

Saint Cecilia

P A R I S H



Third Sunday of Advent

Gaudete!

17 December 2023

St. John the Baptist in the Wilderness by Hieronymus Bosch



Saint Cecilia

P A R I S H

17 December 2023

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

ADVENT

Welcome to Saint Cecilia!

We welcome especially all our guests or visitors who are joining us this weekend. Please know you are always welcome.

PRELUDE | *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme*

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

THE ORDER OF THE MASS INTRODUCTORY RITES

PROCESSIONAL HYMN | *Awake, Awake and Greet the New Morn*

Marty Haugen



1. A - wake! A - wake, and greet the new morn, For
2. To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em -
3. In dark - est night his com - ing shall be, When
4. Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night, Though



an - gels her - ald its dawn - ing. Sing out your joy, for
man - u - el comes a - sing - ing; His hum - ble song is
all the world is de - spair - ing, As morn - ing light so
dark the win - ter and cheer - less, The ris - ing sun shall



soon* he is born, Be - hold the Child of our long - ing!
qui - et and near, Yet fills the earth with its ring - ing.
qui - et and free, So warm and gen - tle and car - ing.
crown you with light; Be strong and lov - ing and fear - less.



Come as a ba - by weak and poor, To bring all hearts to -
Mu - sic to heal the bro - ken soul And hymns of lov - ing -
Then shall the mute break forth in song, The lame shall leap in
Love be our song and love our prayer And love our end - less



geth - er, He o - pens wide the heav'n - ly door And
kind - ness, The thun - der of his an - thems roll To
won - der, The weak be raised a - bove the strong, And
sto - ry. May God fill ev - 'ry day we share And



lives now in - side us for ev - er.
shat - ter all ha - tred and blind - ness.
weap - ons be bro - ken a - sun - der.
bring us at last in - to glo - ry.

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 ACT

COLLECT

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING | Isaiah 61: 1-2a, 10-11



1. My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked upon his lowly servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed.
2. The Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name. He has mercy on those who fear him, in every generation.
3. He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. He has come to the help of his servant Israel for he has remembered his promise of mercy.

SECOND READING | 1 Thessalonians 5: 16-24

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION | Alleluia from *Missa de Lumine*

arranged by Kathleen Demny



GOSPEL | John 1: 6-8, 19-28

HOMILY

PROFESSION OF FAITH

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

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THE PARISH!

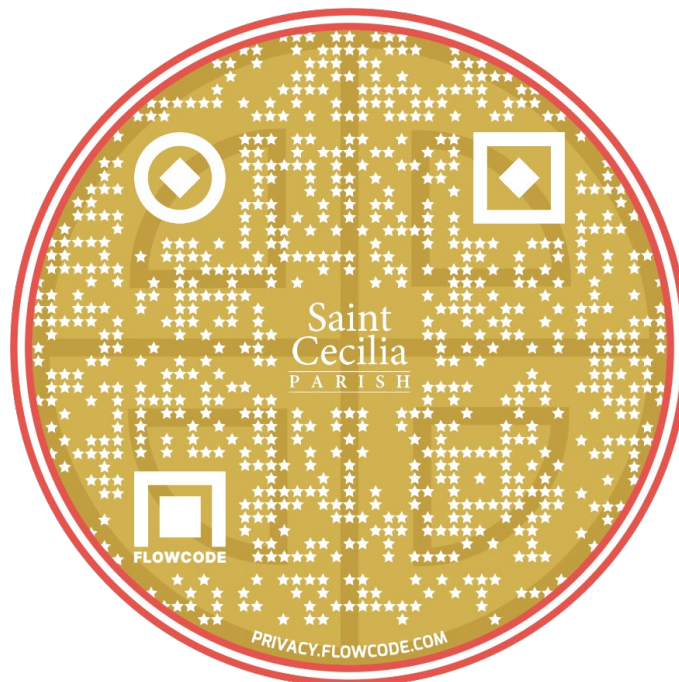
We are grateful for your ongoing support of Saint Cecilia. The easiest way to make a financial contribution to our parish is to use the parish Flowcode below.

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

PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS | Creator of the Stars of Night

CREATOR ALME SIDERUM

Verses



1. Cre - a - tor of the stars of night, Your
2. In sor - row that the an - cient curse Should
3. When this old world drew on toward night, You
4. At your great Name, O Je - sus, now All
5. Come in your ho - ly might, we pray, Re -
6. To God the Fa - ther, God the Son, And



peo - ple's ev - er - last - ing light, O
doom to death a u - ni - verse, You
came; but not in splen - dor bright, Not
knees must bend, all hearts must bow: All
deem us for e - ter - nal day; De -
God the Spir - it, Three in One, Praise,



Christ, Re - deem - er of us all, We
came, O Sav - ior, to set free Your
as a mon - arch, but the child Of
things on earth with one ac - cord, Like
fend us while we dwell be - low From
hon - or, might, and glo - ry be From



pray you hear us when we call.
own in glo - rious lib - er - ty.
Mar - y, blame - less moth - er mild.
those in heav'n, shall call you Lord.
all as - saults of our dread foe.
age to age e - ter - nal - ly.



