



St. Leo The Great

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

130 Watford Street, Brooklin, ON L1M 1H2

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www.stleothegreat.ca • e-mail: st.leos@bellnet.ca

Pastor: Rev. Charles T. Forget

Director of Catechetics: Patrick Sullivan • Parish Secretary: Maureen Holly
905-655-3286 x 103 905-655-3286 x 101

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday to Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 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 6:00 p.m. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament - Mass: 7:00 p.m.
Rosary prayed 20 minutes before weekday masses.

SUNDAY MASS SCHEDULE:

Saturday 5:00 p.m.
Sunday 9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION:

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

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM:

Please pick up a baptism package from Fr. Charles after mass.

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 (Welcome Cards) 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 Manuel Duterte* is present in the hospital (or when he will be). If Father Manuel 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.

NEW 2013 CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

Christmas Eve: Tues. Dec. 24 - 5 pm. and 8 pm.

Christmas Day: Wed. Dec. 25 - 9 am. and 11 am.

KEEPING CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS

When I was young and growing up no one ever had to say nor did I ever hear the slogan "Keep Christ in Christmas". While the majority of Christmas cards available in stores pertained directly to the Christmas message depicting the Nativity, angels, shepherds and wise men with holy figures' silhouettes against dark star-lit skies there were also cards featuring Santa Claus and reindeers and winter scenes as well. The word *Christmas* appeared everywhere and it was the only thing you heard people say. Today, however, one would be hard pressed to find 'religious' cards in retail stores, particularly high-end ones. Stores display huge decorated windows inviting shoppers to prepare for the 'holidays' by shopping in their stores for everyone on their list and radio stations, like the CBC in Toronto, advertise constantly and early-on their "Sounds of the Season" annual fundraiser which wonderfully supports the cities local food banks.

While many fundraisers and causes that are supported by so many at this time of year are worthy of support and do great work there is always what I would call that thin lie that is just beneath the surface and so abundantly apparent in the retail marketplace. Christmas is like a dirty word everyone knows but doesn't want to say out loud. It's politically correct and politely incorrect all at the same time and it perpetuates the lie that the time in December which culminates somehow quite magically on December 25th has nothing to do with the birth of the long-awaited Messiah. Just as the pagan feasts were replaced by Christian feasts now the reverse seems to be happening. In an increasingly secular society the religious reality of Christian feasts – Easter, Christmas, Advent – are fast becoming seasons of no purpose but an excuse to 'celebrate'.

Now think about it. We all take holidays whenever we get the chance, particularly in our northern climate, summer holidays. Yet no one would use the word 'celebrate' in the context of summer holidays. You would never hear radio and TV ads that blared out *Prepare to celebrate your summer holidays by booking your flight with us!* The holiday itself is the goal and focus. The word *celebrate* in our common language use usually pertains to a day, a specific day like a birthday, an anniversary, a family reunion, Thanksgiving or a gathering. Even our Christian occasions suggest a day of celebration such as a First Communion, Confirmation, Baptism, a wedding and even a funeral Mass. But again, our secular culture puts great emphasis on marrying the word *celebrate* with the word *season*, even though for three seasons out of four (spring, summer and fall) we never apply the word *celebrate*. It is only the 'season' that surrounds the Christian mystery of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ – God taking on a human body – that has become the playground

of the thin lie. And then this untruth continues to use all of the Christian props of Christmas but sanitizes them of any religious reference so that the Christmas Tree becomes the Holiday Tree effectively removing any reference to Christ and His birth, holiday gift-giving replaces Christmas presents.

In fact, Christmas in the Christian calendar is a season which ironically begins just when the secular is finished with it. For eight days Catholics celebrate the Birth of the Saviour known as the Octave (8) of Christmas. Our Christmas trees should be up for the 8 days of Christmas as a tangible witness to what we believe about this season of Jesus' birth. Problem is, so often we anticipate Christmas perhaps way too early and are sick of the tree by the time the 25th rolls around and down it comes and out it goes the same day. We should also continue to say "Merry Christmas" to people for the eight days following Christmas Day as a living witness and evangelization tool in teaching others through a genuine salutation that Christmas is not over on December 25th, Christmas Day. I'm sure that the time before Christmas many years ago became known as the Christmas Season which then became the Holiday Season even though in reality only retired people and pre-school children would be on holiday during the whole season.

