

St. Leo's

PARISH COMMUNITY



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2019 IS READY TO ROAR!

When Vacation Bible School opens at 12:30 p.m. on June 3 at the church, St. Leo's kids will get to ROAR!

"ROAR - Life Is Wild; God Is Good" is the exciting theme this year for Vacation Bible School that will run from 12:30-4:30 p.m. June 3-7.

"I'm excited with this theme for all age levels," says Jodi Stauffer, Director of Children and Family Ministries. "The theme is great, because when life is scary, God is good and will be there. No matter what is going on around you, God is good and God is there with you."

Children from kindergarten through fifth grade are invited to attend Vacation Bible School.

"Kindergarten kids who have just completed kindergarten this year will go into the program as kindergarteners, and so on," Jodi says. "But we won't call them by their grades. We'll go by class colors."

Although the format for Vacation Bible School will be slightly different than that in the past, there will be Bible stories, music, crafts, prayer and learning about saints.

"There will be activities that will help the kids understand their faith better and enhance their learning of it," Jodi says.

The entire format for Vacation Bible School works to build the children's relationship with Christ.

"It is a different way of learning and encouraging your faith and relationship building with Jesus and God," Jodi says. "They learn to trust in the Holy Spirit. Children are all different learners — they have different learning styles."



This year's Vacation Bible School will welcome youngsters for the week of June 3-7.

MAY 2019

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THE CHALLENGE OF *Discipleship*

God calls us to give Him everything – our whole heart, our whole soul, and our whole mind. This is the challenge of discipleship – a lifelong process of more fully placing our lives under the lordship of Jesus Christ.

The reason that God can ask such complete service from us is that He made us. Everything we have belongs to Him! This includes our intelligence, our physical ability, our artistic talent, our family, our finances, our government – anything we may typically think of as “ours.”

It takes courage to recognize that we are not the masters of our possessions and ourselves. Furthermore, as Christians, we believe that because everything we have is a gift from God, we are called to give Him thanks. We express our thanks by using our gifts to further His kingdom on earth. This is the basis for our understanding of stewardship.

We refer to “time,” “talent,” and “treasure” in order to differentiate between the various parts of our life that belong to God. “Time” is the duration of life that God has given us. “Talent” includes the special gifts or strengths God has nurtured in us. “Treasure” is what we have earned through our time and talent.

Even though we identify these three aspects of stewardship, they are still part of the same Gospel-based concept. And even when we focus

separately on these parts, it should not signal that one is more important than the other. Instead, focusing on each aspect one at a time helps us to better concentrate on that area in our lives.

Stewardship is, after all, an attitude. If our goal is to become better stewards, we must have a reason in our minds to do so. Here are the basics of a stewardship attitude:

“God made everything!”

A wholehearted trust that God made all things is essential to understanding stewardship. Recognizing God as the Creator is one of the most basic, profound beliefs of Christianity.

“I am truly blessed!”

It takes humility in order to truly acknowledge God’s goodness. Every great triumph and every little pleasure is a blessing from above, and every strong character trait we possess is a gift from God.

“I believe I am to use God’s gifts for His glory!”

What better way to thank God for His goodness than by using our personal gifts to glorify Him? We are not the owners of our time, talent or treasure. But we are caretakers given the responsibility of spreading God’s kingdom on earth.



HONORING OUR LADY IN MAY

Dear Parishioners,

As people of faith, we often refer to May as “the month of Mary.” For centuries, Catholics throughout the world have included special devotions to Mary in their activities during this month. Best known, I’m sure, is the widespread and ever-popular practice of May Crowning — crowning an image of Our Lady with flowers.

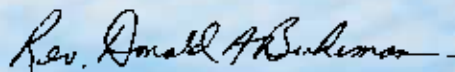
May is certainly a beautiful time — it is, after all, a month full of renewal and celebration. For many Americans, cold March winds and dreary April showers have given way to blooming flowers and trees. Yet, it’s not only flowers and trees that reflect the newness and joy of May. Many students in junior high, high school and college are celebrating their graduations, and will soon be moving on to new phases and exciting opportunities in their lives. And of course, it is the month when we celebrate Mother’s Day, honoring and extending our gratitude to the women who have faithfully raised and nurtured us.

And May is most certainly a month of joy for all of us who claim the Church as our spiritual home. This year, we spend the whole month in the Easter season, which closes with Pentecost in June. Thus, the joy of the Resurrection and the glory of the Ascension are the themes which fill our Christian calendar this month.

