

# St. Leo's

## PARISH COMMUNITY



## A LOOK AT OUR COMMENTATOR MINISTRY

### *Preparing Us Fully for Mass*

When the Commentator Ministry members greet us just before the start of Mass, they are inviting us to step back from talking to each other, and instead to open ourselves to talk and listen to God.

“The commentator is the individual who, after we have been welcomed by the hospitality greeters, greets the congregation before the procession,” says Cheryl O’Curran, ministry coordinator.

After the initial greeting, the commentator makes any important announcements, calls to mind the intention of the Mass, and then reads the priest’s remarks that offer a prelude to the message of the day’s Gospel. The congregation is invited to stand and greet each other, and the procession to the altar begins.

During the Mass, the commentator stands off to the side of the altar. There are no further duties unless a deacon is not present. In this case, the commentator will read the prayers of petition.

“Anybody can be a commentator,” Cheryl says. “I coordinate the ministry and do the training, that takes about one half hour. It covers the procedure and understanding the gravity of what



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## The Traits of the **CHRISTIAN STEWARD**

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Each day, we strive to live stewardship in our lives, recognizing our roles as “God’s co-workers” in His creative, redemptive and sanctifying work. But in our quest to live as disciples of Christ, many obstacles often arise.

One of the most prevalent roadblocks in living stewardship is understanding the traits that make up a good Christian steward. Surely, it would be much more convenient if we had some sort of “stewardship list” that could lay out the necessary steps to becoming a good steward. Unfortunately, it more often feels like living stewardship is a lifelong journey that we will never fully comprehend.

Fortunately, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ pastoral letter on stewardship, *Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response*, gives some insight into the characteristics that make up a good Christian steward.

The Christian steward should display some of the following traits:

**INSIGHT** — Before the disciples could live what we know as the stewardship way of life, they needed a flash of insight, or a certain way of viewing the world and their relationship to it in a fresh light. This “divine grandeur,” more than anything else, is often what sets people on the path to Christian stewardship (*Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response*, 39).

**CONSCIENTIOUSNESS** — Stewards are fully conscious of their accountability in sharing of their time, talent and treasure. As caretakers of the gifts that God has given them, they have the opportunity and responsibility to use them to their fullest potential to spread God’s Kingdom on Earth (40).

**GENEROSITY** — Christian stewards are generous out of love as well as duty. They should display a desire to share with and



care for others based on the sacramental graces they have received. And they are also cognizant of the many warnings that the New Testament presents to those who fail in charity and authentic love (40).

**JOY** — Christian stewards are often presented with difficult obstacles, but they should remain joyful in the face of challenges to their lives of stewardship. Like Paul, the good steward is able to say, “I am filled with encouragement, I am overflowing with joy all the more because of all our affliction” (2 Cor. 7:4). Only by serving with a joyful spirit will stewards fully reap the rewards of their service, both in this life and the next.

Indeed, living as a Christian steward is a lifelong journey with many ups and downs along the way. But if we strive to consciously incorporate each of these characteristics into our giving of time, talent and treasure, we will find that the responsibilities of a good Christian steward will become much clearer with each experience of service.



*A Letter From Our Pastor*

# WELCOME BACK... WELCOME HOME!

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Dear Parishioners,

To those of you who have been actively participating in the life of our parish but have been forced to stay away due to the COVID-19 pandemic, welcome home!

To those of you who haven't been to church in years and decided to renew your faith, welcome back, and welcome home!

During these past few months, we have experienced some of the most challenging and unnerving times in the history of our nation and Church. As we start to emerge from the darkness of this crisis and return to Mass and parish activities and ministries, I feel blessed and excited.

Excited to see familiar faces.

Excited to see new faces.

Excited to see faces of those we haven't seen in a while but decided to come back!

In times like these, when nothing seems to make sense, I am so very glad you are here. The timing of your return is perfect, because the truth is we need Christ now more than ever.

Whether you have simply been forced to stay away while public Masses were canceled, or if you have been away from the Church for many years, this crisis has changed us.

All of us.

We have had some extra time lately for introspection. For personal reflection. And for prayer. And perhaps during this era of isolation and social distancing, you have found yourself yearning for Christ more than ever before in the



hopes of finding some meaning to all of this.

You have come to the right place.

As you walk through our doors for the first time in months — or perhaps even years — I hope you see the face of Christ in myself and in all those around you. I hope you find a welcoming parish family here to greet you, overjoyed by your return.

