

ST. LEO THE GREAT CATHOLIC CHURCH

*We are a welcoming Catholic Community
called by God to live out the message of
Christ in love and service to all people.*

December 14, 2025



Annibale Carracci | Saint John the Baptist Bearing Witness | The Metropolitan Museum of Art

28290 BEAUMONT ROAD, BONITA SPRINGS, FL 34134 • PHONE (239) 992-0901
WWW.STLEOCATHOLICCHURCH.ORG • OFFICE HOURS: MONDAY - FRIDAY 8 AM - 4 PM
DAILY MASS: MONDAY-SATURDAY: 8 AM • CONFESSIONS: SATURDAY 2-3PM

SATURDAY VIGIL MASSES: 3:30 & 5:30 PM • SUNDAY MASSES: 7:30, 9:30, 11:30 AM & 5 PM
MISA EN ESPAÑOL DOMINGO - 3 PM Y LAS CONFESIONES ANTES DE LA MISA • MASS IN POLISH: 3RD SUNDAY OF THE MONTH - 1:30 PM

Parish Staff

Rev. Jarek (Jaroslaw) Sniosek	Pastor
Rev. Juan Carlos Sack	Parochial Vicar
Rev. Mr. Charles Ferraro	Deacon
Rev. Mr. Joel Livingston	Deacon
Juliana Alfano	Musician
Nelson Alfaro	Maintenance
Dan Bardauskis	Liturgy Assistant
Anne Bellows	Communications Coordinator
Hermilo Calderon	Lead Maintenance
Griselda Cisneros	Receptionist
Maria Fernandez	Religious Education Assistant
Daniel Gonzalez	Maintenance
Elsy Hernandez	Operations Supervisor
Marcin Malewski	Director of Music
Martha Mercado	Maintenance
Gisela Meraz	Religious Education Coordinator
Henry Soto	Business Manager
Milana Strezeva	Musician
Marie Talley	Musician
Winter Talley	Musician

Parish Church Support

Thank you for your
continued generosity!

Due to the printer's
holiday schedule
this bulletin was submitted
before the most recent
collections were tabulated.

Celebrating our Faith

BAPTISM OF INFANTS

Baptisms of children under 7 years old are offered every fourth Sunday of each month in Spanish and every second Sunday of the month in English. Please visit our website or contact our office for details and requirements.

CONFIRMATION

At confirmation we receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit and confirm and renew our baptismal promises committing to a life of maturity in the Christian faith. Unconfirmed Catholics wishing to receive the Sacrament should contact the Parish Office to make arrangements for suitable instruction. Unbaptized or non-Catholics can be confirmed at the Easter Vigil when they are baptized or received into the Church as a part of Order of Christian Initiation of Adult. To enroll in OCIA, please call Griselda Cisneros at 992-0901.

EUCHARIST

Parishioners who wish to bring communion to their spouses should contact the parish office to pick up a pyx with the St. Leo's inscription on it. Please use this pyx when approaching to receive a host for your spouse or a family member in the Communion procession during Mass. If you need to receive a gluten free host due to a medical condition please arrive 15 minutes before Mass begins and inform the Sacristan.

RECONCILIATION

Individual confession with a priest is the principal means of absolution and reconciliation of grave sins within the Church. The Sacrament of Reconciliation frees us from sinful patterns of behavior and calls us to complete conversion to Christ. Confessions are heard at 2pm on Saturday in English and 2pm on Sunday in Spanish in the Church. You may also approach any of our parish priests to hear your confession at another suitable time.

THE RITE OF ANOINTING

A person does not need to wait until the point of death to receive this sacrament. A careful judgment about the serious nature of the illness is sufficient. The Sacrament may be repeated if the sick person recovers after the anointing but becomes ill once again, or if, during the same illness, the person's condition becomes more serious. For those who are about to depart from this life, the Church offers the person Penance, Anointing of the Sick, and the Eucharist as Viaticum (food for the journey) given at the end of life. Contact the Parish Office at 992-0901 to be connected with the priest on duty.

SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE

If you are a registered parishioner of St. Leo and plan to marry in our parish please contact our office at least six months prior to the tentative wedding date. Weddings cannot be scheduled until the marriage preparation process is complete and it is determined that the parties are free to marry.

ANNULMENT - Reestablishing the freedom to marry.

An annulment is more accurately described as a declaration of matrimonial invalidity. It is an official determination made by an ecclesiastical court that at the time of the marital consent exchanged by the parties a specific component of the marriage was lacking or defective. Hence, the marriage failed to be a marriage as defined by the Catholic Church. If you wish to reestablish your freedom to marry in the Church, please contact a parish priest to be your advocate in presenting your case to the Tribunal.