Come, O Lord, and bring your light, O ra - diant



EUCCHARISTIC 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.

HOLY, HOLY | *Missa de Lumine*

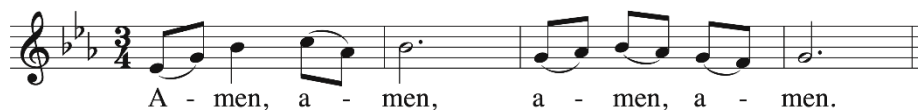
arranged by Kathleen Demny



MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION | *Missa de Lumine*

arranged by Kathleen Demny





COMMUNION RITE

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.

DOXOLOGY

SIGN OF PEACE

LAMB OF GOD | Holy Cross Mass

David Clark Isele



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." When we are unable to be physically present at the celebration of the Eucharist, 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.

1. O come, O come, Em - man - u - el,
 2. O come, O Wis - dom from on high,
 3. O come, O come, great Lord of might,
 4. O come, O Rod of Jes - se's stem,
 5. O come, O Key of Da - vid, come,

And ran - som cap - tive Is - ra - el,
 Who or - der all things might i - ly;
 Who to your tribes on Si - nai's height
 From ev - 'ry foe de - liv - er them
 And o - pen wide our heav'n - ly home;

That mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
 To us the path of knowl - edge show,
 In an - cient times once gave the Law
 That trust your might - y power to save,
 Make safe the way that leads on high,

Un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
 And teach us in her ways to go.
 In cloud and maj - es - ty and awe.
 And give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.
 And close the path to mis - er - y.

Re - joice! Re - joice! Em - man - u - el
 Shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

6. O come, O Dayspring from on high,
 And cheer us by your drawing nigh;
 Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
 And death's dark shadow put to flight.

7. O come, Desire of nations, bind
 In one the hearts of humankind;
 O bid our sad divisions cease,
 And be for us our King of Peace.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

CONCLUDING RITES

BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

✠ 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 | O Come, Divine Messiah

VENEZ, DIVIN MESSIE



1. O come, Di - vine Mes - si - ah! The world in si - lence
2. O come, De - sired of na - tions, Whom priest and proph - et
3. O come in peace and meek - ness, For low - ly will your



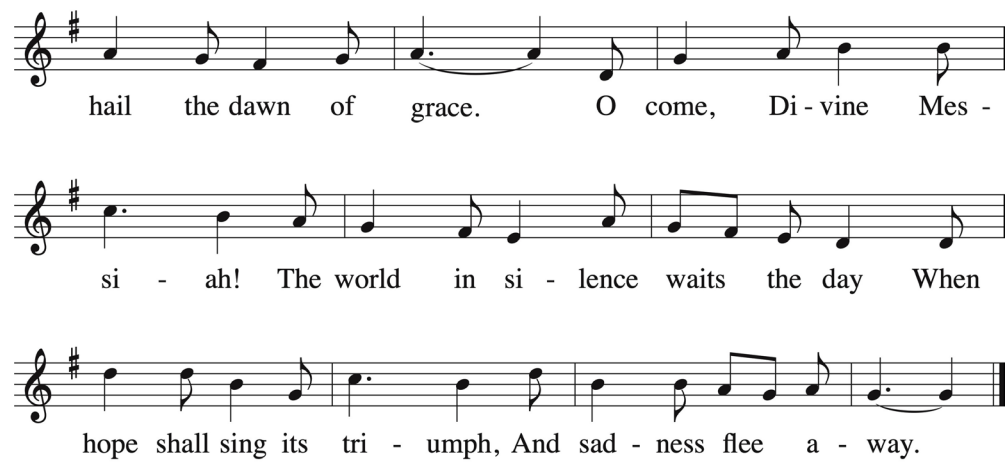
waits the day When hope shall sing its tri - umph, And
long fore - told. Come break the cap - tive fet - ters, Re -
cra - dle be: Though clothed in hu - man weak - ness We



sad - ness flee a - way.
deem the long - lost fold. Dear Sav - ior, haste! Come, come to
shall your God - head see.



earth. Dis - pel the night and show your face, And bid us



POSTLUDE | *Les Anges* from *La Nativité du Seigneur*

Oliver Messiaen
(1908-1992)

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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.

WELCOME!

Welcome to Saint Cecilia Parish, a Roman Catholic community that gathers day by day, week by week, to know and make known the grace of God. By means of this abundant grace, we enjoy a diverse and close-knit parish family—young, old, rich, poor, of various ethnic origins and differing backgrounds. From our extraordinary music program to a growing children's faith formation program; from the various liturgical ministries to the many opportunities for social outreach that the parish provides, Saint Cecilia is a vibrant community of faith, centered on prayer and worship that tries to keep the Gospel close to heart and to live by Jesus' teachings.