As Christ tells us, from Matthew's Gospel, "For I was a stranger, you welcomed me" (Mt. 25:35).

The truth is, there really are no strangers at our parish. So as you come back home to our parish, I hope and pray you experience that


same spirit of kindness and hospitality from all your fellow parishioners.

Whether you're a longtime parishioner, or someone who fell away from the Catholic Church and are now ready to become renewed in the faith, let us all remember to welcome all who enter our parish doors with open arms, smiling faces and a servant's heart.

By living out our calling as Christian stewards, we will all emerge from this dark time as a community of faith that is stronger than ever — together.

Welcome back. And welcome home.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

  
Rev. Donald A. Buhrman  
Pastor

## EMBRACING THE CALL TO SHARE THE GOO

“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all Nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19). Through these final words before His Ascension, Jesus taught us that evangelization is a core part of our Christian identity. Only by sharing the light of Christ with others can we ensure that it spreads, transforming the world around us. And that, says ministry chair Kathy Boroff, is why the Evangelization Team continues to play such a vital role here at St. Leo’s.

“This ministry helps foster an awareness among parishioners and ministries of every Catholic’s duty to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ, and assists them in preparing to live out that responsibility with courage and love,” Kathy says.

Popularly known as the E-Team, the ministry operates by supporting our parish priests

and staff in the planning and facilitating of evangelization opportunities for the parish and community. Ultimately, its purpose is to help parishioners encounter and draw deeper in their relationship with Jesus Christ so that they may go forth and share that love with others.

“We come up with ideas for classes, missions and groups that will further enhance the faith lives of our parishioners,” Kathy says. “We also create Advent and Lenten opportunities to grow in faith. The team gathers input from other parishioners for help in deciding what classes would be most desired and helpful. Some of our evangelization groups include the New Life Ladies, Brothers in Christ, RCIA, Theology on Tap, Catholics Encounter Christ, adult faith formation classes, the myParish App, and FORMED. After each event has ended, we then evaluate the results and discuss ways to improve each event further.”

Thus, the E-Team helps our entire faith





# NEWS: *The Evangelization Team*

community more fully embrace their stewardship calling, for only by first cultivating our own relationship with the Lord can we adequately become His representatives on earth. In the process, Kathy says that E-Team members are blessed to form lasting friendships with “like-minded individuals who understand the importance of evangelization.”

“Those involved with stewardship understand

that the most important goal of stewardship formation is deepening our relationship with Jesus so that we can live more faithfully as His disciples in the world,” Kathy says. “In other words, the ultimate goal of stewardship formation is evangelization. When our faith lives are alive and on fire, we cannot help but share our love of Jesus with others.”

***“Those involved with stewardship understand that the most important goal of stewardship formation is deepening our relationship with Jesus so that we can live more faithfully as His disciples in the world. In other words, the ultimate goal of stewardship formation is evangelization. When our faith lives are alive and on fire, we cannot help but share our love of Jesus with others.” — KATHY BOROFF***

Whether you are an experienced evangelist or someone who simply desires to bring the love of Jesus to your friends and family, there is a place for you on the parish’s Evangelization Team. Please consider joining this ministry either by becoming an active team member or simply participating in the ministry’s events and programs throughout the year. For more information, please contact Fr. Don Buhrman at 308-382-4753.

## COMMENTATOR MINISTRY *continued from front cover*

the commentator is doing, and how important it is to greet the congregation in God’s house with a smile, and remind us of where we are.”

Although the time spent by the commentator is brief in regards to Mass, the message conveyed is that we are being prepared to have the proper frame of mind that we need to fully engage ourselves in the Mass.

***“Anybody can be a commentator. I coordinate the ministry and do the training, that takes about one half hour. It covers the procedure and understanding the gravity of what the commentator is doing, and how important it is to greet the congregation in God’s house with a smile, and remind us of where we are.” — CHERYL O’CURRAN***

Signing up to join the Commentator Ministry is easy — simply call the parish office at 308-382-4753, or Cheryl O’Curran at 402-460-8679. Information is also regularly posted in the bulletins.

## CHOSEN TO DO HIS WILL

*The Feast of St. Anne — July 26*

Did you know that St. Anne is the patron saint of miners? In medieval times, the Virgin Mary and Jesus were often compared to precious metals of silver and gold. Hence, the lives that came from the womb of St. Anne made her the source of precious riches.

