

*ST. LEO THE GREAT PARISH
DECEMBER 2020 HOLIDAY 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 **St. Maximilian Kolbe Knights of Columbus, Immaculate Heart of Mary parishioners, and the Charles Dater Foundation** for providing dozens children's coats of various sizes. St. Leo's children will certainly be ready for winter weather!



Many, many thanks to **St. John Fisher Parish** for multiple donations over the last few months. St. John provided the Food Pantry with two large vans filled with non-perishable food. They also provided numerous gift cards to Kroger and Walmart. We can't begin to tell you how helpful these cards are in carrying out our ministries here at St. Leo's.



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

Many, many thanks to the **St. Vivian Knitters Group** for providing beautiful hats and scarves to keep our St. Leo's parishioners warm all winter! With a touching note for each recipient.



Many, many thanks to our courageous, dedicated **volunteers** who continued to help out at the food pantry throughout the Covid-19 virus restrictions. Thank you again and again for caring for our brothers and sisters in need during this stressful time.

¡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 . . .

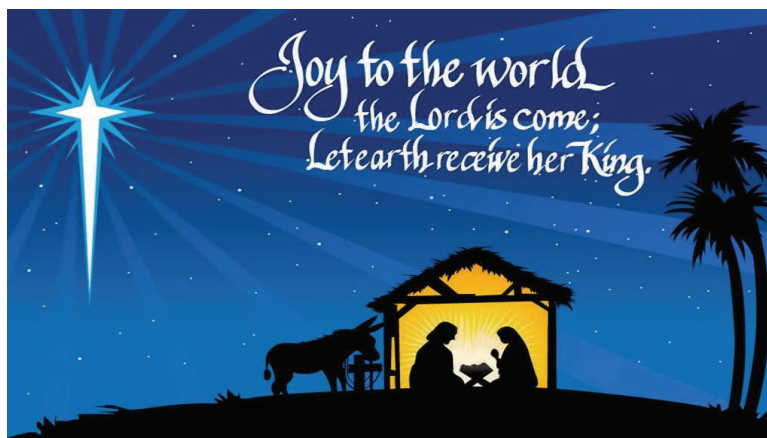
It is good to be back!

This is our first Newsletter since the start of the COVID 19 pandemic. We have missed communicating with you. Please know that all of you are in our prayers constantly during these challenging times of sickness and division in our country. We believe that there is union in prayer and that nothing can ever separate us from the love of God, especially a pandemic and the darkness of division that prevails in our country and in the church at this time.

So as our prayer still joins us together from six feet apart to joining ZOOM meetings and when we can't be in each other's presence, we pray that you will know God's mercy, forgiveness, healing, hope, love, and compassion. We pray that you will continue to love God and neighbor and live your faith as a beacon of light and hope in midst of the fear, anxiety, worry, depression, hatred, violence and separation of these days. We pray that you share the love and presence of God in your life with family and friends in any way that you are able and continue to care for those most in need.

Although we are learning to live by new norms and according to the conditions and limits imposed upon us by the virus and the need to create healthy and safe environments in society and the workplace, nothing really changes about living the faith. It is the same faith handed down to us from our ancestors, the apostles, and the early church. It is the same faith that announces a year of favor from the Lord. It is the same faith that sets captives free and brings sight to the blind. We need only to keep the faith, witness to it, put our faith into action and spread the GOOD NEWS everywhere.

Our encouragement comes from the season of Advent and the approaching Christmas season. Now is the time to repent and welcome the kingdom of God into your heart. Now is the time to prepare the way of the Lord and make straight the path and level the mountains and welcome the gift of salvation. Now is the time to be kind, understanding and compassionate.



Now is the time to be generous, caring, helpful, selfless, and willing to sacrifice for the good of another. Now is the time to love unconditionally. Now is the time "to love others without stopping to inquire if whether or not they are worthy." (Thomas Merton). Now is the time to collaborate for the common good. Now is the time to work for peace and justice. Now is the time to respect life and promote its dignity on all levels.

Now is the time to pray, "Come Lord Jesus." Quickly, Come." And then, with gratitude and great joy, "Joy to the World." The Lord has truly

come. And Merry Christmas to all!

~ 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.

COULD THERE BE GRACE AND EVEN GIFT IN COVID/?

