

**December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017**  
**The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph**



**St. Leo Catholic Church**  
 330 W. 8<sup>th</sup> Street  
 Palmyra, NE 68418  
 (402)780-5535  
[www.stleoandstmartin.com](http://www.stleoandstmartin.com)

**St. Martin Catholic Church**  
 125 W. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
 Douglas, NE  
 (Please send mail to St. Leo Church)  
 Email: [stleopalmyra@gmail.com](mailto:stleopalmyra@gmail.com)

**Fr. Adam Sparling, Pastor**

**Mass Intentions**

Jan	1	Mon	10:00 am	St. Leo	Poor Souls
Jan	2	Tue	8:00am	St. Leo	+Shirley Malone
Jan	3	Wed	8:00 am	St. Martin	LaDonna Seamann
Jan	4	Thur	7:00 am	St. Leo	Tom & Lynette Gilligan (Anniversary)
Jan	5	Fri	7:00 am	St. Leo	+Barbara Barak
Jan	6	Sat	4:00 pm	St. Martin	+Helen Royal
Jan	7	Sun	8:30 am	St. Leo	Maggie Gilligan B-day
Jan	7	Sun	11:00 am	St. Leo	For the people of our parishes

<b>OUR TITHE TO THE LORD</b>			
December 24&25, 2017 Combined			
	Adult	Youth	Plate
St. Leo	\$819	\$ 0	\$357
St. Martin	\$470	\$ 0	\$50
<b>Amount needed to balance yearly budget:</b>			
St. Leo: \$1,185/week or \$5,133/month			
St. Martin: \$1,002/week or \$4,342/month			

**Weekend Masses:**

<b>1st, 3rd &amp; 5th (Odd Sundays)</b> Saturday 4 PM at St. Martin 8:30 AM at St Leo Palmyra 11:00 AM at St Leo Palmyra	<b>2nd &amp; 4th (Even Sundays)</b> Saturday 4 PM at St. Leo 8:30 AM St Martin Douglas 11:00AM St Leo Palmyra
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**Been longer than a month since your last confession? Perhaps it is time to come receive His forgiveness again.**

**Confessions:**

**Saturdays: 3:30-3:45 PM**  
**Sundays: 8:00-8:15 AM**  
**10:30-10:45 AM**  
 \*Any time by appointment

**CALENDAR ITEMS**

- **Next weekend we will take up a second collection for the RETIRED PRIEST fund. Please be as generous as you can to assist our former pastors. You can use the envelopes attached to your bulletin or mark your contribution "retired priest fund". On behalf of our retired priests...Thank you in advance for your generosity!**
- All are invited to St. Leo's Hall for an Epiphany Brunch on **January 7<sup>th</sup> from 9:30 to 10:30**. Please bring a "brunch" food to share.
- **Annual Pro-Life Mass and Nebraska Walk for Life Saturday January 27** - Join pro-life advocates from across the state on January 27 for the Pro-Life Mass at St Mary church, across from the Capitol, celebrated by Most Rev. James Conley, Bishop of Lincoln. Mass at 9:00 am. The Walk for Life will follow with a rally starting at the State Capitol at 10:00 am. The Mass will be streamed live at [fb.me/necatholic](http://fb.me/necatholic). For more information, call the Nebraska Catholic Conference at 402-477-7517. Watch the Southeast Nebraska Register for more details.
- **For Men & Women seeking healing from Divorce: The Catholic Divorced Survival Guide** was created to bring hope and healing to divorced and separated Catholics. This 12 week program will be leader facilitated & features 30-minute DVD segments that cover topics of shock, denial, anger, grief, guilt, forgiveness, money, kids, annulment, and much more. The next session will begin **February 5, 2018** and is held at John XXIII Diocesan Center, Lincoln, NE from 7-9pm. Classes are kept small. Register by calling the Family Life Office at, 402-473-0620, or [catholicflo@cdolinc.net](mailto:catholicflo@cdolinc.net)

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- **Need some help to offset how much you are paying to Uncle Sam? How about give it to the parish instead! As it is the end of the year please consider that all contributions made to the church are TAX DEDUCTIBLE!** Your contributions to the parish are greatly needed to pay our bills and plan for the future needs. More importantly though we give out of a loving response in gratitude to the Lord's generosity to us.
- **We are still in need of cantors and musicians for our Masses!** This is such an important role to assist with the beauty of the mass and to praise God all the more. This is a great opportunity to tithe your time and talent to the parish. Please consider serving our parish in this way. Contact Fr. Sparling if you would be so willing. As St. Augustine is famous for saying: "He who sings, prays twice!"
  - Please join me in praying a prayer of thanksgiving for those who volunteer already.
- **Thank you so much to all who volunteered cleaning and decorating our parishes for the celebration of Christmas. Your work doesn't go unnoticed and we are all very grateful for all that you have done and continue to do!!!**
- Giving an asset such as corn, wheat, soybeans or cattle (instead of cash) can have great tax benefits, allowing you to be more generous to your parish. For free, confidential advice and for more information about your giving options, please contact Les Mach, a representative of the Catholic Foundation of Southern Nebraska, at 402-443-6180.
- As some of you know, a few weekends ago the refrigerator went out in the rectory which added to the oven which had already been sparsely working for over a year and needed to be replaced. It has been a rough month for things to stop working. The water softener in the rectory, which was about 20 years old, quit working and was replaced for \$699. This price being the discounted price saving us \$400 by Quality Water Services and included installation. One of the furnaces in the social hall at St. Leo's had a part die and needed replaced which cost a little over \$200. This past week I

