



Half of an Oracle

In our first reading today, we hear the first half of an oracle Isaiah spoke to Ahaz. The kingdom of Judah was in a precarious position. Ahaz had a decision to make. Where to put his trust? God was ready to offer guidance. Ahaz refused to ask for a sign. Seems Ahaz had already decided; he didn't want a sign from God to get in the way. He was ready to trust in an alliance with Assyria. The full oracle promised that the two threatening forces, the Northern Kingdom and Syria would soon be vanquished, and no threat, if Ahaz would trust in the Lord. Though precise details are lost in the mist of time, most likely the young woman referred to was either Isaiah's wife or that of Ahaz. The child to be born could have referred to Hezekiah, the child Ahaz would sire, or Maher-shalal-hash-baz (quick spoils, speedy plunder), a child Isaiah would have and give a symbolic name. The message: Trust God. God loves his people and will be with them. Fast forward. The message from the prophet (ultimately from God) was not a 'single use' message. God is beyond time. Hence messages are often to be interpreted and reinterpreted multiple times as salvation history unfolds. Led by the Holy Spirit, early Christians found the first half of this oracle to have even deeper meaning centuries later. In this case, it will be the definitive birth, a world changing birth, God coming to us in the flesh. Immanuel, "God is with us", not just from a distance, but up close, among us when we gather, at table with us, the sacrifice we offer, the sacrifice we receive.

What a Greeting!

With the exception of Romans, St. Paul wrote to churches he had founded. His greeting in those letters often made reference to his calling. But writing to the church in Rome, in preparation for a visit, Paul felt the need to establish at the outset that the Gospel he preached and the Gospel they were living were one and the same. As a result, Paul practically packs a mini-Gospel in his greeting! Yes, what we heard was just the greeting! It was chosen today not to establish Paul's credentials, but for its powerful summary of who Christ is: a descendant of David (as we hear in the Gospel today), fully human, yet also Son of God in power, fully divine. St Paul's concludes his greeting: "to the beloved of God in Rome; called to be holy." He would tell us today as well: "beloved of God in Hilton, you too are called to be holy!"

Tell Us More

Looking at the letters of Paul, and examples of early preaching St. Luke presents in the Acts of the Apostles, the first message proclaimed focused exclusively on Jesus' death and resurrection. Mark comes into the picture with more detail about his life, miracles and teaching, but begins the story with an adult Jesus. As time continued, believers wanted to know more. Both Luke and Matthew address the need, each taking traditional remembrances, as well as material from the Old Testament, Luke putting together the story from Mary's perspective (the Gospel this past Thursday), while Matthew tells the story from Joseph's perspective. But remember, these are Gospels not biographies! Biographies tell us about humans who lived in history, leaving a mark. The Evangelist's starting point was to figure out how to help believers experience God, who came in the flesh, lived in history, but amazingly continued to live in the community of believers, in their hearts, and in the sacraments. They didn't write to tell us *about* Jesus, but wrote so that we would *experience* Jesus, the Christ!

~ Fr. Bob

Upcoming Masses
Please mark your calendars!

Christmas Eve:
4:00 PM
11:00 PM
(note: There will *not* be a 6:00 PM Mass)

Christmas Day: 10:30 AM

New Years Eve 4:00 PM

New Years Day:
8:00 AM
10:30 AM
(note: There will *not* be a 6:00 PM Mass)

THIS WEEK AT ST. LEO'S

Monday - December 19th

5:30 PM Mass
6:30 PM Children's Choir
7:15 PM Festive Choir

Tuesday - December 20th

8:30 AM Mass followed by Tasty Tuesdays!
6:30 PM Knights of Columbus

Wednesday - December 21st

8:30 AM Mass
12 Noon Rosary for our country
9:00 AM - 8:00 PM Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
7:00 PM Bell Choir, Room 2

Thursday - December 22nd

8:30 AM Mass
7:00 PM AA room 5
7:00 PM Women's Grouping, Nursery

Friday - December 23rd - Office closed

8:30 AM no Communion Service

Saturday - December 24th - Christmas Eve

7:45 AM Men's Group
2:30 PM Confession
3:30 PM Rosary
4:00 PM Mass
11:00 PM Mass



Sunday - December 25th - The Nativity of the Lord

10:30 AM Mass

The Sunday Mass will be live streamed on the St. Leo Hilton Facebook page on Saturday at 4 PM. Confessions will be heard Saturday from 2:30 - 3:30 PM. Rosary will be prayed Saturday at 3:30 PM.