There is also a similar problem within Catholicism itself about the proper celebration of Christmas whereas many Catholics around the world will rightly celebrate Christmas Day by going to Mass, *most* Catholics will not.

Recently someone sent me a Youtube song video which suggests that believers in Christ shouldn't shop in stores where you are not greeted with "Merry Christmas". While it's a nice idea we all know it will go nowhere fast. If, in fact, Christians en masse refused to shop, purchase or buy anything from stores, restaurants and businesses that didn't reflect the true meaning of Christmas there would be a huge backlash and a tremendous loss of revenue to the stores which would force them to support the true meaning of Christmas even if only in the use of the word Christmas.

Truth is, the biggest culprits in dropping the meaning of Christmas, are Christians themselves. The retail industry caters to where people are at and what they are willing to buy. I dare say that Christmas has been replaced as the Holiday Season because we Christians, and principally us Catholics as the largest group within Christianity, have dropped it and the secular world has picked it up, re-decorated it, changed the language and has presented it as something new and different which fits perfectly into months of retail buying ending on December 25th. Blessed Fulton J. Sheen said that what we Catholics drop the secular world picks up. When we dropped the Rosary the rock stars and porn stars picked it up rendering the power of it as symbol into meaninglessness. When we dropped Sunday as a holy day and a day of rest it was picked up by the world of sports so that most people have difficulty attending to anything religious because it interferes with sports and sporting events.

Each year the Knights of Columbus and other groups have sold Christmas cards that bear the meaning of Christmas as the Birth of Jesus and more recently have introduced lawn signs which herald the challenging message to *Keep Christ in Christmas*. And

DECEMBER 8, 2013

I would suggest that their target audience isn't the secular part of our society that doesn't believe in Jesus or even any suggestion that they have somehow stolen it from us. No, the most challenged readers of those lawn signs will be our fellow Catholics and fellow Christians who have dropped the baby as the reason for the season for a Christ-emptied celebration of nothingness. Just as Smokey the Bear used to say, Only YOU can prevent forest fires, we could add, **Only YOU can keep Christ in Christmas.** It begins with us. (*Father Charles*)

ARCHDIOCESE OF TORONTO - DAY OF CONFESSIONS – DECEMBER 11, 2013 - 11 AM TO 1 PM; 6 PM TO 7 PM AND 7:30 PM TO 8:30 PM AT ST. LEO THE GREAT PARISH.

ST. LEO'S KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS WILL BE SELLING THE FOLLOWING IN THE VESTIBULE AFTER ALL THE MASSES: CAMPAIGN LIFE CHRISTMAS CARDS FOR \$10/BOX OF 15 CARDS & CAMPAIGN LIFE CHRISTMAS CAKES – 1.5 LB. CAKE \$15; 2 LB. CAKE W/TIN \$25 AND "KEEP CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS" LAWN SIGNS FOR \$15.

PARISH WEEKLY COLLECTION UPDATE:

- WEEKLY COST OF RUNNING OUR PARISH - \$7768
- **LAST SUNDAY'S OFFERTORY COLLECTION**
- Envelopes, Loose bills and change - \$3981
- Pre-Authorized Giving (PAP) - \$1544 (*November*)
- ➔ TOTAL COLLECTION LAST WEEK: \$5525
- ➔ **Deficit in last week's collection: \$2243**

