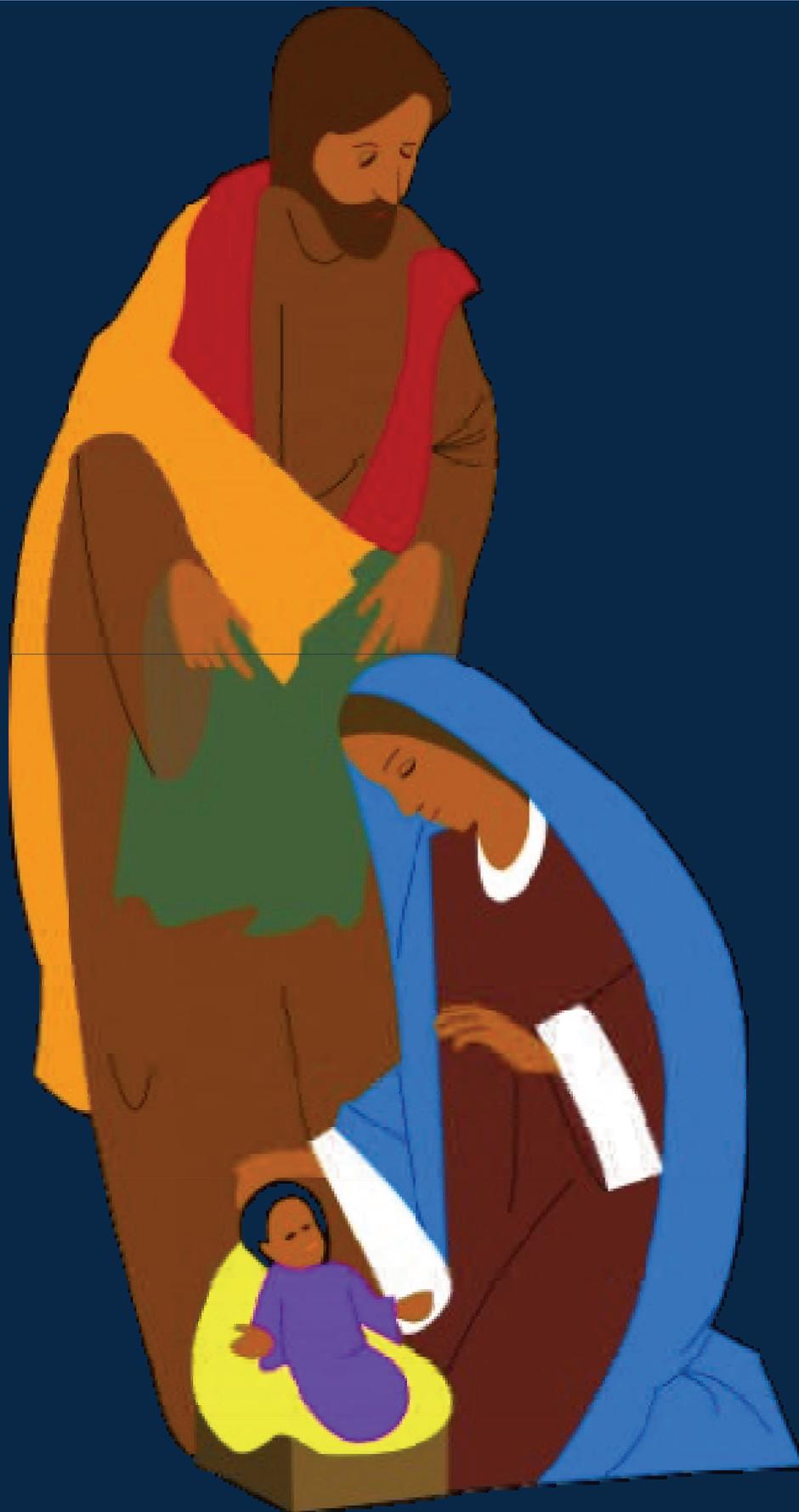


*ST. LEO THE GREAT PARISH  
DECEMBER 2019 NEWSLETTER*



# BECAUSE OF YOU . . .

*St. Leo's struggle and its gift is its poverty. In order to continue and expand its mission and ministry to the community and our immigrant and refugee parishioners we need to reach out to others to help us through prayer, finances, and service. Through God's grace it becomes mutual blessing.*



# AND SO WE THANK YOU ...



**Many, many thanks** to the donors who provided dozens and dozens of girls' and boys' uniform pants socks for St. Leo's students to attend Catholic schools. Our students and their families are sincerely grateful!

