

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS . . .

From all of us here at St. Leo the Great, I wish you a very merry, happy, and blessed Christmas and New Year. Be assured of our continued prayers and love for you and your families. With a grateful heart that we are companions on the journey and conspirators to serving God's people and building the kingdom, I pray that the goodness you continue to offer our parish in support of our service and ministries will return to you a hundredfold.

As you share your blessings with us, we bless others. As you radiate Christ's love to us, you give birth to his presence among us, and we continue to share Christ's presence and love with all whom we meet. The light of Christ comes to our dark world. We thank you so much for accompanying us on mission and for following the light of God's grace in your lives. May his birth and his coming to dwell with you continue to dispel the darkest of nights and may you continue to grow in holiness and grace. May the new year be a time for seeing clearly how the Lord is bringing the good work in you to completion.

Just google St. Leo the Great Cincinnati and find our web page or FACEBOOK site. Check us out and celebrate with us how the Lord is making his presence known to us and to you. To quote St. Paul, "Rejoice in the Lord always. I say it again, rejoice! Now and forever let us rejoice because the Lord is so near and close to all of us. God is with us now and forever. Let us rejoice!"

Beacons of Light: It is official. On Sunday, December 5, at the Cathedral of St. Peter in Chains, Archbishop Dennis Schnurr, Archbishop of Cincinnati, promulgated and made final the families of parishes, ending the first phase of Beacons of Light. Beacons of Light is the process of planning for the future to become parishes with renewed mission and purpose of evangelizing, building the kingdom of God, and actively living the faith. We are in the South Deanery and our family of parishes is St. Theresa; The Little Flower; St. Joseph, Ezzard Charles Drive; Holy Family; St. Leo the Great, and St Boniface. The next phase of Beacons of Light, the implementation of the new Families of Parishes, begins on July 1, 2022.

Until then, the priests personnel board with the archbishop, will be calling all priests and discussing assignments of pastors and parochial vicars for the new families of parishes. Assignments will be determined and named sometime in March and start July 1, 2022. The Comboni Missionaries will be providing a pastor and two parochial vicars for our family of parishes which will be determined and announced hopefully in March. These are challenging and exciting times. Archbishop Schnurr asks us to pray for him and he is praying for us. Throughout this process,

let us pray for each other to be open to the Spirit and embrace the call to become new. Thank you so much for your prayers and participation so far.

Beacons of light calls for comprehensive change in church structure, management, and ministry to become vibrant parishes, from maintenance to mission, while facing a decline in active pastors, church attendance, people seeking initiation and the sacraments. The second phase of Beacons of Light includes training and formation for priests, deacons, and lay leaders. It also includes a Pastoral Planning Pathway Platform with access to guiding and resource documents and the sharing of best practices. Parish design teams, liaisons to the families and Archdiocesan planners, a Parish Vitality Newsletter are resources that are also available to the families.

This process of comprehensive change and growth must be faithfully supported with prayer and spiritual discernment. Please include Beacons of Light in your daily prayer. Lord, let your light shine on us and through us as we face the challenges of actively living our faith today. Make us new and renew your Church, now and always.

~~ Father Jim

