Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph
26 December 2021

The Holy Family
Janet McKenzie
PRELUDE | Clair de lune

Louis Vierne
(1870-1937)

ENTRANCE PROCESSION | Once in Royal David's City

IRBY

1. Once in royal David's city
   Stood a lowly cattle shed,
   Where a mother laid her infant temple bed.

2. He came down to earth from heaven
   Who is God and Lord of all,
   And his cradle was a stall.

3. And through all his wondrous childhood
   Love and watch the lowly day like us he grew;
   Tears and smiles like us he knew.

4. For he is our childhood's patron, day by day
   He was little, weak, and helpless,
   His gentle arms he lay.

5. And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own redeeming love;
   For that child so dear and dear
   Was that mother mild, Jesus.

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.
Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to peoples of good will.
We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father.
Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy, have mercy on us.
For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen, amen.
FIRST READING | Sirach 3: 2-6, 12-14

Blest are those who love you, happy those who follow you, blest are those who seek you, O God.

Verses

1. Happy all those who fear the Lord, and walk in God’s pathway; you will find what you long for: the riches of our God.

2. Your spouse shall be like a fruitful vine in the midst of your home, your children flourish like olive plants rejoicing at your table.

3. May the blessings of God be yours all the days of your life, may the peace and the love of God live always in your heart.

SECOND READING | Colossians 3: 12-21

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION | Mass of Remembrance

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

GOSPEL | Luke 2: 22-40

HOMILY
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
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 | What Child is This

GREENSLEEVES

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.
HOLY, HOLY | Mass of Renewal

MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION | Mass of Renewal

GREAT AMEN | Mass of Renewal

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.
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.
Go, tell it on the mountain, O-ver the hills and ev'ry-where; Go, tell it on the mountain That Je-sus Christ is born.

1. While shep-herds kept their watch-ing O'er si-lent flocks by night,
2. The shep-herds feared and trem -bled When high a -bove the earth
3. And lo, when they had heard it, They all bowed down and prayed;
4. Down in a low -ly man -ger The hum -ble Christ was born,

Be -hold, through-out the heav -ens There shone a ho-ly light.
Rang out the an-gel cho-rus That hailed our Sav -ior's birth.
They trav -eled on to -geth -er To where the Babe was laid.
And God sent us sal -va-tion That bless-ed Christ-mas morn.

Thou must leave Thy lowly dwelling,
The humble crib, the stable bare.
Babe, all mortal babes excelling,
Content our earthly lot to share.
Loving father, Loving mother,
Shelter Thee with tender care!
Blessed Jesus, we implore Thee
With humble love and holy fear.
In the land that lies before Thee,
Forget not us who linger here!
May the shepherd's lowly calling,
Ever to Thy heart be dear!
Blest are ye beyond all measure,
Thou happy father, mother mild!
Guard ye well your heav'nly treasure,
The Prince of Peace, The Holy Child!
God go with you, God protect you,
Guide you safely through the wild!

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

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@stceciaboston.org.
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 | Angels We Have Heard on High

GLORIA

1. Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
   strains pro-long? Say what may the tid-ings be,
   Which in-spire your heav'n-ly song.

2. Shep-herds, why this ju-bi-lee? Why your joy-ous an-gels sing; Come a-dore, on bend-ed knee,
   an-gels praise; Mar-y, Jo-seph, lend your aid, Which in-spire your heav'n-ly song.

3. Come to Beth-le-hem and see Him whose birth the
   while our hearts in love we raise.

4. See him in a man-ger laid, Whom the choirs of
   Glo-ri-a in ex-cel-sis De-o, Glo-

POSTLUDE | Rigaudons

Jean-Philippe Rameau
(1683-1764)
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.

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.
CHRISTMAS LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Masses that are also livestreamed are marked with a * 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.
OUR COMMUNITY NEWS

MINISTERS OF THE LITURGY

Sunday, December 26 | 8:00 a.m.
Rev. James Shaughnessy, SJ, celebrant
Emily St. Germain, lector

Sunday, December 26 | 9:30 a.m.
Rev. Peter Gyves, SJ, celebrant
Karen McMenamy and Catherine Horsley, lectors

Sunday, December 26 | 11:30 a.m.
Rev. Peter Gyves, SJ, celebrant
Virgen Palermo, lectors

SPECIAL INTENTIONS

Sunday, December 26 | 9:30 a.m.
Douglas Hazelton, 1st Anniversary
Rose M. Weber, Memorial
Robert Carriero & Family, Special Intention

THIS SUNDAY’S READINGS
Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14
Colossians 3:12-21
Luke 2:41-52

NEXT SUNDAY’S READINGS
Isaiah 60:1-6
Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6
Matthew 2:1-12

heathier priests.
stronger communities.
The strength of our communities depends on the
well-being of our priests who tirelessly serve others.