VOCATION

If you think that you have a vocation to the priesthood or religious life please speak with one of our priests, or contact the Diocesan Director of Vocations at 941-484-9548, visit www.dioceseofvenice.org/vocations

ONLINE GIVING

WWW.STLEOCATHOLICCHURCH.ORG

Next Weekend's Mass Schedule

Saturday, December 20

3:30 pm	Fr. Stan
5:30 pm	Fr. Stan

Sunday, December 21

7:30 am	Fr. Jack
9:30 am	Fr. Jack
11:30 am	Fr. Jarek
3:00 pm-Spanish	Fr. Juan Carlos
5:00 pm	Fr. Jarek

Christmas Vigil

Wednesday, December 24th

3:30 pm	Fr. Stan
3:30 pm-Overflow	Fr. Jack
5:30 pm	Fr. Jarek
9:00 pm	Fr. Jarek

Christmas Day

Thursday, December 25th

7:30 am	Fr. Stan
9:30 am	Fr. Jack
11:30 am	Fr. Jarek
3:00 pm-Spanish	Fr. Juan Carlos

Changes may occur without notice.



Daily Reflections

by Father Jarek

Sunday, December 14

Third Sunday of Advent

When Joy Finds Us First

"Be strong, fear not. Here is your God." (Isaiah 35:4)

Isaiah promises deserts blooming and frightened hearts steady, which sounds beautiful until we realize he is talking about our deserts and our frightened hearts. We all have areas of life that feel a little dried out, like the spiritual equivalent of a pantry shelf full of stale crackers. Yet Scripture insists that God does some of his best work in places we have quietly written off. Joy does not wait for our lives to be perfectly organized. It walks straight into our mess with the confidence of someone who knows exactly what they are doing.

Even John the Baptist, fierce voice of the wilderness, reaches a moment of doubt behind prison walls. He sends disciples to ask Jesus if he is truly the One. It is strangely comforting to know that even saints have days when faith feels thin. Jesus responds not with a lecture but with evidence of healing already unfolding. In other words, the proof is in front of you. Look again. Sometimes the help we want from God has already started. We just have not connected the dots yet.

Today the invitation is to let joy come to us rather than waiting to feel worthy of it. We may not have blooming deserts to show off, but God is working in quiet corners of our lives even now. Joy is not a reward for the spiritually impressive. It is a gift for the spiritually honest, those willing to admit that parts of life feel dry and trust that God can make them bloom anyway.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, let your joy find me in every dry or hidden place of my life. Strengthen what feels tired, lighten what feels heavy, and help me trust that your work has already begun. Amen. Isaiah 35:1 to 6a and 10, Psalm 146, James 5:7 to 10, Matthew 11:2 to 11

Monday, December 15

When God Shows Us What We Cannot Yet See

"I see him though not now. I behold him though not near." (Numbers 24:17)

Balaam looks at Israel's campsite and sees more than tents and tired travelers. He sees promise blossoming in slow motion. Advent invites us into that same kind of vision, the ability to see with the heart what the eyes cannot yet detect. Some days we look at our own lives and think, Lord, if there is a divine plan here, it is hiding extremely well. But Scripture reassures us that God plants his work long before we recognize the sprout.

The leaders in the Gospel question Jesus' authority not because they lack evidence but because they fear the implications. Accepting Jesus as Lord means loosening our grip on the illusion of control, something we humans surrender only after realizing that our attempts to manage life have turned into a full-time job with no benefits. Jesus exposes the hesitation beneath their questions and invites them to honesty.

Today the invitation is to trust God's long game. His timing is rarely the timing we would choose, but it is always the timing that shapes the heart. When life feels unclear, we do not need perfect vision. We need humble willingness. God can work with questions, doubts, and slow steps. He simply cannot work with a closed door.

Prayer: Lord, open my eyes to the promise you are preparing even when I cannot see it. Give me a heart that welcomes your authority with trust rather than fear. Amen. Numbers 24:2 to 7 and 15 to 17a, Psalm 25, Matthew 21:23 to 27

Tuesday, December 16

The Grace That Waits for a Simple Yes

"The Lord hears the cry of the poor." (Psalm 34:7)

Zephaniah describes a city that has lost the ability to listen. It is not hard to relate. We all have days when our ears are open but our hearts are temporarily unavailable, like a store sign quietly turned the wrong way. Yet God is not discouraged by our stubbornness. He promises to purify our lips and soften our pride with the gentleness of someone who knows exactly how to reach us without breaking us.

The parable of the two sons reminds us that God prefers honest resistance over polite avoidance. One son says yes because he knows it is the right thing to say, then disappears like a volunteer at a parish cleanup who vanishes just before the heavy lifting. The other son grumbles, resists, maybe even rolls his eyes, yet eventually shows up. Jesus makes it clear which response he values. God is not impressed by flawless words. He is moved by imperfect people taking imperfect steps in the right direction.

Today the invitation is to let our no become a yes even if it happens later than we planned. God already knows our hesitations, our excuses, and the fears that slow us down. He is not keeping score. He is waiting patiently for the moment our heart turns toward him, because that single turn is the doorway through which grace enters.

Prayer: Lord, help my heart to respond sincerely even when I hesitate at first. Turn my uncertain no into a simple and willing yes. Amen. Zephaniah 3:1 to 2 and 9 to 13, Psalm 34, Matthew 21:28 to 32

Wednesday, December 17

Where God Hides His Promise

"Justice shall flourish in his time and fullness of peace forever." (Psalm 72:7)

Matthew presents a genealogy that most people listen to with sincere admiration for the lecturer's stamina. Yet this long list of names is a quiet masterpiece of divine patience. Saints and sinners, heroes and complicated stories are woven into the line that leads to Jesus. God writes salvation history the way we write family histories, with imperfect characters, surprising detours, and a steady supply of grace.

