

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS . . .

The month of November is one of my favorite months of the year. Liturgically, the church gathers during this month to celebrate some great feasts and occasions: All Saints, All Souls, and Thanksgiving Day. Also, the memorial of St. Leo the Great, the patron Saint of our parish, is November 10th. We are 132 years old this year! Yes, for many reasons, the month of November is a great month.

If we take a picture of our parish community on Thanksgiving Day gathering to celebrate Eucharist and to share a Turkey dinner, would we see our Lord and Savior in the picture? Would it be like taking a "selfie" with God? If we could take a picture of all the Saints and all Souls, would we see God in the picture? Would, this, too be like taking a "selfie" with God?

Scripture tells us that disciples, apostles and followers of Christ make up the Body of Christ in the world today and we all have been made in the image and likeness of God. When we look at each other and all others, we are to see the face of God and when God looks at us, God wants to see God's own image. So much God's great love forms, shapes, and transforms us. So much God's love joins and unites us together as one. How important is it for everyone to live in the created image and likeness of the Savior? What difference will it make for how we treat each other and for bringing peace to the world? What implications will it have for the healing of hearts and minds? When others look at us, will they see the Lord? In whom do we see the Lord ever so clearly?

Similarly, there is a church in Rome that is dedicated to the service of the poor who live on the streets. In the Blessed Sacrament Chapel, there are black and white pictures of parishioners and street people caring for one another. The implication is that the Lord who is seen in the pictures of God's people on the street and in those who care for them images the presence of God in the Eucharist and vice versa. Nearby this chapel,

is a burnt cross with a burnt corpus of Jesus without hands, legs and feet. The caption on the wall reads: "You are my hands and feet."



The month of November begins with the Church celebrating two feast days: The Feast of All Saints on November 1st and the Feast of all Souls on November 2nd. Both of these feasts could be entitled: "Jesus takes a selfie." Both of these feasts remind us that we are all to be "picture perfect" as we live in the image and likeness of God on earth only to share eternal life and glory with God in heaven. As we live in God's image, God will make us perfect as God is perfect and bring us all to perfection one day.



Near the end of the month, we will celebrate Thanksgiving Day. How often, do you think, when God takes a picture of God, it turns out to be our families sharing a meal together and giving thanks for the life and love that is found among family and friends? How often, do you think, it turns out to be the Church of God celebrating Eucharist and giving thanks for the life, love, and salvation that is found in the dying and rising of Our Lord, Jesus Christ? Jesus takes a "selfie" with us or we take a "selfie" with Jesus. It is meant to be that we

are the image of each other – Jesus and us; us and the Lord.

Have fun taking pictures of you and others and of our God at prayer, work and play. Don't forget to share your pictures with everyone and rejoice at the presence of God in our midst. Every time I think of you, I give thanks to God for being the Body of Christ. May God continue to shape and mold us more and more into his image now and forever.

— Father Jim

St. Leo's Prayer Wall is a place where all, regardless of age, race or creed, are invited to sing God's praises, give Him thanks, and/or call upon His presence for help in times of need. The wall, a place of prayer for all peoples (much like the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem), captures the faces of the community, as well as peacemakers and saints who have inspired us through the ages.



The Wall is a place for staff and volunteers, youth groups, community meetings, and for individuals who pass through our parking lot on the way to work, school, etc., to pray, reflect and pause. We invite you to share in this special way of prayer, joy, and thanksgiving. Praise God!

God cares about every need in your life and knows what you need even before you ask Him for help. Our St. Leo the Great parish community promises to remember you in our private prayer, as well as in our communal prayer, which is to say that we are praying for you all the time.

All prayer requests are held in strictest confidence. **Send your prayer request to:** Saint Leo the Great Church, 2573 Saint Leo Place, Cincinnati, OH 45225. You can also submit your prayer request online at: <http://saint-leo/WorksofMercy/PrayerWallMinistry.aspx>.