MASS INTENTIONS

Tues., Dec. 10 – 8:30 am – Franz Christman+ Req. by Del & Zonia Hicke
Wed., Dec. 11 – 7:00 pm – Geoffrey Hicke+ Req. by Del & Zonia Hicke
Thurs., Dec. 12 – 9:00 am – Blessed John Paul II School Mass (at Church)
Fri., Dec. 13 – 8:30 am – Carmela Bulla+ Req. by Teresa & Vince Corvinelli
Sat., Dec. 14 – 5:00 pm – Gert Lukey+ Req. by Del & Zonia Hicke
Sun., Dec. 15 – 9:00 am – For the intentions of the children to be baptised on January 12, 2014
Sun., Dec. 15 – 11:00 am – In Thanksgiving Req. by Dula O'Dwyer

THE NEW SUNDAY MISSALS ARE ON SALE AT A COST OF \$5.00 EACH AND ARE AVAILABLE AT THE WELCOME TABLE.

Christmas 2013 – Cornerstone Men's Hostel – Once again this Advent Season, St. Leo the Great Parish will be collecting items for the Cornerstone Men's Hostel in Oshawa. Cornerstone has asked us to restrict our donated items to those things that are extremely scarce but so necessary to the men who live on the street which include: **new-only** socks, underwear, toothbrushes and toothpaste, disposable razors, combs/brushes, hand soap, deodorant, shaving cream, foot powder, lip balm, and Kleenex tissues. **We will not be taking a collection of used clothing this season.** You are asked to drop off these items in the church vestibule at the Welcome Table. Thank you to all our parishioners who think of others at this time when we are all called by the gospel

to attend to the needs of others as our own preparation for the coming of the Lord! Please contact Larry Hallihan (905) 620-0351 for additional information.

Second Sunday of Advent – December 8, 2013

"The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'" Could God be calling you to be a priest, deacon, brother or sister in order to help our world of today to truly "prepare the way of the Lord"? If God is calling you, **contact Fr. Hansoo Park 416-0997, email – vocations@vocations.ca www.vocationstoronto.ca**

CWL PIES - If you purchased pies from the ladies of the CWL these pies will be available for pickup in the hall from 3 pm to 4:45 pm on Saturday, Dec. 14 or after masses on Sunday, Dec. 15.

French Programs: Information Sessions and Online Registration – parents/guardians interested in enrolling their children in a Grade 1 French Immersion or Grade 4 Extended French class within the Durham Catholic District School Board for the 2014-2015 school year to attend one or two info. sessions on Dec. 9 and 10, 2013. Flyers with detailed info. are available at the Welcome Table.

St. Francis Xavier University offers distance education courses for adults seeking faith formation: Diploma in Ministry; Certificate in Lay Ministry; Certificate in Spirituality; and Diploma in Intellectual Disability Studies. Please contact Continuing & Distance Education 1-877-867-5562, diplomainministry@stfx.ca/ <http://www.sites.stfx.ca/continuingeducation/ministry>.

A Family Christmas Concert - Sunday, December 15, 2013 7:30 p.m., St. Gregory the Great Catholic Church, 194 Simcoe St. N., Oshawa. Come and join Paul, Michelle, David and their friends in a joyful celebration of the Christmas Season. Admission is free but we ask if you could bring a non-perishable donation for our St. Vincent de Paul food bank.

THE PARISH OFFICE IS CLOSED TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2013 TO FRIDAY, JANUARY 3, 2014 AND REOPENS ON MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 2014. IF YOU HAVE AN EMERGENCY REQUIRING A PRIEST, PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE (905) 655-3286 EXT. 8.

Weekday Masses will be cancelled on the following dates after Christmas, New Year's and the week following. This allows Father Charles to catch up on some rest and take some holidays before the busyness of mid-January to June begins. The Wednesday Holy Hours for three weeks during this time are also cancelled.

THERE WILL BE NO MASS & HOLY HOUR:


Thurs., Dec. 26, Fri., Dec. 27, 2013 & Thurs., Jan. 2 & Fri., Jan. 3, 2014
4-days of holiday: Tues., Jan. 7, Wed., Jan. 8, Thurs., Jan. 9 & Fri., Jan. 10, 2014




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