Jacob blesses Judah with the promise of a king whose reign will stretch far beyond their imagination. It reminds us that God's work unfolds through generations, not instant solutions. Justice and peace do not

arrive with overnight delivery. They grow like trees, slowly and steadily, with roots sinking deeper long before branches appear. Advent teaches us to trust what God is doing even when it feels small, ordinary, or easily overlooked.

Today the invitation is to trust that God is weaving our story into something larger than anything we could create alone. If God can gather up the mixed history of Israel's ancestors and bring Christ into the world, then he can certainly work with the ups and downs of our days. What matters is not flawlessness but faithfulness, the willingness to let grace keep shaping us.

Prayer: Lord, help me trust the slow and steady way you work in my life. Use my imperfect story to prepare a place where peace can take root. Amen. Genesis 49:2 and 8 to 10, Psalm 72, Matthew 1:1 to 17

Thursday, December 18

When God Enters Our Plans Gently

"Behold the days are coming." (Jeremiah 23:5)

Jeremiah speaks of a king who will bring justice and security, a promise that sounds especially comforting on days when life feels as organized as a junk drawer. God reminds his people and us that he is not distant or indifferent. He is preparing something trustworthy even when the world feels uncertain. Advent invites us to wait with expectation rather than exhaustion.

Joseph's story shows a man who responds to shocking news with calm reflection rather than panic. He chooses mercy rather than judgment, patience rather than impulse. In many ways he is the patron saint of take a breath before you respond. Only after Joseph chooses compassion does God reveal the larger plan. His life teaches us that grace often enters after we take the loving step, not before.

Today the invitation is to make room for God in the places that feel confusing or inconvenient. When life disrupts our plans we can still choose patience and kindness. And in those very places God often enters quietly, whispering reassurance that Emmanuel is not an idea but a presence, steady and faithful and near.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, steady my heart when life surprises me. Give me Joseph's courage to choose mercy and help me trust the quiet ways you guide me. Amen. Jeremiah 23:5 to 8, Psalm 72, Matthew 1:18 to 25

Friday, December 19

When God Meets Us in the Long Wait

"Your prayer has been heard." (Luke 1:13)

Manoah's wife and Elizabeth stand in the long line of people who waited for years for something they deeply longed for. Their quiet perseverance makes them feel remarkably close to us. Most adults know what it is to wait for something important, sometimes for so long that we begin to wonder if God gently misplaced our request. Yet Scripture assures us that God was listening the entire time and preparing a grace that would arrive at the right moment.

Zechariah hesitates because hope has worn thin. His reaction is not cynicism but tenderness that has been stretched for years. His doubt reveals a truth we all know well. When God delays we sometimes begin to protect our hearts from disappointment by expecting less. Yet God does not reject Zechariah. He simply holds him gently while the promise continues to unfold.

Today the invitation is to bring our longings honestly before God without pretending they do not ache. Advent reminds us that God works in silence as much as in miracles. Even when we cannot see movement he is stirring new life beneath the surface. And when the time is right he speaks the same words to us that he spoke to Zechariah. Your prayer has been heard.

Prayer: Lord, meet me in the places where I have waited for years. Renew my hope and soften my fear of disappointment. Help me trust your timing even when it feels slow. Amen. Judges 13:2 to 7 and 24 to 25a, Psalm 71, Luke 1:5 to 25

Saturday, December 20

The Yes That Changes Everything

"The virgin shall conceive and bear a son." (Isaiah 7:14)

Isaiah promises a sign so astonishing that it slices through all fear and overthinking. Emmanuel. God with us. Not God above us pointing out our flaws. Not God against us measuring our failures. God with us, standing exactly where we stand with full awareness of our worries and our good intentions that sometimes flatten by lunchtime. Emmanuel is the reassurance our hearts crave.

Mary receives the message from Gabriel with honest questions and courageous trust. She does not understand the plan, and yet she gives her yes with a peace that can only come from someone who knows the character of the One who asks. Mary shows us that holiness is found not in perfect clarity but in perfect surrender to a God who loves without limits.

Today the invitation is to let even a small yes rise in our hearts. It may be uncertain, quiet, or trembling, but God can fill a single yes with enough grace to change a life. Emmanuel is not only a name. It is a promise that God remains with us through every step of our story.

Prayer: Lord, give me Mary's courage to say yes even when I do not understand the whole picture. Let Emmanuel become my peace, my strength, and my constant companion. Amen. Isaiah 7:10 to 14, Psalm 24, Luke 1:26 to 38

**For the full version of each day's reflection,
visit CatholicJourneyToday.com
and journey deeper with Scripture, prayer, and daily encouragement.**

Joy in a Season That Does Not Feel Joyful

Third Sunday of Advent

by Fr. Janek

Isaiah 35:1-6a and 10, Psalm 146, James 5:7-10, Matthew 11:2-11

There is a strange pressure that creeps in every December, a quiet expectation that joy should appear on command. We see it in commercials with perfect families, in store displays where everything sparkles, and in the cheerful music that insists we should be merry simply because the calendar turned another page. For many people, especially older adults who carry deep memories of loved ones lost, friendships changed, or health that is not what it used to be, this pressure can feel almost cruel. When joy feels out of reach, the season of joy can become a season of ache.

