

# St. Leo's

## PARISH COMMUNITY



### ADORATION AT ST. LEO'S IS POWERFUL OPPORTUNITY TO "JUST BE IN THE PRESENCE OF JESUS"

MARCH 2019  
*Inside*

It was a whole new framework in which Sue Kohles would adore and worship God. Eucharistic Adoration was something she had never experienced before.

"I didn't grow up Catholic, so adoration was a completely different thing for me," Sue says. "It has really deepened my spirituality and my faith. I wouldn't go without it now. It is that special."

In adoration, we worship Christ fully present — Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity — in the Eucharist. Whether you are particularly struggling or simply seeking a way to be closer to Christ, He is present in the Eucharist for you to adore.

"Going to adoration when you are in a crisis is a great way to meet Jesus, feel His love and continue to go to adoration afterwards," says Michelle Matthews.

"Adoration is also very useful when you can't receive Communion for some reason and you just want to be in the presence of Jesus."

St. Leo's parishioners have several opportunities to worship Christ in adoration. In the chapel the Eucharist is in the tabernacle for parishioners to adore Christ from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. from Monday to Friday.

On the first Friday of every month, the Eucharist is exposed in the church following the 9 a.m. Mass until 1 p.m. Benediction.



*St. Leo's young people participate in Abide adoration.*

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# STEWARDSHIP: *The Four Pillars*

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You've heard about the three Ts of stewardship, but what about the four Ps?

The three Ts – Time, Talent, and Treasure – describe the personal gifts we offer to the Church. The four Ps are the Four Pillars of Parish Stewardship described by the renowned pastor Msgr. Thomas McGread. They are the hallmark of a stewardship parish – Hospitality, Prayer, Formation, and Service. Let's take a look at each of them to understand how we can improve in each area.

## **Hospitality**

### ***Christian Kindness***

“When I was a stranger, you welcomed me” (Matthew 25:35). The Gospel teaches that whenever we welcome the least of our brothers or sisters, we welcome Christ Himself. That is why the first mark of a stewardship parish is hospitality. Being friendly is one of the first ways we can be Christ-like toward others.

Modern Catholic parishes are often so large and have so many Masses that many parishioners don't know one another. To create a sense of community, be sure to smile and greet others as you enter and exit the Church. Let's try harder than ever to be a welcoming community.

## **Prayer**

### ***Heart-to-Heart with God***

“Do not become so involved in the work of the Lord that you forget the Lord of the work,” a seminary professor once taught. In other words, don't get so caught up with parish projects and outreach efforts that you forget to draw aside to spend time with God in prayer. Every great saint has taught that prayer is the most essential component in the life of the Christian. Through prayer, we nurture our most important relationship – the one that will last for all eternity.

A healthy prayer life should include communal prayer such as Mass, as well as personal prayer and family prayer. The two biggest

obstacles to prayer are lack of time and lack of understanding of how to pray. We have to schedule time for prayer just as we would for an important appointment. And we have to learn how to pray from other people. Many saints have written spiritual books that describe different methods of prayer.

## **Formation**

### ***Continuous Conversion***

Pope John Paul II always emphasized ongoing conversion. From childhood through adulthood, our whole life must be a process of drawing closer to God. He never stops calling us forward to learn more and to examine ourselves more deeply.

Very often our society values material things more than interior virtues. But as personal experience shows, when we finally acquire the car or house or “toy” that we wanted so badly, it doesn't really satisfy. On the other hand, we don't tend to desire spiritual virtues with the same kind of longing; but when we actually have them, we find them far more rewarding than material things.

## **Service**

### ***Love in Action***

“Amen I say to you, whatever you did to the least of my brothers, you did it to me” (Matthew 25:40). This Scripture was one of St. Teresa of Calcutta's favorites. Each time she picked up a poor and hungry child, she knew she was ministering to Christ. While we may not view ourselves as saints, we too are called to such heroic service right within our own community. As St. Teresa of Calcutta said, “To be a saint is not the privilege of a few, but the duty of everyone.”

We have many service opportunities right here within our own parish. If you have the willingness to serve and take the initiative to find where you are needed, you'll find that there is no end to the families and individuals who truly need help. How can you reach out to them in love?



## ANSWERING THE CALL FOR LENT

Dear Parishioners,

This month, as we proceed on our Lenten journey to Easter, every one of us should ask ourselves, “What does it mean to be a disciple of Christ and how well am I living that out each day?”