**Many thanks to our  
Monthly Overhead Sponsor  
for December  
Kind Anonymous Donor**



**Many, many thanks to the entire Our Lady of Visitation Grade School community** for providing a huge supply of assorted baby items to provide "welcome new baby" gift bags for the new babies arriving at St. Leo's parish.



**Many, many thanks to the St. Maximilian Kolbe Knights of Columbus** for providing eight dozen children's coats sizes 6-16. St. Leo's children will certainly be ready for winter weather!



**Many, many thanks to Immaculate Heart of Mary parish** for providing dozens and dozens of new and gently used adult sized coats to keep our St. Leo's parishioners warm all winter!

# ¡GRACIAS! MURAKOZE! THANK YOU!

We are deeply grateful for your continued and generous support. Our St. Leo the Great parish community promises to remember you and your loved ones in our private prayer, as well as in our communal prayer, which is to say that we are praying for you all the time. May our gracious God fill you with every blessing!

# PASTOR'S PONDERINGS . . .

This month begins with the Season of Advent and ends with the Season of Christmas. This month is filled with expectation, waiting, awareness, preparation and celebration, fulfillment, presence (and presents) joy, gratitude, new life and birth. Yes, all these feelings are true and real this time of the year. Many things like immigration, jobs, economy, and foreign diplomacy need solutions and reform. Threats of a nuclear strike and terrorism still exist. Natural disasters have wreaked havoc on many parts of our country and the world and we remember and celebrate that Christ has been born in our midst, in human form and shape. Christ came and is coming with the gift of salvation. How can we become more aware of his arrival and prepare for his coming? How can we welcome him more into our lives, families, policies, politics, work and relationships and dealings with all others? How can we be more welcoming of our Savior into our hearts and homes? Will we not impede him and allow him to continue to save us?

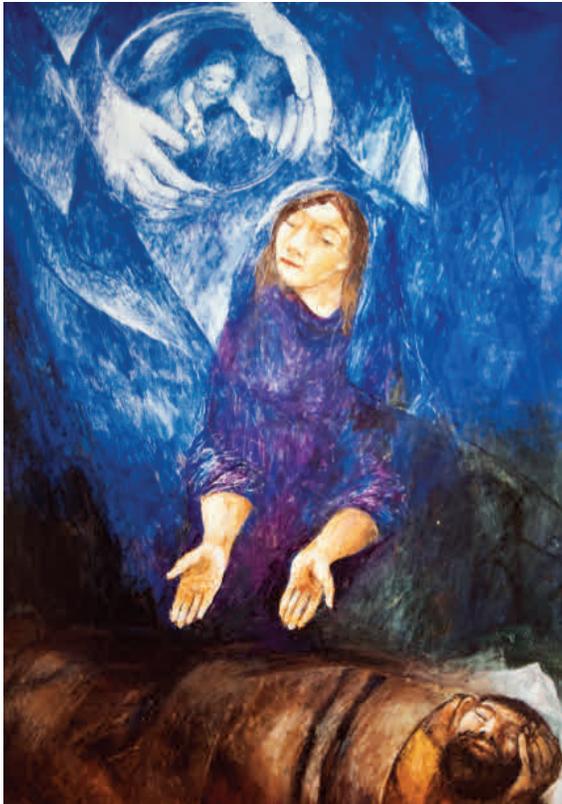
What does it mean to prepare for Christ's coming into our lives? What does it mean to prepare for his return at the end of time? What does it mean to celebrate his presence in our hearts and to rejoice at his coming into the world in human form and shape? What does it mean to live in the hope of his coming again at the end of time? These are the questions that this great month of December brings to all Christians for their reflection, prayer, thanksgiving and celebration.

These are the questions that Christians try to answer with planning, inviting, shopping, decorating, feasting, celebrating, giving, forgiving, praying, welcoming, sharing, trusting and loving. These actions are strikingly different from similar actions in a secular world because they are guided by an awareness of the sacred and the holy and a deep faith and appreciation for the gift and birth of the savior and the divine into our lives. Christians engage in these actions with Christ at the center of their living and with a strong desire to share his presence with others and to gift one another as he has gifted each of us –

with his presence. There is no better gift, especially at Christmas.