Gaudete Sunday enters that ache with a surprising word. The Church does not pretend everything is fine. Instead, it lights a rose candle and declares, "Rejoice." It does not say "Try harder," or "Put on a brave face," or "Pretend nothing hurts." The invitation is different. It calls us to discover a joy rooted not in circumstances but in the God who steps into them.

Isaiah speaks directly to people who understand sadness. His message is not addressed to the confident, but to those whose hands are weak and whose knees feel unsteady. He writes to people who wonder if God will ever show up again, people who stand in the desert seasons of life and search the horizon for any sign of green. And into that landscape he speaks the outrageous promise that the desert will bloom, that streams will rush through dry ground, that the blind will see and the lame will leap. Isaiah dares to proclaim that joy will rise exactly where despair once lived.

That promise is not abstract. It is not poetic decoration. It is God speaking into the places where His people have nearly given up hope. And that is why it matters so much. Most of us do not need shallow positivity. We need the kind of joy that can sit beside sorrow and still breathe.

John the Baptist understood that need better than we realize. In today's Gospel he is not standing strong by the river. He is locked in a prison cell. His life has shrunk to stone walls and silence. And from that lonely place he sends Jesus a question that sounds almost like a whispered prayer: "Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?"

It is a stunning moment. The man who once cried out with fire and certainty now asks if he has been mistaken. John is not weak. He is simply honest. That honesty is one of the great gifts older adults possess. When you have lived long enough, you know what it means to wait for answers that do not come right away. You know what it means to watch someone you love suffer or to face your own fears as the body ages. You know what it means to pray with both faith and fatigue. John is speaking for all of us.

And Jesus does not scold him. He does not say, "How dare you doubt." He sends back a tender response. He tells John to look at the real but quiet signs of God at work: the blind see, the deaf hear, the poor receive good news. In other words, "Do not focus only on what has not changed. Look again. Something holy is already happening."

Jesus answers John's question not with theories, but with evidence that grace is quietly moving through ordinary lives.

James picks up that same theme with the image of a farmer who waits for rain. The soil looks lifeless for a long time. Nothing appears to be happening. Yet the farmer does not give up, because he knows that hidden things are growing beneath the surface. James invites us to that same patience. Not resignation, but trust. Not denial, but hope.

Many people today understand this kind of waiting. The medical test that takes too long. The reconciliation in a family that still seems impossible. The loneliness that lingers longer than we hoped. The prayer that has not yet been answered. Gaudete Sunday speaks into all of that. It says, gently but firmly, that joy is not the same thing as having everything sorted out. Joy is the knowledge that God is already working beneath the surface, even if we cannot yet see the bloom.

Psalm 146 offers the final piece. It reminds us that God lifts up those who are bowed down. He protects the stranger. He supports the widow and the orphan. He watches over the forgotten. This is not the God of holiday sentiment. This is the God who enters the hard corners of life and fills them with new light. His joy is not fragile. His joy holds.

And that is why Gaudete Sunday matters so much in a world that often feels tired. It does not force happiness. It invites us to open our eyes to the small but unmistakable signs that God is near. A phone call that arrives at the right moment. A memory that brings more gratitude than sorrow. A moment of unexpected strength. A simple kindness. A breath of peace that comes from nowhere. These are not accidents. These are the blooming deserts Isaiah promised.

Joy does not erase sorrow. It sits beside it and glows.

On this Third Sunday of Advent, the rose candle does not deny the darkness. It declares that the darkness will not win. It reminds us, gently and quietly, that God is already planting life in places that feel barren.

And if we listen carefully, we hear the same message Jesus sent to John. Look again. Joy is nearer than you think.



Advent

LIVING IN CHRIST'S LIGHT

As the nights grow longer and the air turns colder, Advent arrives—not only as a season on the calendar, but as a call to our hearts. In a world where darkness can feel overwhelming—through suffering, division, and uncertainty—Advent reminds us that God has already answered with light.

From the beginning, God's light has pierced the shadows. The prophets saw it from afar, speaking of a coming Messiah who would bring justice, peace, and healing. In Bethlehem, that promised light took flesh. In Jesus Christ, the Light of the World stepped into our night with the warmth of love and the power of truth.

Each Advent candle, each quiet moment of prayer, becomes a step on the path from darkness to light. As the candles grow in number each week—hope, peace, joy, and love—we are invited to let Christ's light grow within us. The flicker of a flame reminds us: He is near. He is coming. He is already here.

But Advent is not just about seeing the light. It is about living in it. Christ doesn't shine so we can remain the same; he shines so we can become radiant with his love. His light transforms our hearts, softens our judgments, strengthens our courage, and sends us out as bearers of that same light.

In this sacred season, we are called to reflect his light—to offer hope to the lonely, peace to the anxious, joy to the weary, and love to the forgotten.

