

PASTOR’S NOTES

Christmas - the gift that defines all giving!!

Christmas is always a special day, especially for children as they tear into their Christmas gifts and their spirits leap for joy when they get something they really wanted. Gift-giving is a treasured way of showing our love for other people.

Of all the gifts ever shared in all of human history **Christians believe the Christmas gift of the Christ Child defines all measures of selfless love-giving.**

Christmas celebrates the mystery of the Incarnation when God assumed our human nature or as the Prologue of John’s Gospel declares — “*In the beginning was the Word, the Word was in God’s presence, and the Word was God ... the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.*” Every time we pray the Creed we say, “... *he came down from heaven and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary and became man.*” Of this the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) says: “Belief in the true Incarnation of the Son of God is the distinctive sign of Christian faith.” [CCC 463]

All of this leads to a very logical question – **Why did God assume our human nature?** St. Peter Chrysologus gives the over-arching answer when he says the human race takes its origin from two men – Adam the first man and Christ the second man. The first man (Adam) was made by the second man (Christ). Christ had stamped his image and likeness on the first Adam when he created him. Adam’s sin has deprived us of God’s likeness. This is why Christ took on himself the role and name of the first Adam – **in order that he might not lose what he had made in his image.** That is why Scripture says of Christ, “I am the first and the last.” In essence the Father’s gift of Christ (the second man) restores the goodness lost by Adam (the first man).

In paragraphs 456-460 the Catechism of the Catholic Church says the Word became flesh for four (4) reasons:

- (1) The Word became flesh for us in order **to save us** by reconciling us with God. St. Gregory of Nyssa says it this way, “*Sick, our nature demanded to be healed; fallen, to be raised up; ... We had lost possession of the good; it was necessary for it to be given back to us. Closed in the darkness, it was necessary to bring us to the light; captives, we awaited a Savior; prisoners, help; slaves, a liberator. Did they (meaning the human race) not move God to descend to human nature and visit it, since humanity was in so miserable and unhappy a state?*”;
- (2) The Word became flesh so that thus we might **know God’s love.** As John’s Gospel says, “*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.*” (Jn. 3:16)
- (3) The Word became flesh to be our **model of holiness.** As John’s Gospel has Christ saying, “*I am the way, and the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father but by me.*” (Jn. 14:6)
- (4) The Word became flesh to make us **partakers of the divine nature.** St. Athanasius puts it this way, “*For the Son of God became man so that we might become God.*” St. Thomas Aquinas says it this way, “*The only-begotten Son of God, wanting to make us sharers in his divinity, assumed our nature, so that he, made man, might make men gods.*”

Such is the gift of Christmas, and why Christmas is the gift that defines all giving. It is in this spirit that we say **‘Merry Christmas’!!!**



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 Nativity of the Lord
(Christmas)
December 25, 2022

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 25:

Mon - Dec 26 – 9:00 am – **+Hank Weber** by Sheyenne Bierscheid
Tues - Dec 27 - 9:00 am - **+Souls in purgatory**
St. Leo’s — NO 9 am Daily Mass
Wed– Dec 28 - 9:00 am - **+Eugene Sherman** by His family
Thurs – Dec 29 – 9:00 am - **+Marie Hong Tran** by Lisa Tran
Fri – Dec 30 – 9:00 am - **+Gene Farrell** by Paul Nelson
Sat - Dec 31 – 5:00 pm - Larry Zaun by Missy Poulson
Sun - Jan 1 – St. Thomas - 8:30 am - +Kathy Wipf by **Keith & Joni Biggers**
St. Leo’s - 10:30 am - For the people of our parishes

Parish Staff:

Pastor: Fr. James Ermer
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Secretary: Delores Grommesh
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Prayer Chain:
Bea Bachmeier: 347-5555
Kelsey Lako: 793-7088
Maintenance: Paul & Sherry Radermacher
Phone: 701-793-7740; 701-793-7798

St. Leo’s Directors: Dave Glennon & Micah Bartholomay
St. Thomas Directors: Larry Zaun & Gary Milbrandt