My mom's doctor used to say that "getting old is not for sissies." I'm in good health and never thought of myself as old, but it seems COVID has turned that perspective upside down. Because I'm in my late 70's I'm deemed "High Risk" and according to my doctor that means no going into the office, no church, shopping or getting together with my extended family. Still I'm one of the lucky ones. I am not sick and have everything I need—warm shelter, food, enough money to pay my bills, and the support of relatives, friends and my faith community

Most people are facing many more challenges. Grocery store and pharmacy clerks and bus and truck drivers suddenly have become essential workers joining doctors, nurses and EMTs working daily in high risk situations. People have lost jobs, struggle to pay bills and provide for daily necessities. Some have gotten sick and recovered; others have died. It is a time like none of us has ever known.

In March and April all most of us could think about was what we would do again once COVID was over. We felt like Sam I am in Green Eggs and Ham: "I do not like COVID restrictions here or there. I do not like them anywhere." Nine months later we still may not like wearing masks, social distancing, and not being with larger groups of family and friends, but we know it's what's needed to keep us safe.

We'd probably all like things to go back to normal (whatever that was) but in the midst of this mess many of us are also discovering grace and opportunity. I know I am. In the course of these months I've connected more with elderly shut-ins and have been blessed by their wisdom and faith. Through more regular phone calls, I've gotten to know other parishioners more deeply. We've shared faith journeys and daily struggles, something none of us probably would have made time for if everything was "normal.". We'd be too busy. A weekly Zoom meeting offers a place for parishioners to share reflections on the upcoming Sunday's readings. It's become a holy time of deepening faith sharing. I've discovered that I could still support parishioners in their dying and families in their grief, though not physically there. And most importantly I've grown in understanding and appreciation of Eucharist by praying Sunday Mass on line with my St. Leo family.

The slower pace has allowed time for deepening my relationship with my son Jeremy through daily walks through the neighborhood and discovering natural beauty I often was too busy to notice. My gratitude for the diversity and inclusion of my community and neighbors grows as I see many small acts of kindness.

Though this time is just a blip in one's life, it often feels unending. Like many others I long for closeness with family and friends. I really miss being with my twin grandsons. I haven't seen my son and his family in Baltimore since February and will miss Christmas with them, yet we have grown closer in this time apart. When I text my 14-year-old grandson, he responds and tells me he loves me. Times apart make these things even sweeter. And I believe that once we can hug again, it will be hard to let go.

Nine months of quarantine. A pregnancy is usually nine months and during that time change and new life develops. Maybe COVID is offering an opportunity for new and deeper spiritual growth and new ways of loving each other by wearing masks, social distancing and intentional time with each other. It's said that in Jesus' time when a woman was pregnant, she went into seclusion to prepare for the gift of new life within her. Maybe in the midst of all the pain and chaos there is grace and even gift.

During this COVID Advent I find myself turning to Mary .and wondering what she must have been thinking and feeling after "the angel left" and her world was forever altered. She was pregnant and unmarried. Joseph was depending on a dream to stay with her. The Romans ran the country and they demanded a census close to when she was to deliver, If Mary and Joseph owned a donkey it would be a bumpy ride to Bethlehem to be counted but they were poor and probably would have to walk most of the way and have no way to pay for lodging once they arrived. Not quite COVID but it certainly changed her plans for her life. It wasn't something she would have chosen, but saying yes and embracing it changed the world forever. May we have the courage to say Yes as well as we await what God is birthing in us in this time of seeming chaos.

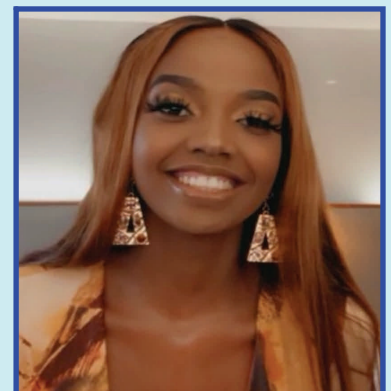
~Angela Anno



CONGRATULATIONS ...



Sandrine Ilumbu, daughter of Claudette Murekatete and Pierre Igaba will graduate in December from Wright State University with a degree in business management. Good Luck with your future endeavors.



