

## P A R I S H



# The Eve of the Nativity of the Lord 24 December 2024

The Nativity Antoniazzo Romano, c. 1482



# THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD 24 DECEMBER 2024

PRELUDES | Advent chorales from Das Orgelbüchlein Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland Gottes Sohn ist kommen Herr Christ, der ein'ge Gottessohn Lob sei dem allmächtigen Gott Puer nattes in Bethlehem Der Tag, der ist so freudenreich Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ Brett Maguire, parish organist

INTROIT | Puer Natus Est Nobis

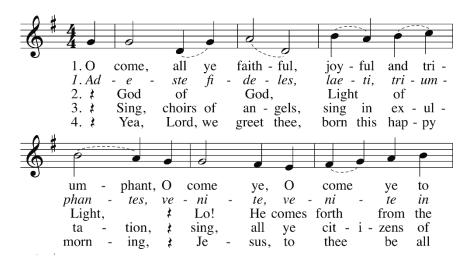
Puer natus est nobis et filius datus est nobis: cuius imperium super humerium eius: et vocabitur nomen eius magni consilii Angelus. Cantate Domino canticum novum quia mirabilia fecit.

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 = 1750)

A child is born to us and a Song is given to us: Whose government is upon His shoulder: and His Name shall be called, the Angel of Great Counsel Sing ye to the Lord a new song for he has done wonderful things.

#### ENTRANCE PROCESSION | O Come, All Ye Faithful

#### ADESTE FIDELES



Plainchant



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

#### Curtis Stephan



# LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING | Isaiah 62: 1-5

RESPONSORIAL PSALM | Isaiah 89: Forever I Will Sing

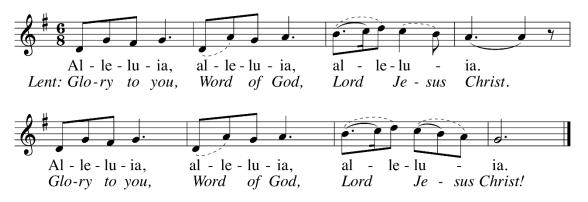


- 1. "With my chosen one I have made a covenant; I have said to David my servant: I will establish your descendants forever and set up your throne through all ages."
- 2. How blessed the people who know your praise, who walk, O Lord, in the light of your face, who find their joy every day in your name, who make your justice their joyful acclaim.
- 3. "He will call out to me, 'You are my father, my God, my God, the rock of my salvation.' I will keep my faithful love for him always; with him my covenant shall last."

SECOND READING | Acts 13:16-17, 22-25

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION | Jubilation Mass

James J. Chepponis



GOSPEL | Matthew 1:1-25

Homily

Tony Alonso

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!

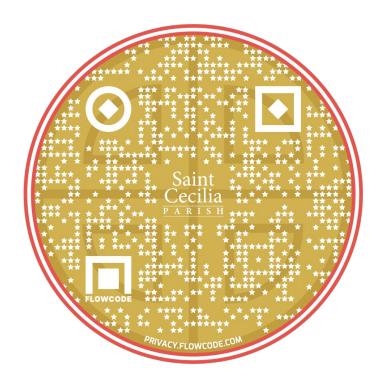
We are grateful for your ongoing support of Saint Cecilia. The easiest way to make a financial contribution to our parish is to use the parish Flowcode below.

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

PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS | Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847) arranged by Craig Phillips



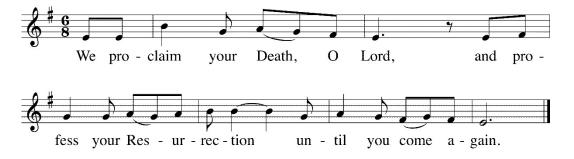
EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

- ✤ 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

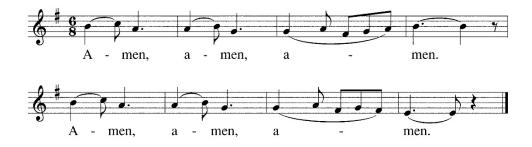
Steven R. Janco





### AMEN | Mass of the Angels and Saints

Steven R. Janco



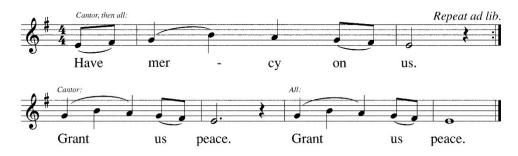
#### THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.



#### 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.



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Adolphe Adam (1803-1856)

# **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 | Joy to the World

George Friderich Handel (1685-1759) Arranged by Craig Phillips



POSTLUDE | Christmas Medley for Brass and Organ

Charles J. Torian, Jr. (b. 1940)

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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: <u>RDuff@stceciliaboston.org</u>.

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

# MERRY CHRISTMAS!

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 Massachusett 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.

# LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

#### Dear friends,

Wow, where did this year go? It flew by ... and it seems like each year on the calendar ticks by faster and faster. I'm sure this has nothing to do with age! Yet, as time moves on, as the days go by, each year at Christmastime we have this unique and beautiful time to remember the source of our existence, the cause of our hope and joy, and the opportunity to greet the One who comes to us as the bringer of light and life, now and eternally, through the gracious gift of forgiveness and love. "All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be. What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." I mean, just think about it!

