

# St. Leo The Great

## ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

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**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](http://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.

## Catholic Medical Ethics and Understanding the Principles of Ordinary and Extraordinary Means of Preserving Life



First off, I would like to extend, on behalf of myself and my six siblings, our deep appreciation for your prayers for our mother, Margaret, and for us as we have had to contend with the recent events of mom's failure to swallow her food thereby her inability to be able to take in food and hydration. Without prayer,

intercession for one another before God, any stressful life event finds us unmoored from any clear sense of direction or help and leaves us alone in a world full of cold 'realities'.

For the last couple of years my mother has received pureed food given to her orally by being spoon-fed, either by the nursing home staff or in the last five months, largely taken up by myself and members of our family. In early August my mother didn't eat and was running a fever and it was found that she had Aspirative Pneumonia, caused by coughing or inhaling food or drink into the lungs. We were given the sense that this was a declining change in her health and that this, perhaps, was the end. But it wasn't. Over time, family members became involved in making sure my mother was eating which at times could take anywhere from a half-hour to two hours to feed her. Through it all my mother continued to eat and take in fluids – the staples of life, until Sunday January 12. My mom had her dinner the previous day but when I went to feed her she would open her mouth and take the food but would then just hold it in her mouth without swallowing. After continued attempts to get her to take and eat her food she would simply not swallow it. The following day my niece was faced with the same challenge and my mother hadn't eaten anything nor were the staff able to get her to eat for several days following.

At this part of the story, I pause to ask you to consider your own thoughts given this scenario because this is where many, in both families and in the health care institutions, simply tally up the facts that my mother is 88-years-old, she's had Dementia for 22 years and now she's not eating, and they deduce that she is dying and since there's nothing you can do, you just let her go. BUT...

Catholic Medical Ethics says that you cannot do this nor can you jump to the conclusion that a *transition* in a person's health is the culmination of it. I can't count the number of times I've been told that these are the late stages of Dementia, the body is shutting down, she is dying, etc. I was blessed to have Fr. Kevin Belgrave, a professor at St. Augustine Seminary in Toronto who teaches Catholic Medical Ethics, with whom I could discuss my mother's situation. My sense was that her condition warranted more than just giving up and walking away assuming her life is over, and speaking with Fr. Kevin confirmed my sense of the situation.

Now, every health and medical situation has its own history, complications and nuances that are particular to the individual and therefore, there is no 'one size fits all' approach to their needs and possible treatment. But given my mother's considerably good health outside of her bout with pneumonia and her failure to swallow, it warranted an approach to assess her situation by weighing her human needs, looking at alternatives and discerning what is best for her in light of the Church's ethics which are based on reason and medical information. In light of these realities Fr. Kevin said YOU MUST GIVE HER FOOD AND HYDRATION as this is not extraordinary care but ordinary, necessary for life care and to withhold it is not ethical.

Before one can make decisions about care and treatment, you have to first recognize that something in the person's health situation has changed and see this as a ***transition***. This is when you carefully and calmly listen to what the doctors and health care professionals have to say about the situation and assess their words in light of sound principles. There may be several transition periods in a person's health and at each one you follow those principals of assessment before making a decision.

Fr. Kevin shared with me some principles when considering accepting or foregoing a proposed medical treatment for someone who is elderly or dying. In doing so you are trying to bring together two big things:

1. The foundational meaning, goods, and spiritual end of the human person
2. A judgment, in light of these goods, of the ***benefits*** and ***burdens*** of the proposed treatment

What are these foundational goods?

1. **Human being is sacred and inviolable.** There is a duty to care for our life and health, and the direct killing of the innocent is intrinsically evil.
2. **At the same time, we are mortal, finite beings** – to gradually deteriorate and die is an inevitable reality of our life.
3. **Our life is more than the simple preservation of physical life and health** – a supernatural destiny. Our physical lives and health are meant to prepare us for eternal life. And spiritual interests have primacy.
4. **Pain and suffering are evils.** Relieving them is a good. **At the same time, there is a Christian redemptive meaning to suffering**, but it is one that must be discerned with spiritual guidance. Accepting pain is not an obligation.

These four points are the critical foundation of all medical treatment decisions in the Catholic faith. To reach a decision, these foundations must be brought together with a judgment about the benefits and burdens of the current or proposed treatment in this specific patient, at this specific time.

In looking at the benefits and burdens for the patient you must:

1. **Understand the benefits/burdens from the medical perspective** understanding as well as possible all of the medical facts, mindful of the risks involved, etc.
2. **Understand the benefits/burdens from the perspective of the patient**, if they are able to speak and communicate this.