Saint Cecilia Parish was established in 1888. At that time the Back Bay section of Boston along Commonwealth Avenue and Beacon Street was the residential section of the Yankee aristocracy. The maids ("Irish working out girls") and coachmen who served these residents had long requested a church of their own. When Archbishop Williams granted their request and carved the parish from the territory of the Cathedral, they built a magnificent church out of their meager earnings. Our church building resides on the ancestral homeland of the Pawtucket and Massachusetts tribal nations.

The church was dedicated on April 22, 1894. Its architecture is Romanesque, XII Century Norman. The main altar, notable for its massive simplicity, was carved from a single block of white Carrara marble. The painting in the center reredos is a reproduction of da Vinci's The Last Supper, and the dome above is an array of 24K gold rosettes.

For the sixtieth anniversary celebration in 1954, a massive renovation project was undertaken. During this renovation, a statue of Pope Saint Pius X (canonized that same year) was imported from Italy and placed on the right side of the sanctuary. Above the statue are paintings from Pius' life. On the left side is a statue of Saint Patrick, principal patron of the Archdiocese of Boston, and above it are three scenes from his life.

Fourteen circular and sixteen square panels adorn the nave and arches of the church. The square panels are decorated with the symbols of Our Lady taken from the Litany of Loreto and the circular ones with symbols taken from the lives of the apostles. The great window of the Assumption—framed by the two oak cases of the organ—was installed in 1954 (the Marian Year) in spaces originally designed for windows but not until then used.

The original organ of 24 stops was built in 1902 by the Hutchings-Votey Organ Company, Opus 1465, and was rebuilt in 1954 with 32 stops. In 1998, Timothy Smith and Theodore Gilbert began a massive reconstruction of the organ. The current Smith & Gilbert Organ of 4 manuals, 54 ranks, and 3,084 pipes was dedicated on the Feast of Saint Cecilia, November 22, 1999.

Today we are experiencing something of an awakening within these old walls. Our numbers are increasing by 350 new households each year, and we continue to grow in our commitment to issues of peace, justice, and service to our neighbors, both near and far.

We've been right here on Belvidere Street, in the same building for over 125 years, but that does not mean that life here is stale, stagnant, or even predictable. We are proud to be entrusted with the legacy of Saint Cecilia Parish, where everything is the same, yet always changing; where we honor tradition while embracing the future; where God's love makes all things new.



Saint Cecilia

P A R I S H

Join Us on the Third Sunday of Advent for

A FESTIVAL OF LESSONS & CAROLS

DECEMBER 17 • 4:00 P.M.

In this service of Scripture and song, lessons from Sacred Scripture are interspersed with Christmas carols, hymns, and choral music, joyfully proclaiming the story of God's love shown forth in Christ.

This service will be livestreamed.

Light refreshments to follow.

OUR COMMUNITY NEWS



MINISTERS OF THE LITURGY

Saturday, December 16 | 5:00 p.m.

Rev. Terrence Devino, SJ, celebrant
Mary Kane, lector

Sunday, December 17 | 8:00 a.m.

Rev. James Shaughnessy, SJ, celebrant
Jim Dougherty, lector

Sunday, December 17 | 9:30 a.m.

Rev. Peter Gyves, SJ, celebrant
Zachary Boutin, Letitia Howland, and Emily St. Germain, lectors

Sunday, December 17 | 11:30 a.m.

Rev. Peter Gyves, SJ, celebrant
Cynthia Wanner, Catherine Horsley, and Kelly McClintock, lectors

SPECIAL INTENTIONS

Sunday, December 17 | 9:30 a.m.

Jaconda & Sam Coluccio, *Anniversary*
Nancy Boutin, 2nd *Anniversary*
Ariel & Tony Silvaggio, *Memorial*
Don Neyer, *Memorial*
Paul DeSabato, *Memorial*

Sunday, December 17 | 11:30 a.m.

Roger Dumont, *Memorial*

Thursday, December 21 | 8:00 a.m.

Laurina Brighenti, *Memorial*

TODAY'S READINGS

Isaiah 61:1-2a, 10-11

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

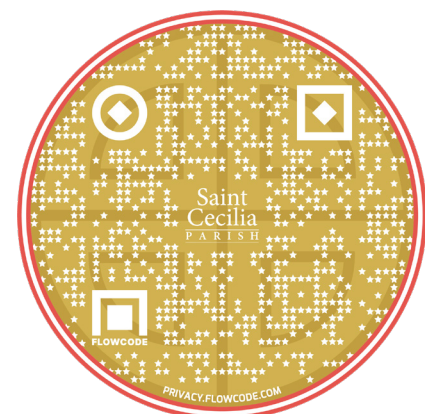
John 1:6-8, 19-28

NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS

2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16

Romans 16:25-27

Luke 1:26-38



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS
SUPPORT OF SAINT CECILIA PARISH!**



PRAYERS & OCCASIONS

Our Sick

Please pray for all our sick and for those who are in need of our prayer, especially Jacqueline Lavelle, Elizabeth Kennedy, Jeff Hommes, Sue Ryan, Tim Finn, Glenn Gallo, John Hosang, Mary Walters, Marc Pelletier, Ray Cronin, Michele Maniscalco, Nick Hungerford, and Fred Tufts.