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

Tues., Dec 27 - 7:00 pm - Annual Collar Classic: Priests vs. Seminarians at Shanley High School, Fargo
Sat., Dec 31 - 5:00 pm - St. Leo's - Mary, Mother of God Mass
Sun., Jan 1 - 8:30 am - St. Thomas - Mary, Mother of God Mass
Sun., Jan 1 - 10:30 am - St. Leo's - Mary, Mother of God Mass
Tues., Jan 3 - 7:00 pm - Liturgy committee meeting at the rectory
Wed., Jan 4 - **NO** Religious Education classes at St. Thomas and St. Leo's
Thurs., Jan 5 - 7:00 pm - Inquiry class on the Catholic Faith
Sun., Jan 8 - 11:30 am - St. Thomas Pastoral Council meeting
Sun., Jan 8 - 3:30 pm - KC Free Throw contest at the Central Cass Elementary School
Tues., Jan 10 - 7:00 pm - Cemetery committee meeting at the rectory

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God: Holy Day
Mass Schedule -

Saturday, December 31 - 5 pm at St. Leo's
Sunday, January 1 - 8:30 am at St. Thomas
10:30 am at St. Leo's

Upcoming Ministry Schedule

	Saturday Dec 31 5:00 pm <i>St. Leo's</i>	Sunday Jan 1 10:30 am <i>St. Leo's</i>	Sunday Jan 1 8:30 am <i>St. Thomas</i>
<i>Lector</i>	<div>Please see Sign-Up Sheets in the Church entry.</div>		Alecia Killoran
<i>Eucharistic Ministers</i>			Linda Milbrandt Jurgen Suhr
<i>Altar Servers</i>			Hallie Besette Piper Koller
<i>Offertory Collectors</i>	<i>Volunteers needed</i>	<i>Volunteers needed</i>	Keith & Joni Biggers
<i>Gift Bearers</i>	<i>Volunteers needed</i>	<i>Volunteers needed</i>	
<i>Lead Rosary</i>	Jessica Enge	Anna Garman	

NEWS AND NOTES

Thank you to all who donated to the Christmas environment:

Bea Bachmeier	in memory of Vince Bachmeier
Theresa Dooley	in memory of deceased members of the Frank Muscha & Gene Dooley families
Skip & Audrey Doyle	in honor of all St. Leo's parishioners
Tricia Gegelman	in memory of Ronn Schmidt
Mary & Cole Jendro	in memory of all deceased family members
Mark Julik & Brandi Hedin	in memory of Vicki Ridl
Margaret Kensok	in memory of Linus Kensok
Andy Levos Family	in memory of Julie Levos
Kent & Terri Monilaws	in memory of Barbara Korynta
Richard & Janice Muscha	in memory of Jake & Evelyn Schlenker and Joseph & Margaret Muscha
Don & Mary Ellen Nilles	in memory of the deceased Nilles and Duval family members
Sandra Nicolai Nystrom	in memory of Vincent E. Nicolai, Teresa Nicolai and Vincent S. Nicolai
Joyce Schmaltz	in memory of Robert Schmaltz, Glennis & Bennie Muscha
Jim & Paulette Schmitt	in memory of Ray & Clairice Schmitt and Leonard & Doris Brandenburg
Jane Sinner	in memory of the deceased Sinner and Beron family members
Pamela Spooner & Family	in memory of Paul Spooner & Nancy Spooner
Lois Titus	in memory of Al J. Artz, Marcella Artz and Neil Artz
Anonymous	in honor of Christmas music environment Liturgy volunteers

Prayers and Sympathy: Our Parish communities extend our deepest sympathies to Anne & Bob Pyle on the death of Bob's mother, Betty Lou.

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

2022 Contributors: Please try and have your 2022 contributions in before December 31st. IRS regulations say that if a donor wants to claim a contribution as a charitable deduction for 2022 for income tax purposes it must be received and postmarked by December 31st. Checks dated for December 31st will be credited to your 2022 offertory statement and checks dated January 1st will be credited to your 2023 statements. Thank you.

This week's Stewardship moment:

"And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us..." ~ John 1:14

God mad us to be in relationship with Him. He loves each of us individually. Through sin, our relationship with God was broken. He gave us Jesus to restore our relationship. Being a disciple of Jesus, we are given the model to obtain eternal life in Heaven. Christmas is not about the material gifts we receive; it is about the love that God, our Father, gave us by giving us His Son, Jesus — the best gift we could ever receive.



Council 9477

St. Leo's Knight of the Month:

The Knight for the month of **December** is **Adrian Kieffer**. Thank you Adrian for all you do for the KC's. Your dedication is greatly appreciated.

KC Christmas Coloring Contest: The coloring contest page needs to be returned to the parish office by January 1st. Thank you.

Knights of Columbus Free Throw Contest will beheld on **Sunday, January 8th at 3:30 pm** for boys & girls ages 9-12 at the Central Cass Elementary School.