


PARISH EVENTS/MEETINGS

Tues., Dec 24 - 5:00 pm - Christmas Eve- Mass at St. Thomas
9:30 pm - Christmas Eve- Mass at St. Leo's; Carols begin at 9 pm
Wed., Dec 25 - 10:00 am - Christmas Day- Mass at St. Leo's
 Tues., Dec 31 - 5:00 pm - Mary, Mother of God/Holy Day Vigil Mass at St. Thomas
 Wed., Jan 1 - 10:00 am - Mary, Mother of God/Holy Day Mass at St. Leo's
 Sun., Jan 5 - 9:00 am - KC Breakfast in the Spirit of Life Center
 Wed., Jan 8 - Religious Education classes resume
 Mon, Jan 13 - 6:30 pm - KC meeting at the rectory
 Tues., Jan 14 - Social Concerns committee meeting at the rectory

Thank you to West Funeral Home for providing the *Places of Pilgrimage* calendars for 2025. The calendars are located on a table in the church entry. Please take only one per household. Thank you.

Christmas Eve/Day Ministry Sign Up:
 Please see the sign up sheets in the church entry for Readers, Altar Servers and Eucharistic Ministers for our upcoming Christmas Eve/Day Masses. Please consider signing up if you are planning to attend any of these Masses. Thank you.

Upcoming Ministry Schedule

	Saturday Dec 28 5:00 pm <i>St. Leo's</i> 4th Sat of December	Sunday Dec 29 8:30 am <i>St. Thomas</i>	Sunday Dec 29 10:30 am <i>St. Leo's</i> 5th Sun of December
Lector	Tony Roth	Alecia Killoran	Darcee Rehovsky
Eucharistic Ministers	Paulette Schmitt Mona Franck	Keith Biggers Kristi Hovelson	Virjean Cramer Susan Kempel Mark Rehovsky Deb Werner Jake Werner
Altar Servers	Evelyn Roth Joe Kappes Jensen Kappes	Abigail Killoran Claire Halland	Lucas Miller Hayden Faleide
Offertory Collectors	<i>Volunteers needed</i>	Travis & Darcie Besette	<i>Volunteers needed</i>
Gift Bearers	<i>Volunteers needed</i>	JoEllen Killoran Betty Lou Stallman	<i>Volunteers needed</i>
Lead Rosary	Michelle Kappes		Alexia Kieffer

NEWS AND NOTES

Christmas Eve/Christmas Day Mass Schedule

Christmas Eve - 5:00 pm Mass at St. Thomas
 9:30 pm Mass at St. Leo's;
 Carols begin at 9 pm
 Christmas Day - 10:00 am Mass at St. Leo's

Christmas Church Decorating: All parishioners are welcome to come and help decorate the church for Christmas. Decorating will be at 9:00 am on Christmas Eve, Tuesday, December 24th. Young and old are welcome. Treats will be served!

Holy Family Sunday: On Sat., Dec. 28th and Sun., Dec. 29th (Holy Family Sunday) at the 5:00 pm (Sat) and 10:30 am (Sun) Masses, 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 before Mass begins.



Gifts for the Child: We will again be collecting items such as diapers, formula, baby wash, baby bottles, clothing and blankets to be given to Birthright of Fargo/Moorhead, a pregnancy support service for women and children. Donated items can be put by the crib located in the church entry. Monetary donations can also be turned in to the parish office.



Cameroon Card Clearance Sale: For a limited time there is a table set up in the Spirit of Life Center to purchase cards one last time. Monies raised from the card sales is sent to our Mission in Cameroon, Africa. Clearance Sale Cards can be purchased for free will donation. Thank you for your support towards our mission.

This week's Stewardship moment:

"For behold, when the voice of your greeting came to my ears, the babe in my womb leaped for joy." ~ Luke 1:44
 When you hear the scripture readings and Gospel reading at Mass, do you "leap for joy?" If not, don't blame the lecturer or priest, rather look inside yourself. What are you doing to grow in friendship with Jesus? How do you prepare for Mass each week? Do you just show up and expect to be entertained? As the Body of Christ, we are called to be active participants, not just passive observers.

Fourth Week of Advent:

Candle Color - Purple
 Candle Represents - Love
 During this final week of Advent we rejoice in the endless love that God has for us, which is made apparent in the birth of his Son. We reflect on the good news of God's love brought to us from the angel Gabriel.



Council 9477

St. Leo's Knight of the Month:

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

Knights of Columbus Breakfast:

Serving pancakes and sausage **Sunday, January 5th from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm** in the Spirit of Life Center. Free will offering.

Knights of Columbus Free Throw Contest

will beheld on Sunday, **January 12th at 2:00 pm** for boys & girls ages 9 - 12 in the Central Cass Elementary School West Gym.

