

Saint Leo the Great Catholic Church

Very Reverend Justin L. Ward, S.T.L, Administrator

February 21, 2021 **The First Sunday of Lent Year B**

Baby Drive

This Lent the CCD program is hosting a Baby Drive for the Sav-A-Life Pregnancy Center. Please contribute newborn baby items such as diapers, wipes, clothes, ect. Each classroom has its own box for donations, and the class that contributes the most will win a prize. You can also bring the baby items to box at the back of the church. The drive will end on March 21. Please consider this act of almsgiving during this Lenten season!

Lector Schedule

	8:00AM	10:00AM
February 21	Jan McDonald	Casey Trusler
February 28	Kay Courtney	Petra Miranda
March 7	Marti Waters	Denise Duke
March 14	Diane Brooker	Joyce Weiss

Mass Intentions

St. Leo Church

Sunday February 21	8AM	†Joyce Marzen
	10AM	Pro Populo

St. Francis Church

1PM † Gregory John Marzen

Please call the Church Office to submit your Mass intentions.

Fulfilling the Precepts of the Church

As we begin the great season of Lent, there really is no better time for us to “get back to the basics.” To do so, it seems opportune for us to recall the precepts of the Church or the “duties” that the Catholic Church requires of all the faithful. Also called the commandments of the Church, these things are binding under pain of mortal sin, *but the point is not to punish*. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church explains, the binding nature “is meant to guarantee to the faithful the indispensable minimum in the spirit of prayer and moral effort, in the growth of love of God and neighbor.” If we follow these commands, we will know that we are at least headed in the right direction spiritually!

1. The Sunday Duty The first precept of the Church is "You shall attend Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation and rest from servile labor." Often called the Sunday Duty or the Sunday Obligation, this is the way in which Christians fulfill the Third Commandment: "Remember, keep holy the Sabbath day." We participate in the Mass, and we refrain from any work that distracts us from a proper celebration of Christ's Resurrection. In a time of pandemic, it belongs to the Church to lift this obligation. However, we see how important the Church understands assistance at Sunday Mass. As our lives return to some degree of normalcy, it is only fitting that attendance at Mass be at the top of the list!

2. Confession The second precept of the Church is "You shall confess your sins at least once a year." Strictly speaking, we only need to take part in the Sacrament of Confession if we have committed a mortal sin, but the Church urges us to make frequent use of the sacrament and, at a minimum, to receive it once each year in preparation for fulfilling our Easter Duty. Confessions are heard 30 minutes before every Mass.

3. The Easter Duty The third precept of the Church is "You shall receive the sacrament of the Eucharist at least during the Easter season." Today, most Catholics receive the Eucharist at every Mass they attend, but it was not always so. Since the Sacrament of Holy Communion binds us to Christ and to our fellow Christians, the Church requires us to receive it at least once each year, sometime between Palm Sunday and Pentecost. Last year, this obligation was lifted in the Diocese of Birmingham considering the pandemic. However, again we see how important and indispensable the Eucharist is.

4. Fasting and Abstinence The fourth precept of the Church is "You shall observe the days of fasting and abstinence established by the Church." Fasting and abstinence, along with prayer and alms-giving, are powerful tools in developing our spiritual life. Today, the Church requires Catholics (age 18-59) to fast only on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, and to abstain from meat on the Fridays during Lent. The norms concerning abstinence of meat are applicable for those over the age of 14. On all other Fridays of the year, we may perform some *other penance* in place of abstinence. However, penance is to be done on **all Fridays of the year** in some way. That penance is reserved only to the Fridays of Lent is a gross misunderstanding of the Catholic tradition.

5. Supporting the Church The fifth precept of the Church is "You shall help to provide for the needs of the Church." The Catechism notes that this "means that the faithful are *obliged* to assist with the material needs of the Church, each according to his own ability." In other words, we do not necessarily have to tithe (give ten percent of our income) if we cannot afford it; but we should also be willing to give more if we can. All of us (even those who draw their resources from the Church such as priests), if we claim to be faithful Catholics, cannot ever rationalize or justify withholding our resources. To do so is a not only selfish, but also a grave offense against our Lord. Rather, we give out of gratitude for what our Lord has done for us and as a means of participating in the one sacrifice of our Lord. Our support of the Church can also be through donations of our time, and the point of both is not simply to maintain the Church but to spread the Gospel and bring others into the Church, the Body of Christ.

Many have asked me what they can do to make sure they have a good Lent this year. I suggest that fulfilling the precepts of the Church with our whole hearts is a great starting place!
God love you. – Fr. Ward

2/14/21 St. Leo \$3,643.30

2/14/21 St. Francis \$920.00