



ST. LEO THE GREAT
PARISH & SCHOOL

News & Views



Festival food draws crowd

For the second year in a row St. Leo the Great Parish held a scaled-down Festival because of the COVID-19 pandemic. But that didn't keep the customers away, as food sales seemed brisk. Festival customers arrived early Friday evening to get their choice of carryout corned beef reuben or Italian sausage sandwiches plus many other selections on the Friday menu. The Saturday menu featured roast pork with dumplings and gravy.



Meanwhile the kitchen crew was busy both days filling orders.

And despite the festival's smaller scale, the annual jackpot raffle was still held, with the following winners:

\$5000 grand prize—Donna Neylon

\$2000 second prize—Jason Mlady

\$1000 third prize—Jovita Orinoco

Help us bring Christmas to others

By Jeanne Sabol

Things change through the years, and changes at St. Leo always seem evident around us. But one thing that does not change is our commitment as Catholic Christians to help those who need us the most. For 48 years St. Leo parishioners have generously helped needy children through the Adopt a Child for Christmas program.

Parishioners are asked to sign up to purchase a gift of about \$15-\$20 for a needy child. This year children who benefit from the program include families at St. Leo Parish, St. Aloysius School, Malachi Center and Zelig's Home (formerly Maggie's Place).

The 2021 season of Adopt-a-Child begins the weekend of November 13/14 and ends December 12 with the distribution of gifts. **All gifts must be brought to St. Leo's by Thursday, December 9.**

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Reaching out to heal those with a loss

Serenity Prayer

*God grant me the **Serenity** to accept the things I cannot change, the **Courage** to change the things I can, and the **Wisdom** to know the difference.*

The Bereavement Sharing Group, a newly formed support group at St. Leo the Great Parish, is a sharing

group for those who have lost a loved one, whether a spouse, close friend, sibling, or another family member. We are not professional therapists or grief counselors, but we're a group of people with a common bond—the loss of a loved one that we're grieving.

The group meets on the first Wednesday of each month at 2 p.m. in the Parish Center. The group begins with a prayer (usually

the Serenity Prayer printed above) or meditation or a Scripture reading.

We then share our pains, sorrows, joys, and memories of our loved one. Anyone can share their story/journey of their grief, but no one is asked to or required to share if they choose not to share. The only "rule"

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St. Leo knitters generate warmth

By Jeanne Sabol

Creativity abounds at the St. Leo Parish Community Center from 1–3 p.m. every Thursday.

That's where you'll find 6–12 ladies in the St. Leo Knitting Group giving generously of their time and talent, making hats, scarves, afghans, lap blankets, mittens and baby items.

Norma Janiak, group spokesman, said the group has been meeting for 9 or 10 years, and she credits Fr. James Schmitz, St. Leo pastor, for providing a place for the ladies to meet every week, for which they are very thankful.

All their creations are donated to area organizations such as Light of Hearts Villa, Zelig's Home (baby items), Malachi Center, Catholic Charities Refugee families, and the St. Vincent DePaul outreach group at St. Leo's. Yarn donations are always welcome and may be dropped off at the rectory.

While they're creating, the ladies enjoy talking about life in general and solving the world's problems. Norma says their time spent together is like a therapy session, "You talk about things and have a good feeling when you go home."

Although the group is quite productive, these knitters from St. Leo and surrounding parishes always welcome new members who enjoy knitting and/or crocheting.



With more than 200 years of knitting experience, these ladies meet each week to create items to warm recipients at local charitable organizations and agencies. Shown here with their handiwork are (first row) Mary Ann Boyert (left), Norma Janiak and Ruth Hakaim Saba, who grew up in St. Leo parish; (second row) Gerri Craider (left), Zora Rountree and Dobrila (Debbie) Zivkov. Among others who sometimes join them are Loretta, Sheila and Doris (who knits all the baby items).

Bringing Christmas to others

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"In recent years we have expanded the program to include all children up to the eighth-grade level," said Program Director Jeanne Sabol. "These young people may be home alone after Christmas, and they may come from single parent households, where the mother or the father cannot be home during the day. St. Leo parishioners can purchase snack food or gift cards for specific fast-food restaurants for these older children."

And for the fourth year, FCSLA Life, (the First Catholic Slovak Ladies Association), has generously pledged up to \$600 in matching funds for contributions from St. Leo parishioners.