Advent Bingo Night:

What a night of fun, laughter and good treats were had by all this past Wed., Dec. 18! We had around 200 people come and play Bingo. Special thanks to members of our Education Committee - Mary Richard, Mallory Poulson, Patty Glennon, Lucas Steckler and Michelle Kappes along with the crew that served simple supper for all their hard work. Also, a big thanks to the awesome 7th and 8th graders who came to "work" bingo night with Virjean Cramer and Paul Olsen. Advent Bingo night brought in 118 food items and \$203, all donated to the Casselton Food Pantry. Thanks so much!

PASTOR'S NOTES

A preface

Christmas usually elicits fond memories of a babe born in a manger along with dotting parents standing at his side. The child gets visited by shepherds and magi.

But this is no normal birth. It is a virgin birth, i.e., there was no usual father involved in the conception. As Scripture says, conception came about by "... *the Holy Spirit will come upon you (Mary) and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; hence the holy offspring to be born will be called Son of God.*" [Lk. 1:35] What lies behind this mystery of words? Is there a plan of some sort going on? What does all of this mean?

[Two spiritual writers address this mystery known as the Incarnation: **Diognetus** was a late 2nd century writer who attempts to explain the Christian God to pagans; **Pope St. Leo the Great** (400-461) was the 45th Pope in the life of the Church *{our patron saint}*, and wrote extensively about the divine personhood of Christ.]

Christmas began with the Fall —

The human story began in Paradise, but the Fall got us kicked out. **But**, God would not give up on us (*the best of his creative acts*). He devised a plan of redemption for the human race and shared it with his Son. He would do nothing without our cooperation.

Diognetus writes, "{God} allowed us to follow our own whim, be swept along by unruly passions, to be led astray by pleasure and desire. Not that he was pleased by our sins: he only tolerated them. Not that he approved of that time of sin." He sent patriarchs and prophets to no avail. "When we had made it clear that we could not enter God's kingdom by our own power, we were to be enabled to do it by the power of God."

"The time came then for God to make known his kindness and power ... he was patient with us, bore with us, and in compassion took our sins upon himself."

St. Leo the Great writes, "The Holy Spirit had not yet come upon the Virgin nor had the power of the Most High overshadowed her, so that within her spotless womb Wisdom might build herself a new house and the Word become flesh. The divine nature and the nature of a servant were to be united in one person so that the Creator of time might be born in time, and he through whom all things were made might be brought forth in their midst."

"For unless the new man, by being made in the likeness of sinful humanity, had taken on himself the nature of our first parents, unless he had stooped to be one in substance with his mother while sharing the Father's substance and, being alone free from sin, united our nature to his, the whole human race would still be held captive under the dominion of Satan. The Conqueror's victory would have profited us nothing if the battle had been fought outside our human condition."

Diognetus writes, "... he gave his own Son as the price of our redemption, the holy one to redeem the wicked, the sinless one to redeem sinners, the just one to redeem the unjust, the incorruptible one to redeem the corruptible, the immortal one to redeem mortals. For what else could have covered our sins but his sinlessness? Where else could we – wicked and sinful as we were – have found the means of holiness except in the Son of God alone? ... how inconceivable a blessing! The wickedness of the many is covered up in the holy One, and the holiness of One sanctifies many sinners."

Or as St. Leo's says, "But through this wonderful blending the mystery of new birth shown upon us, so that through the same Spirit by whom Christ was conceived and brought forth we too might be born again in a spiritual birth; and in consequence the evangelist [John] declares the faithful 'to have been born not of blood, nor of desire of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God'."

Such is Christmas and the wonder of His love.



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



FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT December 22, 2024

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 22:

Mon – Dec 23 – 9:00 am – +Souls in purgatory

Tues – Dec 24– Christmas Eve - 5:00 pm - St. Thomas - **NO** 9 am Daily Mass

Tues – Dec 24– Christmas Eve - 9:30 pm - St. Leo's - +Pat Schuler by Patty & Tony Roth
9:00 pm - Carols begin

Wed – Dec 25 – Christmas Day - 10:00 am – St. Leo's - ++Greg & Harriet Dimmer

Thurs – Dec 26 – 9:00 am – +Souls in purgatory

Fri – Dec 27 – 9:00 am – +Rick Keller by Peggy Bauslaugh

Saturday – Dec 28 – 5:00 pm - +Larry Goldade by Richard Muscha

Sunday - Dec 29 – St. Thomas - 8:30 am - +Luke Von Bank by Frank & Laura Biggers
St. Leo's - 10:30 am - For the people of our parishes

Parish Staff:

Pastor: Fr. James Ermer

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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.

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