3. **Evaluation** follows by considering the factors of #1 and #2 above in light of the foundational goods mentioned earlier.

In my mother's case, we looked at whether providing nutrition and hydration was a benefit or a burden to her. Clearly, she not only needed to have both food and hydration for life but there were no other conditions to prevent her from being provided with these as long as there were alternative ways for her to receive them other than by mouth. Without these she would not live and to not provide them to her would not be care but the removal of care which would cause her death.

In this article I have laid out some of the considerations and steps to keep in mind when presented with decision making in what is Ordinary and Extraordinary means of life for the seriously ill and the dying. My intention is not to exhaustively address the situations that may arise but look at the core principals in making decisions. Know that today there is a widening gap between the Church's teachings on these end-of-life issues and that of the medical community and society itself. Euthanasia, now legal in Canada since 2016 and expanding in its scope of persons, age and conditions, has fueled the even greater need to properly discern, discuss and seek out information and help in what St. John Paul II called "The Culture of Death" when it comes to end of life issues and decisions.

While my mother had not eaten in several days the urgency to do something to relieve this situation became paramount. Last Wednesday my mother was taken to the hospital and beyond the expected opinions of hospital staff not to do anything, we made a clear decision for my mother's health assessment and treatment. Since that time she has received treatment for a bed sore, antibiotics, various IV fluids for hydration and treatment and as of Tuesday has been receiving nutrition through an NG tube going from her nose to her stomach. We will see how her body and health responds to all of the tremendous care she has been getting and leave her in the Best Hands of the One who loves her, has never left her and is with her always... Jesus. Please continue to remember her before the Lord praying for His perfect will to be done. (Fr. Charles)

### **St. Gregory K of C and CWL "Share the Love" Gala in support of Grandview Kids**

Enjoy a decadent dinner, dance your worries away, AND support Grandview Kids at the same time! St. Gregory the Great Knights of Columbus and the Catholic Women's League are hosting a Share the Love Dinner and Dance.

Saturday, Feb. 1, 2020

Cocktails: 6:00 p.m. Dinner 7:00 p.m.

St. Mary of the People Parish Hall

Tickets are \$75.00 per person

Includes: 5 course dinner by CHEF VITO & entertainment by vocalist JOE COLLURA silent and live auction. For tickets please contact Janice at 905-431-5568 or George at 905-999-0639.



**Saturday, February 1<sup>st</sup>**

4:30 p.m. † Liam Kennedy

**Sunday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>**

9:00 a.m. † John Campitelli

11:00 a.m. † Kathleen Power

**Sanctuary Lamp intention for Amelia Florez Barrera  
Week of January 31 to February 6**

**There will be no daily Mass on January 28 – 31.**

### **The 11:00 a.m. choir is inviting you to join them**

The Sunday 11:00 am choir would like to invite members of the congregation to join our amazing group. We are currently looking for new members, particularly tenors and basses but all are welcome. All ages and vocal abilities are wanted. Music is taught on a weekly basis in a fun and simple way to those who don't read music so don't let that stop you if you have been thinking about joining us. We are in a new calendar year and with that comes new schedules and new opportunities. We hope that you will strongly consider coming out and giving the choir a try. You will be glad that you did. The choir sings at the 11:00 mass on Sundays and we rehearse on Thursday nights from 7:30 - 9:00 pm. For more information about joining this notable group of singers, please see Ted, the director, after the 11:00 mass or come out to the church on Thursday night at 7:30 pm. Ted can also be reached by phone at 647-302-6996. Thank you.

### **VOCATION SEEDS**

"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." Are you willing to proclaim the coming of the kingdom as a priest, deacon, brother or sister? If God is calling you, **contact Fr. Chris Lemieux, Vocation Director, Archdiocese of Toronto 416-968-0997 email [vocations@archtoronto.org](mailto:vocations@archtoronto.org) [www.vocationstoronto.ca](http://www.vocationstoronto.ca)**

### ***St. Leo Knights of Columbus Annual Valentine's Day Dance***

will be held on February 8, 2020. Everyone is invited for another enjoyable evening with friends and family.

Location - St. Leo Church Hall

Time- Doors open at 6:45 P.M.

Refreshments at 7:00 P.M.

Dinner at 7:30 P.M.

Dinner - Full meal with desert

Cash Bar

Music - Live Band

Prizes - Door prizes and draws during evening

Price - \$30.00 individual, \$50.00 couple




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