Whether we light a candle on the wreath or a string of lights on the tree, let each small flame be a prayer:

COME, LORD JESUS. LIGHT THE WAY.
DWELL IN US. SHINE THROUGH US.

This Advent, may we not only watch for Christ's coming but prepare to live as children of the light—joyful, radiant, and ready to welcome him.



FROM CANDLES TO CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

ILLUMINATING THE MEANING OF ADVENT

Candles have long symbolized Advent, representing the light of Christ coming into a world darkened by sin. The tradition dates back to early Christian customs in Europe, where people lit candles during the darkest days of winter as a sign of hope and expectation. Over time, this merged with Christian liturgical practices—especially in medieval Germany—giving rise to the Advent wreath.

The wreath usually holds four candles—three purple and one pink—lit one by one on each Sunday of Advent. Some include a fifth white candle, the Christ candle, lit on Christmas Day. Each flame represents a theme: hope, peace, joy, and love. As more candles are lit, the growing light reflects the increasing anticipation of Christ's birth.

More than seasonal decoration, candles serve as a visual and spiritual countdown to Christmas. Their soft glow invites stillness, prayer, and reflection in a season often marked by hurry. They help focus our hearts on the mystery and joy of the Incarnation.

Christmas lights continue this tradition in a broader, more public way. Like Advent candles, they symbolize Christ as the Light of the World—a promise kindled in Advent and fulfilled on Christmas Day. The practice of lighting homes and trees began when Christians placed candles in windows as a sign of welcome and hope. With electric lights introduced in the late 19th century, the tradition expanded to homes, trees, and city streets.

Each light we see—whether candle or bulb—echoes the same message: light overcomes darkness. Jesus, the true Light, has come to bring warmth, joy, and peace. As candles call us to quiet reflection, Christmas lights proclaim in celebration that the Light has arrived.



SUNDAY MASS READINGS FOR ADVENT 2025

1st Sunday: Isaiah 2:1-5; Romans 13:11-14; Matthew 24:37-44

2nd Sunday: Isaiah 11:1-10; Romans 15:4-9; Matthew 3:1-12

3rd Sunday: Isaiah 35:1-6, 10; James 5:7-10; Matthew 11:2-11

4th Sunday: Isaiah 7:10-14; Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-24

Christmas Day: Isaiah 52:7-10; Hebrews 1:1-6; John 1:1-18

"MAY WE BE IN THIS WORLD A RAY OF THAT LIGHT WHICH
SHONE FORTH FROM BETHLEHEM, BRINGING JOY AND PEACE TO
THE HEARTS OF ALL MEN AND WOMEN."

—Pope Francis

WHERE DID ADVENT COME FROM?

Advent originated in the early Church as a season of preparation for baptism, especially for new Christians baptized at Epiphany. Records from 4th-century Gaul and Spain show Christians observing periods of fasting and penance in late autumn. By the 6th century, the focus of Advent shifted in Rome to preparing for the celebration of Christ's birth on December 25. Pope Gregory I (590–604) helped shape the season's liturgical structure, though the number of weeks varied regionally. By the Middle Ages, the Western Church standardized Advent as the four Sundays before Christmas. Its name comes from the Latin *adventus*, meaning "coming," and it mirrors the Greek word *parousia*, referring to Christ's return. Over time, Advent became a season marking both Christ's first coming in Bethlehem and his promised return.

ADVENT FACTS

Advent comes from the Latin *adventus*, meaning "coming" or "arrival." It translates the Greek word *parousia*, which refers to Christ's Second Coming. Advent invites reflection on both Christ's birth and his return in glory.

Liturgical colors used during Advent are primarily purple (or violet), symbolizing penance, prayer, and preparation. On the third Sunday, called *Gaudete* Sunday, (Latin for "rejoice") rose-colored vestments may be used to signify joy and a shift toward celebration.

The '**O Antiphons**' are a set of ancient prayers recited or sung from December 17–23. Each begins with "O" and addresses Christ by a biblical title, such as "O Wisdom" or "O Emmanuel." They are the inspiration for the hymn "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel."

The **Advent season** begins four Sundays before Christmas and lasts between 22 and 28 days, depending on the calendar year.

St. Leo Food Bank

"The need has never been greater."

The St. Leo Food Bank is always in need of supplies to share with local food pantries.

All unopened, non-perishable foods that are not expired are welcomed.

**You may continue to drop off your donations when you come to Mass,
or at our office Monday - Friday from 8am-3pm.**

THESE ITEMS ARE ESPECIALLY NEEDED

MOST NEEDED

- ☐ COOKING OIL
- ☐ DRIED BEANS
- ☐ MASECA (CORN TORTILLA FLOUR)
- ☐ WHITE RICE

- ☐ TOOTHPASTE
- ☐ TOOTHBRUSHES
- ☐ BAR SOAP
- ☐ SHAMPOO/BODY WASH
- ☐ TOILET PAPER
- ☐ ANTIBACTERIAL WIPES

- ☐ CANNED FRUIT & VEGETABLES
- ☐ CANNED TUNA & CHICKEN
- ☐ FLOUR & SUGAR
- ☐ CANNED SOUP

- ☐ POWDERED MILK
- ☐ PEANUT BUTTER & JELLY
- ☐ CEREAL
- ☐ JUICE

If you prefer, you may donate money directly to St Leo Food Bank. These funds will be dispersed to those in need both directly, and through our partner parishes and organizations.