With Mary, the Mother of God, aware of God's merciful love ever present

in God who has made his dwelling in and among us, we sing:



*My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior for He has looked with favor on his lowly servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed: the almighty has done great things for me and holy is his name. He has mercy on those who fear him in every generation. He has shown the strength of his arm, he has scattered the proud in their conceit. He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, and has lifted up the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. He has come to the help of his servant Israel for he has remembered his promise of mercy, the promise he made to our fathers, to Abraham and his children forever.*

Come, Lord Jesus. Come! Come with your saving grace. Open our hearts to receive you and welcome you into every aspect of our lives now and always.



~ Fr. Jim

**St. Leo's Prayer Wall** is a place where all, regardless of age, race or creed, are invited to sing God's praises, give Him thanks, and/or call upon His presence for help in times of need. The wall, a place of prayer for all peoples (much like the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem), captures the faces of the community, as well as peacemakers and saints who have inspired us through the ages.

The Wall is a place for staff and volunteers, youth groups, community meetings, and for individuals who pass through our parking lot on the way to work, school, etc., to pray, reflect and pause. We invite you to share in this special way of prayer, joy, and thanksgiving. Praise God! God cares about every need in your life and knows what you need even before you ask Him for help. Our St. Leo the Great parish community promises to remember you in our private prayer, as well as in our communal prayer, which is to say that we are praying for you all the time.



All prayer requests are held in strictest confidence. **Send your prayer request to:** Saint Leo the Great Church, 2573 Saint Leo Place, Cincinnati, OH 45225. You can also submit your prayer request online at: <http://saint-leo/WorksofMercy/PrayerWallMinistry.aspx>.

# MAKE TIME FOR CHRISTMAS

*For me Christmas has always been about this: contemplating the visit of God to his people.*

POPE FRANCIS



Make space for wonder and surprise this Christmas, Pope Francis urged Wednesday, explaining that the first Christmas had many surprises – including that God came into the world as a tiny baby.

The Blessed Virgin Mary was surprised by the Angel Gabriel at the Annunciation and Joseph was surprised by the angel in his dream, which told him to take Mary as his wife.

To welcome the Savior there are no powerful people, no ambassadors, just simple shepherds, surprised by the angels while working at night.

“But it is on the night of Christmas that the biggest surprise comes: The Most High is a small child,” he said. “To celebrate Christmas, then, is to welcome the surprises of Heaven on earth.”

Speaking at his weekly general audience, Pope Francis reflected on the surprising elements of Christ’s birth, and the way each Catholic can replicate the feelings at the first Christmas in his or her heart by making room for silence.

“Christmas is preferring the silent voice of God to the noisiness of consumerism. If we can be silent in front of the crib, Christmas will be a surprise even for us, not something seen before,” he said.

“Be silent in front of the nativity,” he advised. “This is an invitation for Christmas, take some time. Go before the nativity and stay in silence.”

Francis noted that since the beginning of Advent, the Gospel warned against becoming weighed down by the “anxieties of daily life.” “These days we rush, maybe as we never have during the year. But this is the opposite of what Jesus wants,” he said.

We blame the fast-pace of the world, but Jesus did not blame the world; Jesus asked his followers to keep watch and pray.

It is easy to get wrapped up in consumerism and in parties this time of year, preferring “the usual things of the earth over the news of Heaven,” he warned. “If Christmas is just a nice traditional

holiday, where we are at the center and not Him, it will be a lost opportunity.”

We will celebrate Christmas well, “if, like Joseph, we will give space to silence; if, like Mary, we say ‘here I am’ to God; if, like Jesus, we will be close to those who are alone; if, like the shepherds, we will leave our enclosures to be with Jesus,” Pope Francis said.

“It will be Christmas, if we find the light in the poor cave of Bethlehem.”

On the other hand, he stated, it will not be Christmas if people look only for the “shimmering glow of the world,” filling themselves with presents and fancy meals, but do not help “at least one poor man.”

“Christmas is the payback of humility over arrogance, of simplicity over abundance, of silence over hubbub, of prayer over ‘my time,’ of God over my ego,” he said.

“Every one of us has, hidden in our heart, the capacity to be surprised. May we be surprised by Jesus this Christmas.”

*Excerpts from a speech by Pope Francis the week before Christmas, 2018*



“Christmas celebrations are often full of sound. It would be good for us to make room for silence, to hear the voice of Love.”

