

St. Leo The Great

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

130 Watford Street, Brooklin, ON L1M 1H2

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www.stleothegreat.ca • e-mail: office@stleothegreat.ca

Pastor: Rev. Charles T. Forget

Parish Secretary: Magda Nowak 905-655-3286 x 101

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday to Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Closed for Lunch from 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m.

Friday Office Closed.

DAILY MASS SCHEDULE:

Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 8:30 a.m.

Wednesday 7:00 p.m.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament – Friday 7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. (followed by 8:30 a.m. Mass)

SUNDAY MASS SCHEDULE:

Saturday 4:30 p.m. Youth Mass

Sunday 9:00 a.m. (with Children's Liturgy JK, SK, Grade 1 & 2) & 11:00 a.m.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION:

Saturdays 3:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. or anytime by appointment.

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM:

Please download the Baptism Information Kit and Registration Form from the parish website, www.stleothegreat.ca

SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE:

The Archdiocese of Toronto requires that you contact your parish priest at least one year in advance of the planned date of your wedding and that you participate in a marriage preparation course. Please call the Parish Office.

PARISH REGISTRATION:

All families attending St. Leo's are requested to register with the parish.

Registration forms are available in the vestibule of the church.

LOCAL HOSPITALS AND EMERGENCY PASTORAL VISITATION

If you or someone in your family is in the Oshawa, Whitby or Port Perry Hospitals and would like to have a priest (for serious reasons) visit the person who is sick for Anointing of the Sick, Last Rites, Confession or Communion, please note that there is a full-time Catholic Priest assigned to these three hospitals at various times of the week. Simply ask hospital staff to inquire as to whether *Father Pius Alejo* is present in the hospital (or when he will be). If Father Pius Alejo is not available and there is an emergency requiring a Catholic priest, please call St. Leo the Great Parish at 905-655-3286 and when prompted, press "8" and leave your message. Fr. Charles will receive your message (if he is available) and return your call. If there is no emergency but you would like to speak to Fr. Charles, please call the parish office and leave a message with the parish secretary at 905-655-3286 x 101.

EPHIPHANY REVISITED

LAST SUNDAY'S HOMILY

Last Sunday on the Feast of the Epiphany, which marks the end of the Christmas season, I was moved by the Spirit to address so much that is beyond Epiphany, which is to say, you and me and the rest of the human race. So many people, as they were exiting the church, commented to me on the impact the homily had on them and others have commented by email or phone. More than a few parishioners uttered, "I wish my son or daughter was here to hear what you preached". Obviously, it touched a nerve about something that is close to the heart of many people as they see their families, sons and daughters and grandchildren not desire to live the Catholic faith much less pray or even have their children baptized.

Jesus' epiphany was his coming to the earth, not by being 'beamed down' like a sci-fi flick but through the portal of Mary, the Blessed Virgin. He was revealed, shown, manifested first to the shepherds and then to the wise men and Simeon and eventually to all nations. His coming was and is for every man, woman and child of the earth – for all people without exception. God has kept his epiphany promises but, sadly, we humans have not. The witness that we were supposed to be giving in our families, our friends, co-workers and the public at large hasn't been a very loud or visible one and so many people who may have believed at one time or another have simply walked away from it or have crowded it out with a busy, secular life.

For every 1 person who comes into the Catholic Church, 7 more leave the Church, according to a recent Pew Study. That is a tremendous hemorrhage of people. But their leaving is not about numbers – it's about souls! It's about those who may have once believed and no longer do. It's about souls that may never have known God or experienced Him or believed in Him who continue to live their life for this world and its pleasures only. And while the clergy sex abuse scandal and its victims and its coverup by some bishops, which has gripped the Church over the last few decades and particularly as things came to a head in the American Church in 2018, is horrific in that it has been found in Christ's Church at all. I believe that while some would walk away from the Church over scandals such as this the vast majority of those who left are about an indifference to Christ. And while some might use the scandal as an excuse for why they don't go to Mass (if they ever did) there wouldn't be many who would identify with this group. It is a scandal in itself that so few Catholics attend Mass on anything like a regular basis. Pope Benedict Emeritus described the Catholic Church as eventually becoming

smaller in that there would be fewer and fewer authentic people who genuinely profess and live the Catholic faith.

THE DANGEROUS PHALACY OF BEING A GOOD PERSON

How often have you heard someone say, "I think that in order to go to heaven you just need to be a good person.", and maybe you even thought this or said it yourself. This is really saying that as long as you don't sin in the extreme, eg., like being a serial killer or a Hitler, you will go to heaven. Jesus didn't come to save the world so that what we glean from His teaching is "just be good". What does it even mean to "be good"?

One of the things I touched on in my homily was the words of Jesus in Matthew 7:13:

"Enter by the narrow gate. The gate is wide that leads to perdition, (hell) there is plenty of room on the road, and many go that way; but the gate that leads to life is small and the road is narrow, and those who find it are few."



Many people in our time have given reflection on the question of the apostles to Jesus, "Lord, will many be saved?" (Luke 13:23) Jesus answered by instructing them to "Struggle (strive) to get in through the narrow door; for I tell you that many will try to enter and not be able."

