

News & Views

St. Leo the Great Parish • Cleveland

Summer 2014



St. Leo will introduce spiritual renewal in the fall

By John Sabol

Beginning this fall, St. Leo Parish will begin ARISE, an ongoing renewal process to further enhance the community's spiritual life.

This three-year process focuses on a parish-centered process of spiritual renewal and evangelization that enables people to deepen their faith, develop a closer relationship with Christ, grow in community and reach out in service to others. St. Leo will be one of the first parishes in the Cleveland Diocese to begin ARISE.

The goals of ARISE as put forth by its developers, Renew International, are:

- Teaching and witnessing to the Word of God in Sacred Scripture
- Developing vibrant communities of faith and service that are ongoing
- Implementing a strategy for adult faith formation
- Providing a concrete and practical means of evangelization
- Enhancing the celebration of the Sunday liturgy

"We plan to have two six-week sessions of

ARISE each year," said St. Leo Pastor Fr. Jim Schmitz. "The program will help people make practical application of faith to their daily lives."

ARISE sessions will take place in people's homes, or they can be held in parish meeting facilities, with 8–10 participants per session.

"This allows people to talk about their faith in an informal session, where everyone is on the same level," Fr. Schmitz said. "Some people like to join groups where they know nobody, while others may like to be in groups with friends. ARISE is flexible enough to allow this type of participation."

"But once you get to know your fellow parishioners and God, you want to take it to another level."

Each meeting during a six-week process will focus on a different topic, but participants are not bound to stay on the subject for the evening, Fr. Schmitz emphasized.

"The approach that this program takes puts everyone on the same level," Fr. Schmitz said, adding that participants bring "who they are" to the sessions.

"The goal of the program is to learn how faith helps you to make a difference," he added.



St. Leo Music Director Mike Caraffi

Mike Caraffi sets the tempo at St. Leo

By Chris Rath

Mike Caraffi has brought a fistful of talent to St. Leo Parish. His goal is to get parishioners to share their talent.

Equipped with a degree in piano and voice from Cleveland State University, Mike joined the parish staff as music director in late 2013 after serving at Communion of Saints Parish, which was formed through the merger of St. Philomena and St. Ann parishes in East Cleveland and Cleveland Heights, respectively.

Going into the summer, Mike is looking to establish a foundation for growth in the music ministry. "I want to engage our parish

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Parish Picnic July 27

Mark your calendar for the St. Leo Parish Picnic, Sunday, July 27. This will be an old-fashioned picnic with grilled burgers and hot dogs, and everyone is asked to bring a side dish or dessert to share. For more details, check the Sunday Bulletin. Did anyone tell Fr. Jim about the volleyball game?



Four-year-olds sing the Alphabet Song at the close of the 2014 Preschool session.

In Preschool, F = Fun + Foundation

By Elizabeth Fleming

The three-year-olds and four-year-olds who attend St. Leo Preschool don't realize what a strong educational foundation they're receiving. They just know they have lots of fun in the classroom.

Licensed by the Ohio Department of Education, the preschool uses a curriculum provided by the Cleveland Catholic Diocese, which includes readiness activities for math, language arts, reading and religion. Children also take part in science and nature studies, arts and crafts, and music and movement. Teachers also emphasize development of motor skills and social skills.

The program's primary goal is to prepare the children for kindergarten. Another priority is to enable them to think for themselves, rather than simply memorize facts.

Preschool Director Lisa Broschk teaches the full-time classes (8 a.m.–2:30 p.m., Monday–Friday), while Cherise Pacanovsky teaches the morning and afternoon sessions (8–10:30 a.m. and noon–2:30 p.m., Monday–Friday). Jennifer Robinson serves as a classroom aide to all groups. Extended care is available from 2:30–5:30 p.m.

The preschool meets on the second floor of the Parish Center, in two connected classrooms with an attached restroom. An outdoor play area has slides and a jungle gym.

A high ratio of teachers to students allows for a focus on each child's specific needs. One child might know colors and numbers, but lack fine motor skills. Another might be adept in reading readiness but weak in social skills. Being able to provide individual attention where it's needed is a significant benefit St. Leo Preschool offers.

Director Lisa Broschk enjoys seeing how much the kids grow and mature during the two-year program. "They're learning how to be with each other and how to share. By the end of the second year, they're really independent and ready for kindergarten."

Throughout the classrooms are stations that focus on particular subjects. Story time, games and songs engage the children and reinforce learning. "Jesus time" each day explains the gospel for the coming Sunday on a young child's level.

Theme days throughout the year—such as bear day, bunny day, and rainbow colors day—make learning especially fun. The

daily lesson, a craft and snack time all incorporate the special theme.

Seasonal activities are also popular, including applesauce-making in the fall, cookies at Christmastime and homemade pretzels during Lent. The St. Leo Seniors, who meet on the first floor of the Community Center, enjoy having the children sing to them through the year.

Parents of St. Leo preschoolers often find support and form friendships with each other. It can be very comforting to have a parent network to relate to, especially when your oldest child begins preschool.

The preschool was founded in 1985 by Jeanne Sabol and Rhonda Richlovsky, who ran the program together for 25 years. Both remain actively involved, coming in

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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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Where F stands for Fun and Foundation

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to read to the children and lead special autumn and Lenten projects.

Cherise Pacanovsky (“Mrs. Cherise” to the kids) has been working at St. Leo Preschool for 15 years and loves it. Her energy and dedication are evident as she describes how the children engage in continual learning.

“Learning happens all the time, not just in structured lessons. We believe very strongly in incidental learning, so we’re always alert to opportunities to expose the kids to new things and enhance their understanding.”

