Second Sunday of Advent
5 December 2021
St. John the Forerunner Teaching the Pharisees and Sadducees
CALL TO WORSHIP

* In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
All: Amen.

* The Lord be with you.
All: And with your spirit.

PENITENTIAL RITE

COLLECT

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING | Baruch 5:1-9
RESPONSORIAL PSALM | Ps. 126: The Lord Has Done Great Things for Us  
Tony Alonso

Refrain

The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy.

Verses

1. When the LORD brought back the exiles of Sion, we thought we were dreaming. Then was our mouth filled with laughter; on our tongues, songs of joy.

2. Then the nations themselves said, “What great deeds the LORD worked for them!” What great deeds the LORD worked for us! Indeed, we were glad.

3. Bring back our exiles, O LORD, as streams in the south. Those who are sowing in tears will sing when they reap.

4. They go out, they go out, full of tears, bearing seed for the sowing; they come back, they come back with a song, bearing their sheaves.

SECOND READING | Philippians 1: 4-6, 8-11

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION | Jubilation Mass  
James Chepponis

GOSPEL | Luke 3: 1-6

HOMILY
DISMISSAL OF THE CATECHUMENS (11:30AM MASS)  May the Word of God Christopher Walker

NICENE CREED

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.
I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,
and became man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

May the word of God strengthen you. May the word of God nourish you. May the word of God comfort you all your life.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THE PARISH!

We are grateful for your ongoing support of Saint Cecilia. The easiest way to make a financial contribution to our parish is to use the parish Flowcode below.

Using the Flowcode with the camera on your smartphone is as easy as Aim & Tap. Aim your camera at the Flowcode image and tap the notification banner when it appears on your phone’s screen. You may need to zoom in a bit to focus on the code.

If the Flowcode doesn’t work for you, please visit www.flowcode.com/page/stceciliaboston.

You can also mail a check to:

Saint Cecilia Parish
18 Belvidere Street
Boston, MA 02115
LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

* The Lord be with you.
All: And with your spirit.

* Lift up your hearts.
All: We lift them up to the Lord.

* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
All: It is right and just.
SANCTUS | Mass of the Angels and Saints

Steven Janco

MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION | Mass of the Angels and Saints

Steven Janco

AMEN | Mass of the Angels and Saints

Steven Janco
THE LORD’S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever.

Amen.

THE EXCHANGE OF PEACE

* The peace of the Lord be with you always.
All: And with your spirit.

AGNUS DEI | Mass of the Angels and Saints

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

It is a long-held Catholic belief that when circumstances prevent one from receiving Holy Communion, it is possible to make an “Act of Spiritual Communion.” During this time when we are not able to celebrate the Eucharist together in person, Pope Francis invites Catholics to say this prayer as a source of grace. We can be assured that when we express our desire to receive Jesus in the Eucharist, God will be with us spiritually in a special way. Here is an Act of Spiritual Communion that we encourage you to pray as you participate in our live-streamed liturgies:

ACT OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

Loving Jesus,
I believe that you are present in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist.
I love you above all things, and I desire to receive you into my soul.
Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart.
I embrace you as if you were already there and unite myself wholly to you.
Never permit me to be separated from you.
Amen.
Like a shepherd he feeds his flock and gathers the lambs in his arms, holding them carefully close to his heart, leading them home.

1. Say to the cities of Judah: Prepare the way of the Lord.
2. I myself will shepherd them, for others have led them astray. Go to the mountain-top, the lost I will rescue and lift your voice: Jerusalem, here is your God.

1. lift your voice: Jerusalem, here is your God.
2. heal their wounds and pasture them, giving them rest.

3. Come unto me if you are heavily burdened, and take my yoke upon your shoulders. I will give you rest.
COMMUNION MEDITATION | E’en So Lord Jesus, Quickly Come (9:30am)  

Paul Manz

Peace be to you and grace from Him  
Who freed us from our sins,  
Who loved us all and shed His blood  
That we might saved be.

Sing Holy, Holy to our Lord,  
The Lord, Almighty God,  
Who was and is and is to come  
Sing Holy, Holy, Lord!

Rejoice in heaven, all ye that dwell therein.  
Rejoice on earth, ye saints below,  
For Christ is coming, is coming soon  
For Christ is coming soon!

E’en so, Lord Jesus, quickly come  
And night shall be no more.  
They need no light nor lamp nor sun  
For Christ will be their All!

O Love (11:30am for World AIDS Day Remembrance)  
Elaine Hagenberg

O love, O love, O love that will not let me go; O love, I rest my weary soul in Thee.  
I give Thee back the life I owe, That in Thy ocean depths its flow may richer, fuller be.

O joy that seeks me through the pain, I cannot close my heart to thee; I trace the rainbow through the rain,  
And feel the promise is not vain... that morn shall tearless be. That morn shall tearless be.

O love, O love, O love that will not let me go; O love, I rest my weary soul in Thee.  
I give Thee back the life I owe; I give Thee back the life I owe, And in Thy ocean depths its flow shall richer, fuller be.  
That morn shall tearless be.