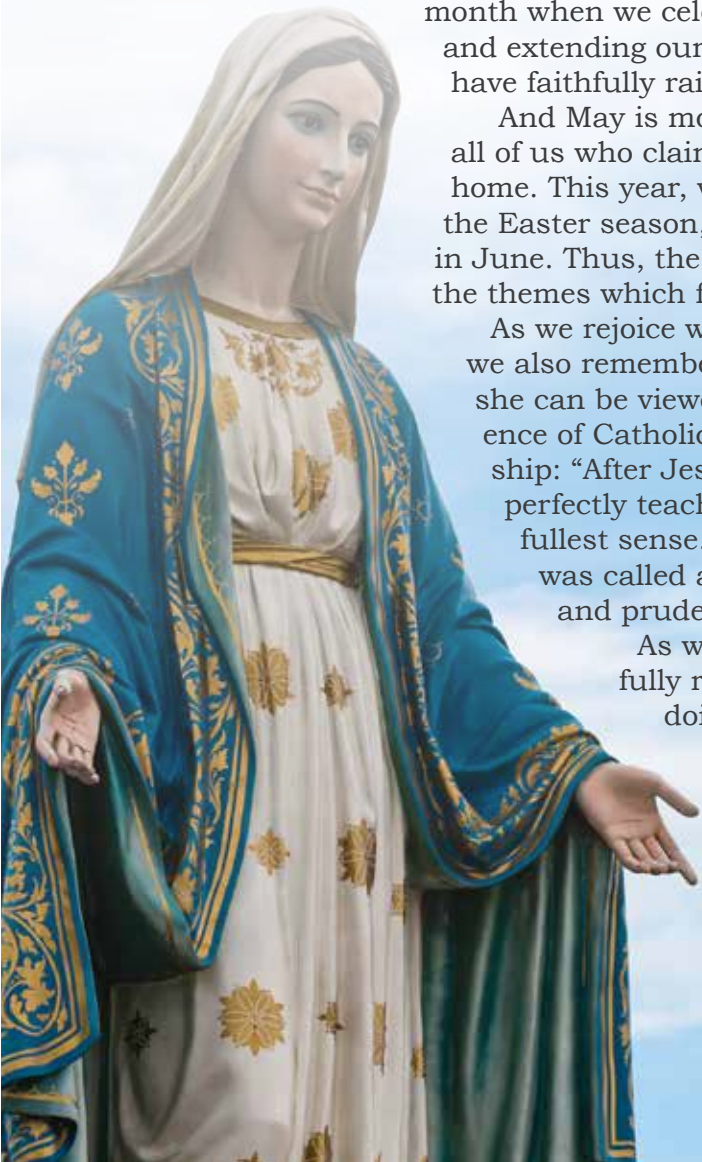
As we rejoice with Mary at her Son’s triumph over sin, Satan and death, we also remember her faithfulness to God’s will throughout her life. Indeed, she can be viewed as the model of Christian stewardship. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops pointed to her in their pastoral letter on stewardship: “After Jesus, it is the Blessed Virgin Mary who by her example most perfectly teaches the meaning of discipleship and stewardship in their fullest sense. All of their essential elements are found in her life: she was called and gifted by God; she responded generously, creatively, and prudently” (*Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response*, 41).

As we enter into the month of May, let us take the time to gratefully reflect on the newness and joy that surrounds us. And in doing so, let us follow the Blessed Mother’s example of total dedication to God as we rejoice in the blessings He gives us, this month and beyond!

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Rev. Donald A. Buhrman
Pastor



SERVING AS GOOD STEWARDS OF OUR TREASURE:

Patty Hooker is a charter member of the parish who has worked in her family business for over 30 years, and she has served for the past three years on St. Leo's Finance Council.

"From what little I know from our business, there is perspective I can bring to the church," says Patty. "Being on the Finance Council, you're making sure everybody's money is spent the right way, not just your own. It's the money of everybody in the parish and you want to make sure it's done correctly. I've enjoyed really seeing how the church works and how the finances work. A lot of people bring a lot of ideas and it's been a learning experience for me."

"The Finance Council functions for the support of the pastor, and to exercise the fiduciary

responsibility of the parish," says Fr. Don Buhrman. "We have to be responsible for our funds and assets."