Welcome to Saint Cecilia Parish

We are pleased to welcome the following newly-registered members of our parish: The **Mchunu Family** of West Roxbury, **Joseph McGillicuddy** of Boston, **Elizabeth Lawlor** and **Andrew Chuma** of Boston, **Caroline Fulton** of Boston, **Anne and John O'Brien** of West Yarmouth, **Jane Lawless** of Dorchester, the **Schroen Family** of Pinehurst, North Carolina, the **Ansteth-DiFabio Family** of Boston, and the **McDonald-Stahl Family** of Boston. If you have not previously registered, you can do so at www.stceciliaboston.org.

Happy Anniversary!

This month, we celebrate the baptismal anniversaries of **Dave Sullivan**, who was baptized on December 17, **Mary Botosh**, who was baptized on December 20, and **Lisa Sankowski**, who was baptized on December 25. May the Lord continue to bless Dave, Mary, and Lisa with the grace to live out their baptismal call. Happy Feast Days!

Christmas Flowers

You are invited to remember your loved ones by donating towards the Christmas flowers that will grace our sanctuary. In the rear of the church you will find envelopes and a basket that you can use for this purpose. You can also bring your envelope to the reception desk. **Please note that all names that are collected from now until Christmas will be**

published in the Epiphany bulletin as the deadline for names to be published in the Christmas bulletin has passed. Please be sure to PRINT clearly. If you'd like to participate online, please visit the following link to donate: <https://www.osvhub.com/stceciliaboston/giving/funds/christmas-flowers-2023> and this link to record the name(s) of your loved one(s): <https://bit.ly/3Rjd2JH>



Gaudete Sunday

This 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!

Winter Draws Nigh

Winter officially begins with the winter solstice, which occurs at 10:27 p.m. EST on Thursday, December 21.

Coffee Hospitality Pause

Please note that there will be no coffee hospitality on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and New Year's Eve so that we can give our hardworking coffee hospitality team a well-deserved break!

Happy Birthday, Papa Francesco!

Pope Francis will celebrate his 87th birthday on Sunday, December 17. Pray for the intentions of the Holy Father and ask God to continue to bless him with good health and length of days.

For Our Students

Pray that all of our students may successfully complete the semester and have safe travels as they head home to celebrate Christmas with family and friends.

A Note on Space

As you may have noticed, our numbers have grown quite a bit over the past couple months. We're thrilled that so many have found a home in our community, and we would like to remind you to please be thoughtful of those around you. If you see someone in the need of a seat, in particular an elderly person, a pregnant woman, or a child, please make space for them as you would on the T! Thank you!

Saint Cecilia Monthly Holy Hour

Please note that there will be no Holy Hour on January 2. The Saint Cecilia Young Adults, who facilitate our Holy Hour, will resume their monthly schedule on Tuesday, February 6. We hope to see you then!



Advent

THIS WEEK'S PRAYER FOR
YOUR ADVENT WREATH

THIRD WEEK

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



*Jesus, we gather here as a family to dedicate our lives
to you, as John the Baptist did. Help us to know, love,
and serve you. As we light this candle, we remember
that you bring the light of joy into our lives. May your
Word be always in our minds, on our lips, and in our
hearts. Amen.*

ADVENT IGNATIAN PRAYER

Mondays in Advent (12/4, 12/11, 12/18)

7:00-8:00 p.m. | Zoom

Open to: Young Adults (20 - 40)

Join the Saint Cecilia Young Adults community
for weekly prayer and faith sharing this Ad-
vent season as they explore different forms
of Ignatian prayer, including Lectio and Visio
Divina, and imaginative prayer. They'll reflect
on the nativity story in new ways and learn
from each other's experiences to find new
meaning in this familiar but powerful Gospel
reading. Prepare your hearts for the com-
ing of Jesus this Advent! Please RSVP here
(<https://bit.ly/3uytzAK>) to receive the Zoom
link. To sign up for and learn about other SCYA
events, go to their LinkTree: [https://linktr.ee/
scyoungadultsboston](https://linktr.ee/scyoungadultsboston)



*Gaudete in Domino semper:
iterum dico, gaudete.
Dominus enim prope est.*

*Rejoice in the Lord always;
again I say, rejoice!
The Lord is near.*



We are now midway through Advent and today is a day of
rejoicing, traditionally called "Gaudete Sunday" (gow-DAY-tay).
"Gaudete" is Latin for "rejoice" and this title is taken from the
first word of the Introit (entrance antiphon) for the Third Sunday
of Advent. Before we started singing hymns in English, the Introit
was normally chanted in Latin as the priest approached the altar.
It helped to set the mood and theme of the Mass of the day. The
Introit for the Third Sunday of Advent comes from Philippians 4,
Paul's warm and loving letter to the community at Philippi. The
optional use of rose-colored vestments underscores the joyful
character of today's liturgy.

