



**ST. LEO THE GREAT**  
PARISH & SCHOOL

# News & Views

## A SIGN OF THE TIMES?

### St. Leo's tightens Mass schedule

**A message from  
St. Leo Pastor,  
Fr. James Schmitz**

In my March 2015 "State of the Parish" *News & Views* article, I gave my views on five topics, the last of which concerned our current Mass schedule. I encouraged the parish community to begin a discussion about this issue since the current Mass schedule has been in place since the parish had three full time priests.

The feedback received from you was supportive and offered good insights. Since that time, the Plain Dealer published an article on February 17, 2016, "With priest shortage growing, Northeast Ohio Catholics can expect fewer Masses, other changes."

"The population of priests in the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland is thinning rapidly," the article began, "and will force the Church to make painful, fundamental changes, according to a study commissioned by diocesan leaders."

The article gave statistics from a recent study that showed there were 264 active diocesan priests in 2015, down 26 percent from 2000. It predicted that the number of diocesan

priests would drop to 156 by 2030, and that this estimate may be optimistic.

More facts and predictions continued to show the downward trends. For example, the diocese had nearly 700,000 Catholics in 2014, but by 2040, this population would drop to 455,000.

Finally, the article suggested that churches will offer fewer Masses, citing St. Christopher Parish in Rocky River, which recently reduced its Sunday Masses from four to three. Since then, I have heard of several other parishes who have reduced their Sunday Masses.

Father Vesely and I have been having an ongoing conversation concerning his ability to continue celebrating weekend Mass here at St. Leo's due to the trouble with his knees. He is now at the point where he feels it is time for him to make that change.

**New Mass schedule:  
4p.m., Saturday, 8 and 11 a.m., Sunday**

In addition, during the last few months I have been discussing our Mass schedule with members of the Parish Council, and they agree unanimously that a Mass schedule change would be suitable at this time. We discussed many possibilities and the con-

sensus was that we keep the 4 p.m. Mass on Saturday and the 8 a.m. Mass on Sunday, but combine the 10 a.m. and Noon Sunday Masses into one Mass at 11 a.m.

This schedule change would mean that only half the parish would need to make an adjustment, and it would be only one hour later for those who attend the 10 a.m. Mass and one hour earlier for those who normally attend the Noon Mass.

This schedule would also allow some "breathing room" for Sunday morning RCIA sessions or any future Sunday morning programs or meetings (giving us from 9 a.m. till 11 a.m. instead of 9 a.m. till 10 a.m.).

Moreover, on Easter we could easily add a 9:30 a.m. Mass because it is currently required that we have three Masses on Easter due to the increased number of people present. We need only two Masses on Christmas morning since we have three well-attended Masses on Christmas Eve.

**Effective Jan. 1, 2017**

It was decided that the best date to make this transition would be Sunday, January 1, 2017. That would give us enough time to make the necessary adjustments (such as

*Continued on page two*

# St. Leo's reduces number of Masses

*Continued from page one*

changes in the scheduling of liturgical ministers), and time enough to make our new schedule known. Father Vesely would continue to celebrate weekday Mass since no steps are required in the daily chapel area of the church, and he would concelebrate one of the weekend Masses without needing to get up and down frequently as he does now.

Change can be difficult, but I believe this will be good not only for Fr. Vesely but for the whole parish. I anticipate a full 11 a.m. Sunday Mass, where we can have greater participation in the liturgy that is at the heart of our Catholic worship.

## **We all have a ministry**

I am hopeful that this change to our Mass schedule will help us to remember that we all have a responsibility to respond to the vocation or call that God gives to each of us, whether we are single or married, a member of the clergy or of the faithful.

I have been taught and firmly believe that it is the role of the priest not only to preach and preside over the celebration of the sacraments, but to continually encourage the people of the parish community to use their gifts for the good of the Church.

Some use their gifts during our liturgical celebrations. Others use them in parish ministries and organizations. And still others are called to witness to their faith in their family, in their work and in the world at large.

As St. Paul writes in his letter to the Corinthians, "There are many parts, but we are all one body." I believe that we do this well here at St. Leo's, but we always need to search our hearts and ask what

more the Lord may be asking of us.

There are a hundred different ways you can contribute to the parish. If you need some suggestions, you can look at a list of opportunities on our website. Under the "Forms" menu, is a page called "Parish Ministries Interest," which you can look over and submit online. Or you can just ask me to offer you some suggestions based on what you can tell me about your interests or your gifts.