Catholic Charities is in need of volunteers to help with food pantry distribution every other Wednesday from 9am to noon at their building on the St. Leo campus.

If you would like to help please contact Michael Vega at 239-270-3291 or mvega@ccdov.org

The St. Leo Food Bank supports Catholic Charities on our campus, Café of Life in Bonita Springs, as well as the food pantries at the parishes of Jesus the Worker (Ft. Myers), St. Margaret (Clewiston) and Our Lady Queen of Heaven (LaBelle).

If you need assistance from Catholic Charities for food, financial assistance, or tele-mental health counseling, please call 239-390-2928 between the hours of 9am-5pm Monday-Friday.

TO DONATE HOUSEHOLD ITEMS AND CLOTHING BRING THEM TO:

Our Lady of Light Thrift Shop
24600 S. Tamiami Tr. Ste. 600A (992-1576)

St. Vincent de Paul Resale Shop
3725 Bonita Beach Road (992-1899)

The Perpetual Baby Shower



Please remember all the infants who are in need of diapers and new clothes. Their toddler brothers and sisters grow so fast and need clothes also.

The Ladies of St. Leo Guild thank all of you for your past support. Contributions may be left in the donation boxes at the doors of the church or taken to the parish office.

BABIES ALWAYS NEED

- ☐ WIPES
- ☐ FORMULA
- ☐ BABY WASH
- ☐ BABY SHAMPOO
- ☐ DIAPERS (ESPECIALLY SIZE 6)



WE APPRECIATE YOUR GENEROSITY!



OCIA Sponsors

©LPI

This year St. Leo is blessed to have a growing number of people who have joined our Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA) program to study and discern their desire to join the Church. The program is in great need of people willing to share their time and faith as sponsors. Sponsors for each of these individuals play an important role as they represent the faith community and insure that no one walks the journey of conversion without the support of the Church community. A sponsor makes the individual feel welcome, introduces them to other members of the faith community and encourages them to participate in community activities. Walking with someone who is learning about the Catholic faith is a great way to grow in your own faith. Not only will you be reviewing and learning about Catholic teachings, you will also be diving into prayer and scripture, renewing and strengthening your personal relationship with God. The experience can be mutually rewarding for both the candidate and the sponsor.

If you would like to share your faith and love for the Church, and learn more about becoming an OCIA sponsor please contact Matt Atkinson at sloop17mra@gmail.com or 812-789-3615.



Liturgical Schedule

CHRISTMAS MASSES

Wednesday, December 24
 3:30 pm - Church & Auditorium
 5:30 pm - Children's Mass
 9:00 pm - Midnight Mass
 Carols begin at 8:00 pm

Thursday, December 25
 7:30, 9:30 & 11:30 am
 & 3:00 pm in Spanish

SOLEMNITY OF MARY MASSES

Wednesday, December 31
 5 pm

Thursday, January 1
 8am, 12 noon
 & 3:00 pm in Spanish

*We Pray for the Recently Deceased of
Our Parish*

Franklin Carrion
Kenneth Craig



Faith That Meets You Where You Are
**JOURNEY
TOGETHER
IN FAITH AND
HOPE**



If you enjoy Fr. Jarek's reflections in the bulletin, take your faith journey further at CatholicJourneyToday.com a site created with you in mind. Discover daily reflections, inspiring homilies, faith-filled articles, and enriching courses in Scripture and Catholic catechism. Whether you seek Spiritual insights, practical wisdom, or a quiet space for reflection, you'll find it here.

Visit CatholicJourneyToday.com and continue growing in faith—one reflection at a time



walking with purpose

Come As You Are
You are Welcome Here!

Join Us For Session Two—You're Welcome if you are new—Always!!!
To Register for Day or Night Sessions Please Use the QR Code

For Daytime Sessions: Saint William Church Hall, 601 Seagate Dr.
 January 13th to March 31st 2026
 10:00 to 11:45am
 Doors Open at 9:30 for Coffee Social With Treats



Evening Sessions: The Blessed Mother Center—Rm.203
 750 Seagate Dr., Naples, FL 34103
 January 13th to March 31st 2026
 6:30 to 8:00 pm (Doors Open at 6 pm)



**Important: Please purchase book "Opening Your Heart" at:
<https://walkingwithpurpose.com>**

For Scholarships, Babysitting, or Questions: **Contact Lisa McGowan**
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NEXT WEEK'S MASS INTENTIONS

