

PASTOR'S NOTES

Welcome home, Matthew

Our seminarian, Matthew Kensok, will be home from the seminary and helping at both St. Leo's and St. Thomas parish from the beginning of December until the middle part of January 2021. During these six weeks Matthew will be hopefully getting some practical and pastoral experiences of parish life. He is presently attending Mt. St. Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg, Maryland and is in his third year of theology studies and formation. Matthew will be ordained a transitional deacon this coming June (2021), and ordained to the priesthood in June of 2022.

This year Mt. St. Mary's Seminary started their school year earlier in August and did not take a Fall break. This has allowed those seminarians to get this 'six-week' break between Thanksgiving and mid-January. In turn, this has allowed seminarians to get some great experiences in the many aspects of parish life. Hopefully, these experiences will serve them well as they look forward to their days as a parish priest.

Do not be afraid to introduce yourself to Matthew (*or even invite him to your home*). He is looking forward to offering some Advent and Christmas reflections, doing a short Bible study, visiting and teaching RE classes, helping with liturgies, etc. **Welcome – Matthew!!**

Advent — getting it straight ... doing it right

Of the five (5) seasons of the church year, Advent gets short shrift. It gets pushed out of the way as people make a mad dash for Christmas. The meaning and purpose of Advent is often never explored nor experienced. We have all learned from the world of medicine that having the right diagnosis makes all the difference in the world for the restoration of one's health. Knowing the place of Advent in the life of the Church is critical for living the life of the Church.

Advent begins the church year. **Advent is not Christmas!** Advent sets the stage for what is to come – *the gift of a Christmas Child whose life-giving death and resurrection will literally change time and history.* Advent is that time in which the human spirit ponders the question – Do I (we) really need such a child? How can a child change time and history?

In our absolute busyness we do not take time to ponder the full purpose of life and living. We get caught in the present moment and all its pressing needs – *making a living, paying bills, seeking the good life, keeping up with the Jones', funding our leisures, insuring our retirements, besting our competitors, establishing connections, having the latest app, seeking the best deal, etc.*

Whether we do any of this well or poorly, we are all going to die. Then what? That is where the season of Advent begins.

In this first Sunday of Advent the Gospel speaks of a gate of which a gatekeeper is to tend – to be on alert for the arrival of the master who has been traveling abroad. (*The presumed Master is Christ who is coming a second time*). In the first reading of this Advent Sunday Isaiah the prophet writes, "Would that you (*the Lord*) might meet us doing right, that we were mindful of you in our ways!" This is in contrast with being 'like withered leaves who never call upon his name nor rouse themselves to cling to him' (*the Lord*).

This week's clarion call to be on '*Watch*' will be followed by '*Repent*' in Advent's second week, '*Make ready the way of the Lord*' in Advent's third week, and '*Be not afraid*' in Advent's last week when an angel comes to a virgin in a little known town called Nazareth. It is from there that salvation dawns upon human history.

Salvation comes to those who attend to (*watch*) the Master of time and history. They know they have fallen short (*repent*) of the Master's glory and make amends (*make straight the way of the Lord*). It is to these that God's glory comes and takes up residence (*Be not afraid*). **Christmas can only really come to those who have attended to Advent!**



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



FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT November 29, 2020

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 Nov 29:

