

PASTOR'S NOTES

Ongoing church notes regarding COVID ...

As we continue to navigate COVID vaccinations and lowering numbers, the Church is presently suggesting that the blessings of throats on Wednesday, February 3rd be done with the general prayer blessing for this devotion over the people. For those who would like to receive the individual blessing they may do so after the general blessing. **We will do this blessing after the 9 a.m. daily Mass and at 7:30 p.m. for the closing of Religious Education classes on this coming Wednesday evening.**

As regards the distribution of ashes on Ash Wednesday the Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline for the Sacraments issued a NOTE that ashes be sprinkled on the heads of people rather than imposing them. Also since we have the ability to broadcast our church service into the Spirit of Life Center we believe we can safely celebrate our Ash Wednesday liturgies at 5:30 pm at St. Thomas in Buffalo and at 7 p.m. at St. Leo's on Wednesday, February 17th.

A recent note from our diocesan liturgy office said that further instructions may be forthcoming since the Governor recently lowered the risk factor for the state of North Dakota.

Stay tuned!!

Blessing of Throats

Every February 3rd we celebrate the memorial of St. Blaise, who is associated with the Catholic sacramental practice of the *Blessing of Throats*.

The story goes that St. Blaise was bishop of Sebaste, Armenia (present day Turkey) in the early 300s. This was an age of vicious persecution of Christians under the Roman emperor, Licinius. Blaise was known for his ability to heal and cure. While imprisoned Blaise miraculously cured a young boy who nearly died because of a fishbone caught in his throat. Supposedly he used two candles that had been brought to him in prison and placed them in the form of a cross around the boy's throat. Blaise was later beheaded and is now known as a martyr in the life of the Church. Since the 8th century St. Blaise has been invoked on behalf of the sick, especially those afflicted with illnesses of the throat.

The Church's present *Book of Blessings* acknowledges that —

“suffering and illness have always been among the greatest problems that trouble the human spirit ... Part of the plan laid out by God's providence is that we should fight strenuously against all sickness and carefully seek the blessings of good health ... The blessing of the sick by ministers of the Church is a very ancient custom, rooted in imitation of Christ himself and his apostles. ... In the United States the annual blessing of throats is a traditional sign of the struggle against illness in the life of a Christian ... the blessing may be given by touching the throat of each person with two candles blessed on the feast of the Presentation of the Lord (February 2nd) and which are joined together in the form of the cross.”

The *Book of Blessing* speaks of candles that were blessed on the feast of the Presentation of the Lord (February 2nd). This feast is always the 40th day after Christmas which is narrated in Luke's Gospel. [Luke 2:22-35] Jewish practice was that 40 days after the birth of a son the mother was to be purified and the first-born son was to be “consecrated to the Lord.” At this presentation of Jesus in the Temple of Jerusalem Simeon acknowledges Jesus to be “a revealing light to the Gentiles, the glory of your people Israel.” Out of this biblical narrative arose the practice of blessing candles for home use. From these blessed candles the Church's minister bestows the blessing associated with St. Blaise on February 3rd.



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 IN ORDINARY TIME January 31, 2021

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 Jan 31:

Mon - Feb 1 - 9:00 am - +**Janice Miller** by Pat Palmer

Tues - Feb 2 - 9:00 am - St. Thomas - +**Msgr. Joseph Senger**

St. Leo's - NO MASS

Wed - Feb 3 - 9:00 am - +**John 'Jack' Ermer** by Wayne & Roxanne Gapp

Thurs - Feb 4 - 9:00 am - +**Duane Mergner** by Marian Watson

Fri - Feb 5 - 9:00 am - +**Ann Marschke** by Mary Jendro

Sat - Feb 6 - 5:00 pm - ++Paul & Eileen Grommesh by Gary & Delores Grommesh

Sun - Feb 7 - St. Thomas - 8:30 am - For the people of our parishes

St. Leo's - 10:30 am - +Debbie Kelly by Barb Olson

Parish Staff:

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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: Mark Rehovsky & Dave Glennon

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

Sun., Jan 31 - **NO Beverage and Bite** after 10:30 am Mass  
Tues., Feb 2 - 7:00 pm - Social Concerns Committee meeting in the Spirit of Life Center  
Wed., Feb 3 - 3:45 pm - RE classes at St. Thomas - Group B  
6:30 pm - Re classes at St. Leo’s - Group B, Simple Supper at 6:00 pm  
6:15 pm - Junior class meets  
Thurs., Feb 4 - 7:00 pm - Inquiry Class on the Catholic Faith in large classroom in lower level of church  
Thurs., Feb 4 - 7:00 pm - Rosary for Respect of Life led by the KCs  
Fri., Feb 5 - 7:00 pm - Rosary for Respect of Life led by the KCs  
Sun., Feb 7 - **NO Beverage and Bite** after 10:30 am Mass  
Sun., Feb 7 - 4:00 pm - RE 10<sup>th</sup> grade in Spirit of Life Center  
Tues., Feb 9 - 7:00 pm - Religious Education Committee meeting in the Spirit of Life Center  
Thurs., Feb 11 - 12:00 pm - Casselton Ministerium meeting in the Spirit of Life Center  
Thurs., Feb 11 - 7:00 pm - Inquiry Class on the Catholic Faith in large classroom in lower level of church  
**Wed., Feb 17 - 5:30 pm - Ash Wednesday Mass at St. Thomas in Buffalo**  
**7:00 pm - Ash Wednesday Mass at St. Leo’s**