O love, O love, O love that will not let me go; O love that will not let me go.

**CONCLUDING RITES**

☒ The Lord be with you.  
   All: And with your spirit.

☒ May almighty God bless you, the Father, (+) and the Son and the Holy Spirit.  
   All: Amen.

☒ Go forth, the Mass is ended.  
   All: Thanks be to God.
RECESSIONAL | People, Look East

1. People look East, The time is near Of the
crown ing of the year. Make your house fair as you are
came to Earth. Set every peak and valley

2. Fur rows, be glad, though earth is bare. One more
crest that must be filled. Even the hour when wings are
frozen He for fledging time has chosen.

3. Birds, though you long have ceased to build, Guard the
light the bowl shall brim. Shining be your frost y
weather bright as sun and moon together.

4. Stars, keep the watch when night is dim. One more
that brings new life to earth. Shining be your frost y
humidity With the word, the Lord is coming.

5. Angels announce with shouts of mirth Him who
will plant the seed. Give up your strength as you are
able Trim the hearth and set the table.

For information on becoming involved or supporting the music program at Saint Cecilia, please contact Dr. Robert Duff at 617-536-4548 or email: RDuff@stceciliaboston.org.

Music in this worship aid is printed with permission under Onelicense.net #A700-137.

POSTLUDE | Es ist ein Ros' entsprungen, Op. 122, no. 8

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)
Saint Cecilia
Parish Advent Giving Tree!

LGBT Asylum Task Force assists LGBTQ people from one of the 71 countries in which it is a crime to be LGBTQ to obtain asylum in the United States. Provides housing, food, pro bono legal services, mental health counseling, medical health services, employment services, and other services.

Saint Cecilia Prison & After Program provides a support group for men coming out of prison. Presently, the group shares inspirational emails, 1:1 buddy-style phone relationships and a monthly virtual book group.

Saint Cecilia CARES is a home visitation program with ministers who visit the homes of the sick, isolated, and needy members of our parish and the surrounding community. Ministers provide the gifts of compassionate listening, pastoral presence, emotional support, and Holy Communion if requested.

Waltham House is the first residential group home designed specifically for LGBTQ youth in New England, and one of only three of its kind in the nation. The group home provides a safe and supportive living environment for 12 gay, lesbian, bisexual, and/or transgender youth ages 14-18.

Haley House uses food with purpose and the power of community to break down barriers between people, empower individuals, and strengthen neighborhoods. We believe in radical solutions: solving problems at their root by challenging attitudes that perpetuate suffering and building alternative models.

Elders Living at Home Program provides supportive services to older adults with the goal of helping them maintain their independence in safe, affordable permanent housing for as long as possible.

Women’s Lunch Place (WLP) is a unique daytime shelter and advocacy center in Boston dedicated to helping women in need. Advocates provide healthy meals, essentials, and one-on-one assistance to guests, and free medical services from Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program.

Project Hope ensures the holidays are joyous and cheerful for hundreds of Boston’s children and families. With your help, we can share joy with Project Hope families and ease stress for parents purchasing gifts.

Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program (BHCHP) serves over 11,000 homeless individuals and families. BHCHP ensures every one of these individuals and families have access to comprehensive health care. During winter months, those on the streets and in shelters often lack the very basic clothing necessary to stay warm and dry.

Catholic Charities Yawkey Childhood Center is a diverse center based community which provides a safe, clean, healthy environment for children from age 6 weeks to 7 years.

Elders Living at Home Program is a support group for men coming out of prison. Presently, the group shares inspirational emails, 1:1 buddy-style phone relationships and a monthly virtual book group.

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As you can see, our beautiful Advent Giving Tree has arrived! Our team was busy yesterday making tags for agencies and individuals who have reached out to us again this year.

This year there are two ways to purchase gifts: taking a tag from the Advent Giving Tree in the church OR by using the VIRTUAL method online.

Option 1: Giving Tree at Church
- Select one or more tags from the tree and purchase the item(s).
- Please DO NOT take a tag unless you intend to purchase the gift.
- Wrap the gift (unless the tag indicates not to) and attach the tag securely to the outside.
- You are welcome to add to the purchase. For example, if someone needs a winter hat, you could include gloves, scarf, or holiday candy, etc. For some people this is the only gift they receive.
- If the gift is unavailable/out of stock a gift card may be substituted.
- If you change your mind, simply return the tag to a Giving Tree Coordinator as soon as possible.
- If you lose the tag, please inform a Giving Tree Coordinator.
- Bring your gift(s) to the parish NO LATER than 6:00 PM on Wednesday, December 15th.

Option 2: VIRTUAL Giving Tree Online
You can purchase gifts online from the Virtual Advent Giving Tree to be shipped directly to agencies in need, or in some cases dropped off at the parish.