WELCOME SISTER TRACY KEMME, SC

Dear St. Leo family,

A blessed Advent to all! My name is Sr. Tracy Kemme, and I started ministering part-time at St. Leo in September as a Pastoral Associate for Adult Faith Formation. Since this is my first newsletter, I wanted to take some time to introduce myself.

I'm a Sister of Charity of Cincinnati. I entered in 2012 and professed final vows this past July in the midst of the pandemic. Although only a small number of people could join me in the chapel for the ceremony, hundreds of people prayed and celebrated with me via livestream – a true glimmer of grace during a tough time.

I grew up in Fairfield, a member of St. John Neumann parish, and attended St. Bartholomew grade school and Roger Bacon High School. I graduated from the University of Dayton in 2008 with degrees in psychology and Spanish, and I spent the next two years volunteering in Ecuador, South America, with a program called Rostro de Cristo.

It was during my time in Ecuador that I started sensing God's call to religious life. I was terrified and resistant at first, but slowly, with the support of mentors, friends, and lots of prayers, I grew open to the idea. After serving in Ecuador, I moved in with the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati in El Paso, Texas, to continue my discernment. A few years later, I entered the community.

I've been blessed to experience community life and ministry in many different forms. In El Paso, I worked at a shelter for migrants, a Jesuit parish just blocks from the U.S.-Mexico border, and at the Sisters of Charity center for kids with special needs in Anapra, Mexico. After novitiate back in Cincinnati, I ministered at the Archdiocese of Cincinnati Catholic Social Action Office, focusing on justice for immigrants, and as the Bilingual Pastoral Minister at Holy Family Parish in Price Hill.

While at Holy Family, I helped run the Solidaridad en Cristo twinning program with Concepción Tutuapa, Guatemala. In 2014 and 2016, I led trips to Guatemala – the second time with Fr. Jim, Judie, and Stephanie!

For the last two years, I've been studying at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, a seminary and school of theology with students from 38 different countries. I'm completing my program online this year and, God-willing, will graduate in May 2021 with a Master of Divinity and a Certificate in Biblical Spirituality. I also serve as a Vocation Minister for the Sisters of Charity. I love walking with young adults as they seek God's call in their lives.

I am so excited to have joined the team at St. Leo! It's been hard not getting the full experience of the parish because of the pandemic, but I've been doing what I can to listen, learn, and build relationships. Despite the limitations, I've gotten a glimpse of the beautiful, intercultural family of faith that calls St. Leo home, and I can't wait to see what God has in store for us!

I wish you all many blessings for a joyful, meaningful Christmas. Even though our celebrations may look different this year, Christ is born among us, forever our light in the darkness.

With peace and prayers,

Sr. Tracy – pictured top row third from left



PEACE AWARD

WINNER

Job Well Done!!! Parishioner Sue Prieshoff has received the Interdenominational Peace and Justice Center's annual peace award in recognition of her many years of work to end the death penalty. Sue, has served as President of St. Leo's pastoral council and has been a part time secretary at the Parish Office.

*pictured is Sue's award



"The enchanting image of the Christmas crèche, so dear to the Christian people, never ceases to arouse amazement and wonder. The depiction of Jesus' birth is itself a simple and joyful proclamation of the mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God. The nativity scene is like a living Gospel rising up from the pages of sacred Scripture. As we contemplate the Christmas story, we are invited to set out on a spiritual journey, drawn by the humility of the God who became man in order to encounter every man and woman. We come to realize that so great is his love for us that he became one of us, so that we in turn might become one with him."

~ Pope Francis

Jake's Jabbers

This year I'm dressing up as a Rein-Dog! Howl Howl Howl! (That's dog-speak for Ho-Ho-Ho!) I'm lookin' like a real haute dog now! Woof Woof!



'Tis the season for gift-giving but rather than the traditional "here Comes Santa Paws" type of gift-giving, I thought I'd make mention of the unexpected gifts in our lives to give *and* to receive!

Here's a good one! Provide an unexpected phone or Zoom call to a friend or someone in need just out of the blue. A most *excellent* social-distancing "event". What a great and memorable gift! Props come in handy if you're adventuresome. Think holiday head boppers, turkey helmet, jingle bells, or watching a holiday show together but in different spaces.

Take-offs of the above idea: Do a recording of yourself singing, telling a story, or even video a few games of Charades or scavenger hunt maps; provide a compilation of recordings of your favorite songs, send an album of photos, or so many other fun things!