Unlike Mary, St. Anne was not conceived without sin — but nevertheless, she would one day raise the Mother of God. That's a pretty big deal! What was it about St. Anne that prompted God to give her such a significant role in the history of salvation? There's no way to know for sure, but there is one thing we can definitely say about St. Anne — God uses those who put themselves at His service, and that is precisely what St. Anne did.

Not much is mentioned about St. Anne in the Bible, but her name derives from the longer name “Hannah,” or the Hebrew word for “grace.” We understand that, having believed herself to be barren for 20 years, an angel appeared to Anne and told her that she would soon have a daughter that she should name Mary.

When Mary was finally born, after many years of frustration and infertility on her parents' part, Anne did just as she promised — she dedicated Mary to the Lord, and raised a holy woman who would mother Christ Himself!

Early Christians are said to have been very intrigued by the story of Jesus' grandmother and, around the year 550, erected a church in Jerusalem where St. Anne, her husband, Joachim, and Mary are said to have lived.

Although we do not know much more about St. Anne, we can assume that she was a very holy woman based upon the woman her daughter, Mary, grew to be. Anne was the one from whom Mary learned to be a mother. She was the one from whom Mary learned to serve God. She was the one who instilled in Mary the confidence and faith to say “yes” to God — “May it be done to me according to your word” (Luke 1:38).

There is no doubt that St. Anne was a humble, holy woman. She was given a great gift — a child — who she readily gave back to God. And, thanks to her faith-filled gratitude to God for His gift, Mary opened her heart to the will of God, and became the mother of Christ.

Talk about stewardship in action!



*The Feast of  
St. Anne is  
celebrated on  
July 26*





# Bunco NIGHTS:

*An Unexpected,  
Fun Expression of Stewardship*

Though service is certainly a big part of stewardship, stewardship isn't always about serving or even the giving of something. Sometimes, stewardship is as simple as having a good time with fellow parishioners, building up that sense of camaraderie and belonging here within the parish. Parishioner Angie Smolek says that's the beauty of the St. Leo's Bunco Nights for women.

Angie says this social event got started years ago in an effort to bring the women of the parish together on a more regular — and fun — basis.

"Some of us ladies were having a meeting and we began brainstorming ways to get more ladies involved in the church," Angie says. "We thought about trying out Bunco, and so we had it and I think at least 20 ladies showed up that very first time. It was such a success that we decided to

begin putting it on the church calendar more regularly, and I've been coordinating it ever since."

For those unfamiliar with the game, Bunco is a social dice game played with a partner in groups of four. The object is to gain as many points possible before one of the two teams at the head table gets to 21 total points, ending the round. Winning couples move up toward the head table, playing against new partners, while losing partners remain stationary. Angie says this creates a friendly and social environment, allowing the women to get to know one another better and even form entirely new friendships.

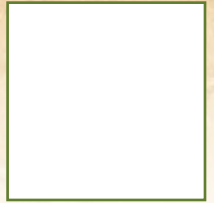
"With Bunco, it's a roll-of-the-dice game," Angie says. "You have a partner, but you also switch from table to table so you are continuously mingling with other people as you play against different partners. It's just a fun time to relax and catch up

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## **BUNCO NIGHTS** *continued from page 7*

with things going on in each other's lives.”

Bunco Nights typically take place three times in the spring, and then three times again in the fall on a Sunday afternoon from 3 to 4:30 in the parish hall. Bunco volunteers help host the evening by providing refreshments, game prizes, and assisting with setup and cleanup.

Though the evenings are designed to be purely social, Angie says there is indirect evangelization and enrichment that occurs as well. Women

from all different walks and stages of life begin to form relationships with one another. They'll get to talking about the various parish ministries in which they're involved, inviting and encouraging others to participate as well.

“I've personally been able to make many new friends from the church through Bunco,” Angie says. “I think it helps build up stewardship by forming relationships, encouraging people to get a little more involved and to maybe try new things.”

We encourage all women of the parish to consider coming out for the next Bunco Night, which will be advertised in the parish bulletin. If you would like more information or are interested in joining the volunteer team, please contact Angie Smolek at 308-258-2364.

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### **LITURGY SCHEDULE**

**Daily Mass:** 9 a.m., **Saturday:** 5 p.m., **Sunday:** 8 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.

**Confession:** Saturday 4 - 4:30 p.m. **Adoration:** First Friday of the Month, 9:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

**Abide Adoration:** Fourth Sunday of the Month, 7 - 8 p.m.