

December 20, 2020

From Fr. Jim . . .

Gift Giving at Christmas Time: The best present that we have ever received is the presence of God's coming to us in human form and shape in the birth of God's son, Jesus Christ. Arguably, the best gift that we can give to another at Christmas is the gift of our presence. In her book, *Out of the Ordinary 2000*, Sr. Joyce Rupp suggests that we consider the "Present of Presence." This primarily involves "being with" someone rather than just "doing" for someone. There are two possible ways to be with another – physically be present with another and be present to another "in spirit" by deliberately sending prayer, compassionate thoughts, and kind feelings toward another person or group. She suggests giving the "Present of Presence" by: being with someone who needs you; being with a person who gives you hope; being with those who live in terror or fear; being with an older person; being with someone who has helped you to grow; being with one who is in pain; being with yourself; being with someone who has written to you; spending time with a child; being with someone who is terminally ill; being with a coworker; being with your loved ones. These are only some. She suggests more. What "Present of Presence" would you add to this list? We can be about "being with" in addition to just "doing for" because of God choosing to share our human form and dwell in us. We have the ability to warm the lives of others with our very presence because of this incredible Gift of Love.

On this note, I want to thank everyone who wants to create this presence through the spiritual and corporal works of mercy and through expressions of solidarity with those who are most in need. You are not just providing for their physical and material needs but in ways that you are not fully aware, you are building a spiritual relationship with them. You are treating them as a brother or sister in Christ. You are giving them the present of Christ's presence and love. People know that they are not alone or have not been forgotten or that there are others who really care about them. They know that God is born to them and remains with them. Thank you so very much!

Welcome, Welcome and again Welcome! As the angels sang, "Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth to all," they announced the coming of God to everyone. All of heaven and earth is joined together now as God has taken on our flesh. No one is excluded from God's salvation, no one. We can not celebrate as fully as we have in the past because of the pandemic but we can still celebrate. Please join us on live stream or in person in church. I apologize that we are not able to accommodate as many people who would want to come because of the need to social distance. Our space is limited and wearing masks and washing hands is still very much necessary. For Christmas Eve and Christmas day only, Centennial Hall will have limited seating with live-stream and the availability to receive communion. Once the church and the Hall have reached maximum capacity at safe distancing, then it will not be safe to allow others to enter. The obligation to attend Mass is still dispensed so to help prevent overcrowding and unsafe environments, you may want to consider attending Mass during the week. Wherever we are and with masks and safe distancing we can still be bearers of the Good News: Joy to the world the Lord has come, let earth receive her king. Glory to God in the highest and on earth Peace!

Mass on
Christmas Day, Friday,
December 25 is
10:30am. Mass on
Christmas Eve,
December 24, 6pm in
Spanish. On behalf of our
entire staff, I wish all of
you a very Merry
Christmas and the
blessing and gift of
Christ's presence and
peace for a joyous New Year. May the Lord be present to you in
new, exciting and profound ways. May you experience God's love
and mercy like you never have before. God is truly with us! All
Glory and praise be to God.



Sunday Mass: 10:30am, limited seating available, or join Fr. Jim as he livestreams Sunday Mass at 10:30am at:
RCC St. Leo Church Cincinnati:
https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=rcc%20st%20leo%20church%20cincinnati&epa=SEARCH_BOX

You can read the Sunday bulletin at:
www.saintleo.org/Publications/StLeoSundayBulletin
You can read Fr. Jim's letter at:
www.saint-leo.org/Publications/FromtheDeskofFrJim

St. Leo's is looking for two area rugs, one 9x12, and 8x10 for two employee offices. We are also in need of Amazon Gift Cards for our wish list items and office needs. Please call the office at 513-921-1044 if you have questions or would like to donate these items.

Thanks for Giving! "We are conscious of the great generosity of the many benefactors who support the Retirement Fund for the Religious each year," says a Catholic sister. "Support from the fund has been tremendous blessing to our retired sisters." Thank you for donating to last week's second collection, Retirement Fund for Religious.

2021 Contribution Envelopes and Calendars

We have prepared the 2021 contribution envelopes and calendars. Since many of you are joining mass through Live Stream, please contact the office if you would like your envelopes to be mailed. If you have not received envelopes in the past, and would like to receive them please let us know. If you would like to make your contribution online instead please contact Amy Kleeman at 513-921.1044 ext. 30.

Best Wishes for a Blessed and Merry Christmas, and may the peace and the joy and the love of that wonderful night be with you always.