How about when, what to my wondering eyes should appear, I see the face of my master after a long day at his parishes. (Keep in mind his eight hours equals three and a half days in dog time!) Seeing him at the end of the day is such a gift. (Plus we get food.) So I do what any loyal doggie would do and lick his face off! Instead of sharing germs, a huge Polar Bear hug works just as well. Virtual hugs are also a great gift!

You can be the provider of a Holiday "care package" aka "thinking of you" package. There are lots of excuses to go dog wild with this one during the next few months...Thanksgiving, St. Nick's, Christmas, New Years, Epiphany, Groundhog Day (ahem, Angela!). Your creativity can put this one over the top. Make sure if food is included in the package the receiver is home, ring the bell, run back to the sidewalk and slip down your mask for a huge smile and wave. That would make anyone's day! Especially if you still have those jingle bells in your paws.

Most of all, remember those most endearing and easiest unexpected gifts. Smile with your eyes at strangers, friends and family. Giggle. Jump up and down. Clap your hands. Often, I wiggle my little tail back and forth, run in circles, and do my poodle tricks, trying not to knock things over. The more you do it, the more you just can't help yourself!

Love is the ultimate gift—whether you're the receiver or giver. The best gifts come from the heart. During this special season, pay attention for those unexpected gifts to get and give in your life, for the mini-miracles that are there if we only just take a moment to paws and listen and watch. We will experience that unexpected gift in the form of an innocent, pure, baby infant—the universal and unexpected gift and reminder of unconditional love. Keep that special spirit of Christmas Day in your heart every day of the year! In closing here are some seasonal questions and antlers!!!



Jake's Jokes

Where do Eskimos train their dogs? **In the mush room**
Why did the snowman call his dog Frost? **Because Frost Bites**
What's a cow's favorite holiday? **Peanut Butter and Jolly**



ST. LEO PARISH AND COMMUNITY CONTACT INFORMATION

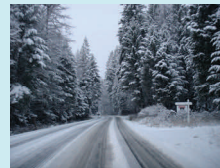


Pastor: Rev. James R. Schutte
Address: 2573 Saint Leo Place,
Cincinnati, OH 45225
Phone: 513-921-1044
Fax: 513-921-8048

E-Mail: stleocinti@aol.com **Website:** www.saint-leo.org
Facebook: St. Leo The Great Catholic Church
St. Leo's YouTube Channel: [StLeoTheGreatParish](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1o3t11111111111111111111)
Worship Schedule: Saturday 6:00pm Mass in Spanish;
Sunday Mass: 10:30am; Weekday Mass: Wednesday 11:30 a.m.
Thursday 7:00pm
Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament: First Thursday following

FOOD PANTRY: 1860 Carll Street (corner of Carll & Baltimore)
Serving Hours: Mon., Wed., & Fri., 1:00pm to 3:30pm
Pantry Requirements: Serving North Fairmount, English Woods, Roll Hill Apartments 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: NO CHILDREN DURING COVID**

[To volunteer, or for more info, call 513-921-1044x30.](tel:513-921-1044x30)



Snow NEWS!

Check out the following stations for St. Leo cancellations:
WCPO-Channel 9, WKRC Channel 12,
WXIX-Channel 19

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE CLASSES

 Cancelled during COVID until further notice

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

ANGELS' ARMS STORE, 1882 Baltimore Avenue Accepting donations of clothing, kitchen, bath and bedding. Open Mon-Wed -Fri 9:00 a.m. -3:00 p.m. and Tues-Thurs 10:00 a.m. -3:00 p.m.

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](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1o3t11111111111111111111)



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 Amy Kleeman, Development Director, at akleemanstleo@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. **Great Gift Idea for Christmas!**

- 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: Don Laidle, Cheryl Roy, Barb Gruver, and Evelyn Robison

Dear Santa, All I want for Christmas is...

RYOBI Impact Driver Kit— at Home Depot - 18-volt plus one Lithium-Ion Cordless 1/4 inch, includes batteries, charger, and bag

Area Rugs— From Overstock nuLOOM Vintage Floral Mandala Area Rug —8x10 Turquoise; Safavieh Montage Bibiane Rug 9x12— Black/Multi— or send in money or gift cards to cover the cost (\$200-\$300 each)

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, Overstock, Staples, WalMart, Kroger, Oriental Trading Company Priceless, Amazon!

