

PASTOR'S NOTES

The Christmas Season

The Christmas season is the shortest season of the church's liturgical life. It begins with the celebration of the Christmas Mass and extends through the feast of the Baptism of the Lord, which this year falls on Sunday, January 12th. Between Christmas and the Baptism of the Lord the Church also celebrates today's feast of the **Holy Family** (December 29th) and the solemnities of **Mary, Mother of God** (January 1st) and the **Epiphany of the Lord** (January 5th). With his baptism by John the Baptist, Christ begins the three-year public ministry that is narrated in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

Christmas is much more than the sentimentality that is often associated with the manger scene. The Christmas season is really the Gospel in miniature. All the major themes found in the public ministry of Jesus are found in miniature in the stories that dominate the Christmas season. For example:

- (1) the angel's song at the birth of Jesus reminds us that Christ came to unite heaven and earth, which had been rent apart by the sin of our first parents;
- (2) when Jesus is found in the Temple he reminds his parents he must be about his Father's business, which is the essence of Christ's prayer in the garden of Gethsemane when he prays that his Father's will be done;
- (3) the story of the Magi remind us of the universality (catholicity) of Christ's mission to the whole of the human race;
- (4) Simeon's prophecy to Mary that her heart would be pierced by a sword [Lk. 2:35] looks forward to that famous sculpture work of the *Pieta* where Mary holds the body of her son as he is taken down from the Cross. All discipleship bears the mark of suffering.

With this understanding may our Christmas season be a little richer in appreciating the wonder of God's love — **which begins in a manger, is seemingly 'snuffed out' on Calvary, but breaks the bonds of death at Easter only to fill the world at Pentecost with the unconquerable hope of eternal life.** As John's Gospel says, "... *through him the world was made, yet the world did not know who he was. To his own he came, yet his own did not accept him. Anyone who did accept him he empowered to become children of God... of his fullness we have all had a share ... love following upon love.*" [Jn 1: 10-12,16]

Such is the beauty and splendor of Christmas, of a Christmas people, of a Christmas world!

Holy Day Mass schedule

January 1st is the Holy Day and solemnity of Mary, Mother of God. Mass schedule for that day is as follows:

- > **Tuesday, December 31st at 5 p.m.** at St. Thomas in Buffalo
- > **Wednesday, January 1st at 10 a.m.** at St. Leo's in Casselton

Thank You!!

Please know I am deeply grateful for all the Christmas greetings, cards, photos, goodies and gifts that have come my way during these festive days.

Your thoughtfulness is very much appreciated.

Do have a blessed 2020!!



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 Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph **December 29, 2019**

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 29:

Mon - Dec 30 - 9:00 am - **Kym Alex** by Patti Alex

Tues - Dec 31- 5:00 pm- Mass at St. Thomas- Mary, Mother of God Vigil Mass- +Marty Willson

NO 9 am Daily Mass

Wed - Jan 1 - 10:00 am- Mass at St. Leo's- Holy Day/Mary, Mother of God- +Fr. Gerald McCarthy

Thurs - Jan 2 - 9:00 am - **+Myrtle Mergner** by Marian Watson

Fri - Jan 3 - 9:00 am - **++Nick & Mary Ann Bachmeier** by Bea Bachmeier

Sat - Jan 4 - St. Leo's - 5:00 pm - Brian Pollock by Missy Poulson

Sun - Jan 5 - St. Thomas - 8:30 am Mass - Larry & Penny Zaun Family

St. Leo's - 10:30 am Mass - For the people of our parishes

Parish Staff:

Pastor: Fr. James Ermer

E-mail: james.ermer@fargodiocese.org

Secretary: Delores Grommesh

Phone: 701-347-4609

E-mail: stleo@casselton.net

Liturgy/RE: Sue Knoll

Phone: 701-347-4609

Cell: 701-261-2047

Website: www.stleosnd.org

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: Mark Rehovsky & Mark Wieland

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.


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

| PARISH EVENTS/MEETINGS                                                                                    |
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| <b>Tues., Dec 31 - 5:00 pm– Holy Day/Mary Mother of God– Mass at St. Thomas in Buffalo</b>                |
| <b>Wed., Jan 1 - 10:00 am– Holy Day/Mary Mother of God– Mass at St. Leo’s</b>                             |
| Sun., Jan 5 - 9:00 am - KC Breakfast in the Spirit of Life Center                                         |
| Tues., Jan 7 - 7:00 pm - Cemetery committee meeting at the rectory                                        |
| Wed., Jan 8 - 3:45 pm - RE classes at St. Thomas                                                          |
| Wed., Jan 8 - 6:30 pm - RE classes at St. Leo’s, Simple Supper at 6:00 pm<br>6:15 pm - Junior class meets |
| Thurs., Jan 9 - 12:00 pm - Casselton Ministerium meeting in the Spirit of Life Center                     |
| Tues., Jan 14 - 7:00 pm - Liturgy meeting at the rectory                                                  |
| Tues., Jan 21 - 7:00 pm - Finance committee meeting at the rectory                                        |
| Tues., Jan 28 - 7:00 pm - Pastoral Council meeting at the rectory                                         |

**A Christmas Season “Thank You”:** As we continue to celebrate the Christmas Season, we extend a special thanks to all the people who helped make our Christmas so special- the environment decorators, the Mass Coordinators, Lectors, EMHCs, Mass servers, ushers, greeters, gift bearers, and musicians. We thank those who took time out of busy schedules to plan, prepare, and practice so that everything we did gave glory to God. A special Thank You to Micah Bartholomay for the making and the lighting of our Christmas wreath. Thank you! Have a blessed New Year!