Every parish is required, by Canon Law, to have a finance council that assists and advises the pastor in managing the parish's fiscal resources. At St. Leo's, the Finance Council, comprised of nine people, meets monthly to review the parish's finances and present them to the Pastoral Council. Finance Council members serve a three-year term that is renewable. Each year any vacancies are filled by selection to bring in the one, two or three new members.

The Finance Council has a number of different responsibilities, from working with the pastor on the annual budget and monthly expenses, to



Those who serve on the Finance Council assist our pastor in the good stewardship of our parish's financial resources.

THE PARISH FINANCE COUNCIL

larger projects such as external audits and the capital campaign.

“These are all ways in which I as pastor use, in the best sense of the word, the skills and abilities of these people to help me manage the assets and be responsible with income and expenditures,” Fr. Don says.

“Their role is important to make sure that I as a pastor don’t mismanage things, that I’m responsible with things, that I spend and budget appropriately and realistically,” he adds. “They’re really helpful for me as far as being a good steward of what’s been given to us.”

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Tom Strand, who works in the investment business, has served on the Finance Council for the past four years, and is currently in his second term. He chaired the Capital Campaign and is grateful that his role on the Finance Council gave him the opportunity to make a positive difference in the parish.

“We needed to raise money for the parking lot, accordion doors in parish hall, and we needed a new roof,” Tom says. “We had a goal of \$800,000

and we met it. It feels really good. It was a goal we set and we made it, so it was nice that we were able to do that for St. Leo’s.”

“I enjoy serving on the Finance Council,” he adds. “I want to see St. Leo’s do well.”

Those who serve on the Council come from a variety of backgrounds, with various experience and skills.

“The blessing for me is that the people who are serving on the Council are very competent, and they come from a variety of backgrounds,” Fr. Don says. “Some are accountants, some are business people — I like to have a farmer on there because they’re practical people. I have an accountant who can tell me, ‘Father, this is what we’ve got to do,’ or ‘This is what we can’t do.’ They have a lot of great skills and I’m very grateful for their wisdom and direction. If I have questions, they usually know the answers.”

For those who serve on the Finance Council, it’s an opportunity to see the behind-the-scenes work of the parish, to learn from other parishioners, and to make a difference in the community that they care about.

“You learn so much from the other people, they come from all walks of life,” Patty says. “You might bring some information into the Finance Council, but there are others who bring more and you learn a lot. You’re not just helping the parish, but you’re learning a lot yourself.”

Fr. Don encourages those who would be willing to serve on the Finance Council to indicate their interest on the annual stewardship renewal form, and he expresses his thanks to those who have volunteered their services.

“I’m really grateful for these people who are willing to help me be the best pastoral businessman I can be,” Fr. Don says. “I’m blessed that my father was a businessman, and when he was alive I could call him up and ask him questions. And now, the Finance Council functions in that capacity on a professional level for me. I do have to run a business, just like everyone else.”

OFFERING OUR LOVE AND ADORATION TO JESUS

Eucharistic Adoration is the adoration of Jesus Christ present in the Holy Eucharist. Churches that have this adoration display the Eucharist in a special holder called a monstrance, and people come to pray and worship Jesus.

Christ's great love for us was shown when He was crucified on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins and give us eternal life. He loves us without limit, and offers Himself to us in the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist. Can we not give Jesus a few minutes of love and adoration in return?

What is the importance of Eucharistic Adoration?

Eucharistic Adoration is the respect and worship we give to Jesus, who is truly present to us under the appearance of bread and wine. The Eucharist is a priceless treasure; by not only celebrating it but also by praying before it outside of Mass, we are enabled to make contact with the very wellspring of grace.

What are the fruits of Eucharistic Adoration?

People who observe Eucharistic Adoration experience a deeper devotion to Jesus, and this manifests itself in countless ways. The primary fruits are repentance and conversion, which lead to increased charity — that is, the love of Christ alive in His people. The adoration of Jesus in the Eucharist

also leads to greater reverence at Mass, a deeper desire for personal holiness, and a stronger sense of union with the parish and the whole Church. Ever since the early centuries of Christianity, the Church has linked Eucharistic Devotion to service to the poor. The practice has, more recently, led to an increase in vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and religious life.

What is proper etiquette during Eucharistic Adoration?

When we are not taking part in vocal prayers and hymns with other adorers, we should be praying silently. Whenever we pass before the place where

the Sacred Host is reserved, we should genuflect. We should observe the modest dress and decorum that are appropriate to very solemn occasions. We should avoid any actions that might disturb or distract others, or otherwise draw attention to ourselves rather than Jesus.