Gaudete Sunday dates back to the Middle Ages, when the
season of Advent bore a penitential character similar to that
of Lent. At that time, Advent was a forty-day period of fasting
and penance in preparation for Christmas. It commenced on the
day after Saint Martin's Day (12 November) and was thus often
referred to as "St. Martin's Lent." In the midst of a dark and
serious Advent, Gaudete Sunday helped to brighten the mood.
In the ninth century, Advent was reduced to four weeks and its
austere character gave way to a new understanding of Advent as
a time of longing, hoping, and waiting for the Lord.



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Apple Pay, PayPal
via Givebuttr.



WOMEN'S LUNCH PLACE
HOLIDAY CARDS SALE

We encourage you to participate in Women's Lunch Place's annual holiday cards fundraiser. Cards can be purchased in person after this weekend's Saturday 5:00 p.m. Mass and our Sunday 9:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m., and 6:00 p.m. Masses. The cards, which cost \$25 for a pack of 5, feature artwork created by a former guest of the shelter who is presently the part-time Art Coordinator at the agency. All proceeds from the card sale support WLP. For more information and to purchase holiday cards online, visit <https://womenslunchplace.org/holiday-cards>

THIS WEEK AT SAINT CECILIA
DECEMBER 17 – DECEMBER 24

Sunday, December 17

Wisdom Group, 8:30 a.m. via Zoom
Young Families Planning Committee, 8 p.m. via Zoom

Monday, December 18

SCYA Advent Ignatian Prayer Series, 7-8 p.m. via Zoom

Tuesday, December 19

Communion Circle, Saint Cecilia House, 1 p.m.
RCIA, 6:30 – 8 p.m.

Wednesday, December 20

SCYA Men's Group, 7:30 a.m. via Zoom
Rainbow Ministries: LGBTQ A Space to Share, 6:30 – 8 p.m.
SCYA Women's Group, 7:00 p.m. via Zoom

Thursday, December 21

Communion Circle at Hale House, 4 p.m.
Wisdom Group, 7:30 p.m. via Zoom

Friday, December 22

Evening Prayer, O Rex Gentium, 6 p.m. via Zoom

Sunday, December 24

Wisdom Group, 8:30 a.m. via Zoom

DONATIONS FOR
DORCHESTER FOOD PANTRIES

Please consider participating in our food donation ministry during the upcoming months so that the volume of our donated food remains strong. The local economy might have improved for some of us, but the working poor and unemployed continue to face enormous economic challenges—especially in light of rising food prices. Saint Cecilia has committed to providing these items to food pantries: Cheerios or cornflakes, peanut butter, white flour pasta and spaghetti, macaroni and cheese, canned tuna fish, canned chicken breast, cooking oil, and tomato sauce. While any canned or shelf-stable items are appreciated, it is particularly helpful when parishioners can help with the staples listed above. Unfortunately, we cannot accept donations of baked items or produce in the narthex.

SAINT CECILIA ADVENT GIVING TREE

Each year, before Christmas, we consolidate requests for assistance from local agencies serving our neighbors in need into one program—the Saint Cecilia Advent Giving Tree. This year, the tags on the trees are from the agencies that reached out to us. Parishioners may take one or more tags from the tree and return the gifts to the parish for delivery. Thank you for your generosity—it helps bring tidings of comfort and joy to many people in our neighborhood.

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HERE'S WHAT TO DO

- Select one or more tags and purchase the item(s).
- Please do not take a tag unless you know you will be able to purchase the gift.
- Wrap the gift UNLESS the tag says, “DO NOT WRAP.” If you do not have time to wrap—that’s OK! We have a gift wrap team!
- Attach the tag securely to the outside of the gift(s).
- You are welcome to add to your purchase, e.g., if someone requested a winter hat, you add gloves or a scarf, holiday candy, etc. Remember—for some people, this will be the only gift they receive for Christmas.
- The recommended amount for gift cards is \$25.
- If the gift is out of stock, a gift card may be substituted.
- If the gift is too expensive or if you change your mind, simply return the tag to a Giving Tree Coordinator.
- If you lose the tag, please let us know.
- Return the gift(s) to the church NO LATER than Sunday, December 17 at 3:00 p.m.