| <i>Upcoming Ministry Schedule</i>                                                  |                                                 |                                                |                                                                                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <b>Saturday Jan 4<br/>5:00 pm<br/>St. Leo’s</b> | <b>Sunday Jan 5<br/>8:30 am<br/>St. Thomas</b> | <b>Sunday Jan 5<br/>10:30 am<br/>St. Leo’s</b>                                  |
| <i>Lector</i>                                                                      | Tricia Gegelman<br>Lois Titus                   | Gary Milbrandt                                 | Anna Garman<br>Gavin Oberlander                                                 |
| <i>Eucharistic Ministers</i>                                                       | Lucy Wagner<br>Mona Franck                      | Penny Zaun<br>Joni Biggers                     | Micah Bartholomay<br>Kristi Dutchuk<br>Leo Kieffer<br>Pam Spooner<br>Jerry Volk |
| <i>Altar Servers</i>                                                               | Nikita Howard<br>Ethan Richard                  | Courtney Hovelson<br>Hallie Besette            | Addison Hushka<br>Lucas Miller<br>Andy or Anthony Garman                        |
| <i>Offertory Collectors</i>                                                        | <i>Volunteer needed</i>                         | Claudia Von Bank<br>John Hansen                | <i>Volunteer needed</i>                                                         |
| <i>Gift Bearers</i>                                                                | <i>Volunteer needed</i>                         | Ron & Carol Howitz                             | <i>Volunteer needed</i>                                                         |

| NEWS AND NOTES                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
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| <p><b><u>Thank you to all who donated to the Christmas environment: St. Leo’s:</u></b></p> <div> <div> Bea Bachmeier<br/>Don &amp; Audrey Cramer<br/><br/>Theresa Dooley<br/><br/>Skip &amp; Audrey Doyle<br/>Cole &amp; Mary Jendro<br/>Ron &amp; Dung Thuy Kaufman<br/>Linus &amp; Margaret Kensok<br/>Ron &amp; Lorraine Kensok<br/>Perry &amp; Dawn Lubbers<br/>Kent &amp; Terri Monilaws<br/>Richard &amp; Janice Muscha<br/>Ralph &amp; Barb Nelson<br/>Don &amp; Mary Ellen Nilles<br/>Sandra Nicolai Nystrom<br/>Paul Puhr<br/>Jim &amp; Paulette Schmitt<br/>Rick Voeller<br/>Hank Weber </div> <div> in memory of Vince Bachmeier<br/>in honor of all living family members &amp; in memory of all deceased family members<br/>in honor of all living family members &amp; in memory of all deceased Dooley &amp; Muscha family members<br/>in honor of all St. Leo’s parishioners<br/>in honor of al living family members<br/>in memory of Zachary Kaufman<br/>in memory of all their deceased brothers &amp; sisters<br/>in honor of all deceased family members<br/>in memory of Christopher Perry Lubbers<br/>in memory of Barb Korynta and Katherine Adam<br/>in memory of Joe &amp; Margaret Muscha and Jake &amp; Evelyn Schlenker<br/>in memory of Ralph P. Nelson<br/>in memory of Duval Family members &amp; Nilles Family members<br/>in memory of Vince Nicolai and Dale Nystrom<br/>in memory of John &amp; Alice Puhr<br/>in memory of Leonard Brandenburg and Ray &amp; Clarice Schmit<br/>in memory of Roddie Voeller<br/>in memory of Dona Weber </div> </div> |

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| <p><b>Children’s Envelopes:</b> Due to production issues, the company we receive our children’s envelopes from are behind on orders. Until the regular envelopes arrive there are supplementary envelopes available at the back of the church for use. We ask that you please write your child’s name on the envelope so they may be recorded correctly. Thank you.</p> <p><b>2019 Contributors:</b> We ask that you please try and have your 2019 contributions in before December 31<sup>st</sup>. IRS regulations say that if a donor wants to claim a contribution as a charitable deduction for 2019 for income tax purposes, it must be received or postmarked by December 31<sup>st</sup>. Checks dated for December 31<sup>st</sup> will be credited to your 2019 offertory statement and checks dated January 1<sup>st</sup> will be credited to your 2020 statements. Thank you.</p> | <p><b>Knights of Columbus Breakfast:</b><br/>  Sunday, Jan., 5<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 am to 12:00 pm in the Spirit of Life Center. Serving French toast and Sausage. Free will offering.</p>                                |
| <p><b>This week’s Stewardship moment:</b><br/> <i>“Wives, be subordinate to your husbands...Husbands, love your wives...Children, obey your parents in everything...Fathers, do not provoke your children...” - Colossians 3:18-21</i><br/> Pope Francis said that families, through their life or prayer and love, become “schools of true human growth.” Being credible witnesses of Christian love, especially that of family members, exerts the most positive influence on our children. We are all Children of God, let us pray and love each other as God, Our Father , does for us.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <p><b>Catholic Collage:</b> February 9, 16 &amp; 23, 2020 at Shanley High School. Please see the flyer and registration forms on the bulletin board at the back of the church. Visit: <a href="http://www.catholiccollage.com">www.catholiccollage.com</a> for more information and to register online.</p> |