went ahead and purchased new appliances at Schafer's in Lincoln who gave the parishes a great discount. We received a whole new set of 4 appliances for only just about \$3,500 (I included a 5 year extended warranty which if unused will be returned to us as in store credit). Richard and Laura Hays donated the purchase of a microwave oven and Bernie Masek donated about half the cost of the new refrigerator. God bless their generosity! If anyone else would like to donate to any of these needed repairs and replacements please contact Fr. Sparling or put it in an envelope marked Appliance/repair donation.

- **Thank you to those who have contributed to items on our Parish Needs Wish List!!** We even had a large donation from a Catherine Wilds who lives in Arkansas and visited our parish and saw our needs list in the bulletin. I will continue to run that list in case anyone else wishes to donate towards it.
- **Parish Needs Wish List:** Your help in donating to these things will help defray the cost of the parish purchasing the following needs:
  - Large Bulletin boards
  - Reams of colored paper
  - General classroom supplies
  - Financial gifts to be put toward updating technology such as: Tv's or projectors and dvd players in classrooms, upgrading Divine Mercy Hall to larger screen or projector, wifi coverage for social hall, printer ink, laptop computers or tablets for teachers to use to communicate with tv or projector in classrooms, classroom speakers.
  - Financial gifts to defer the cost of the new office copy/scan/printer machine that replaced the antiquated and inefficient model acquired in 2004 and the computer printer. This 1 new unit replaced two machines and reduces our cost per page. (\$1,300)

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**First, I would like to thank those who sent me a card and/or gave a gift. It truly is humbling to be loved by you. I wish I could express in words the immense level of gratitude I have. This being my first Christmas as a pastor it was already an extra special celebration but your generosity and love exalted it even higher. Thank you so much!**

**The end of the year brings us a good opportunity to reflect on our life this past year. Every year brings joy and sometimes hardships. The Lord is present in every one of those moments. It's good to take a moment to consider our spiritual lives as well. Asking ourselves the questions such as was Christ the center of my life and/or family's life? What can I do better in 2018? These are just a few good questions to bring before the Lord and spend some time in prayer talking with Him about. I personally have so much to work on that it can become overwhelming at times. So I try to think of a couple of things I can focus on at a time so that it's not so overwhelming. I would suggest doing a reflection on the sacraments and prayer. Perhaps make it a goal to spend a little more time in prayer this year both personally and as a family. Pray a rosary together if you don't already. You can start small like once a week at least. Come spend some time before our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament before the 11am Mass when Jesus in the Eucharist is exposed. Perhaps visit FORMED.org and do a reflection, watch movie about one of the saints, scripture study, spiritual reading or something else amongst the great resources there. Those are just a few things to consider.**

**Making the sacraments a priority is the best place for anyone to start. Making Mass a priority, of course every Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation which we are obligated to do, but perhaps coming to a daily Mass once a week or more. Confession is also so important in our spiritual life. We are all sinners, I very much included, and we need the Lords forgiveness and grace. I know that confession can be intimidating at times, especially when we go maybe just once or twice a year. I think back to my spiritual journey and I was very nervous about going to confession until I started going more frequently. The more I went the easier it was and the more I recognized the grace that comes from the sacrament. I dove deeper into understanding the sacrament by using an examination of conscience, like the one I attached to the bulletin at the beginning of advent, which allowed me to recognize how much I was attached to sinful things that prevented me from having a deeper relationship with our Lord. It's not about "Catholic guilt" but rather obtaining true freedom. The Church recommends that we make a monthly visit to confession and of course as soon as possible after falling into mortal sin. Simply not having to carry around the weight of sins for months on end is so absolutely freeing and receiving that grace and peace the Lord gives can make a person feel better both spiritually and physically.**

**Going more frequently to Mass, going to confession frequently so that I could receive the Eucharist more worthily were the two greatest things that changed my life and I know they will change yours as well. I pray that you too allow the Lord to flood your heart and soul with His grace and when you do it changes everything. You will find yourself to be a much more peaceful and relaxed person as you grow closer to Him. So start of the new year right and make an intentional effort to receive His grace more in 2018 than 2017.**

**May God bless you all this New Year's and may peace reign in your heart and homes!**

**Have a blessed week! God love you! ~Fr. Sparling**