MASS SCHEDULE FOR THIS WEEK

Monday - 5:30 PM - Nursing home residents
Tuesday - 8:30 AM - Scott Mattle (Mattle family)
Wednesday - 8:30 AM - Giang Ngo (Family)
Thursday - 8:30 AM - Celina Sovie (Sharon Prince)
Friday - 8:30 AM - no Communion Service

Christmas Eve

Saturday - 4:00 PM - for St. Leo Parishioners
11:00 PM - for St. Leo Parishioners

The Nativity of the Lord

Sunday - 10:30 AM - for St. Leo Parishioners

Attention 'Snowbirds' Many of our parishioners 'take flight' for warmer weather this time of year. Often we will not know until church envelopes are returned from the Post Office with postage due. Please call us at the office with the dates that you will be away. Check on our website for the latest bulletin! And don't forget to keep in touch with us on Facebook.

CMA Update

Due to the early deadline for publishing the bulletin, the latest information is from December 5th. Thanks to the 139 parishioners who have made pledges of \$56,973 for 70.34% of our goal. Remember no gift is too small and each and every gift is important!



Empty Toner Cartridges

Did you know that St. Leo's collects empty toner cartridges for recycling? There is a box just inside the entrance to the Christian Formation Center door. Drop yours in!

Readings for the week of December 18, 2022

Sunday: Is 7:10-14/Ps 24:1-2, 3-4, 5-6 [7c, 10b]/Rom 1:1-7
Mt 1:18-24
Monday: Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a/Ps 71:3-4a, 5-6ab, 16-17/Lk 1:5-25
Tuesday: Is 7:10-14/Ps 24:1-2, 3-4ab, 5-6/Lk 1:26-38
Wednesday: Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a/Ps 33:2-3, 11-12, 20-21
Lk 1:39-45
Thursday: 1 Sm 1:24-28/1 Sm 2:1, 4-5, 6-7, 8abcd/Lk 1:46-56
Friday: Mal 3:1-4, 23-24/Ps 25:4-5ab, 8-9, 10 and 14/Lk 1:57-66
Saturday: Morning: 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16/Ps 89:2-3, 4-5, 27 and 29
Lk 1:67-79
Next Sunday:
Vigil: Is 62:1-5/Ps 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29 (2a)/Acts 13:16-17, 22-25
Mt 1:1-25 or 1:18-25
Night: Is 9:1-6/Ps 96:1-2, 2-3, 11-12, 13/Ti 2:11-14/Lk 2:1-14
Dawn: Is 62:11-12/Ps 97:1, 6, 11-12/Ti 3:4-7/Lk 2:15-20
Day: Is 52:7-10/Ps 98:1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6 [3]/Heb 1:1-6
Jn 1:1-18 or 1:1-5, 9-14

Observances for the week of December 18, 2022

Sunday: 4th Sunday of Advent
Wednesday: St. Peter Canisius, Priest and Doctor of the Church
Friday: St. John of Kanty, Priest
Saturday: Christmas Eve
Next Sunday: The Nativity of the Lord

Highlights on FORMED

Adventus: A Spiritual Pilgrimage

Step away from the chaos of the holiday season and make a spiritual pilgrimage to the Holy Land this Advent and Christmas. Viewers journey to the holy places associated with Christ's birth. Revisit the stories of the Nativity while immersing yourself in the environment in which they took place. Visit the Church of John the Baptist, the waters of the Jordan River, the landscapes of Nazareth, and the town of Bethlehem as you listen to the story written in the heart of every setting.

WEST BY NORTHWEST ULTREYA - A Cursillo Center of the Rochester Diocese. Ultreya meets the last Saturday of each month at 6:15 PM
MINISTRY TO THE SICK: Contact Margaret, 392-8064; Theresa, 392-4856 or the Parish Office 392-2710; concerning the needs of the sick, hospitalized or shut-ins. Those unable to attend Mass regularly will have Holy Communion brought to their homes.
Parish Membership: those who choose to worship regularly with us are invited and welcome to join our parish community offering your time, talent and financial support. Call the Parish Office, 392-2710 to register.
Christian Formation: Ongoing education for Pre-School through adults.
Rite of Christian Initiation (RCIA): Our faith community invites anyone who is interested in becoming Catholic or wishes to be fully initiated into the Catholic Church by their Sacraments contact Mary Lou Rosien at (585)734-3213 or mrosien@me.com
Sacrament of Marriage: Call the Parish Office, 392-2710 when you become engaged.
Sacrament of Baptism: Email Jose Rivera at Jose.E.Rivera@dor.org 6 months before the anticipated birth date. Parent class is required.
Bulletin Submissions: Please submit 2 weeks before the week needed, email Darlene.Serbicki@dor.org