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops addressed what it means to be a disciple when they wrote their pastoral letter *Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response*. “Who is a Christian disciple?” the USCCB asked and, in turn, they also provided the answer: One who responds to Christ’s call, follows Jesus, and shapes his or her life in imitation of Christ’s (9). So, as disciples of Jesus Christ, it is essential that we consider the true meaning of that answer.

The first step in the Christian life is responding to Jesus’ call. Jesus invites every person to develop a relationship with Him. But obviously, not every person is a Christian disciple. Some people are too busy to even hear that invitation or don’t make the effort to recognize it. Others make a conscious decision to reject the call because it demands that they can no longer place themselves at the center of their lives.

On the other hand, for those of us who make an affirmative response to Christ’s call, the most meaningful life possible awaits us, both now and into eternity. However, saying “yes” to Jesus has consequences that affect the rest of our lives.

The first consequence of becoming a disciple is that we now follow Jesus. The Gospel accounts record that when He called His disciples, they left what they were doing and followed Him. The same is true for us today. Becoming a Christian disciple



does not necessarily mean that all of us will leave our present job or enter into the consecrated life, or serve as a missionary in another country — although that might be where the journey leads you. But it does mean that we offer our work — whether as a doctor, homemaker, mechanic, farmer or teacher — to build up the Kingdom of God.

In following Jesus as His disciples, we should strive to more fully absorb His teaching and then apply it to our daily lives. As we do, we find that we attempt to imitate Him, treating others with the same welcoming and generous spirit. St. Peter was direct when he described how Jesus acted: “He went about

doing good... for God was with Him” (Acts 10:38). That’s the model for how we must live.

Discipleship leads naturally to stewardship as a way of life. The time we offer in prayer and worship will give us the strength and guidance for serving Christ. Using the skills and gifts we have to build the Kingdom will direct our offering of talent. The support of all these endeavors with our treasure will ensure that our lives as disciples and stewards are genuine.

As a Christian steward this Lent, I encourage you to reflect on the changes you can make in growing as a disciple of Jesus.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Rev. Donald A. Buhrman  
Pastor



# OUR STEWARD

## PROMOTING THE MESSAGE O

As parishioner Dan Placzek puts it, stewardship of our faith is similar to how a farmer is a steward of the land.

“A farmer doesn’t just carve off 10 percent of the land and give it away,” Dan says. “The farmer husbands the land and nurtures it so it grows a product. He takes care of the land; and by taking care of the land, he produces a crop. That’s stewardship.”

A parishioner since the founding of the parish, Dan and his brothers served as the first altar servers at St. Leo’s. So, when our pastor decided several years ago to gather some parishioners to serve as a Stewardship Council, Dan was happy to help.

“When I got involved, I thought it was a committee to set up and organize all the fundraising the parish does, so we started organizing it that way,” Dan says. “We presented our thoughts to other members of the parish and our spouses were invited, and they said, ‘Why are you so focused on money?’ And we realized, maybe stewardship involves more than just fundraising. That’s when we took a step back and really started to learn what stewardship was about.”

Over the years since he began getting involved, Dan has found that his understanding of stewardship has broadened.

“Years ago, when I was in high school, I got involved and somehow, I was reading a little bit and talking to a priest about the theology behind stewardship,” Dan says. “But then you go to college and then you start raising a family, and you get in your career and you forget about all that stuff. You still give to the church and you give to the Red Cross and you volunteer, but I’d barely touched the surface. That was 45 years ago, and now I get the opportunity on the Stewardship Council to really read about this stuff and understand the theology behind it.”

The Stewardship Council meets monthly, discussing ways to share and integrate the message of stewardship in the life of the parish.

“Our focus is to try to get away from fundraising and focus on the time commitment,” Dan says. “We want parishioners to understand that we’re not just



*Parishioners serve as members of our Stewardship Council — (back row, from left) Doug Whitman, Cory Gearhart, Ryan Smith and Chris Stinson; (front row, from left) Cheryl Aubery, Dan Placzek and Kathy Boroff. (Not pictured: Tom Gdowski, Mike Kalvoda.)*

talking about doing stuff for the parish, but also spending time in prayer, spending time with God — that’s our focus.