SUPPORT OUR PRIESTS THIS CHRISTMAS

donate at clergytrust.org

OR

SCAN HERE for
Venmo, Google/Apple Pay, PayPal via Givebutter.

Supports our priests in good standing
PRAYERS & OCCASIONS

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, and Liam Nedell.

Office closing
The Parish offices will close during the week between Christmas and New Years to allow the staff some much needed rest. For emergencies please call 857-317-3833. The Mass schedule will be maintained. See page 2.

For Those Who Are Far from Home
Pray for all who are away from home during the Christmas season, particularly missionaries and members of the military—that God will fill their hearts with peace and reunite them with loved ones in the New Year.

The Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God
On January 1 we celebrate the most ancient Marian feast of the Roman Church. It honors Mary as Theotokos, or "Mother of God," the title accorded her at the Council of Ephesus in 431. Because this falls on a Saturday this year, it is not a holy day of obligation. Mass will be celebrated at ten o'clock in the morning.

World Day of Prayer for Peace
Saturday, January 1 is designated as the World Day of Prayer for Peace. Pray for peace in all the troubled parts of our world.

Six O'Clock Mass Note
There will be no six o'clock Sunday Mass tonight. The six o'clock Mass will resume Sunday, January 9, the Baptism of the Lord.

For Those Without the Love of Family
Pray for all who have no families, for those who are alienated from or rejected by their families—that they may experience love and acceptance through this Christian community.

For Those Who Struggle with the Weather
Pray for all who struggle with winter weather, particularly the homeless and the homebound—that God will provide warmth, friendship, and protection from the elements.

For Those Who Are Grieving
Pray for all who are grieving, particularly children who have lost parents and parents who have lost children to violence—that they may know that God is with them and draw strength and hope from the Holy Family who experienced great loss and pain.

THE FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

On the Sunday within the Octave of Christmas, we celebrate a feast in honor of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. This is a modern feast, instituted by Pope Leo XIII in 1893 and extended to the whole Roman Church by Pope Benedict XV in 1921. Strains of family life in those post-war days were enormous. From its inception, this feast was meant to inspire people with an image of family harmony even amidst hardship. At one time this feast was celebrated on the Sunday following Epiphany (now the Baptism of the Lord), but since 1969 the feast is celebrated on the Sunday within the Octave of Christmas. The Gospels chosen back in 1969 all depict stressful times in the family of Jesus: the flight into Egypt; the presentation of the Child Jesus in the temple with its warning of future sorrow; and Mary and Joseph's frantic search for their young son in Jerusalem (today's Gospel for Year C).

Celebrate the Christmas Season with Evening Prayer

Monday, December 27 at 6:30 p.m. – The 3rd Day and Saint John the Evangelist

Wednesday, December 29 at 6:30 p.m. – The 5th Day and Saint Thomas Becket

Friday, December 31 at 6:30 p.m. – The 7th Day and Vigil of Mary, Mother of God

Sunday, January 2 at 6:30 p.m. – The 9th Day and Epiphany of the Lord

Tuesday, January 4 at 6:30 p.m. – The 11th Day and Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton

Wednesday, January 5 at 6:30 p.m. – The 12th Day and Saint John Neumann

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory. John 1:14

Sunday, January 9 at 6:30 p.m. – Baptism of the Lord and Conclusion of Christmas
WISDOM AND MATURE SPIRITUALITY

The Wisdom and Mature Spirituality Ministry invites you to join us to pray Advent and explore more deeply the reasons for the season. We’re using the "Praying with Advent" resource page from the Jesuits at Creighton University: onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/Advent/. All are welcome.

HUNGER & HOMELESSNESS MINISTRY: DRIVERS NEEDED

Each weekend parishioners have the opportunity to pick up donated meat, dairy products, prepared foods, and produce from four local supermarkets and deliver it to either Catholic Charities' Haitian Multi-Service Center in Dorchester or the Huntington Y’s food pantry. This vital ministry takes place at 8:00 a.m. every Saturday and Sunday morning and on Sundays can be completed in time to watch the livestreamed 9:30 a.m. parish Mass. We need drivers for all the Saturdays and Sundays in January and February. Please email Mark.Lippolt@gmail.com if you can help out.

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.

UPCOMING YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY EVENTS

EPIPHANY PARTY!
Friday, January 7 | 6:30 p.m. | RSVP for Location

Join us for an evening to celebrate the feast of the Epiphany with traditional kings bread and Mexican hot chocolate! Enjoy time socializing with friends old and new! This event is for Young Adults ages 18-40. RSVP at http://tiny.cc/SCYA3kings.