Cash or checks payable to St. Leo the Great Parish can be placed in an envelope marked "Adopt-a-Child" and placed in the collec-

tion basket or dropped off at the rectory. Gift cards may also be donated.

To sign up for Adopt-a-Child, call Jeanne Sabol at 216 351 6247 or Judi Westergurg at 216 642 0134. They will give you the name and age of a child so you can buy an appropriate gift. Or you can sign up on the parish website.

If you purchase a gift, please wrap and tag it and bring it to the parish rectory or church at Mass times. Rectory hours are Monday–Friday, 9 a.m.–3 p.m.; Saturday noon–5:30 p.m.; and Sunday, 9 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

All gifts are due by Thursday, December 9.

If you have questions, or would like a child's name, please call Jeanne at 216/351-6247 or Judi at 216/642-0134.

St. Leo News & Views

The St. Leo News & Views is published three times a year. Articles and article ideas are always welcome.

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St. Francis is in his element

By Nancy Zola

The statue of St. Francis of Assisi, which adorns the rectory-side entrance to St. Leo Church, has now been substantially enhanced, thanks to a contribution from the Mlady family.

Loretta Mlady, an active, long-time parishioner of the parish, wanted to do something for the parish in memory of her husband Ralph who had passed away after an extended illness. Ralph, a tall, athletic man, was good-natured and witty. He was also “a gentle person who loved nature and animals,” according to Loretta.

Earlier this year, St. Leo’s pastor, Fr. Jim Schmitz, installed a statue of St. Francis, patron saint of animals, in the garden between the church and rectory. Loretta noticed the statue each time she entered the church or rectory and, after discussing it with close family members and friends, she approached Fr. Jim about the possibility of adding animals around the statue. “Fr. Jim jumped at the chance,” Loretta said and she provided him with some photos. Soon after, the animals were placed in the garden around the St. Francis statue.

The animals have been positioned throughout the garden in a natural manner with a raccoon hiding in a hollowed log and



Thanks to a contribution by the Mlady family, the statue of St. Francis in the garden on the Rectory side of St. Leo church is now enhanced by a menagerie of his woodland friends.

a deer and her fawn peering out from between two shrubs. A family of rabbits looks up at St. Francis and the birds perched on his shoulder and in his hand. Squirrels take cover under a tree, and, at the back of the garden, a wolf approaches. St. Francis is associated with wolves since, according to legend, he tamed a wolf so it wouldn’t hurt people.

Loretta said that the animals Fr. Jim chose were very appropriate with the fur on the deer looking like real fur. Two animals are replicas of Fr. Jim’s own pets—Michaela

the dog and Abby the cat. Unfortunately, one of the woodland creatures, a squirrel, disappeared soon after it was placed in the garden, and Loretta hopes that it will be replaced. She would also like to see a cardinal added since it is a symbol of a loved one who has passed.

Loretta has heard from many parishioners who bring out-of-town guests who can’t get over the arrangement, adding that it was such “a neat thing to do, to see, and to be a part of.” She added that she knows that “somewhere Ralph is smiling.”

Group’s goal: to help heal loss

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we have is that whatever is shared in the group is confidential.

Once everyone has had the opportunity to share, there’s open discussion, which concludes with a prayer. The group sharing and prayer is approximately one hour.

Here’s what the co-founder of the group has to say:

“When I lost my husband, I went through varying waves of emotions. I mourned

deeply, hoped, or even expected him to walk in the room even only momentarily to hear his voice, his laughs, his songs. I needed someone to convince me that I had done my best, that I should not allow regrets to muddle my mind, that it was time for him to ‘come home.’

“A bereavement group at our church was what I needed, and with our pastor’s permission, Joan Berigan started a support group. Shared tears and laughter are healing, and we do not feel alone. Together we share our stories, we cry with each other

while recalling memorable moments, and hope to find ways to accept our powerlessness as a result of losing our loved ones.

“We long to become partners in that extraordinary journey of grieving. In the group, we gather to be present with each other and grieve together, however difficult, however painful. During this process, we cling tightly to our Almighty God, feel His constant presence and make Him our most faithful, loving companion.”