“We’re trying first to understand ourselves,” he adds. “We’re given gifts and we’re given time, and those are great gifts. We’re learning that the greatest thing we can give back is to choose to follow what God wants us to do and to spend our time following His will.”

Dan hopes that other parishioners will consider finding ways to delve into the heart behind stewardship. He recommends borrowing the four-part series on stewardship, from the Diocese of Wichita, which is available in the parish office.

Since learning more about stewardship, Dan has also found that his faith has grown deeper and stronger.

“My faith and relationship with God is all different because of this,” Dan says. “I wish everybody could serve on the Stewardship Council because it gives you the opportunity to think about these things.

# SHIP COUNCIL

## OF DISCIPLESHIP AT ST. LEO'S

"It's taken me four years to get here," he adds. "But I figured I better start practicing what I preach, so I've started to go to daily Mass once a week, and it changes what I say when I pray."

Dan encourages other parishioners to consider becoming involved in stewardship, whether serving on the council, becoming more involved in the parish, or simply making prayer a daily habit.

"Get involved in any one of the parish ministries or just start with setting aside a minute a day for

some prayer, that's the most important thing," Dan says. "The more you let God in your life, the more you want to let Him in."

If you would like more information on the Stewardship Council, or if you would like to submit your name for the council drawing, which will take place in June, please contact Stewardship Committee Chairperson Dan Placzek at 308-382-1930 or the parish office at 308-382-4753.

## ADORATION AT ST. LEO'S

"We break the day into half-hour segments, and I put a list out leading up to the first Friday for parishioners to sign up," Sue says. "We like to have two people for every half hour."

Many Catholics begin a practice of worshipping Christ in adoration by saying the Rosary in His presence or reading a devotional book.

"I started with just sitting there quietly in front of Jesus and letting Him wash over me," Sue says. "Then from there, I shared my hopes and dreams with Him."

There are different children's books available that help us explain to our families about Christ's Real Presence in the Eucharist and about what adoration is.

"Our kids learn most by watching us," Sue says. "Take them with you to adoration."

Another opportunity for adoration is through Abide, during which parishioners can adore, praise and worship Christ on the last Sunday of every month from 7 to 8 p.m.

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"I believe singing is praying twice," Michelle says. "Sometimes you can feel the Holy Spirit talking to you through the music."

The music at Abide is primarily contemporary Christian music, and St. Leo's faith formation programs for young adults and children will be offering Abide for them at least one Wednesday evening a semester.

"This format for adoration is really working," Michelle says. "Children are very much welcome at Abide, where they can enjoy the songs and movement. It could be a good place to start introducing them to adoration."

If you and your family are looking for a new tradition this year or particularly during this Lenten season, book-end your month with adoration on the first Friday and the last Sunday. Come worship Him.

"Give just a small part of your time back to Him in Adoration in gratitude for what He has done for you," Sue says.

If you would like more information about Eucharistic Adoration at St. Leo's, please reach out to Sue Kohles at 308-382-4753 or Michelle Matthews at 402-744-2038.



# “Transformed by the Sacred Liturgy”

## THE CELEBRATION OF THE PASCHAL MYSTERY

In a limited way, the liturgy can be compared to a story or a film – upon a first reading or viewing, we might understand the basic outline of the narrative, yet through every subsequent encounter, the story further unfolds before us, becoming richer and more complex.

Often, inquisitive children teach us about how to understand a story or the Mass. As a child inquires about the priest’s green vestments, the foregrounded wreath or the presence of palm branches, we might pause to recall the symbolism underlying the rich rituals of the liturgy.

There is a sense of the sacred in the liturgy, but its rituals and ceremonies can appear as empty pantomimes when divorced from their meaning. Far from empty signs, the liturgy is the celebration of the Paschal mystery, of Christ’s passion, death, resurrection and glorification by which He “accomplished the work of our salvation” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1067).

From the Greek *leitourgia*, meaning public service or worship, liturgy in the Christian tradition refers to the communal participation of the people in the work of God, and God is always present and at work in the liturgy, acting in and with the Church through the sacraments.

Annually, the Church’s liturgical year is structured around the Paschal mystery, which we observe every Sunday. We begin each year with a season of anticipating Christ’s birth and, following a celebration of Christ’s Incarnation, we gradually enter a period of preparation for the Easter Triduum, for His passion, death and Resurrection. The year closes with a period of ordinary time – a time to grow in our faith and in living out the Gospel.