THE CHOSEN SEASON 2
January 4, 25, February 8, 22 | 6:00 p.m. | Community Room

Starting in 2022, we are going to be watching The Chosen season 2 in person at St. C’s! The Chosen is the first multi-season series about the life of Christ. If you haven’t seen Season 1 yet, we highly recommend it (you can watch it for free on The Chosen app). Although, you don’t need to watch it before seeing season 2 - we’ll be sure to catch you up! We will meet a total of 4 times and watch 2 episodes at each meeting followed by some discussion. Pizza and snacks will be provided! All are welcome. If you plan to attend, please email johannathehappy@gmail.com.

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. MEMORIAL BREAKFAST
Monday, January 17, 2022 | 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Boston Convention and Exhibition Center & Online

This year’s MLK Breakfast will be a hybrid event with both in-person and online components. This vibrant and passion-filled program will pay tribute to Black women throughout history who have shepherded the dream of social justice. In partnership with Northeastern University, the 52nd annual breakfast will include a celebratory program and an extended program of virtual teach-ins (informal lectures and discussions on subjects of public interest). Tickets for the in-person breakfast are $50. Please note that there are a limited number of tickets available for the breakfast event at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center. There will not be a Saint Cecilia table this year, instead there will be a Zoom ebrief for all those who attend virtually or in-person. Details to follow.

This year’s theme is “From Resistance to Representation: Black Women Proving the Dream" and the keynote speaker is historian, Harvard Law professor, and NYT bestselling author Annette Gordon-Reed. You may register by visiting: https://bostonmlkbreakfast.org.
TWO AFGHAN FAMILIES ARE ARRIVING SOON - THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Parishioners from the Paulist Center and Saint Cecilia are working together to jointly sponsor two Afghan refugee families. They will arrive in our communities soon, seeking safety and peace, and will begin the difficult journey of starting a new life. We are moved to help them on this journey, and hope that you will be too.

So far parishioners have given their time, talent and treasure; making donations, gathering goods and furnishings, and signing up to provide direct help to our families when they arrive. We are immensely grateful and humbled by the outpouring of support. With the help of many generous donors and volunteers:

• We have secured and furnished housing.
• More than 70 volunteers have signed up to help our families adjust to life in Boston and have given their time already to prepare apartments.
• Collections for clothing and small household goods are in process.
• We have raised more than $84,000, from 177 individual donors.

We still need to close the gap on our financial needs: We have an initial goal of $100,000 to assist our two families with their transition and basic needs, including rent and utilities, culturally appropriate food and clothing, and transportation. To donate by check, make it payable to “Catholic Charities” and write on the memo line: “PC-SC POWIR, Afghan.” Mail the check to Catholic Charities, 275 West Broadway, Boston, MA 02127, Attention: Marjean Perhot. To donate online go to www.ccab.org/donate. Under “Designation” use the pull-down list and select “Other.” In the resulting window type “Paulist Center St. Cecilia’s POWIR, Afghan.”

We await news on our two families and prepare to welcome them to our communities. We will need to help them navigate through complex government programs, ensure their children have a good education, prepare them to find work, learn English, and navigate a new culture. To volunteer with our refugee family, sign up at bit.ly/POWIRvolunteer. If you have already done so, we promise to be in touch to find where your interests and skills might best be used.

Please contact us with any questions: sc.socialracialjustice@gmail.com. Thank you again for your generosity and kindness.

FAITH & FILM SERIES 2021-2022

PLEASE JOIN US FOR THIS SEASON’S FIFTH FILM IN OUR FAITH & FILM SERIES:

SCENES FROM A PARISH JANUARY 8, 6:00 P.M.

This award-winning documentary chronicles four years (2003–2007) in the life of Saint Patrick Parish in Lawrence, Massachusetts. When Fr. Paul O’Brien arrives as the new pastor, he soon discovers that trying to foster an inclusive community amidst the ethnic tensions in a working-class, multicultural parish would be no mean feat. Filmed over four years, Scenes From a Parish explores the personal stories of a Catholic parish struggling to reconcile the ideals of faith with the cultural realities of a globalized United States. “Steer the faithful, and everyone else, to Scenes From a Parish, a surpassingly lucid documentary. It raises more questions about the church’s place in a changing world—and touches more emotions doing so—than any big-budget studio folderol” (Ty Burr, Boston Globe).

James Rutenbeck, producer and director of Scenes From a Parish, will be with us to lead a discussion.

The film will be shown in Fellowship Hall following the 5:00 Mass on Saturday (approximately 6:00 p.m.).