Extra Holiday Volunteers Needed at the Food Pantry:
December 4, 11, 16, 18, 21

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 <https://www.saint-leo.org/Donate-Now>
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/>



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

In October the Food Pantry served 695 individuals, in 203 households, including 287 children and 60 seniors.

CURRENT PANTRY NEEDS:

Bar Soap, Deodorant, Toothbrushes, Toothpaste, Razors, Shaving Cream, Feminine Hygiene Products

Dish Soap, Paper Towels, Kleenex

Diapers: All sizes, especially newborn, and Size 4 and 5, Baby Formula

Cooking Oil (not Olive), Mustard, Ketchup, Salad Dressing, Hot Sauce, BBQ Sauce, Jelly, Pancake Syrup, Mayonnaise

Salt and Pepper Shaker Combo, White Flour, Sugar (smaller bags), Saltine and other Crackers, Individual Snacks (granola bars, cheese crackers)

Black Sharpie Markers



ST. LEO FOOD PANTRY MONTHLY OVERHEAD SPONSORSHIPS NEEDED

We are seek-ing individuals and organizations that would be willing to "Sponsor" one month of our operating costs of \$2,323.53.

Sponsor's name will be recognized in the food pantry foyer, on St. Leo's website, in St. Leo's monthly newsletter and in St. Leo's weekly Sunday bulletin during their month; and if interested, the organization's members would be welcome to volunteer by working in the pantry serving our clients.

If interested, please contact Amy Kleeman, at 513-921-1044 x 30, akleemanstleo@aol.com, or mail to: Amy Kleeman, St. Leo the Great Church, 2573 Saint Leo Place, Cincinnati, OH 45225.

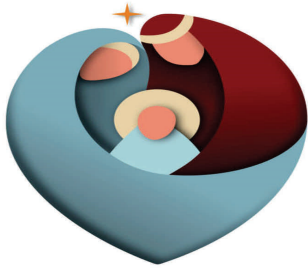
**Please Note the Food Pantry is Closed
December 23rd - January 4th**




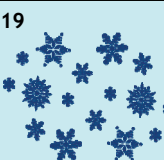



ST. LEO THE GREAT CHURCH
2573 ST. LEO PLACE AT BALTIMORE AVENUE
CINCINNATI, OH 45225-1960

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Org.
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 Cincinnati, Ohio
 Permit No. 3402



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 <h1 style="font-size: 2em; color: #0070C0; margin: 0;">JANUARY</h1>					1 Food Pantry Closed; NEW YEARS DAY	2 Mass in Spanish 6pm; https://www.facebook.com/RCC-St-Leo-Church-Cincinnati
3 Mass: 10:30am https://www.facebook.com/RCC-St-Leo-Church-Cincinnati	4 Food Pantry Open	5 	6 Food Pantry Open	7 7:00pm MASS https://www.facebook.com/RCC-St-Leo-Church-Cincinnati	8 Food Pantry Open;	9 Mass in Spanish 6pm; https://www.facebook.com/RCC-St-Leo-Church-Cincinnati
10 Mass: 10:30am https://www.facebook.com/RCC-St-Leo-Church-Cincinnati	11 Food Pantry Open	12 	13 Food Pantry Open	14 7:00pm MASS https://www.facebook.com/RCC-St-Leo-Church-Cincinnati	15 Food Pantry Open;	16 Mass in Spanish 6pm; https://www.facebook.com/RCC-St-Leo-Church-Cincinnati
17 Mass: 10:30am https://www.facebook.com/RCC-St-Leo-Church-Cincinnati	18 Food Pantry Open	19 	20 Food Pantry Open	21 7:00pm MASS https://www.facebook.com/RCC-St-Leo-Church-Cincinnati	22 Food Pantry Open;	23 Mass in Spanish 6pm; https://www.facebook.com/RCC-St-Leo-Church-Cincinnati
24/31 Mass: 10:30am https://www.facebook.com/RCC-St-Leo-Church-Cincinnati	25 Food Pantry Open	26 	27 Food Pantry Open	28 7:00pm MASS https://www.facebook.com/RCC-St-Leo-Church-Cincinnati	29 Food Pantry Open;	30 Mass in Spanish 6pm; https://www.facebook.com/RCC-St-Leo-Church-Cincinnati