~ POPE FRANCIS



# THE GREATEST GIFT OF ALL

Can you remember the best Christmas present you ever received? When I was a child it was my Jerry Mahoney puppet. I had visions of becoming a famous ventriloquist like Paul Winchell who was Jerry's voice on his weekly TV show. As a teen I wished for (but never got) tickets to the Perry Como show so I could go and let my favorite singer hear me sing and invite me to perform on his show. As my oldest grandson once told me I "was full of myself."

As I grew older my wishes got more practical—like having a date for New Year's Eve or passing my college math class, but as I look back I struggle to remember many other things that at the time seemed so important to me to get at Christmas

My dad had the habit of shopping at the very last minute. He would go to Henry Harris on Christmas Eve and get gifts for my mom, my sisters, and me. By that time it was slim pickings and dad chose things he liked and counted on us to fit into them. Often that didn't quite work, but one year he bought me a tweed car coat I still wear today. Every time I put it on I feel dad's love.

When I was first married I explained our annual St. Nick tradition to my husband. It was something his family hadn't done and I thought he understood how it worked. On December 6 that year he presented me with an expensive watch. At first I was upset because we usually just gave small gifts. I told him that and his feelings were hurt. At first I justified my response but later came to my senses and apologized. That "not according to my rules" gift suddenly became precious to me. I cherish it still more than 20 years after his death. Each time I check the time I remember his love. Funny how time and age changes our perspective.

Now when I think about "best" gifts I recall the births of my children and the joy and marvel of cradling that new life in my arms. Watching them grow, mature, and start their own lives has been both bittersweet and fulfilling. I savor time more with them and listen again to the end of the message from my son who lives 500 miles away: "really love you, mom." That makes my heart sing.

I've also had the gift of deep honest unexpected reconciliation as my husband was dying. We talked about how hard his illness had been on both of us and tensions, misunderstandings, and even sometimes anger we had felt. We both apologized for our individual roles in causing this and we found healing and peace and deeper love.

We get so bombarded at this time of year with Black Friday and Cyber Monday sales and the seemingly never ending emails telling us all the material things that we "need" that should make our lives easier or more complete. It's hard to focus on why we celebrate Christmas at all.