BOSTON COLLEGE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY AND MINISTRY

SPRING 2022 ONLINE COURSES

The Creed: What We Believe
January 5 – February 8, 2022 | 5-Week Online Course | Registration Required | $60.00

New Testament Visions of Faith
January 12 – February 22, 2022 | 6-Week Online Course | Registration Required | $60.00

Christian Faith and Moral Character
January 26 – March 1, 2021 | 5-Week Online Course | Registration Required | $60.00

These courses are now enrolling and will begin in January 2022. Save 20% by using the promotion code: 3KINGS20 (Expires January 6)

For further details or to register for these events, please check the STM Online: Crossroads Website: https://bostoncollege-stm.catalog.instructure.com/
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
The only child often gets a bad rap. Stereotyped as entitled and self-important, people who grow up without siblings aren’t always looked upon favorably—especially by those of us with at least a sibling or two. Jesus may have acted like an only child at times in the gospels, but all of the four evangelists make some mention of his brothers and sisters.

In Mark, a crowd asks of Jesus, “Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are his sisters here with us?” (6:3). In Luke, when Jesus is told by a crowd gathered to hear him speak, “Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you,” Jesus famously rejects them: “My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it” (8:19-21). And John writes that after Jesus performed his first miracles in Cana, “he went down to Capernaum with his mother, his brothers, and his disciples; and they remained there a few days” (2:12).

The evidence may seem clear, but scripture scholars and theologians have been debating these and other passages for nearly two millennia, arguing whether those brothers and sisters were in fact biological siblings, step-siblings, “half” siblings, or not even siblings at all, but cousins.

The first recorded argument was between St. Jerome and another fourth-century theologian, Helvidius, who had written that after the virgin birth of Jesus, Mary had other children with her husband, Joseph. St. Jerome disagreed, indicating that by the fourth century at least some of the church community believed that Mary had stayed a virgin for the rest of her life. These children of Mary, Jerome said, were from Mary of Clopas, Jesus’ aunt and his mother’s sister, making them cousins. He claimed that the Greek word adelphios could refer to cousins, not just biological siblings.

Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis and a contemporary of Jerome and Helvidius, threw another possibility into the hat. He argued that the siblings weren’t cousins, but Joseph’s children from a previous marriage, making them the step-siblings of Jesus. Joseph isn’t mentioned outside of the birth of Jesus, causing some to believe that he was much older than Mary and died before Jesus’ public ministry. It is conjecture, but some apocryphal works, such as the Protoevangelium of James, the Gospel of Peter, and the Infancy Gospel of Thomas, all seem to indicate a tradition of belief that Jesus’ brothers and sisters were the children of Joseph.

These three general arguments continue to be defended and disputed by scholars today, whose positions depend mostly on their particular traditions and how they interpret early church theology. The New Testament writers didn’t leave a clear picture of what first-century Christians thought about Mary’s virginity after the birth of Jesus, if they left any details at all. All we can say for sure is that Jesus’ family tree looks just as complicated as those of many modern families. ~Lauren W. Reliford, MSW, is political director at Sojourners.

~Meghan Murphy-Gill is a writer living in Chicago.

THE PLACE WE TRULY BELONG

Melody S. Gee

My children are near the age of Jesus in today’s Gospel, which means there are times I only generally know where they are—down the street or in the park. Like Mary and Joseph in the caravan, I usually assume my children are where they are supposed to be.

So I feel Mary and Joseph’s panic upon discovering Jesus is not with them and can understand the agony of a three-day search for their son. It would be hard not to feel that such anxiety was something your child had “done to you.” Yet Jesus tells his parents they had no need for anxiety because they should have known exactly where to find him. They should have known he wasn’t supposed to be with them at that moment. Earlier in Luke, when Mary and Joseph bring the infant Jesus to the temple, Simeon takes him from his mother’s arms and proclaims God’s blessing. Even earlier in the nativity story, Mary and Joseph hear strangers claim their son for all humanity.

Neither do our children ever belong to us alone. They belong to the world and to others, who will know them in ways we never will. Despite this, I will always search for my children and hope to bring them home. But I also hope that when I find them in a place where they truly belong, even if it is apart from me, I will recognize that God is with them—the same God who will notice when I am absent and search for me. I live in the hope that we will always be found, and therefore always be together.

~Melody S. Gee is a freelance writer and editor living in St. Louis, Missouri.
**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

**Parish Staff**
- **Rev. James Shaughnessy, SJ**, Pastoral Support
- **Rev. Mr. David A. Kiblinger, SJ**, Deacon
- **Leah Bennett**, Communications and Operations Manager
- **Giovanna Franchi**, Pastoral Minister
- **David Girardin**, Assistant Music Director
- **Scott MacDonald**, Director of Faith Formation and Parish Visibility
- **Colleen Melaugh**, Director of Finance
- **Thomas Mellan**, Organist
- **Lisa Pickering**, Director of Facilities and Events
- **Christin Roskos**, Reception

**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 dangerous situations. The full text of the policy is also available in the narthex 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 Sundays 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 follow 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 neighborhoods in and around Boston, but also have long distance parishioners from other states 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 Saint Cecilia.
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All of our services are available to this wonderful parish community here in this beautiful worship space.

Honoring.
Remembering.
Celebrating.

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