Pastoral Planning Task Force Update

The Charlotte/Greece/Hilton Pastoral Planning Task Force met again on November 16. After opening prayer and faithsharing, the first portion of the meeting was devoted to an initial discussion about what we can do to prepare for the inevitable future where fewer priests are available to serve our parishes. Key questions were: How would Masses be distributed across our 7 parishes as the number of available priests declines? How would other sacramental ministry happen? What would we do in an emergency where a priest was unable to preside at a weekend's Masses? Since it is possible that more of our parishes will be joined under a single pastor, Fr. Coffas, Fr. Enyan-Boadu, Fr. Firpo, and lay members of the task force shared what they view as best practices based on their experience with clustered parishes. In response to some comments heard from parishioners, it was emphasized that this task force—formed by the pastoral leaders of the 7 parishes—was not charged with recommending parish closures but with reaching agreement on how best to prepare for a reduced number of priests while keeping all of the parishes vibrant.

Over the previous month, task force members had responded to two surveys. Twenty-one ideas for how to work collaboratively on the Church's mission of Word, Worship, Community and Service were reduced to 3: reaching out to inactive parishioners, a shared vocation approach, and creating a shared website to communicate what is happening in all our parishes. The last part of this meeting was spent working in small groups to focus on how to begin and who in each parish might carry each of the initiatives forward.

COUNCIL CORNER

Each month, your Parish Council will try and post updates and events to keep parishioners informed on various activities taking place –

- **Mass Attendance** - the numbers for October were very encouraging; attendance for the last three weeks was 372, 437 and 486, showing a positive trend from the 350 average we have had recently.
- **Evangelization** – effort to distribute “Welcome Packets” to 124 residences new to Hilton/Parma area has been launched.
- **Parish “Reach-out”** – script drafted to contact parishioners via phone call re: St. Leo activities, etc.
- **7 Parish Task Force** - The Charlotte/Greece/Hilton Pastoral Planning Task Force met again on November 16; there is an update in respective church bulletins this weekend. (see above)



The Focus Pregnancy Help Center would like to sincerely thank St. Leo parishioners for all the donated items from the recent Walking with Mom's in Need drive. The baby clothes, diapers, etc. are always in great demand and they are extremely grateful.

Eucharistic Miracles of the World “To always be close to Jesus, that’s my life plan” ~Carlo Acutis (5/3/91-10/12/06)

Carlo Acutis was born in 1991, he and his parents lived most of their lives in Milan, Italy. From a very early age, family members noticed that there was something ‘special’ about this child. Upon making his First Communion at age 7 Carlo exhibited a strong desire to be in the presence of Jesus in the Tabernacle. At age 11 Carlo was compelled to create a website chronicling all the eucharistic miracles, that had ever been approved by the church. Carlo contracted leukemia and died on October 12, 2006 at the age of 15. Despite his illness, Carlo never wavered in his faith and devotion to the Eucharist. Carlo wished to encourage others to also lead this Christ-like life.

We invite you to come experience this exhibit and learn more about your faith, the power of the Holy Eucharist and the incredible life of Carlo Acutis. The display will be at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. This is your last opportunity:

December 3rd – December 18th : Weekends Before and After Masses

IN NEED OF OUR PRAYERS

Ken Bilone, Jackie Collins, Cindy Confer, Susan Crump, Joann Curtis, Christine Davison, James Derefinko, Neil Eldridge, Lu Ess, Steve Ewert, John Flanagan, Pamela Godshalk, Shirley Goth, Arabella Harris, Ed Hubbell, Robert Jacobbe, Dick Johnson Cheryl Johnson Family, Ellen Johnson, Eric Kelly, Dawn Knapp, Lisa Legler, Dcn. Bill Lenhart, Don MacKenzie, Catherine McGinnis, Erin Merritt, Catherine Miller, Patricia O'Neill, Christopher Parish, Marie Pierre, Kathi Popowich, Jennifer Pringle, Anne Reyner, Laura Richter, James Robinson, Ken Robinson, Doug Order, Andrea Richel, Bea Ross, Jamie Rothfuss, Delaney Scheuerman, John Schiffhauer, Cheryl Schojan, Gordon Schultz, Diane Sellitto, Charmin Sercu, Kathy Semanko, Chelsea Speer, Cameron Tomlin, Mary Beth Turiano-Fox, Bob Wahl, Steve Wilds, Mary Wirth, Sally Woodley, Dick Link, Rita Cahill, Sharon Camp, Bill Ess, Judy Kreiser, Jody Waller, Ward Bowen, Sharon Prince and all in need of prayer.

ST. LEO PARISH MISSION STATEMENT

Provide a warm and supportive community to aid in the salvation of souls, to promote evangelization, and to serve God, our congregation and our world.

Ministry Team

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