VIRTUAL GIVING TREE INSTRUCTIONS

- Please visit: <https://tinyurl.com/stc2023givingtree>
- Select the agency you wish to support.
- Follow instructions for shipping and delivery. Be sure to include the listed "in care of" (c/o) information.
- For gift cards, choose a physical card vs. an electronic 'E-card' and mail it to the agency.
- In the “from” field enter “from [your first name] at Saint Cecilia Parish” or “from a friend at Saint Cecilia Parish.”
- Any online seller can be used, or you may purchase the gift from a store and mail.
- If the gift is out of stock or too expensive, a gift card may be substituted.
- Please order and ship the gift(s) to arrive at the agency or parish by Sunday, December 17 at 3:00 p.m.
- You may also bring the gift to the parish—let us know it was from the Virtual Giving Tree and which agency it was for.

TO THE FAR-FLUNG FLOCK

While we welcome all to participate in the Saint Cecilia Giving Tree, we encourage you to support the local agencies that are serving those in need in your area.



THE GIVING DEADLINE IS THIS SUNDAY AT 3:00 P.M.!



PROJECT HOPE BOSTON

PROJECT HOPE Boston works in partnership with women and families in the Dorchester and Roxbury neighborhoods of Boston on their journeys up and out of poverty. They do this by being a catalyst for change in the lives of families, developing and providing programs and family support solutions to alleviate poverty and homelessness.



HALEY HOUSE

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



the Y

The FAMILIES IN TRANSITION program at the Huntington Avenue YMCA is an emergency housing shelter for families. They provide services including advocacy, skills training, employment support, health and wellness opportunities, childcare provisions, and housing assistance to help families secure permanent housing.



THE HOME FOR LITTLE WANDERERS

WALTHAM HOUSE is a group home program run by the Home for Little Wanderers. It is designed to provide a supportive living environment for LGBTQ+ youth ages 14-18. Residents are offered a safe and nurturing environment, while they prepare for family reunification, independent living, and future self-sufficiency.



Pine Street Inn

Ending Homelessness

PINE STREET INN partners with homeless individuals to help them move from the streets and shelter to a home, and assists formerly homeless individuals in retaining housing. They provide street outreach, emergency services, supportive housing, job training, and connections to employment. Pine Street tirelessly advocates for collaborative solutions to end homelessness.



Catholic Charities BOSTON

The Catholic Charities Yawkey Child Care Center, is a diverse center-based community dedicated to providing a nurturing, safe, clean, healthy environment where children can grow and develop socially, emotionally, and cognitively. The center serves children aged 6 weeks to 7 years with full-day, full-year care for families living or working in Dorchester, Mattapan, Hyde Park, Roxbury, Roslindale, and other Boston neighborhoods.



BOSTON HEALTH CARE for the HOMELESS PROGRAM

SINCE 1985

The mission of Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program is to ensure unconditionally equitable and dignified access to the highest quality health care for all individuals and families experiencing homelessness in our community.



LGBT ASYLUM TASK FORCE

The LGBT Asylum Task Force provides shared housing for LGBTQ asylum seekers in Worcester, Massachusetts, small monthly stipends to pay for food, transportation, and other basic expenses, along with legal and medical resource lists.

The Mary Ann Brett Food Pantry is a ministry of faith and love staffed by committed volunteers and based at Saint Mother Teresa Parish in Dorchester, MA. Their mission is to provide nutritious groceries with kindness and compassion to individuals and families facing economic hardship and living in the Dorchester neighborhood of Boston.

The Elders Living at Home Program at Boston Medical Center provides a range of services to a diverse group of older adults who are homeless, who have been homeless, and who may be at risk of becoming homeless. Their goal is to help these individuals maintain independence in safe, affordable permanent housing for as long as possible. The individuals served by ELAHP are very low-income, and many are socially isolated.

Saint Cecilia

P A R I S H

CHRISTMAS LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Please note that since Christmas falls on a Monday this year, our Sunday schedule for the Fourth Sunday of Advent (December 24) will change. Masses that are also livestreamed are marked with an asterisk (*) and can be viewed at www.stceciliaboston.org.

Saturday, December 16 | Third Sunday of Advent

Mass | 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 17 | Third Sunday of Advent

Mass | 8:00, 9:30*, & 11:30 a.m.

A Festival of Lessons and Carols | 4:00 p.m.*

Please note that there will be no 6:00 p.m. liturgy.

Saturday, December 23 | Fourth Sunday of Advent

Mass | 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 24 | Fourth Sunday of Advent

Mass will be celebrated at 9:30 a.m.* **ONLY**

Please note that this is the only Sunday morning liturgy we will have.

There will NOT be an 8:00 or an 11:30 liturgy. There will be no coffee hospitality today.

Sunday, December 24 | Christmas Eve

Mass | 4:00 p.m.* *with the procession of children bringing the infant Jesus to the crèche*

Mass | 6:30 p.m.

Monday, December 25 | Christmas Day

Mass | 9:30 a.m.*

Please note that this is the only Mass on Christmas Day. There will be no coffee hospitality today.

Tuesday, December 26–Friday, December 29

Parish offices closed.

Wednesday, December 27 | Thursday, December 28 | Friday, December 29

Weekday Mass | 8:00 a.m.