Daily, the Liturgy of the Hours unifies the Church Militant in prayers said by the clergy and increasingly by the laity. As the liturgical calendar structures our year, the Liturgy of the Hours structures our day, offering us an opportunity to

consecrate each present moment to Christ.

Ultimately, the liturgical life of the Church “revolves around the Eucharistic sacrifice and the sacraments” (CCC 1113), for we receive God’s grace to fortify us in our spiritual lives and as His disciples through the sacraments, particularly the Holy Mass.

The Mass nurtures us spiritually, inviting us to reflect on the Paschal mystery and to lift our hearts to God as individuals and a community through spoken and sung prayer.

The Mass moves us corporeally, drawing us to sit as we listen to the Word, to stand as we unanimously profess our faith, and to kneel as the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ.

The Mass inspires us apostolically, sending us out to proclaim the Gospel and to share Christ with our brothers and sisters.

Though the “source and center” of all prayer, the liturgy and a sense of the sacred has, in some ways, become marginalized in the American Church. Once robust parishes are seeking to rebuild, but they frequently overlook the connection between the empty pews and the decentralization of the liturgy, which was underscored by Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI.

“I am convinced that the crisis in the Church that we are experiencing today is, to a large extent, due to the disintegration of the liturgy,” Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI wrote in his autobiography *Milestones*.

Something in the simplicity of the child’s experience of the liturgy teaches us to return to what we might call the basics of the faith – meaning a love for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the sacraments and the rituals of the Church. Only through the liturgy are we nurtured on our stewardship journey and inspired to proclaim the Gospel.

As Archbishop Alexander Sample from the Diocese of Portland, Ore., writes, “If we are transformed by the sacred liturgy, then we, as believers, can help transform the culture.”

# KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS SERVE FAITHFULLY IN SUPPORT OF PARISH AND COMMUNITY

In lore and legend, knights embraced their mission of defending the vulnerable and voiceless. Our St. Leo's Knights of Columbus Council 10387 follows such a mission, as well, with the many projects and causes they support throughout the year.

The Knights of Columbus is a fraternal organization of men founded under the principles of charity, unity, fraternity and patriotism. Men who are practicing Catholics and are at least 18 years of age may join.

Council 10387 has about 181 members, ranging from their 30s to their 80s. The group meets at 7 p.m. every third Monday at the church.

Mark Volkl is Grand Knight of Council 10387 and also is a member of the Parish Council. He, like many other fellow Knights, not only participates in the organization, but also serve on other parish ministries. And he, like many other Knights, came into the organization by way of his father's footsteps.

"I've been a member for 33 years," Mark says. "When I was young, my dad prompted me that I should join. He joined, and then I decided to."

Throughout the year, the



*Members of the Fourth Degree, Knights of Columbus Council 10387 prepare to take part in the 40th Anniversary Celebration of St. Leo's Parish in 2013.*

Council takes part in activities supporting not only our parish, but also our wider community.

"We mainly do projects for the mentally challenged," Mark says. "And we also work with anything to do with raising money for a community need."

During the fall, the Council conducted its Tootsie Roll Drive to collect funds for those with

developmental disabilities.

"This year it was kind of chilly, but it's when we can do the drive," Mark says. "We do the drive at Walmart and the Hy-Vee."

The weekend of Jan. 19-20, the Council handed out "One Rose, One Life" prayer cards and accepted donations for pro-life causes.

This spring, in April or May,

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Anyone interested in joining the Knights may speak to any Council member. "We have literature with us to explain what goes on," Mark Volkl says. "And we just tell them all that we do for the order." For more information, please contact Mark at 308-850-3380.





## KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS *continued from page 7*

the Council will once again conduct their roadside cleanup on North Highway 281.

“We take a two-mile stretch and get it cleaned up for the state,” Mark says.

All while doing their fundraising activities and civic projects, the Knights are also working to bring themselves closer to Christ by trying to set a good example for others to follow. The Council members also share the love of Christ with each other through fellowship the members share during meetings and other activities.

In addition, the Knights also participate in significant parish events. One such notable event was in 2013, when we celebrated the 40th anniversary of our parish’s founding. Members of the Council’s Fourth Degree dressed in their full ceremonial regalia to take part in the celebration.



*Council members are active on behalf of the parish and community.*

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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.