saturday May 27 5:00 pm <i>St. Leo's</i>	Sunday May 28 8:30 am <i>St. Leo's</i>	Sunday May 28 10:30 am <i>St. Thomas</i>
Lector	Tony Roth	Fred Eldridge	Judy Von Bank
Eucharistic Ministers	Paulette Schmitt Mona Franck	Virjean Cramer Dave Glennon Patty Glennon Terri Monilaws Richard Muscha	Jurgen Suhr Penny Zaun
Altar Servers	Olivea/Evelyn Roth Joe Kappes Beau Parisien	Lauren Glennon Clair Glennon Jack Glennon	Gavin Besette Piper Koller
Offertory Collectors	<i>Volunteers needed</i>	<i>Volunteers needed</i>	JoEllen Killoran Lisa Zahnow
Gift Bearers	<i>Volunteers needed</i>	<i>Volunteers needed</i>	Gary & Linda Milbrandt
Lead Rosary	Jessica Enge		Sandra Keller

NEWS AND NOTES

Summer Camps for Youth: There are many wonderful summer faith-based camp opportunities for youths entering 4th grade and up. St. Leo's Education Committee has put together a brochure available for you to pick up at the church with information on the various camps and how to register. **One of the camps listed in the brochure is Camp Summit at Red Willow Bible Camp in Binford, ND for grades 7-9, July 9-13.** Students will engage in prayer, worship, fellowship, leadership formation, play and fun. The camp is designed to encourage and equip the youth for discipleship to their family, friends and communities.

Beginning Experience Weekend to be Held: June 23-25, 2023 at the Retreat Center in Hankinson, ND. The BE weekend is a program for adults grieving the loss of a love relationship through death, divorce or separation. It is presented by people who have suffered the loss of a loved one and are willing to share their experience to help others. Team members lead participants through a program of presentations, personal private reflection and small group sharing. If you or someone you know could benefit from coming to the BE weekend, please contact the BE line at 701-277-8784 and leave a message for more information and an application. More information can also be found on the website at: www.beginningexperience-easternnd.org

6th Annual Rural Life Celebration: Please join the parishioners of St. Joseph's in Devils Lake on Sunday, July 2nd, 2023 at Terry and Paulette Haman's Farm, 9361 46th St. NE, Crary, ND 58327. The farm is located .25 miles North and .5 miles east of Crary. For more information visit www.fargodiocese.org/rural-life. Please RSVP by June 26th at: (701) 662-7558 or stjosephschurch@gondtc.com. Remember to bring a lawn chair or blanket to sit on. You may also bring a container of soil from your fields or garden to be blessed. Please see the flyer on the bulletin board for a list of the days events and time. The event is FREE.

Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group starting in June: Do you have someone in your life who is living with the challenges of Alzheimer's? These meetings are open to caregivers, family and friends who are looking for support and information. We will meet **Thursday, June 8th** from 10-11 am at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Casselton. For more information please see the flyer on the bulletin board or call Cindi at Community of Care at 347-0032.

Diocese of Fargo Pilgrimage to the National Eucharistic Congress in 2024: July 16th-22nd, 2024. The Pilgrimage will be a bus trip from Fargo to Indianapolis for a total of 7 days. In addition to the conference the trip will include a stop at the National Shrine of St. Maximilian Kolbe, Marytown, Libertyville, IL. For more information and to register for the trip please visit the Fargo Diocese website at: <https://fargodiocese.org/congress-pilgrimage>



God's Gift Appeal 2023

Goal 5/12/2023

St. Leo's	\$56,112	\$37,652
St. Thomas	\$10,992	\$ 4,115

Thank you to all parishioners who have made their gifts to the 2023 God's Gift Appeal. Pledge cards/donations may be placed in the offertory collection basket or dropped off at the parish office and we will see they get to the Diocese.

This week's Stewardship moment:

"I am praying for them..." ~ John 17:9

Prayer is the foundation of our Faith and the foundation of Stewardship. Prayer is always the first best option in any situation - not just our last resort. Pray for friends and family, and especially for those that do not treat you very well. Pray to give praise, to thank, and to ask God for help. Pray to see what God wants you to do with the gifts He has given you. Teach others how to pray. It has been said that teaching someone how to pray is the best gift you can give someone.