It is December, and the light seems to fade fast as the day goes on. We now begin the slow climb from the autumnal equinox toward the summer solstice ... from darkness to light ... from Christmas toward Holy Week and Easter ... from dying to rising. It's all around us in nature, in the natural rhythms, in the seasons of time and of liturgy. We always lament the darkness and the loss of light; we always rejoice and look forward to the abundance of more and more light! As it is in the seasons, so it is with our faith and our belief: we are people of light; "light that the darkness will not overcome." How can you and I be people of light? How can you and I bring light into someone else's dark or dreary day? How can we be people of upbeat spirits with and for those who are wrestling with isolation, depression, loneliness or grief? How can we be hope in any hopelessness especially when we think of the seemingly systematic decimation of the Palestinians in Gaza, the unfathomable pain of the Israeli hostage families, the terrorized people of Haiti, the war ravaged citizens of Ukraine, or the beleaguered people in Syria, our own country or around the world ... ? How? By being drawn to the "true light (Jn 1:9), which enlightens everyone." Drawn to Him this Christmas, we can spread His light, His hope and His love. We then make better the lives of those whose paths cross ours.

But even with this belief, think of how frazzled and confused Mary and Joseph must have been as the "light bearers" of Jesus, the light of this world! As the angel spoke to Mary, he said, "Do not be afraid. You have found favor with God." Then he spoke to Joe, "Do not be afraid to take Mary into your home. It is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her." Then as the glory of the Lord shone upon them, the angel then said to the shepherds, "Behold I proclaim to you good news of great joy for all people: a savior has been born for you who is Christ and Lord." Go check out the manger in the barn (because there was no room for "them types" in the inn).

God is always shining light and life into our rejections and into the lives of all the characters in the gospels ... even into our lives ... characters or not! God always wants to break into our darkness and bring light, hope, goodness and life. Isn't that who Jesus is? Isn't that what Jesus is all about? Isn't that what we all desire from others and hope to be ourselves? Shine the light! Be the hope!! Enhance life!!!

This Christmas, belief in God, Jesus, Mary, Joseph, and the Holy Spirit is meant to remind us that we come from them and, after the last breath, we go back to them. In the meantime, there's a way to be, work to be done, people to be accompanied, tended, forgiven, fed, healed, included, not judged, but lifted up, listened to, visited, and loved. Pretty simple. Sometimes elusive. But always true and right and good.

This upcoming 2025, let us make conscious and active choices to be light and life to those around us ... even when it's most challenging. Let's not give into cynicism, sarcasm, negativity and despair. They're all from the dark side and not from the Light. Let's be a people of hope, let's give others hope by our actions and words. Let us try to be light even when those around us might be trying to extinguish our flame. Let's follow the star that shines light upon us in our stables and homes, in the fields or in the cities, and let's praise God with the shepherds and magi, the angels and heavenly host as we remember what each Christmas is really all about.

On behalf of all of us here at Saint Cecilia, with great gratitude to the whole staff and multitude of parish ministers, I wish you all a very light filled, hope-full, blessed and Merry Christmas!

Peace,

Father John



## MINISTERS OF THE LITURGY

**Tuesday, December 24 | 4:00 p.m.** Rev. John Unni, celebrant Nikko Mendoza, Louisa Essmann, and Letitia Howland, lectors

**Tuesday, December 24 | 6:30 p.m.** Rev. John Unni, celebrant Julie DesAutels, Kelly McClintock, and Karen McMenamy, lectors

Wednesday, December 25 | 9:30 a.m. Rev. John Unni, celebrant Maggie Giles and Bobbi Moran, lectors



#### CHRISTMAS EVE READINGS

#### Isaiah 9:1-6 Titus 2:11-14 Luke 2:1-14

#### CHRISTMAS DAY READINGS

Isaiah 52:7-10 Hebrews 1:1-16 John 1:1-18

#### SUPPORT OUR PRIESTS THIS CHRISTMAS



#### Clergytrust healthier priests. stronger communities.

#### SUPPORT OUR PRIESTS THIS CHRISTMAS

Your support helps Clergy Trust care for our priests in good standing so they can continue building stronger communities for all.

Learn more and give today at clergytrust.org SCAN HERE for Venmo, Google/ Apple Pay, PayPal via Givebutter.



#### GIVE A GIFT TO OUR PRIESTS THIS CHRISTMAS

Each year Christmas allows us the opportunity to appeal for donations to help Clergy Trust care for the health and well-being or our active and senior priests in good standing. At all our Christmas liturgies the entire offertory collection will be directed to Clergy Trust. On behalf of all the priests of the Archdiocese of Boston, thank you for your generosity.

To donate to Clergy Trust click <u>HERE</u>.

# CHRISTONAS FLOWERS

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# 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

Rev. John J. Unni, Pastor Rev. James Shaughnessy, SJ, Pastoral Support Mark Donohoe, Pastoral Associate Robert Duff, Director of Music Carly-Anne Gannon, Coordinator of Children's Faith Formation Scott MacDonald, Director of Faith Formation and Parish Visibility Colleen Melaugh, Director of Finance and Development Nicole Pascarelli O'Brien, Pastoral Director of Operations Lisa Pickering, Director of Facilities and Events Mary Wessel, Pastoral Associate

#### Assisting Clergy

Rev. Peter Grover, OMV Rev. John Predmore, SJ

#### **Music Ministry**

Tyler Cesario, Assistant Director of Music Daniel Lamoureux, Vigil Organist Brett Maguire, Parish Organist Pendexter Macdonald, Assistant Organist

#### Audiovisual Support

Maureen Deery, Parish Photographer & Creator of Weekly Slide Show Geoffrey Edwards, Livestream Videographer

#### 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.

#### 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 lowgluten altar bread available for those who cannot tolerate gluten.

#### 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 \$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.

#### 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 Faith Formation, 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, Erin Young, or Kathy Sanders, MD 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)

This 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 arround 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 safely 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 a ministry email address, please call our reception desk (617-536-4548) and our receptionists will be happy to share the appropriate information. Thank you for helping us maintain our parish security online.