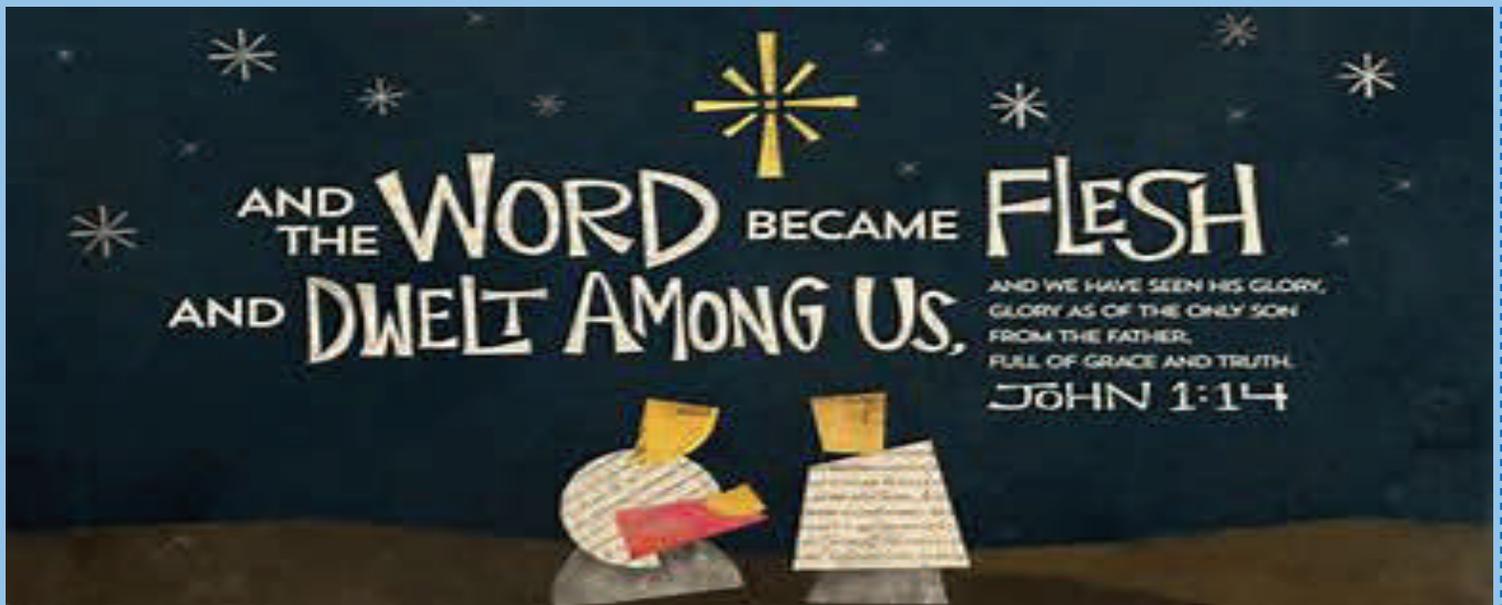


I wonder if God were going to announce the coming of Jesus, would he take to the airways promoting the "best gift of all?" Would God have a Black Friday sale or send repeated text and voice messages, each one featuring another aspect of his gift and the urgency to act now? Would God have a Facebook or Twitter Account to get our attention since many of us are almost constantly looking at our phones? Sounds silly, doesn't it? How would God get our attention today? I'm guessing we'd find it not in the blare of media, but in unexpected places, much the same way it was done 2000 years ago. A baby being born to a seemingly insignificant pregnant woman perhaps living in a refugee camp or detained at our southern border just might be the one to change the world.

I love the line from the first chapter of John: "The word became flesh and pitched his tent among us." God's not leaving, but is right here among and with us. God took on flesh, I believe, to enter into the muck and messiness of our lives, to love us unconditionally even when we feel most unlovable, to rejoice with us in the up times, to walk with us when everything seems to be falling apart, and ultimately, to suffer with us and to assure us that we are not alone and death does not have the last word.

That's got to be the best gift ever!

~ Angela Anno





## Clancy's Clichés

Ahhh...the closing of another year.

It was a challenging year. Many near and dear to us all have gone through illness, difficulties, and death of loved ones. As this year comes to a close, what seemed to shine brightly was the love, kindness, concern, and deep and caring friendships through those events and circumstances - always incredibly outshining

the sadness, anxiety, tears, grieving, and frustration. What shone brightest? Unconditional Love. It weaved it's beautiful fingers around shoulders. It embraced hearts. It touched souls.

As we gather around with family and friends this Christmas, unwrap the bestest gift of all. What's that you ask? It isn't those things with paper and ribbons sitting at your feet. No. Look at the Gifts around the tree—the unwrapped ones...each family member, each friend, each doggie or kittie companion. Then feel it. The greatest gift will be what's in the room with you. It's Love. Unconditional Love.

Ohwoofohwoofohwoof! It was difficult finishing my sentences in my letter to Santa. Here's as far as I've gotten:

*Dear Santa Paws,  
First of all, it wasn't me...  
I can explain...  
Do you take bribes?...  
Define GOOD...  
It was really my master.....  
It was really the office staff...*

### And we all need Seasonal Pochie Pointers:

- \*Don't order a knit sweater from a Christmas tree. They're always losing their needles.
- \*I've learned from eating extension and lamp cords NOT to eat Christmas decorations. You get tinselitis.
- \*This time of year don't catch snowflakes on your tongue until all the birds have flown south for the winter.
- \*Every family has one weird relative. If you don't know who it is then it's probably you.
- \*Be patient with folks who are afraid of Santa. They can be very Claustrophobic.
- \*Avoid showing a snowman your hair dryer. You'll scare him!

Finally, just a little candy cane-nine humor to get you through the holidays and time to sing my favorite song..."Deck the Howls"! My wish to you all is what vegetarians wish for at Christmas:

### PEAS ON EARTH AND GOODWILL TOWARD ALL!



## Clancy's Cackles

Knock Knock. Who's there?  
Mary and Abby. Mary and Abby who?  
Mary Christmas and Abby New Year!



What do you get if you cross an apple with a Christmas tree?

A pineapple.

What comes before Christmas Eve? Christmas Adam!

What's white & red & goes up & down & down & up?

Santa in an elevator!

## ST. LEO PARISH AND COMMUNITY CONTACT INFORMATION



**Pastor:** Rev. James R. Schutte

**Address:** 2573 Saint Leo Place,  
Cincinnati, OH 45225

**Phone:** 513-921-1044

**Fax:** 513-921-8048

**E-Mail:** stleocinti@aol.com **Website:** www.saint-leo.org

**Facebook:** St. Leo The Great Catholic Church

**St. Leo's YouTube Channel:** StLeoTheGreatParish

**Worship Schedule:** Saturday 6:00pm Mass in Spanish;

Sunday Mass: 10:30am; Weekday Mass: Thursday 7:00pm

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament: First Thursday following 7:00pm Mass.