- Please visit the link to see the requests from the agencies we are supporting:
  https://signup.com/go/stceciliaadventgivingtree
- Select your gift(s) and follow instructions for shipping and delivery. Be sure to include the listed c/o (‘in care of’) information.
- For Gift Cards choose a physical card* vs. an ‘E-card’ (electronic) card (*Project Hope is an exception to this rule).
- Any online seller can be used or you may purchase the gift at a store and mail it.
- Parish drop-off for gifts is limited. Please read the description to see if this is an option for the gift you choose. If bringing a gift to the parish be sure to clearly indicate the agency it is for.
- If the gift is unavailable/out of stock a gift card may be substituted.
- Please order and ship gifts so they will arrive at the listed agency or the Parish before Wednesday, December 15th.
SAINT CECILIA PARISH

OUR COMMUNITY NEWS

MINISTERS OF THE LITURGY

Saturday, December 4 | 5:00 p.m.
Rev. Peter Grover, OMV, celebrant
Emily Bogert, lector

Sunday, December 5 | 8:00 a.m.
Rev. Peter Gyves, SJ, celebrant
Bob Mann, lector

Sunday, December 5 | 9:30 a.m.
Rev. John J. Unni, celebrant
Will Kelly, Cathy Anderson, and Karen Vachon, lectors

Sunday, December 5 | 11:30 a.m.
Rev. John J. Unni, celebrant
James Paradis and Karen McMenamy, lectors

Sunday, December 5 | 6:00 p.m.
Rev. Bojan Bijelic, SJ, presider
Rev. Mr. David Kiblinger, SJ, homilist
Spencer Dunne and Nikko Mendoza, lectors

SPECIAL INTENTIONS

Sunday, December 5 | 9:30 a.m.
Carol Howland, Memorial
Kevin F. O'Donnell, Memorial
Mary Schrader, 1st Anniversary

Sunday, December 5 | 11:30 a.m.
Sr. Mary Hennessey, Memorial

Thursday, December 9 | 8:00 a.m.
Claire T. Stanley, 1st Anniversary

Friday, December 10 | 8:00 a.m.
Philip Duffer, Special Intention

THIS SUNDAY’S READINGS
Baruch 5:1–9
Philippians 1:4–6, 8–11
Luke 3:1–6

NEXT SUNDAY’S READINGS
Zephaniah 3:14-18a
Philippians 4:4-7
Luke 3:10-18

PRAYER FOR WORLD AIDS DAY

Most Gracious and Compassionate God,
on this World AIDS Day
we are mindful that countless people are at risk
of joining the 36.7 million currently infected with AIDS.
You are greater than any disease or plague;
and now we ask, as you have done in times past,
to heal and comfort those who are suffering.
Be with those who may learn today
that they or a loved one
may have just been diagnosed with HIV.
God of mercy, we confess
that we have often turned our backs
on those with HIV/AIDS,
those who are sick and dying.
We ask you to forgive our disparaging attitudes,
our indifference, and our failures to offer a helping hand.
Help us to hear their cries,
respond to their needs with compassionate love,
and to be your welcoming face of mercy. Amen.
— Dianna Ortiz, O.S.U.
Our Sick
Please pray for all our sick and for those who are in need of our prayer, especially Mary Pickering, Caeden Boyce, Delia Alvarez, Charlie Naughton, Peter Tracy, MaryAnn Weber, Bob Haas, Bob Roppolo, Christopher Gobron, Joy Gilbert, Mary Walters, John Powers, Marc Pelletier, Larry Murphy, Josephine Mason, Marian Licameli, Ray Cronin, Rosalind Sica, Nicholas Collins, Eileen Bolesky, Fred Anzalone, and Liam Nedell.

Welcome to Saint Cecilia Parish
We are pleased to welcome the following new members of our parish who have recently registered: Mary Ellen and Bill Daily of Butte, Montana, Amanda Snow of Boston, Aubri and Matthew Perry of Boston, Zoe Prince of Valhalla, New York, the Athens Family of Lexington, the Habermehl Family of Framingham,Montserrat Martinez of San Antonio, Texas, Lillian Shirley of Jamaica Plain, Lauren Heintz and Adrian Samsel of Cambridge, Barbara Hanson of Boston, and the Harney Family of Natick. If you have not previously registered you can do so online at www.stceciliaboston.org

Thank You
You donated $4,202 to the collection for Retired Sisters who have served the Church of Boston so generously for so many years. This fund assists religious communities to provide for the retirement and health care needs of Sisters who have served in the Archdiocese. Thank you!

World AIDS Day
Today we commemorate World AIDS Day. Remember in your prayer all those who live with HIV/AIDS. Remember also those who care for individuals with this virus—loved ones, physicians, nurses, and nursing assistants, as well as for scientists who work to find a cure. Please read the next page to learn how you can participate in our commemoration of this day.

Christmas Flowers
You are invited to remember your loved ones by donating towards the Christmas flowers that will grace our sanctuary. In the back of the church you’ll find envelopes that you can use for this purpose. Please drop the envelope in the collection basket or hand it to any staff person. The names of those remembered will be published in the Christmas bulletin. Please be sure to PRINT clearly.