Saturday, December 30 | Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph

Mass | 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 31 | Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph

Mass | 8:00, 9:30*, & 11:30

There will be no coffee hospitality today. Please note that there will be no 6:00 p.m. liturgy.

Monday, January 1 | Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God

Mass | 10:00 a.m. | *Please note that this is NOT a holy day of obligation this year.*

Saturday, January 6 | The Epiphany of the Lord

Mass | 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, January 7 | The Epiphany of the Lord

Mass | 8:00, 9:30*, 11:30 a.m., and 6:00 p.m.

There will be coffee hospitality following the 9:30 & 11:30 liturgies.



LAS POSADAS: A MEXICAN TRADITION KEEPS CHRIST (AND MARY AND JOSEPH) IN CHRISTMAS

BY J.D. LONG-GARCÍA

Mary and Joseph were running just a couple of minutes late yesterday afternoon. Children, parents and grandparents of many families gathered on 125th Avenue in front of one of their neighbor's homes to celebrate Las Posadas.

"This is a tradition that we've celebrated since we were children in Mexico," said Maria Ramirez, one of the coordinators of Las Posadas for St. John Vianney Church in Goodyear, Arizona.

"It brings the barrio together. Almost everyone in the neighborhood participates," she said, noting most participants immigrated from Mexico. "This is something we want to hand down to our children."

Las Posadas, literally "the inns," is a reenactment of the Holy Family's search for lodging in Bethlehem before the birth of Christ. Typically, two children will play the role of Mary and Joseph, a few others will play innkeepers and the rest will accompany the group as they process from one house to the next. If children take the roles, participants will carry statues of Mary and Joseph for the reenactment.

But yesterday, Breyda Navarro-Vargas, 12, played Mary.

"I'm honored to do this for my family," she said as she adjusted her blue mantle. "Most of my cousins are embarrassed. But I'm down with it. I'm proud of my faith."

Breyda has played Mary before. She said that participating in Las Posadas helps her understand what the Blessed Mother went through before giving birth to Jesus. Bernye Santillán, 11, who played St. Joseph, did not offer much in response to questions. Perhaps that is because he was in character.

The St. John Vianney group prayed decades of the rosary, meditating on the Luminous Mysteries, before breaking out into the traditional songs of Las Posadas at each house. The three stops of the reenactment were relatively close to each other, so the procession of about 50 walked slowly.

During the reenactments, the group outside asks for lodging, or "posada," and the group inside rejects them at each stop. Until, of course, the reenactment arrives at the final house

where Mary and Joseph are welcomed inside. All the same songs are sung, back and forth, but then the group playing the innkeepers sing lines: "Wait, it is you Joseph, and your wife, Mary! Please come in, I did not recognize you!" To this, the group outside sings, "God will repay you for your charity and fill you with blessings in heaven." Once the pilgrims are welcomed, the celebration truly begins.

"We are experts at celebrating," Cristofer Pereyra, director of the Hispanic Mission Office of the Diocese of Phoenix, said of the Latino community.

Las Posadas celebrations will typically include Mexican sweet bread, a hot chocolate drink called *champurrado* and *menudo*. At the Goodyear celebration yesterday, they shared *pozole*, a traditional Mexican stew, along with hot chocolate and nachos, which are admittedly not traditional.

"You know, not all the children like pozole," said Ms. Ramirez, stressing the need to involve the next generation. "Kids don't always like spicy foods, so we have nachos."

During evening celebrations, participants often carry candles. "The children love that. It's the one chance they have to play with fire every year," Mr. Pereyra quipped.

Las Posadas, with its series of chants and prayers, is a tradition that is clearly Christian. It reminds believers that the very first Christmas was a humble one, Mr. Pereyra said, and it was not about the amount of money spent.

"Christmas is about receiving God made flesh. Las Posadas is a path away from the commercialization of Christmas," he said, adding that it could be celebrated by various cultures. "I wouldn't be surprised if we start seeing Las Posadas celebrated in the English-language."

Maria Muñoz-Visoso, executive director for U.S bishops' Secretariat for Cultural Diversity in the Church, has experienced people "from all over the world" celebrating Las Posadas at her parish, St. Camillus in Silver Spring, Md. The story connects with people on the move.

"Mary was very much pregnant, but she and Joseph were

forced to make this journey because of the census. Joseph had to return to his birthplace to get registered," she said. "The inn is full, no one is welcoming them, even in Mary's state."

But someone finally does take pity on them and allows them to stay, albeit with the animals. They stay for a time, receive visitors, but then have to flee persecution.

"For us, Las Posadas is a journey of faith," Ms. Muñoz-Visoso said. "Mary, Joseph and Jesus are trying to find a place in our heart. Are we open to them?"

Yet for migrants and refugees fleeing violence, Las Posadas is their life, she said. They are forced to leave circumstances of dire poverty, war, gang violence and extortion to find a safe place for their families. Migrants and refugees identify with the Holy Family through Las Posadas.