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I have found that people who get involved in their parish, even in ways that take a small amount of their time, always feel that they benefit themselves from their new friendships and connections with others in the parish. But not everyone is called to parish ministries. Again, the primary place of ministry for all of us is in the places where we live and work in the world.

## **Pray for vocations**

Finally, each week we print in our parish bulletin the name and photo of a seminarian (someone who is preparing for priestly ministry) or of a novice (a man or woman who is preparing to be a member of a religious community as a brother or sister). We do this so you can remember them in your prayers during their years of formation. Pray that they may persevere in responding generous-

ly to God's call to the priesthood and/or religious life.

I mentioned a few weeks ago that a young man in our parish who is an altar server and a graduate of our parish school told me that he was thinking about the possibility of priestly ministry. We need to pray for him and that others like him from our parish will think about a priestly or religious life.

God may indeed be calling a man or woman from our parish to this type of vocation. Let us pray that they may answer the call!

I can assure them that these last 30 years of my priesthood have been

filled with great joy. We receive much more than we give, and we live a challenging and rewarding life. So let us do what Christ tells us by asking, seeking, knocking, praying, and hoping.

St. Leo the Great, pray for us!

In Christ

**Fr. James P. Schmitz, Pastor**

## **St. Leo News & Views**

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

### **STAFF**

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# School is out. Or is it?

Children are gone from the school halls, and that means that work crews, many courtesy of the Sherwin-Williams Company, have moved in to spruce up on many levels—inside, outside, upstairs at the preschool and below level in the primary school.



*St. Leo Preschool is getting new paint, carpeting and a remodeled office. In the preschool play area, a new fence is being erected, workers are replacing the mulch, and the stage has been torn down.*



*In the school, three lower-level rooms are being renovated to house all Cleveland school services, psychology, speech, tutoring and the office of the auxiliary clerk.*

*In the upper level of the school we are painting some classrooms, updating some computer wiring and installing smart boards in three classrooms.*





# Sports roundup

## St. Leo CYO athletes find playing hard is fun

By Alex Pavlick

To hear Matt Tullos talk about the St. Leo sports program, it's not your father's CYO—maybe not even the CYO that you grew up with.

As St. Leo's athletic director, Matt exudes energy and optimism about the program. And in a phone interview about the state of CYO sports at St. Leo Matt confirmed that sports are alive and well in CYO and at St. Leo. It's all a matter of the new dynamics of CYO.

But first, some statistics.

The St. Leo Third Grade Girls volleyball team finished 6-2 this year. And the Eighth Grade Girls Volleyball team also had a winning season, going 7-3.

In basketball St. Leo's Sixth and Seventh Grade Boys and the Eighth Grade Girls basketball teams reached the playoffs this past season, advancing to the second round.

What about baseball, a sport that was once popular at St. Leo? Matt explained that over the years maintaining a baseball program has become restrictive and costly.

"It's an attractive sport for a lot of schools, recreation centers, and travel teams, so nailing down a field to play in is costly and restrictive," Matt said.

From a cost standpoint maintaining a team costs about \$750, plus \$40-\$60 per student for uniforms and the cost of equipment. "In addition, St. Leo is in

a cold weather state, so there is always the risk of snow and rain, which would be close to impossible to make up due to fields being booked by other teams," Matt said. "That kind of money and risk is too much to ask of parents."

As for St. Leo's cheerleaders, interest in cheerleading has waned, although the parish did field a Third Grade cheerleading squad this year, which cheered on the boys basketball team.

Despite some of these setbacks, the new dynamics of CYO now gives children from other parishes the opportunity to participate in programs at nearby parishes if their home parish does not have a program in a particular sport.

"For example," Matt said, "St. Leo does not have a football program, but St. Thomas More in Brooklyn has a strong football program that is well established. Boys from St. Leo may compete for a spot on St. Thomas More's team during tryouts."

At the high school level, Matt was very upbeat, explaining that some boys, when entering area high schools, either don't make their school teams or just didn't have fun in the intense programs that comprise high school basketball. Enter the CYO high school basketball program. The key word here is FUN, Matt emphasized, adding that the boys just want to play competitively without the pressure of winning titles.