Gaudete Sunday
Next Sunday is traditionally known as Gaudete Sunday, a day marked by a joyful anticipation of the Christmas celebration. Like Laetare Sunday in Lent, the optional liturgical color is rose. Help add to our celebration by wearing something rose–colored to Mass next Sunday!

Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary—Patronal Feast Day of the United States
Wednesday, December 8, is the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception and a holy day of obligation. Many people confuse the Immaculate Conception with the doctrine of the Virgin Birth (Mary’s virginal conception of Jesus). Wednesday’s solemnity celebrates Mary’s Immaculate Conception: that is, our solemn belief that Mary, though conceived in the normal way, was preserved from original sin from the first moment of her conception. This solemnity occurs nine months before the feast of the Nativity of Mary, which is celebrated on September 8.

Last 6:00 p.m. Evening Mass of 2021
Next Sunday, December 12, is the last six o’clock Sunday liturgy before Christmas. The six o’clock liturgy will resume on the Solemnity of the Baptism of the Lord (January 9).
OUR AIDS MEMORIAL QUILT

Throughout history quilts have symbolized a legacy of memory and community. The Saint Cecilia AIDS Memorial Quilt, inspired by the NAMES Project which originated in San Francisco and is now based in Atlanta, was first dedicated at the Jesuit Urban Center in November of 1995 and brought to Saint Cecilia fourteen years ago. It is a tapestry that binds us together and reminds us of the loved ones, friends, and partners this community has lost to the AIDS virus.

In the mid-nineteen nineties, Michele Audet, Paul Goulet, Jean Marino, Mimi Rittenburg, and Janine Shahbaz, members of the Jesuit Urban Center’s Last Tuesday Dinner Program (a program founded to serve a nutritious and delicious dinner on the last Tuesday of each month to people living with HIV/AIDS), came together to determine how best to honor the many wonderful people they loved who had died. It was during this gathering that the idea of an AIDS Memorial Quilt was born. Pedro Carasquilto, a Jesuit scholastic who was stationed at the church at this time, helped design this powerful visual reminder of so many lives cut short by the AIDS virus. Each Quilt panel in the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt is 3 feet by 6 feet; eight panels are sewn together to create full size quilts of 12 square feet. The Saint Cecilia AIDS Memorial Quilt is modeled after a full size quilt.

The bold primary colors used in the Quilt contrast with its solemn symbolism. The Quilt evokes both Christian imagery and the memory of those who have died. “IHS” is derived from the first three letters of the Greek name of Jesus (IHSOUS). In ancient times, this became a widely recognized monogram of the Christ. IHS is also featured in the Jesuit crest. The red AIDS ribbon is looped through the “H.” Each star circling around the central image represents someone from our community who died from AIDS. Michele, Paul, Jean, Mimi and Janine placed the Quilt on the altar of the church and lovingly inscribed the first ninety-three names on the stars. It is displayed on the Sunday nearest World AIDS Day—a stark reminder that AIDS is still with us. Calling us to the hope born of faith is a verse from the prophet Zephaniah, edging the Quilt in four-inch letters:

“I will sing and dance before the Lord. With happy song God will dance for you with shouts of joy. For God now rejoices over you.”

WORLD AIDS DAY

As part of our annual observance of World AIDS Day, the solemn reading of the names inscribed on our AIDS Memorial Quilt will take place at the 11:30 Mass. This custom, begun at the Jesuit Urban Center in 1995 and continued at Saint Cecilia following the closure of the Jesuit Urban Center, honors the lives of men and women that were cut short by HIV/AIDS. Following the 11:30 liturgy on December 5, the Rainbow Ministry will host a reception in the Community Room. Refreshments will be served and there will be a discussion of the history of both the epidemic and of our Quilt. When you come to church that weekend, be sure to spend a few moments in prayer before this powerful visual reminder of souls from both the JUC and Saint Cecilia communities.

THANK YOU TO SAINT CECILIA PARISHIONERS AND FRIENDS

This year’s Pine Street Inn gift card donations to the low threshold housing tenants was a success! Over 100 tenants will be receiving gift cards to enjoy a Thanksgiving meal or buy something they really want or need to celebrate the holiday. The generosity of Saint Cecilia parishioners and friends made this more successful than last year and we are very grateful. Saint Cecilia’s giving community is a testament to spreading kindness to those who are less fortunate. Thank you and happy holidays from Karen Dunnett and the Pine Street Inn staff, volunteers, and tenants!

LOW-GLUTEN ALTAR BREAD AVAILABLE

If you have celiac disease, please let us know. We have a supply of low-gluten altar bread available for those who cannot tolerate gluten. These hosts are prepared by the Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration in Clyde, Missouri.