MASS	INTENTION	REQUESTED BY
MONDAY	DECEMBER 15	
8:00 am	+Ronald Sebring	Sandra Serchuk
TUESDAY	DECEMBER 16	
8:00 am	+Jason Abbenante	His Loving Parents
WEDNESDAY	DECEMBER 17	
8:00 am	+Ronald Stutzman	Fred and Sandra Serchuk
THURSDAY	DECEMBER 18	
8:00 am	+Kathy Pecorella	Her Loving Husband, Ronnie
FRIDAY	DECEMBER 19	
8:00 am	+Rev. Daniel S. Murphy	Antonia Daughtry
SATURDAY	DECEMBER 20	
8:00 am	+Maureen Broitzman	The St. Leo Ladies' Guild
3:30 pm	+Gene Buffo	Lena Guigon
5:30 pm	+Dcn. William Tansey M.D.	His Loving Family
SUNDAY	DECEMBER 21	
7:30 am	+Richard Hall	Donald & Elaine Marvin
9:30 am	The Parishioners of St. Leo	
11:30 am	+Gene Buffo	Suzi Schultz & Yvonne Rivera
1:30 pm - Polish	Special Cumulative Intentions	
3:00 pm - Spanish	Special Cumulative Intentions	
5:00 pm	+Helen, +John & +Lisa Lagowski	Their Loving Daughter, Theresa

Hearing Loops are installed around the pews adjacent to the north and south entrances of the church and in the new auditorium. Hearing Loops transmit sound directly into a hearing aid or cochlear implant. To receive the Loop signal, manually activate the T-coil or telephone setting on your device. Consult your audiologist or hearing aid professional with problems.



EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

Experiencing the marvelous presence of Christ through Eucharistic Adoration is available in our Chapel from 7am to 3:30pm Monday through Friday and on Saturdays and Sundays from 7am to 5:30pm.

ST. LEO MARIAN MOVEMENT OF PRIEST CENACLE

On the second Friday of each month in the Cry Room following 8am Mass we pray for good and holy priests for one hour.
For more information contact Betty at 860-595-6370 or holdenbnd@gmail.com

Prayer Group

All are welcome on Wednesday mornings in the Nest Café at 8:45am to pray for our personal intentions and those of our community, country and peace in our world.

Rosary Makers - Wednesday at 10:30 am - Nest Café

All are welcome to join the JMJ Rosary Makers as they make beaded string rosaries. The instructions, supplies and tools required will be provided. Since prayer and evangelization are needed more than ever, so are rosaries.

Walking with Moms in Need is a program at St. Leo which connects pregnant women and new mothers in need with assistance and support. Please go to our website for more information www.stleocatholicchurch.org

The Sewing, Knitting & Crocheting Group

shares their talents to benefit local charities. They welcome volunteers of all skill levels on Tuesdays beginning at noon in the Juan Diego Outreach Center. Contact Bernice Romano at 239-601-5877 with questions.



DAILY PRAYER SCHEDULE

MONDAYS THROUGH THURSDAYS, AND SATURDAYS: 7:15 am-Divine Mercy Chaplet in the Cry Room, 7:30 am-Rosary in the main church.
FRIDAYS: 7:10 am-Divine Mercy Chaplet in the Cry Room, 7:25 am-Rosary in the main church, followed by the Miraculous Medal Novena. We invite you to join us in these wonderful prayers. Your presence and participation are greatly appreciated.



ST LEO'S RESPECT LIFE MINISTRY

Meetings are held in the Nest Café on the last Friday of each month following 8am Mass beginning again in January.
For questions contact Loretta at 917.886.7273 or Peggy at 239.293.3201.



Flowers this week are dedicated to †Ginny Rodriguez
Requested by Loving Husband & Children

Candles this week are dedicated to †Maureen Broitzman
Requested by Janina Regienczuk

Please Pray for Our Troops

Lt. Marco Colavecchia	Joseph McDermond
Brian Dearcia Leon	Daniel McDonald
Michael DeSantis	Cpt. Kyle Martin
Cpt. Mary Kate Flynn	Michael Oliveira
Lt. Thomas A. Flynn	Sgt. Thomas Pauls
Cpt. Sean Flynn	Nick Parrorzio
Thomas Geanuracos	Sean Michael Perry
Carlos Gonzales	Cpt. Evan Razzano
Lt. Andrew D. Holt	Lt. Riley N. Schliem
Brian Howlett	Lt. Col. Jonathan W. Schwarz
Lt. Com. Matthew Kleine	Lt. Col. Peter Shayhorn
Reed Lessman	All serving in the military,
Lt. Col. Nicholas LoRusso	especially those in combat.

We pray today for...