Mon - Nov 30 - 9:00 am - +Ernest Watson by Marian Watson

Tues - Dec 1 - 9:00 am - St. Thomas - +Souls in purgatory

St. Leo's - NO MASS

Wed - Dec 2 - 9:00 am - Ron Browning by Richard & Joanne Browning

Thurs - Dec 3 - 9:00 am - +Duane Mergner

Fri - Dec 4 - 9:00 am - +Don Gill by Ron & Lorraine Kensok

Sat - Dec 5 - 5:00 pm - +Ken Waldorf by Gary & Delores Grommesh

Sun - Dec 6 - St. Thomas - 8:30 am - +Kevin Loibl by Keith & Joni Biggers

St. Leo's - 10:30 am - 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

E-mail: dre@stleosnd.org

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 & 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., Nov 29 - **NO Beverage and Bite** after 10:30 am Mass  
 Mon., Nov 30 - 7:00 pm - St. Thomas Pastoral Council meeting  
 Tues., Dec 1 - 7:00 pm - First Eucharist Parent meeting in the Spirit of Life Center  
 Wed., Dec 2 - 3:45 pm - RE classes at St. Thomas - Group A  
     6:30 pm - Re classes at St. Leo's - Group A, Simple Supper at 6:00 pm  
     6:15 pm - Senior class meets  
 Thurs., Dec 3 - 7:00 pm - Inquiry Class on the Catholic Faith in large classroom in lower level of church  
 Sun., Dec 6 - **NO Beverage and Bite** after 10:30 am Mass  
 Mon., Dec 7 - 6:00 pm - Holy Day/Immaculate Conception Vigil Mass at St. Thomas in Buffalo  
 Tues., Dec 8 - 7:00 pm - Holy Day/Immaculate Conception Mass at St. Leo's



**GIFTS for THE CHILD:** We will again be collecting items to be shared with those in need. As in the past we have donated to some of the agencies that work with expectant parents. So formula, diapers, clothing and toys are very much appreciated. Monetary donations can also be turned in to the parish office.

### Upcoming Ministry Schedule

|  | <b>Saturday Dec 5</b><br><b>5:00 pm</b><br><i>St. Leo's</i> | <b>Sunday Dec 6</b><br><b>8:30 am</b><br><i>St. Thomas</i> | <b>Sunday Dec 6</b><br><b>10:30 am</b><br><i>St. Leo's</i> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Lector</b>                                                                      | Tricia Gegelman<br>Lois Titus                               | Gary Milbrandt                                             | Anna Garman<br>Gavin Oberlander                            |
| <b>Eucharistic Ministers</b>                                                       |                                                             |                                                            |                                                            |
| <b>Altar Servers</b>                                                               | Nikita Howard<br>Ethan Richard                              | Courtney Hovelson                                          | Jacob Dutchuk<br>Isabelle Dutchuk<br>Eva or Olivia Garman  |
| <b>Offertory Collectors</b>                                                        | <i>Volunteers needed</i>                                    | Gary & Linda<br>Milbrandt                                  | <i>Volunteers needed</i>                                   |
| <b>Gift Bearers</b>                                                                | <i>Volunteers needed</i>                                    |                                                            | <i>Volunteers needed</i>                                   |

## NEWS AND NOTES

### Mass Schedule for Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary-Holy Day

Mon., Dec 7<sup>th</sup> - 6 pm Mass at St. Thomas  
 Tues., Dec 8<sup>th</sup> - 7 pm Mass at St. Leo's



**Christmas Music:** We will need to do things a little differently this year! We would like to invite any and all musicians to take part in our Carols before Christmas Eve Mass. We will do it with small groups and it would be in the church sanctuary. So we are looking for small groups, like family groups, who would like to present a song during this time. If you would be interested, or need more information, please call Sue. 347-4609/ 261-2047.

**ADVENT Opportunities:** There are copies of various Advent booklets in the church entrances. Help yourself.

### Advent Bible Study with Seminarian Matt Kensok

Join seminarian Matt Kensok for a bible study through the infancy narratives of the Gospels (Luke 1-2 and Matthew 1-2). There will be 3 sessions: 12/3, 12/10, & 12/17 (it is okay to miss once or twice – come when you can). Bring your bible. Masks and physical distancing are encouraged.

Spirit of Life Center -  
Thursdays, 7:00-8:00 PM

Dec. 3 – Luke 1  
 Dec. 10 – Luke 2  
 Dec. 17 – Matthew 1-2

Please see the flyer on the bulletin board for more information.

**West Funeral Home Holiday Remembrance Service:** Due to COVID 19, our Annual Service of Remembrance will not be held in person. It will be recorded and uploaded to our website on Wednesday, November 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and can be viewed at your convenience anytime after that. [www.westfuneralhome.com](http://www.westfuneralhome.com)



### Help Support our Cameroon Card Mission:

Cards are available for purchase in the magazine rack in church entry. Cost of cards is .50 cents, please place money in envelope provided and return to parish office. All proceeds go to the mission.

### This week's Stewardship moment:

*"Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time will come." - Mark 13:33*

We all take things for granted. In particular, we take time for granted. We make our lives too busy. We plan our time, our days, weeks, months, even years in advance. Remember, our time on earth is a gift. None of us knows how long we will be here. Start today and begin thanking God for each and every day. Take time in silence, every day, and listen to how God is calling you right now to help build His kingdom on earth.