A REMINDER TO PARENTS

While at Saint Cecilia, children should never go to the restroom alone. We are happy that you feel so safe here, but please remember that we are in a building that is wide open and has multiple entrances. For the safety of our children, please do not allow them to wander around unsupervised and please do not ever allow them to go to the restroom unaccompanied by a parent.
Advent wreaths were originally part of folk traditions of Northern Europe. Wreaths of evergreens were decorated with candles to symbolize life and light during the dark months of winter. The circle of the wreath, which has no beginning or end, symbolizes the eternity of God. Evergreens stay green all year and so signify continuous life. Each of the four candles represent one of the Sundays of Advent. We needn't worry about the colors of the candles; traditionally, three violet candles and one rose candle are used, but you may prefer to use all royal blue candles, four violet candles or four white candles. The symbol is the flame, not the color. Each Sunday, the light of the wreath glows brighter as a reminder that Christ comes into the darkness of our lives to bring newness, life, and hope.

Tonight, light the first and second candle, sing a verse of *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*, re-read part of today's Gospel, and say a brief concluding prayer. If you prefer, here is a prayer that you can use.

**SECOND WEEK**

Light two of the violet candles. During the rest of the week, these candles are relit at the evening meal or whenever you choose to do so.

> Jesus, John the Baptist told the people, "If you have two coats, give one to someone else who doesn't have any. If you have food, share it with someone else." As we light this candle, we remember that you bring the light of service into our lives. May your Word be always in our minds, on our lips, and in our hearts. 
> Amen.
CHRISTMAS LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Masses that are also livestreamed are marked with an * and can be viewed at www.stceciliaboston.org

Christmas Eve | Friday, December 24
Mass | 4:00 p.m.*
Mass | 6:30 p.m.

Christmas Day | Saturday, December 25
Mass | 9:30 a.m.*
Please note that this is the only Mass on Christmas Day

Feast of the Holy Family | Sunday, December 26
Mass | 8:00 a.m.
Mass | 9:30 a.m.*
Mass | 11:30 a.m.

Monday, December 27 — Friday, December 31
Parish Offices Closed

Wednesday, December 29 | Thursday, December 30 | Friday, December 31
Weekday Mass | 8:00 a.m.

Saturday, January 1
Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God | 10:00 a.m.
Sunday Mass | 5:00 p.m.

Epiphany | Sunday, January 2
Mass | 8:00, 9:30*, & 11:30

Please note that there will be no 6:00 Mass on December 19, 26, or January 2.
FAITH & FILM SERIES
2021-2022

SEPTEMBER 25
THE TWO POPES
(2019)

OCTOBER 16
SCENES FROM AN EMPTY CHURCH
(2021)

NOVEMBER 6
MARY MAGDALENE
(2018)

DECEMBER 4
LITTLE WOMEN
(2019)

JANUARY 8
SCENES FROM A PARISH
(2009)

FEBRUARY 5
SILENCE
(2016)

MARCH 5
THE TREE OF LIFE
(2011)

APRIL 2
MOONLIGHT
(2016)

MAY 7
A BEAUTIFUL DAY IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD
(2019)

JUNE 4
A HIDDEN LIFE
(2019)

A SHORT DISCUSSION
WILL FOLLOW THE MOVIE

SPONSORED BY THE ADULT FAITH FORMATION COMMISSION
AN AFGHAN FAMILY IS ARRIVING SOON AND WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!

Six weeks ago parishioners from the Paulist Center and Saint Cecilia began organizing to jointly sponsor an Afghan refugee family. This week we received preliminary approval for sponsoring a family of 5-6 people. The family is due to arrive within 2-3 weeks! Now comes the challenge to welcome this family, help them navigate through complex government programs, enroll their children in school, prepare them to find work, help them learn English, and much, much more.

Eventually the family will be eligible for some U.S. government benefits, but even with those we may need to provide more than $20,000 for rent alone and an additional $25,000 for other living expenses.

If you wish to donate by check, make it payable to “Catholic Charities” and write: “PC-SC POWIR, Afghan” on the memo line. (POWIR stands for Parishes Organizing to Welcome Immigrants and Refugees.) Please mail your check to Catholic Charities, 275 West Broadway, Boston, MA 02127, attention: Marjean Perhot.

To donate online go to www.ccab.org/donate and under “Designation” use the drop down menu and select “Other”. In the resulting window type “Paulist Center St. Cecilia POWIR, Afghan”.

You can also sign up to volunteer with our refugee family at bit.ly/POWIRvolunteer Please contact us with any questions: sc.socialracialjustice@gmail.com. Thank you for your generosity!

JOIN PINE STREET INN FOR A VIRTUAL UPDATE ON REIMAGINING SHELTER

Please consider joining Lyndia Downie, President and Executive Director of Pine Street Inn, for a virtual update on Reimagining Shelter: Lessons Learned from the Pandemic and the Way Forward on Tuesday, December 14th at 2:00 p.m. This is an opportunity to hear directly from Pine Street frontline staff about shelter operations during the COVID-19 pandemic and explore how the lessons they have learned are shaping shelter services now and in the future.