Tom Bardol	Emily Lienesch
Jeffrey Bogart	Cole LoRusso
Dave Bowezs	Tim McAuliff
Tom Brown	Pauline McKeen
Denise Buk	Misaela Mendiola Sandoval
Isabelle Marie Caiola	Jose Manuel Meraz
Patrick Cain	Jay Miller
Carol Compagna	Paul Modzelewski
Mark Chambers	Barbara Moloney
Mickey Chervitz	Jay Morgan
Michelle Chiarulli	Deborah Muñiz
Kevin Clark	Audrey Grace Neeley
Scott Cochell	Glenn Nelson
Lourdes Coll	Kathleen Nelson
Greg Daeger	Paul Nippert
Eli Davis	Rita Off
Janet Davis	Beverly Pecor
Tara DeRoma	Connie Phillips
Carrie Derse	Aiden Putnam
Robby Dirks	Michelle Rendon
Paul Duggan	Mary Ritt
Brad Fairfield	Jack Rubush
Paula Fairfield	Tessa Santagate
Linda Fischel	Cindy Santiago
Sean Flynn	Martha Simons
Brynn Forlizzi	Rosemarie Smedile
John Galli	Sheryl Southerd
Gisette Lupita Garcia	Jim Stokes
Ben Gondersone	Charlie Sweeney Jr.
Esmeralda Gomez Moreira	Debra Tailerco
Louise Grantt	Michael Taveripte
Cory Gray	Fabio Thurman
Pauline Graziano	Tom Thurman
Karen Grimshaw	Eleanor Trevison
Ryan Hammond	Keanu Vallette
Alan Handsman	Debra Vannotti
Tara Handsman	Tim Young
Luke Hass	John White
Robbin Holcomb	George Witkowsky
Jack Jeffrey	Ray Zonghetti
Jerry Kaehle	Annie Zanussi
Nolan Kane	Anthony, Christine, Fabiala,
Mary Kobel	Krislin, Michael, Tray. Present
Peggy Land	& past parish priests.
Diane Lamdi	

Names remain on our prayer list for 30 days & troop list for 6 months.
To add names or update information call the Parish Office at 992-0901 or email: ehernandez@stleocatholicchurch.org

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Arimatheans	Parish Office 992-0901
Bulletin	Anne Bellows..... 992-0901
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Finance Council	Henry Soto 992-0901
Human Trafficking Hotline888-373-7888
Landings for Returning Catholics	Parish Office 992-0901
Lector Coordinator for Weekends	David Froelke.....646-831-9733
Lector Coordinator for Weekdays	Dan Bardauskis.....992-0901
Mass in Polish Coordinator	Maryla Basara..405-2151
Money Counters	Henry Soto992-0901
Perpetual Baby Shower	Patty Swanson713-876-5517
Prison Ministry	Robert Hiniker.....863-558-0407
Project Gabriel	Carol Dangler..793-0826
Project Rachel	Sylvia Jimenez.....941-412-5860
Respect Life Ministry	Loretta Ede.....917-886-7273
Retrouvaille	Doug & Jeanne Lindberg.....800-470-2230
Order of Christian Initiation	Griselda Cisneros 992-0901
Sacristan Ministry	Annette Smith 948-1640
Sewing-Knitting-Crocheting	Bernice Romano601-5877
Sing a Long	Penny Kelly.....314-412-4022
St. Leo the Great Ladies Guild	Beth Daniels.....248-376-2997
Usher Ministry	Parish Office 992-0901
Youth Ministry	Gisela Meraz..... 992-0901

Our Capital Improvement Fund

Our Capital Improvement Fund allows us to collect assessment free money to be used for necessary repairs and projects for the parish campus. Funds have been used to pay for the replacement of the skylights in the church and a portion of the air conditioning units in the Parish Life Center and Education Buildings.

More recently we have repaired roof leaks in the church, added a security system, replaced the church bell system, freshly painted many of our buildings and added extra landscaping. These funds are not designated for the construction of any new buildings. We sincerely thank you for your continued generosity.

Please know that contributing to this assessment free fund is the most efficient way to help St. Leo maintain and improve our beautiful properties.

VIGIL SERVICE OF RECONCILIATION

THIS MONDAY, DECEMBER 15TH
6PM

Join us for a prayer service
in the tradition of Taize
as we contemplate God and his mercy.
Priests will be available to hear confessions
in English, Spanish and Polish.



NOTAS EN ESPAÑOL

Servicio de Vigilia de Reconciliación



**Este, Lunes 15 de diciembre
6 pm
Acompáñenos en un
servicio de oración según la tradición
de Taizé para contemplar a Dios y
su misericordia.
Habrá sacerdotes disponibles
para confesar en
inglés, español y polaco.**



Horario Litúrgico

MISAS DE NAVIDAD

Miercoles 24 de diciembre
3:30pm - Iglesia y Auditorio
5:30pm - Misa de niños
9 pm - Misa de medianoche
Los villancicos comienzan a las 8pm

Jueves 25 de diciembre
7:30, 9:30 y 11:30 am
3pm en español

Solemnidad de Santa Maria, Madre de Dios
Miercoles 31 de diciembre
5 pm

Jueves 1 de enero
8am, 12 noon
& 3:00 pm en español

CONTEMPLAR



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aquí que yo envío a mi
mensajero para que vaya delante
de ti y te prepare el camino”.*

MATEO 11, 10



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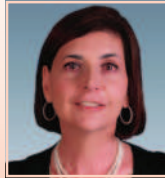
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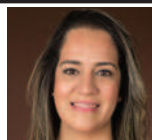
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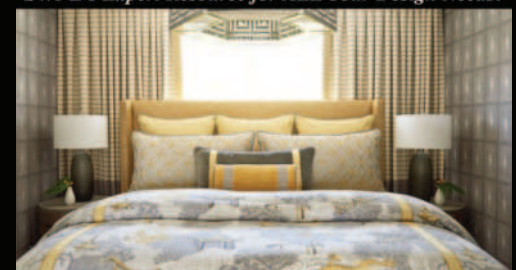
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