Jesus is saying that in order to get to heaven you need to do specific things, not general things. It is generalizing to say "be good" and many who might have this view of admittance might also hold that abortion is okay, that marriage is open to anyone and everyone and voting for immoral politicians according to your own selfish agenda and whims isn't a problem. No, Jesus gave us some clear and specific things to abide by that would lead to the fullness of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Jesus tells us we have to strive, struggle – that we have to choose to follow Him in order to get to heaven. It is foolish and wrong to think that our natural life path is bound for the things of God when we all know this to be untrue. The closer we come to Christ the more aware we are of our sin against God that we need to do battle with in our day to day lives.

In fact, the Church teaches that there are four specific things that we must do in order to strive toward heaven, and many Catholic evangelists of our time are speaking about this.

The first is **Baptism**. We tend to take for granted the Sacrament and power of Baptism but it is a response to a command of Jesus found in John 3:5 when he was speaking with Nicodemus about the need to be born again: "No one

can enter the kingdom of God without being born from water and spirit". We must be baptized! Baptism in our time is often regarded as doing something, attending some Church 'ritual' to keep grandma happy. It can be viewed as an event that is all about the child when in fact it is all about God responding to the child, His creation and child, who, through his or her parents have asked God's life for their child. It isn't merely a human thing but a 'spiritual' reality and necessity.

The second demand for Eternal Life is the **Eucharist**. In the 6th chapter of John's Gospel we hear in verses 54-55 the direct and commanding voice of Our Saviour tell us as he told His disciples and the crowds: *"Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood possesses eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. My flesh is real food; my blood is real drink."* Again, how apparent it is in our day that most of the parents who desire their child to 'make their first Communion' rarely if ever go to Mass themselves and, therefore, don't follow this command of the Lord to receive Him in His body and blood – the Eucharist. And following the child's first Communion so, so many just don't understand what the Lord has given their children and themselves because they do what the crowds did in response to Jesus' clear words about the Eucharist – *"From that time on, many of his disciples withdrew and no longer went about with him."* Truly sad words about a sad and modern reality of people who don't really have any faith in Jesus or the Sacraments He instituted and gave to His Church.

Which brings us to **Faith**. In Romans 10:9, St. Paul says that: *"If on your lips is the confession, 'Jesus is Lord', and in your heart the faith that God raised him from the dead, then you will find salvation."* This is a demand of priorities in our lives. If God isn't first in your life – and He must be – then that is evidence that you have not put your faith in Him but in other people and things. Jesus can only be Lord in our lives if we make Him first – go to Mass every Sunday, receive Him in the Eucharist and meet Him in the Sacraments He gave, know and keep the commandments and live in such a way that your life gives clear, visible evidence that Jesus is Lord. Again, in John 3:18, Jesus says, *"The man who puts his faith in him does not come under judgement; but the unbeliever has already been judged in that he has not given his allegiance to God's only Son."*

Doing the will of Jesus' heavenly Father. In Matthew 7:21, Jesus said, *"Not everyone who calls me 'Lord, Lord' will enter the kingdom of Heaven, but only those who do the will of my heavenly Father."* Doing the will of Jesus is in being baptized and living out that baptismal calling which will bring us to church each Sunday to receive Him in the Eucharist. Doing this will help to build our faith in Christ and do His will. It's that crucial. It's all important. (Fr.C)

Tuesday, January 15th	
8:30 a.m.	Intentions of our NET Team
Wednesday, January 16th	
7:00 p.m.	Intentions of Agata & Slawek
Thursday, January 17th	
8:30 a.m.	Intentions of Fr. Charles
Friday, January 18th	
8:30 a.m.	Intentions of Joan Barker
Saturday, January 19th	
4:30 p.m.	† Francesco Caruso
Sunday, January 20th	
9:00 a.m.	† Fred Molica
11:00 a.m.	† Geraldine Mueller



St. Leo Catholic Women's League Budget and General Meeting, Sunday January 13, 12:15 to 2:15 pm. Join us for refreshments and joyful discussions.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2019

Ecumenical Prayer Service Theme: "Justice, Only Justice, You Shall Pursue" (Deuteronomy 16:20) Come and join us in an ecumenical prayer service led by Catholic, Anglican and Orthodox bishops along with Leaders from Christian Churches in GTA. Sunday January 27, 2019 at 4:30pm, St James Anglican Cathedral, 106 King St. E., Toronto, ON (King & Church Sts.) Organized by Greater Toronto Area Christian Council of Churches (GTACCC). Refreshments to follow. For further information, please contact The Ecumenical and Interfaith Affairs Office at (416) 934-3400 x 344 or ecumenical@archtoronto.org

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Paint Nite for Hospice

25 January 2019 at 7 p.m.
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Join us for a fun evening and help us raise \$10-million for our future Whitby Residential Hospice! Purchase tickets online: bit.ly/paintBrooklinCares \$15 from each ticket sold will go to Durham Region Hospice.

For more information, visit and "like" our Brooklin Cares Facebook page or go to: durhamregionhospice.ca



The Cornerstone Community greatly appreciates the generous donations of so many St. Leo the Great parishioners that supported the needs of many homeless persons during the Christmas season. Thank you.




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