To register and receive the Zoom link, please email Megan Harding at mharding@pinestreetinn.org. You are invited to send 1-2 questions in advance. You can submit your questions when you register or send them directly to Megan.

SAINT CECILIA SOCIAL AND RACIAL JUSTICE MINISTRY BOOK CLUB

Every Other Wednesday | 5:45-6:50 p.m. | Zoom

The Anti-Racist Book Club is reading Begin Again: James Baldwin’s America and Its Urgent Lessons for Our Own by Eddie S. Glaude Jr. We meet every 2 weeks. Please join our club on the BookClubz platform to get access to announcements, and meeting days and times: https://bookclubz.com/clubs/17366/join/7c4bc6/ Members of all faith communities and denominations are welcome.

ADULT FAITH FORMATION VIRTUAL EVENTS

SAINT SUSANNA PARISH — DEDHAM

Having Difficult Conversations
Presenter: - Fr. John Predmore S.J., Boston College High School
Monday, December 13 | 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. | Zoom

For further details on this presentation, please check the website: https://www.saintsusanna.org/Attachments/aff_yearly_program_standard.pdf
In a five-part series released the week of March 16th from the National Catholic Reporter, God’s Community in the Castro, a parishioner from San Francisco’s Most Holy Redeemer Parish had this to say about his spiritual home: “We don’t see ourselves as a gay community, but rather as a community that’s open to gays... It’s an acceptance and a realization that people feel OK to be who they are that makes this place different.”

For many LGBTQ men and women, The Castro District of San Francisco has been their home where life can be lived with dignity. As NCR reporter Thomas C. Fox points out in this series, Most Holy Redeemer has been the spiritual center for LGBTQ Catholics living in and around this neighborhood. Much of its current history started in the 1980’s when AIDS was taking so many lives. Since then this parish has been the sanctuary for an often neglected and shunned community.

As Catholics, we have a sense of the Church being a truly universal home, a place where all are welcome, as the name Catholic would indicate. Yet within that sense of universality there are many who feel the Church is not a welcoming home for them. Teachers have been terminated from jobs, children with disabilities have been refused sacraments, and many divorced men and women continue to feel unwanted. You don’t have to look hard to find similar stories from African-American Catholics, Latino Catholics, Catholic women, and former Catholics alike. And all of this tension has caused people to leave the church, and in some cases, lose their faith.

Yet here’s the truth I know and believe: I am created in God’s image and likeness, just as God creates us all. It is actually that simple. But sometimes we take that image and likeness and complicate it. That complication created concern for my loved ones as I discerned religious life in 2011 at the age of 33. Some were troubled that I’d find difficulty as a man of color in an ostensibly all-white male order. Others feared I would be forced into the closet after seventeen years of accepting myself as gay. A few friends expressed worry I would not encounter common ground in an order filled with the privileged when I only knew disadvantage. All of their observations and concerns were valid because they not only came from a place of love but through their own experiences as Catholics.

I am more than my skin color, my sexual orientation, and my economic class. It restricts God’s image and likeness if I only see myself as those three aspects. Defining myself purely on what I am limits who I am and how I can be of service. Even allowing these characteristics to dictate my life would prevent me from engaging the world as a wholly integrated human being. Besides, I prayed, and discerned, and made a choice. I made a commitment to live the vows of consecrated chastity, poverty, and obedience because of my belief in Christ, the mission of the Church, and the people of God. I share my struggles openly just as I share my joys. Like my parents did with each other, transparency helps me live my vows honestly so that I am always available to live out my calling as a Jesuit.

That’s the truth that sits within each of us: God made us all in his image and likeness. St. Francis De Sales said, “Be who you are and be that well.” To embrace all that we are – and to embrace each other with that love – is to embrace that image and likeness; it is to embrace God. 36 years of life and my short time as a Jesuit have confirmed that truth. And so I pray as a Church we discover tender compassion for each other to love the God that dwells in us all.

~Fr. Damian Torres-Botello, SJ
If it’s not too early for Pope Francis to start listening to Christmas music, it’s not too early for us!

The pope is hosting a competition for young people to create brand new Christmas carols. Addressing those gathered at the launch of the “Christmas Contest,” he thanked the organizers of the contest, “which gives voice to the young, inviting them to create new songs inspired by Christmas and its values.”

Francis ended his message by reminding them of a phrase Pope St. Paul VI spoke in his message to artists 56 years ago: “This world in which we live needs beauty so as not to fall into despair.”

And the audio team at America couldn’t agree more. Cue the creation of “Hark!” a podcast about the meaning and making of our favorite Christmas carols, available now wherever you listen to podcasts.

The inspiration for the "Hark!” podcast came about, strangely enough, because of a visit I made to a cemetery.

A couple years ago, before Covid-19 was a part of the global vernacular, I took myself to England. I had always wanted to experience high tea and punting and when none of my friends or family could travel, I went anyways. In addition to the usual tourist attractions, however, I made my way out to the north London suburb of Highgate. There, amid sprawling vines and grassy knolls, you will find the Victorian-era Highgate Cemetery, decorated with the headstones and mausoleums of the most celebrated of citizens through the ages.

