

Completion of the 2119 Parish Time Capsule!

There is an old saying that “all good things come to those who wait” and—in 98 years-time—the parish community of 2119 will celebrate the 225th Anniversary of Saint Cecilia Church. In honor of this past week’s 127th milestone, we are delighted to announce the installation / ‘planting’ of a special gift for them—the 2119 Parish Time Capsule!

“If you could have a conversation with the person(s) who will sit where you are today, one hundred years from now, what would you share?”

Born out of curiosity about the parishioners of the past, this question began a time-traveling project and journey. Kicking-off Memorial Day Weekend 2019 and stretching through to Labor Day, parishioners submitted reflections on their lives and connection with Saint Cecilia in beautiful letters, photographs, paintings, and poems—voices and faces from our present community, given as a gift to future parishioners. While the contents of the submissions are confidential, it can be said that poignant themes and the love of St. C’s were evident. Given this past unprecedented year—one letter included an addendum—the time capsule references this historic time of life, of loss, and of love.

Research for a project such as this was extensive to ensure preservation of the time capsule’s contents through to the next century and beyond. The decision was made early on to keep the project to paper, which stood the best chance of survival. All submissions were written or printed on acid-free paper and placed in protective polypropylene sleeves. Artwork and non-paper items were placed in corrosion intercept pouches, protecting all from heat, cold, and mold. All items were carefully handled with archival gloves, and the contents were carefully packed into the capsule and secured in place—with three new pairs of gloves sealed in an intercept pouch and arranged on top to be the first item opened.



The time capsule itself is solid stainless steel—crafted from one piece—and can withstand time, fire, and flood. A special seal inside the cover will keep it airtight, and a twist of a flathead screwdriver, or other such tool, in the cover’s keyless lock will open it. Items purposely not included were batteries, electronics, USB drives, CD/DVDs, or any other corrosive materials. Respecting the impact climate change may have on flood zones in Boston over the next century, protection inside an interior wall of St. C’s was selected over in-ground burying—and the time capsule is now safe and secure in its special space.

One item enclosed in the time capsule is a special stainless steel plaque, identical to the one that will mark its location when all is complete (bottom of the main stairs on the right, just as you enter the Fellowship Hall). Designed for the 2119 community’s 325th Anniversary celebration—written encouragement is enclosed for our intended celebrants to add their voices, faces, and stories to ours—then replant the capsule with similar instructions for the

2319 parish...and so on. A gift that truly could keep on giving for centuries to come!

Any number of questions could be asked on what Boston will be like one hundred years hence—is the ‘T’ still rolling along—do the Swan Boats still glide through the Lagoon—do the Boston Pops still make the 4th spectacular—does Paul Revere still ride his route as an April Patriot—is the Citgo Sign still lighting the way in Kenmore Square—does the gold of the State House dome still gleam above the Common—are Tom Brady’s records still unbroken? Here at Saint Cecilia—will future parishioners imagine those who came before—who were they—what were their names—what did they look like—what were their lives like—and what did they share with one another as they gathered in their pews?

The Time Capsule was designed as a gift of gratitude to the parishioners who started it all in 1894, to those here today, and for those coming long after. Thank you to all who participated for your ‘time, talent, and treasures.’ Special appreciation goes to Fr. John Unni, Mary Kaye, Jeanne Bruno, Scott MacDonald, Leah Bennett, Lisa Pickering, Sue O’Connell, and Sara Clark for bringing the project to fruition, and to Mark Donohoe, Colleen Melaugh, Robert Duff, and Giovanna Franchi for your support.

Over the next century there will be vast advances across the spectrum, giving us hope that members of our youngest generation may be in attendance as our representatives on April 22, 2119. Wherever you may be within the universe that evening—please mark your calendar now—for all good things are indeed worth waiting for.

*With love, prayers and peace from the Time Capsule Committee:
Celia Harris, Adam Valsahagun, and Jacob Venter*