How should we pray during Eucharistic Adoration?

There are many ways to pray. We may meditate in silence by gazing on the Sacred Host. We may silently speak to Jesus from our mind and heart. We may also rely on devotions and prayers from Catholic tradition, such as the reading of Scripture, recitation of the Rosary, or the litanies. When two or more are gathered before the Sacrament, they may pray or sing hymns together.

What is the best way to promote Eucharistic Adoration?

The best way to promote Eucharistic Adoration is by doing it! Make frequent visits to Jesus at the tabernacle. Invite your spouse, your children, your neighbors and co-workers to join you. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* reminds us, "Because Christ himself is present in the sacrament of the altar, he is to be honored with the worship of adoration. To visit the Blessed Sacrament is ... a proof of gratitude, an expression of love, and a duty of adoration toward Christ our Lord" (1418).



Church Linens Ministry

CARING FOR JESUS' TABLE

It's probably safe to say that laundry is something many people dread. It almost seems like a badge of honor these days to complain on social media about how big our piles have gotten, never having time to fold — or, if that pile does get folded, the amount of time one can let it go before putting it away! But when it comes to God's laundry, there's a ministry at St. Leo's that takes it on without complaint.

The Church Linens Ministry consists of parishioners who take turns laundering the linens we see on the altar each week at Mass. These linens are used in the preparation and distribution of the Body and Blood of Christ, and therefore, are treated with the reverence Jesus' table deserves.

Parish Office Manager Sue Kohles coordinates the ministry by creating a year-long schedule that volunteers follow. Each ministry member then takes one month out of the year to pick up the linens, clean and fold them in their own home, and bring them back to St. Leo's. Sue says the tasks involved with the ministry don't require any particular skill and are easy to learn.

"They pre-treat for any consecrated wine or lipstick stains with Shout or Spray and Wash, or presoak the towels," Sue says of the volunteers. "They iron and spray starch to make them nice and crisp. There's a red cross in the middle so it tells exactly how to fold it."

In this way, the ministry presents a great opportunity for parishioners who want to lend their talents to the parish but don't have time for another ministry or don't want to get up in front of the congregation during Mass.

"There's always behind-the-scenes ministries that you can do," Sue says. "Each ministry is important, but this is very important because it's something that's right up front, right in front of everyone. You want everything clean — you don't want something up there that's got a stain or a tear. By having these people do this, you're assured of having it nice and neat, every crease is

just so, and it looks very nice and professional up there on the altar, very respectful."

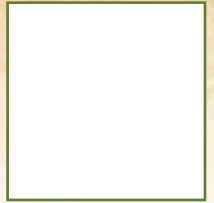
While the ministry currently has a full roster of volunteers for the coming year, Sue says other parishioners who may be interested are welcome to put their name on the list to substitute for anyone who might need a break for travel or illness.

"If someone is interested, there are always veterans who would happily take them under their wing and show them the ropes," Sue says. "They'd be happy to answer any questions that they have."



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If you would like more information, please call Sue Kohles at the parish office at 308-382-4753.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2019 IS READY TO ROAR!

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And Vacation Bible School is another area to do different styles of learning. It's not highly structured. There is more functionality about how we adapt our faith to everyday activities. When you engage all the children's senses, the lessons stick to your psyche better. It makes it so when you are in college, for example, and are challenged about your faith, you can recall a lesson from Vacation Bible School to help you."

There is no fee for the week.

Middle school and high school students are invited to volunteer as mentors for the week.

"We ask them to arrive at 11:30 a.m. and bring their sack lunch for a 45-minute preparation time," Jodi says. "We will have a devotional time for them, and the lessons will be reviewed that they will be mentoring to the elementary students."

By serving as mentors during the week, middle

school and high school students can earn their 25 to 30 service hours.

Between 7 to 10 adults take part, but the younger students keep things running.

"We're also very excited that our parishioners like to donate supplies for the week," Jodi says. "We are always blessed for it."

Signups for volunteers will be available in the Gathering Space at church. Anyone can contact Jodi Stauffer by email at jodi@saintleos.org, or call her at 308-382-4753. Volunteers must have a background check and take part in the Safe Environment training. Registration for Vacation Bible School is available online at www.saintleos.org. Registration should be completed by June 1 so there are adequate supplies.

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.