"They know what it is to be persecuted for no fault of their own. And they also know the journey is about protecting life," Ms. Muñoz-Visoso said. "When Mary and Joseph flee, they are protecting their most precious gift, the child Jesus. They do whatever it takes to protect him."

In Goodyear, traditional Mexican dancers, called matachines, joined the celebration at the final house. Matachines dance in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe. After the dancing, Breyda Navarro-Vargas, who played Mary, climbed on top of the roof to swing the piñata.

Children lined up, smallest to biggest, with a decorated wooden stick. The time allowed for each child shrank in proportion to their size. The parents wanted all the children to get a swing.

"We have families from all over the neighborhood who are welcomed at our homes," said Baltazar Ramírez, who co-hosted the celebration with his wife, María. "We come together, as brothers and sisters, like a family. We eat together...we eat tamales. It's where differences disappear. Jesus sees us all the same."

And with any luck, more people will join the celebration in the United States.

"This is a way of evangelizing people. It really is a witness," Ms. Muñoz-Visoso said. "People go through the streets. They're singing about Jesus' birth and Jesus' coming. It's a witness of faith."

~ J.D. Long-García is a senior editor at America.



RITE OF ACCEPTANCE & WELCOMING

At last Sunday's 11:30 liturgy, our RCIA inquirers entered a new phase in their faith journeys as we celebrated the Rite of Acceptance and Welcoming. After ten weeks of study and discernment, those individuals preparing for baptism were initiated into the Order of Catechumens. These six men and women were claimed for Christ by being signed with the cross as they stood before the Sunday assembly and stated their desire to become baptized members of the Church. Additionally, our ten baptized Candidates who are journeying toward the sacraments of confirmation and Eucharist were welcomed into the process of full communion with the Catholic Church. Please keep these newest members of our community in your prayer!

Saint Cecilia
PARISH

MY SOUL IN STILLNESS WAITS: ADVENT PRAYER

VESPERS

*The church gathers for **Evening Prayer** to give thanks for the day that has passed and to lift up to God the needs of the world. We pray for the light of Christ to illumine our hearts and give us his grace and peace. And we join with Mary in her song of praise – the Magnificat – remembering God's promise of mercy. The liturgy lasts about half an hour.*

Wednesday, December 6 at 6 pm
Memorial of Saint Nicholas

Tuesday, December 12 at 6 pm
Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

Friday, December 22 at 6 pm
"O Rex Gentium"

Please join us on Facebook Live or via Zoom.
Email hoursandtaize@stceciliaboston.org
for details and reminders.

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
Website | www.stceciliaboston.org

Parish Staff

**To email parish staff, please use the following formula:
First Initial + Last Name @stceciliaboston.org*

Rev. John J. Unni, Pastor
Rev. James Shaughnessy, SJ, Pastoral Support
Christine Burns, Digital and Print Media Coordinator
Tyler Cesario, Assistant Director of Music
Mark Donohoe, Pastoral Associate
Robert Duff, Director of Music
Carly-Anne Gannon, Coordinator of Children's Faith Formation
Daniel Lamoureux, Vigil Organist
Scott MacDonald, Director of Faith Formation and Parish Visibility
Brett Maguire, Organist
Colleen Melaugh, Director of Finance and Development
Nicole Pascarelli O'Brien, Pastoral Director of Operations
Lisa Pickering, Director of Facilities and Events
Tanya Rybarczyk, Pastoral Associate

Assisting Clergy

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

Audiovisual Support

Maureen Deery, Parish Photographer & Creator of Weekly Slide Show
Geoffrey Edwards, Livestream Videographer
Vasily Izumchensky, Livestream Sound Engineer

Reception

**Keith Brinkley, Joe O'Brien, Juliette Kaoudji,
Paul Keating, & Ellie Sanderson**

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.

Parking

There is discounted parking at The Hynes Auditorium Garage (located at 50 Dalton Street next to Bukowski's Tavern), for \$13, available on Sundays until 3:00 p.m., and \$13 after 4:00 every day of the week. To get this discount, ask a greeter 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, place the ticket you received upon entering the garage into the machine, then follow it with the chaser ticket.

Building Accessibility

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

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.

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.

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 our Children's Faith Formation Coordinator, Carly-Anne Gannon.

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 (VIR-TUS). They provide consultation and support to anyone who has concerns about reporting child abuse and neglect. Please contact Maria Roche, Letitia Howland, or Erin Young if you have any questions. 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 dangerous situations. The full policy is available in the narthex, Parish Office, and on our website.

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.

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.

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 neighborhoods in and around Boston, but also have long distance parishioners from around the country and around the world. 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 Saint Cecilia.

Please note:

According to online safety guidelines released by the Archdiocese of Boston, we have removed email addresses from our online parish bulletin to avoid the danger of potential phishing scams. If you need a staff member's email address or ministry email address, please call our reception desk (617-536-4548) and our receptionists would be happy to pass along the appropriate information. Thank you for helping us maintain our parish security online!