I first heard about Highgate on a BBC podcast, and even without pictures, I was enthralled by the sound of it. It’s the eternal resting place of philosopher Karl Marx, English novelist Mary Evans—or as she is known by her pen name, George Eliot—and Christina Rossetti, an English poet who wrote the words of two well-known carols “In the Bleak Midwinter” and “Love Came Down at Christmas.”

And you don’t need to be a literary genius to rest at Highgate. Even for the commoners buried there nearly two centuries past, their graves are marked by ornate sculptured headstones and angelic statues keeping watch.

As I walked the lush and overgrown grounds, marveling at the “funerary furniture,” it occurred to me that perhaps the Victorians had a different understanding of death. And life. After all, with outbreaks of cholera, small pox and scarlet fever, pandemics were an all too common part of life. The mortality rate through the 19th century averaged around 149 deaths for every 1,000 births. But it was especially grim for children.

And the number of women who died in childbirth was also staggering. London was running out of places to bury the dead and so broke land on Highgate cemetery in 1839.

All of this made life so achingly precious. And in many cases, tragic. But for every young child or mother a husband had to bury, there sprang a poetic tribute carved in stone—at least for those able to afford a spot at Highgrave.

This year will mark our second Christmas amid a pandemic, which has claimed so many lives, so many dreams and so many of our most cherished family traditions. And so perhaps this is why I am reminded of Highgate Cemetery and the Victorians that built it. They understood how to make beauty in the face of so much loss.

This romanticism, which is so characteristic of the 19th century, is also why, I believe, they have bequeathed us with a different way to celebrate Advent and Christmas. You don’t have to love the ornate or even ostentatious display of bows and garland to appreciate what the Victorians did about Christmas. Look no further than the revival of caroling.

The Victorians certainly did not invent singing at Christmas time—that began as early as 129 A.D. when the bishop of Rome encouraged Christians to sing the Angel’s Hymn—but they contributed to its renaissance.

“As far back as medieval times, there were groups that would go around singing these winter solstice songs or singing these carols to bring joy to people,” Rosie Pentreath, a musician and writer for U.K.-based Classic FM, told me in an interview for "Hark!” “This tradition of going around in groups to bring the music to different households or different public areas, came back with a vengeance again with the Victorians.”
Some of the most popular carols we sing today originated, or were given a second life, in the 19th century: “Silent Night,” “O Come O Come Emmanuel,” “Good King Wenceslas,” “It Came Upon a Midnight Clear,” “We Three Kings of Orient Are,” “Jingle Bells,” “O Christmas Tree,” “Go Tell It On the Mountain,” “O Holy Night,” “Angels We Have Heard on High,” “Away in a Manger,” “O Little Town of Bethlehem.”

The reinvention of Christmas can be partially attributed to the marriage of Germany’s Prince Albert to England’s Queen Victoria. Before then, Pentreath says that “the Puritans and Oliver Cromwell [made] a very concerted effort to actually ban singing at Christmas time.” The Puritans considered it “very frivolous and sort of foolish to combine Christianity and a belief in God and Jesus with frivolous feasting of winter.”

But with the restoration of the British monarchy and then later, the marriage of Victoria and Albert, who brought German Yuletide celebrations to England, Christmas was back on the map.

Was the resurgence of carols a sincerely religious movement or the start of commercial Christmas the Puritans feared?

This question lingered well into the 19th century. The Oxford Movement (1833-45) in the Anglican church sought to restore some of the ancient texts, hymns, architecture and classical heritage, which was extremely redolent of Roman Catholicism—and therefore deemed highly suspicious by Anglican hierarchy. One notable composer and Anglican clergyman, John Mason Neale, was repeatedly harassed for his retrieval of the dangerously Catholic classics (including “O Come O Come Emmanuel”) and was even mauled at the funeral of a religious sister. Even then, religious aesthetics (like whether to sing in Latin or decorate a Christmas tree) were no private matter. They carried a host of political and religious implications.

So how does a person of faith enter the Advent season in a spirit of genuine preparation for the birth of Christ, while also partaking in the wider cultural merriment? She makes a podcast charting the development of Christmas carols, of course! To learn more about the history of our favorite Yuletide jingles be sure to subscribe to "Hark!" wherever you listen to podcasts. Each episode will unwrap one carol at a time over the next four weeks of Advent.