On the basketball court, the popularity of the Cleveland Cavaliers is apparently felt throughout the CYO system. In Northeast Ohio, more than 12,000 boys play basketball, and St. Leo is one of the sites that offers facilities to play. That is why the upkeep and updating of the



*St. Leo's fifth grade girls volleyball team with their coach, Susan Ehrett.*

*Continued on page five*





*The St. Leo CYO program believes in getting children interested in sports as early as possible. Shown here are participants in St. Leo's annual Bitty Basketball Camp, for preschoolers through the third grade.*

## CYO athletes find playing hard is fun

*Continued from page four*

Lux Hall gym has been so appreciated. Matt said at least 6-8 games were played at St. Leo's every weekend this past season, even if a St. Leo team was not participating.

He mentioned a game between St. Albert Parish in North Royalton and St. Adalbert's from Cleveland's east side. This was an example of the range of the CYO program, and St. Leo was the site of the game.

Ed Kotonski and Gary Smith, assistant basketball coaches at St. Leo, teach and coach these boys.

During this past season, raffles were the main fundraiser for the St. Leo CYO program, which produced funds to provide new padding on the Lux

Hall walls, a new scoreboard, and new volleyball nets and poles.

Matt explained that a huge amount of praise is owed to Sr. Erin Zubal, St. Leo principal, for the work, painting, and updating of Lux Hall. All players and visitors to St. Leo's were truly in awe of the gym, Matt said.

One final note from Matt: Summer means no sports; it's vacation time for the student athletes and coaches. But on August 1 there will be sign-ups for Cross Country and Volleyball.

## Sign up now for the fifth season of ARISE

By Chris Rath

Season Five of *ARISE Together in Christ* will begin with Sign-up Sunday in late September. Meetings will begin the week of October 9 and conclude the week before Thanksgiving.

ARISE, sponsored by RENEW International, consists of small group gatherings, once a week, for six weeks. Each meeting lasts about an hour to an hour and a half and includes

prayer, music, individual sharing of faith experiences and great fellowship.

Previous attendees have expressed their gratitude for making new friends and getting support, for a safe place to share faith in, for new people to pray with and for a gentle atmosphere of Christian friendship. Each meeting includes an invitation to act, for individuals as well as a group, in spiritual growth and/or service.

Past projects have included penny collections to support Christians in the Middle East, a soup supper benefitting the St. Leo St. Vincent de Paul Society, purchasing water filters and jugs through OXFAM for a third-world area and incalculable individual growth steps.

Each of the past seasons has had a specific theme reflected in Scripture readings and reflections, and Season Five's theme is We Are the Good News!



**Catholic Diocese  
St. Leo the Great Parish  
4940 Broadview Road  
Cleveland OH 44109  
216/661-1006**

Rev. James P. Schmitz, Pastor  
Rev. James Vesely, in Residence

### **Mass Schedule**

Sundays—4 p.m. (Saturday Vigil)

8 a.m., 10 a.m. and Noon

Weekdays—Monday-Thursday 7:30 a.m.

Friday 8:30 a.m.

Holy Days of Obligation—7 a.m., 8:30 a.m.

(school Mass when in session) and 7

p.m. (please check Sunday Bulletin for  
exceptions to this schedule)

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*Summertime means sunny skies, finally saying goodbye to cold and snow, kids out of school and the Parish Picnic. Mark your calendar to join us on Sunday, August 14, from 1–4 p.m. behind the parish center. If you like good food, foot-tapping music and a friendly atmosphere, enjoy a relaxing afternoon with your fellow parishioners. Please check the bulletin for more details.*

## **Blessed events**

**August 5**—Eucharistic Adoration—9 a.m.–5 p.m.

**August 10**—Seniors Group Meeting

**August 13/14**—St. Vincent de Paul monthly  
food collection at all the Masses

**August 14**—Parish Picnic—1–4 p.m.

**August 24**—School is back in session

**August 24**—Seniors Group Meeting

**August 28**—Donut Sunday

**September 2**—Eucharistic Adoration—  
9 a.m.–5 p.m.

**September 5**—Labor Day Mass—9 a.m.

**September 14**—Seniors Group Meeting

**September 17/18**—St. Vincent de Paul  
monthly food collection at all the Masses

**September 18**—Bloodmobile—8:30 a.m.–noon

**September 28**—Seniors Group Meeting