**FOOD PANTRY:** At the corner of Carll & Baltimore

**Serving Hours:** Mon., Wed., & Fri., 1:00pm to 3:30pm

**Pantry Requirements:** Serving North Fairmount, English Woods, Roll Hill Apts., and Millvale once every 30 days. See website: www.saint-leo.org or call (513-921-1044) to see if your street is covered. To meet St. Leo's Acts of Mercy pantry donor guidelines, current proof of residence (Duke or telephone bill), photo ID & Social Security Cards for all members of household must be presented at each visit. **Plan ahead: Children must be supervised while at our Food Pantry.**

**Extra Food Pantry Holiday Volunteers Needed:**

**December 1, 6, 13, 16, 18, 20**

**January 3**

To volunteer, or for more info, call 513-921-1044x30.

### ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE CLASSES

 We welcome all wishing to learn English. **FREE!**  
Saturday 10:00-Noon.

### COMMUNITY PHONE NUMBERS

 North Fairmount Community Center/  
Referral Services: Linda Klems: 513-921-5842  
Housing: 513-921-5889,  
Healthy Moms & Babies: 513-591-5600  
Hopple Street Neighborhood Clinic: 513-541-4500  
Literacy Network: 513-621-7323

**ANGELS' ARMS STORE**, 1882 Baltimore Ave. Accepting donations of clothing, kitchen, bath and bedding. Open Mon-Wed-Fri 9-3:00 and Tues-Thurs 10-3:00. **All Items Free!** Call Linda Klems at 513-623-9897.

### Visit Us!

**St. Leo's website:** www.Saint-Leo.org

**Facebook:** St. Leo the Great Catholic Church

**St. Leo's YouTube Channel:**

StLeoTheGreatParish



### Enjoy the online edition with color photos!

Save the **www.saint-leo.org** site in your "favorites" list to visit often. Feel free to send corrections, updates, news and/or info to be included on the website to Casey Betz, Development Director, at cbetzstleo@aol.com. If you'd like to receive St. Leo's Newsletter, call 921-1044 and we'll add you (or anyone else you know) to the mailing list.

# HOW YOU CAN HELP . . .



## Treasure Chest

Treasure Chest Tickets are sold on a monthly basis at \$5.00 each.

- Winner based on Pick 3 played straight every day.
- Each \$100.00 prize will be sent in the mail.
- Get In On the Fun! To purchase Treasure Chest tickets, send \$5.00 per ticket by the first of the month to: St. Leo Treasure Chest, 2573 Saint Leo Place, Cincinnati, OH 45225
- Volunteers Needed to help sell tickets!

**October Winners:** Wanda Mc Neil, Bonnie Johnston, and Evelyn Robison

**Thank You Again!**



**Many thanks to our St. Leo Food Pantry  
Monthly Overhead Sponsor for December  
A Kind Anonymous Donor**

## WISH LIST

**\$2,500 to purchase materials** to build new Missalette holders onto the backs of the pews in the church building.

**Costumes for our Youth Ministry:** Christmas, Jesus, Mary, Joseph, angels, shepherds, animals, Easter, soldiers, apostles, women, All Souls Day saints, etc.

**Snow Removal Assistance Needed.** We really need someone willing to help out with snow removal before events on weekends. Call Stephanie at 513-921-1044

**Gas Cards** for our 3 vans

**Uber Gift Cards** to assist St. Leo's parishioners who have no means of transportation to get to appointments.

**Gift Cards** for the continuing work and maintenance of the parish, and our Youth Group functions: Home Depot, Staples, Hobby Lobby, Kroger, Oriental Trading Company Priceless!

**Extra Holiday Volunteers Needed at the Food Pantry:**  
December 1, 6, 13, 16, 18, 20  
January 3

**Cash to Cover Operating Expenses is Essential!**

## Easy Online Giving

Make a one-time donation, or set up a weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, quarterly, semi-annual or annual gift to be deducted from your banking account, or to charge your gift to your credit card:



**Go to <http://saint-leo.org/DonateNow.aspx>** And click on the Donate Now Button.

**SHOP AMAZON SMILE, SUPPORT ST. LEO:** <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/31-0538556>

**SHOP KROGER'S AND SUPPORT ST. LEO:** <https://www.kroger.com/communityrewards> Enter St. Leo's #KC265 or search for St. Leo the Great Church.

