

Pittsburgh Police Officer Launches 'Leo's Sunday' Pasta Sauce Based on Old Family Recipe

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The homemade, slow-cooked marinara sauce is regularly donated to fundraisers.



Leo DiCesare, left, with fellow pasta sauce slinger Chief Thomas Kokoski at the Avalon Police Department in Pittsburgh, and in chef mode.

Leo DiCesare is the kind of un-knighted hero the world needs more of. And though he's a lifelong police officer, some of his most important public service has come in the form of pasta sauce.

In 2015, DiCesare learned that his dear friend in blue, Jeffrey Svidron, had been diagnosed with **leukemia** at only 40 years old and with three young children. Naturally he felt a strong sense of loyalty to his friend and co-workers. He kicked into action: The force put together a fundraiser, and the DiCesare family catered the luncheon. Leo's Italian heritage was woven throughout the meal and the century-old red sauce was the shining star of the buffet.

The slow-cooked (gluten-free) marinara sauce was a family recipe that DiCesare's parents brought with them when they emigrated to Pittsburgh in 1972 from Abruzzi, **Italy**. "We didn't have much

growing up, and so we had no choice but to grow our vegetables and cook every meal,” he told The Daily Meal. “My mother taught me how to make homemade sauces, pastas, soups, and desserts. “

At and after the fundraiser the father of three received so many questions and compliments about the sauce he thought that maybe just maybe — this sauce had some potential.

After their co-worker died, Leo and his chief started to toy with the idea of launching this raved-about red sauce to help raise money for his family. So from some light-hearted beer banter to getting the necessary licensing to start the business, “Leo’s Sunday Sauce” was born in January 2017. His family are currently his only employees which Leo claims is a great excuse to spend quality time together.

They currently manufacture the products in a licensed commercial kitchen in Braddock Hills, Pennsylvania. Now they have even launched a fresh pasta line along with it and continue to actively

donate a portion of their sales to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. The plan is to someday be in a position to expand the brand and continue to help those in need — a great example of how the food industry can give back even in the most devastating circumstances. The pasta sauce is currently only available at high-end grocery stores in and around **Pittsburgh** including McGinnis Sisters in Brentwood, T-Bones in Wexford, Produce Plus in Bellevue, Cibrone and Sons Bakery in Castle Shannon, Good L'oven Bakery in Ross Township.

For more about Leo and his sauce adventures, follow his **Facebook page** (<https://www.facebook.com/Cibofattifresca/>).