~Maggi Van Dorn is the audio producer for America Media. If you wish to listen to her podcast it’s available on all podcast platforms or here: https://www.americamagazine.org/arts-culture/2021/11/26/history-christmas-carols-hark-241914

ONLINE COFFEE HOUR — CHRISTMAS CAROLS
December 5 | 4:00 p.m. EST | Zoom

Last month, we launched our monthly online coffee hour for those who are unable to be with us in person, for whatever reason, and it was a rousing success! Join our December session for a special treat! Our topic is Christmas Carols, and one of our ministry team leaders from England, Annette Smith, will take us beyond the traditional songs that are so familiar to us, and introduce us to a musical world stretching over eight centuries inhabited by, among others, laundry women, bad-tempered old “gaffers” and three parched drovers, all on their way to Bethlehem! Unlike formally composed Christmas hymns and songs, these Christmas Carols sprang from the intimacies of traditional village life using local dialects and popular tunes. They preserve snapshots of “real life” as experienced by ordinary people who interpreted the Nativity story through the lens of their own personal experiences and localities.

Think of this ministry as your remote “coffee hour” with fellow parishioners! Our mission is that all—near or far—feel more connected to the parish and to God—rather than just being on the periphery. Anyone is welcome to join us and get to know one another. If you haven’t already signed up for this new ministry, please email Mary Ann Gallagher at gallaghercomms@gmail.com who will send you the Zoom link.
PARISH RESOURCES

Parish Office & Mailing Address
18 Belvidere Street, Boston, MA 02115
Hours | Monday–Friday, 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m. & by Appointment
Phone | 617 536 4548; Fax | 617 536 1781
E-mail | info@stceciliaboston.org
Website | www.stceciliaboston.org

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Assisting Clergy
Rev. Terrence Devino, SJ
Rev. Peter Grover, OMV
Rev. Peter Gyves, SJ

Schedule for Liturgy
Wednesday, Thursday, & Friday | 8:00 a.m.
Lord’s Day | Sat 5:00 p.m.; Sun 8:00, 9:30*, 11:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m.
Holy Days | 8:00 a.m.
* Please note that the 9:30 Mass is both in-person and livestreamed.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)
The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults is the communal process
through which non-baptized men and women become members of
the Catholic Church. It is also suitable for those baptized in different faith
traditions who are interested in becoming Catholic, or, for those who
were baptized Catholic, but have yet to receive the sacraments of
Eucharist and confirmation.

Baptism for Infants
Infant baptism is celebrated on the first Sunday of the month. For more
information, please contact Mark Donohoe in the Parish Office.

Faith Formation for Children
To register your child for our Faith Formation Program, please contact
Scott MacDonald in the Parish Office.

Marriage
Couples who wish to prepare for marriage should contact Mark
Donohoe in the Parish Office at least six months in advance.

Care of the Sick
To arrange for the Sacrament of the Sick, for Holy Communion to
be brought to those unable to attend the Sunday celebration, or for
Viaticum for the Dying (Holy Communion for those in danger of death),
please contact the Parish Office. It is always possible to anoint the sick
during regularly scheduled liturgies.

Order of Christian Funerals
The parish is prepared to celebrate the Vigil (wake) in the church. Please
contact the Parish Office for more information.

Child Abuse Prevention (CAP) Team
The CAP Team is responsible for training all parish staff and volunteers
in mandated reporting laws and the Protecting God’s Children program
(VIRTUS). They also provide consultation and support to anyone in the
parish who has concerns about reporting child abuse and neglect. Please
contact Lois Flaherty (loisflaherty@gmail.com), Maria Roche (maria.
roche15@gmail.com), Letitia Howland (l_howland@hotmail.com), or Erin
Young (erin.t.young@gmail.com) if you have any questions or concerns.

The Archdiocese of Boston has in place a vigorous program to protect
children from harm and to educate its ministers and faithful about the
nature of abuse, with a goal of increasing knowledge, creating a safe
environment for children, and recognizing and reporting potentially dan-
ergous situations. The full text of the policy is also available in the nar-
ther and Parish Office, as well as on our website.

For Those with Celiac Disease
If you have celiac disease, please let us know. We have a supply of low-
gluten altar bread available for those who cannot tolerate gluten.

Hearing Assistance in Church
The church is equipped with an assistive listening system. If you would
like to use one of the small receivers, please ask one of our greeters.

Building Accessibility
Both the church and Parish Hall Center are accessible by elevator.

Parking
There is discounted parking at The Hynes Auditorium Garage (located at
50 Dalton Street next to Bukowski’s Tavern), for $11, available on Sun-
days until 3:00 p.m., and $14 after 4:00 every day of the week. To take
advantage of this discount, ask one of our greeters for a chaser ticket at
Mass or ask a staff person during the week. Chaser tickets must be used
at the machine at the exit gate. To obtain the discount, first place the
ticket you received upon entering the garage into the machine, then fol-
low it with the chaser ticket.

Joining Our Community
We’re happy that you’re with us! Our community offers a warm, spiritual
home for a diverse group of Catholics. We come from many neighbor-
hoods in and around Boston, but also have long distance parishioners
from other states as well as well as other countries. If you are local,
please introduce yourself to a staff member or drop in for coffee on
Sunday. We invite both local and long distance individuals and families
to fill out a new parishioner form on our website. No matter what your
background or location, please know that you are always welcome at
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“He has risen.” Matt 28:6

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