Mrs. Lisa, Mrs. Cherise, and Mrs. Jennifer all have strong credentials and extensive experience in early childhood education. They maintain high standards for the school, to offer an enriching program that complies with State and diocesan requirements.

“We try to bring our experience together to come up with new things for the kids,” Lisa noted.

It’s obvious they also find their work very rewarding. Lisa enjoys the range of personalities among the children. “Their conversations can be hilarious,” she laughed.

For Cherise, the best part of her job is the kids’ enthusiasm. “Seeing their enthusiasm reminds me how great our world is.”

St. Leo Preschool will hold a registration open house on Sunday, August 10, from 11 a.m.–1 p.m. in the Parish Community Center. Registration fee is \$50, and St. Leo parishioners receive a discounted tuition rate. County vouchers are accepted for the full-time program. For more information, please call 216/661-5330 or visit saintleopreschool.com.

Music director seeks parish’s talent

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youth and build upon the great things that are already going on in the music ministry.

“Typically, the music ministry is one of the most vibrant ministries in any parish, and I want to get to a place where the music ministry at St. Leo is the most vibrant ministry in the entire Diocese—but that takes time and energy.”

Mike emphasized that he is not seeking professional musicians. “All you need is the desire to make a joyful noise unto the Lord and share that with the faith community,” he said. “From there, we can find the right place for you.”

“It’s a lot like vocations—some people are called to priesthood, brotherhood, or to become a religious sister. I want the same types of opportunities to exist within the ministry—bell choir, youth choir, adult choir, instrumental ensembles, schola choirs for the more accomplished singer.

“I truly believe it’s all possible, but you have to have a foundation of growth in order to do it.

“I encourage people to think about how much music has impacted them throughout their lives. Music has the power to transcend all barriers and impact us in

You can help St. Leo’s choir, bell choir and other ensembles by sharing your gifts to uplift the community and enhance the parish worship experience. If you would like to volunteer, please see Mike Caraffi (he’s the guy playing the organ) after any weekend Mass or leave a message for Mike by calling the rectory at 216/661-1006.

ways we never imagined. How cool would that be if as a community at St. Leo, we could all give that gift to each other?”

Mike is something of a prodigy, having taught himself to read music and play the organ at age 4. He’s the youngest of three and says his music genes are inherited from his grandfather, who plays harmonica, and his mom, who plays piano. His older sister shares the same genes and plays clarinet, but his brother “plays the radio.”

When Mike attended Brooklyn High School, his band teacher would give him a different instrument to take home over the summer and teach himself to play it.

Mike graduated from Cleveland State University with a double major in piano and voice. For three years he taught music at two now-closed Catholic grade schools, then was music director at St. Francis de Sales in Parma for two years and St. Paschal Baylon for another year.

Taking a sabbatical from music, he returned to CSU to earn a bachelor of

business administration degree, which led to a five-year stint at KeyBank. At the same time, he continued to work part time as music director at Holy Cross church in Euclid (now Our Lady of the Lake). In 2010 he left Key Bank and joined PNC bank while also substituting for the music director at Communion of Saints.

Besides his work, Mike says another passion is cooking and baking “for a group of people to enjoy, not just for myself. I can make a marinara sauce that would make your mama cry,” he adds. He likes to experiment, and his cooking skills center around “techniques, more than recipes,” which he learned from his mother and grandmother.

An amateur thespian, Mike has acted and done backstage work at several community theaters. His most memorable role was his most recent, as Sparky in “Forever Plaid.” Mike is single and just recently celebrated his 38th birthday. Maybe music and all that cooking and acting keep him looking young.



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 p.m. (Vigil)
7 a.m., 12:10 p.m. and 7 p.m.

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End of school year is busy time

By Nancy Zola

No more pencils, no more books!
The school year has ended, but
not without a lot of activity.

April was a busy month with several days set aside for testing, including the traditional Iowa Tests of Basic Skills, which are required by the Diocese. All students from grades 3 to 8 were tested in math and reading as part of the OAA testing, which was required by the State of Ohio because of the school's participation in the voucher program. The OAA testing also required students in grades 5 and 8 to be tested in science. As part of the Common Core State Standards program, the school will begin a new reading series this fall.

The PRP Reward Field Day on May 16, provided a much-needed break from testing. Throughout the year, students earned points for positive behavior or lost points

for negative behavior as part of the Personal Responsibility in Daily Excellence Project (PRIDE). Points earned could be used for dress-down days and other fun activities during the year.

The Field Day was the culmination of the project. Students from each grade level competed in athletic activities ranging from a corn hole contest to a tug of rope contest to relay events. This was the first year for PRIDE, and it was organized by Cindy Funari, Amber Gibbs and Michele Peters.

To show off students' artistic talents, the Spring Concert was held May 20. This year was the first time that the Band and the Chorus performed together. Selections included songs from Broadway hits. A repeat performance on May 21 was followed by a poetry slam, in which eighth graders memorized and recited poems of 15 lines or more.

In the few months that Fr. Jim Schmitz has been at St. Leo's, he has gotten to know the students by greeting each of them with a handshake as they leave Church after the school Masses. Upon returning from Rome, Fr. Jim brought silver crosses blessed by Pope Francis for all the students.

As the school year came to a close, eighth grade graduation was held at the 4 p.m. Mass on May 31. Many students are continuing their Catholic education and were accepted at the following Catholic high schools: Benedictine, Holy Name, Magnificat, Padua, St. Edward, St. Ignatius, St. Joseph Academy, and Trinity.

Summer will see a flurry of improvements to the school, including painting, the addition of storage space, and new lighting fixtures, which will reduce electrical costs. Parishioners interested in assisting with any of the school projects are encouraged to contact the rectory at 216/661 1006.