By Joan Berigan and Cora Dejele

St. Leo milestones

February–August 2021

Baptisms

Audrey Balakumaran
Christian Burkett
Aiden Friebe
Madelyn Hickman
Dominic Hunter
Rylie Jenkins
Logan Kirby
Hubert Miller
Harrison Shepherd
Michael Shue
Elizabeth Shue
Anayah Rose Valentine

Funerals

Victor Barcelona
Diane Buccier
Michael Coffman, Sr.
Linda DeBaltzo
Cecelia Doris
Linda Graham
Louise Horvath
Charles Huetter
Raymond Kikta
Dorothy Kish
Suzanne Kravec
Lewis Morrow
Steven Plevelich
Christine Preuss
Michael Rahanian
Ralph Rath
Jeffrey Schigel
Rita Shandersky
Robert Squires
Neal Strodbeck
David Venditti
Ann Vidovic
Frank Wade
Michael Wiglusz

Weddings

James Haffner & Christina Giangrande
Genesis Ramos & Jose Alvarado
Gabrielle Gorczyca & Justin Sword
Andrea Mendoza & Darryn Joyce, Jr.
Christopher Kenny & Sarah Hunley

First Communions

Nara Lin Elizabeth Manson
Lilly Ring

New Parishioners

Steven J. & Bonnie R. Bartczak
Reinaldo & Ivana Caraballo
Marianna Caraballo
Kathir & Chloe Castro-Balakumaran
Ryan Frazer
Nancy J. Halloran
Elizabeth Margaret Hirko
Tricia Howell
John Karr
Bonnie-Lynn Kundrach
Benita R. Milton
Benjamin Gary Milton
Miraela Minissale
Gary A. Mulica
Loretta Ann Rogalski
Christina Schmitz
Gina Shrader

Blessed events

November 2—Election Day
November 3—Bereavement Sharing Group, 2 p.m.
November 5—Eucharistic Adoration, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.
November 6—Help the Homeless collection begins
November 7—Daylight Savings Time Ends
November 11—Veterans Day
November 13—Adopt-A-Child begins
November 13–14—St. Vincent de Paul food collection at all the Masses
November 14—Bloodmobile, 8 a.m.–Noon
November 25—Thanksgiving Day Mass, 9 a.m.
November 28—Help the Homeless collection ends
December 1—Bereavement Sharing Group, 2 p.m.
December 3—Eucharistic Adoration, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.
December 8—Immaculate Conception, 8:30 a.m. & 7 p.m. Masses

December 9—Final Adopt-A-Child Drop-off
December 18–19—St. Vincent de Paul food collection at all the Masses
December 24 & 25—Christmas Eve & Christmas Day Masses (check bulletin for times)
December 31/January 1—Solemnity of Mary Masses (check bulletin for times)
January 5—Bereavement Sharing Group, 2 p.m.
January 7—Eucharistic Adoration, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.
January 15–16—St. Vincent de Paul food collection at all the Masses
January 16—Bloodmobile, 8 a.m.–12 Noon
January 17—Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
January 30—February 5, Catholic Schools Week

St. Leo School makes physical improvements for 2021-22

By Alex Pavlick

The fallout of Covid 19 last year was a bane as well as a benefit for St. Leo School this year.

Many students fell behind last year after classes were cancelled and they had to be home-schooled, but thanks to money from stimulus bills, St. Leo now offers tutors for teaching and counselors for support. Besides support for the students, funds have also been used for physical improvements to the school.

Mrs. Denise Burns, principal, has received a \$16,000 diocesan grant from Rooted In Faith, which has been used to remodel and improve the girls lavatory, including remodeled and handicapped accessible stalls. Mrs. Burns has applied for added Rooted in Faith funds to help pay for new school windows in 2022.

Other school improvements, funded by the Stimulus COVID Spending bill and from parish money, include new flooring in the halls and offices and air purifiers throughout the school (as well cleaning supplies to keep the school disinfected).

The school has also received funds to pay for Chromebooks for second through eighth grade students and iPads for kindergartners and first graders.

For the gym and cafeteria, St. Leo School now has View Sonics, an enormous 96-inch TV, similar to a smart board, which is connected to the internet and used as a teaching aid for large assemblies.

Masks for students are optional, but the school is following protocols initiated in 2020.

There are many new teachers this year at the school. Mrs. Burns mentioned these teachers bring a refreshing feeling to the school and was pleased by the new energy as well.