**iGive: Shop the sites you love and support St. Leo!** Sounds easy? It is! Sign up at <http://www.igive.com/>



**In September the Food Pantry served 911 individuals, in 330 households, including 356 children and 88 seniors.**

### NEEDS FOR JANUARY:

Cereal; Boxed dinner accompaniments like Mac-n-cheese, Rice-a-Roni, scalloped potatoes, etc.

Canned: salmon, tuna, chicken, hams (for the holidays!), vegetarian vegetable soup, cream of mushroom soup, chicken noodle soup, applesauce, pineapple, carrots, spinach

Vinegar, Salad dressing, tomato paste, salsa

Shampoo, deodorant, men's razors, baby-wipes (adults use them too!), Clorox Wipes, dish soap, tissues, paper towels

Diapers: size 4, 5, 6

Brown paper grocery bags

Sandwich/Gallon size Ziploc baggies - we go through these like hotcakes!

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

**Monday, Wednesdays & especially Fridays Noon-4:00pm**  
contact Stephanie Sepate at 513-921-1044 ext. 20

**Extra Holiday Volunteers Needed:**  
December 1, 6, 13, 16, 18, 20  
January 3

## Building the Kingdom of God

Please join us in living the spiritual and corporal works of Mercy in real and concrete ways by:

**Making a donation** by cash or check.

Your **weekly, monthly, or quarterly gift** helps maintain us throughout the year. Sustaining gifts are most welcome and are tax deductible.

**Remembering a Loved One.** Your gift to St. Leo's is a caring way to honor or remember a special person, or mark a special occasion.

**Gifts-In-Kind** including food items, clothing, toiletries, and wish list items are just a few of the useful and practical items that help us assist those in most need.

Giving a gift of **stocks, bonds or mutual funds** that have increased in value. You can deduct the entire value from your taxable income and avoid the capital gains tax.

Please consider remembering St. Leo the Great Church in your Will. For more information contact Casey Betz at 513-921-1044.

**Volunteering!** Be sure to check us out on Facebook at: [St. Leo the Great Catholic Church](https://www.facebook.com/StLeoTheGreatCatholicChurch) and on our Web Page at [www.saint-leo.org](http://www.saint-leo.org), and please spread the word about us to your family and friends.

Without a doubt, **your ongoing prayers** are much needed and most appreciated!

**ST. LEO THE GREAT CHURCH**  
**2573 ST. LEO PLACE AT BALTIMORE AVENUE**  
**CINCINNATI, OH 45225-1960**

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<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>	
1 Mass: 10:30am 1st Sunday of Advent	2 Food Pantry Open	3 	4 Food Pantry Open	5 7:00pm MASS	6 Food Pantry Open AA Meeting 7:30pm	7 Mass in Spanish 6pm; English as 2 <sup>nd</sup> lang. class 10-noon	
8 Mass: 10:30am 2nd Sunday of Advent Toy & Clothing Sale	9 Food Pantry Open Feast of the Immaculate Conception OFFICE CLOSED	10 	11 Food Pantry Open	12 7:00pm MASS	13 Food Pantry Open; AA Meeting 7:30pm	14 Mass in Spanish 6pm; English as 2 <sup>nd</sup> lang. class 10-noon	
15 Mass: 10:30am 3rd Sunday of Advent	16 Food Pantry Open	17 OFFICE CLOSED 11:00AM 	18 Food Pantry Open	19 7:00pm MASS	20 Food Pantry Open; AA Meeting 7:30pm	21 Mass in Spanish 6pm; English as 2 <sup>nd</sup> lang. class 10-noon	
22 Mass: 10:30am 4th Sunday of Advent	23 Food Pantry CLOSED	24 OFFICE CLOSED Christmas Eve 6:00pm Mass 	25 Food Pantry CLOSED OFFICE CLOSED Christmas Day 10:30am Mass	26 NO MASS OFFICE CLOSED	27 Food Pantry CLOSED; AA Meeting 7:30pm	28 Mass in Spanish 6pm; English as 2 <sup>nd</sup> lang. class 10-noon	
29 Mass: 10:30am	30 Food Pantry CLOSED	31 New Year's Eve 	<i>December</i>				