**NO Annual Meeting; Yes, Tax Statements:** St. Leo’s Pastoral Council decided not to have an in-person annual meeting this year (usually held the first Sunday of February). Beginning next weekend (Feb 6/7) the packets containing reports from each of the committees and the yearly tax statements will be available for pickup after the weekend Masses.

Upcoming Ministry Schedule

|                                                                                    |                                                             |                                                            |                                                            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <b>Saturday Feb 6</b><br><b>5:00 pm</b><br><i>St. Leo’s</i> | <b>Sunday Feb 7</b><br><b>8:30 am</b><br><i>St. Thomas</i> | <b>Sunday Feb 7</b><br><b>10:30 am</b><br><i>St. Leo’s</i> |
| <i>Lector</i>                                                                      | Tricia Gegelman<br>Lois Titus                               | Jackie Vavra                                               | Anna Garman<br>Gavin Oberlander                            |
| <i>Eucharistic Ministers</i>                                                       | Lucy Wagner                                                 |                                                            | Micah Bartholomay                                          |
| <i>Altar Servers</i>                                                               | Nikita Howard<br>Ethan Richard                              | Courtney Hovelson                                          | Jacob Dutchuk<br>Isabelle Dutchuk<br>Eva or Olivia Garman  |
| <i>Offertory Collectors</i>                                                        | <i>Volunteers needed</i>                                    | Larry & Penny Zaun                                         | <i>Volunteers needed</i>                                   |
| <i>Gift Bearers</i>                                                                |                                                             |                                                            |                                                            |

NEWS AND NOTES

**Year of St. Joseph:** Last week Fr. Ermer wrote about the Year of St. Joseph (December 9, 2020 - December 8, 2021) in his pastor’s notes. Beginning this weekend we will have a poster on the bulletin board in the church entry outlining some ways to grow in knowledge and love of this great Saint by our own Seminarian Matt Kensok. Please see the bulletin board for more information and resources provided by Matt.

**GIVING HEARTS DAY—Thursday, February 11<sup>th</sup>**  
What is Giving Hearts Day? Giving Hearts Day was started in 2008 by Dakota Medical Foundation and Impact Foundation as the region’s first one-day ‘virtual’ fundraising event to create awareness for many charities in ND and western Minnesota and for individuals to make donations. St. Leo’s has personally received cards from Catholic Charities, Community of Care and Women’s Care Center to consider making a donation to. You can go on line to see a complete list over 400 charities to choose from. Donations can be made by check directly to the organization, but must be dated February 11<sup>th</sup> and received by February 11<sup>th</sup>. For more information on Giving Hearts Day and to make a donation please visit: [www.GivingHeartsDay.org](http://www.GivingHeartsDay.org).

**Catholic Daughters to Meet:** Court St. Ann #261 of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas will meet Tuesday, February 9<sup>th</sup> at St. Anthony's beginning with Mass at 5:15 pm; meal to follow (Unit 2 serving) and meeting at 6:30 pm. St. Anthony's requires attendees to wear a mask and to follow social distancing guidelines. If interested in CDA, please join us at our meeting. Members are invited to bring food pantry donations. Any questions, please send email to [regentctstann@gmail.com](mailto:regentctstann@gmail.com).

**This week’s Stewardship moment:**  
*“Brothers and sisters: I should like you to be free of anxieties.” - 1 Corinthians 7:32*  
How much anxiety do we bring upon ourselves by constantly worrying about not having enough or attaining more things? God won’t necessarily give you everything you want, but He will provide everything you need. Try this — use the word “pray” instead of the word “worry” in the future. Then pray for things instead of worrying about them.



**St. Leo’s Knights of Columbus will be praying a Rosary for Respect of Life** on Thursday, **February 4<sup>th</sup>** and **Friday, February 5<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm** both nights. All parishioners are welcome to come and pray the rosary with the Knights.



**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 a reasonable purchase price including Valentines Day cards. Cost of cards is 50¢, please place money in envelope provided and return to parish office.

**Palms, Nails and Lenten canisters:**  
*If you have nails and old palms at home, you are welcome to bring them to the church to be used on Ash Wednesday. If you have any old Lenten canisters at home, we ask that you please return them as soon as possible. This helps us to defray the cost of purchasing new canisters for this year’s Lenten season. Each canister costs around \$1. Thank you.*