

# Saint Cecilia

P A R I S H



## Second Sunday of Advent

8 December 2024

St. John the Baptist

Jacopo del Casentino and assistant, c. 1330



# Saint Cecilia

P A R I S H

8 December 2024

## THE SECOND 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 | *La Vierge et l'Enfant* from *La Nativité de Seigneur*

Oliver Messiaen  
(1908-1992)

## THE ORDER OF THE MASS

### INTRODUCTORY RITES

PROCESSIONAL HYMN | *Comfort, Comfort O My People*

GENEVA



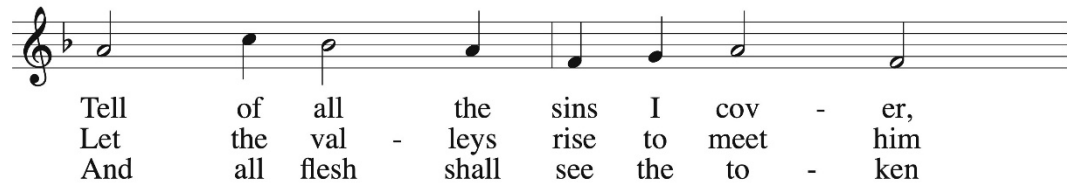
1. Com - fort, com - fort, O my peo - ple, Speak of peace, now  
2. Hark, the voice of one who's cry - ing In the des - ert  
3. O make straight what long was crook - ed, Make the rough - er



says our God. Com - fort those who sit in dark - ness,  
far and near, Bid - ding all to full re - pent - ance  
plac - es plain. Let your hearts be true and hum - ble,



Mourn - ing un - der sor - rows' load. Speak un - to Je -  
Since the king - dom now is here. Oh, that warn - ing  
As be - fits his ho - ly reign. For the glo - ry



#### CALL TO WORSHIP

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

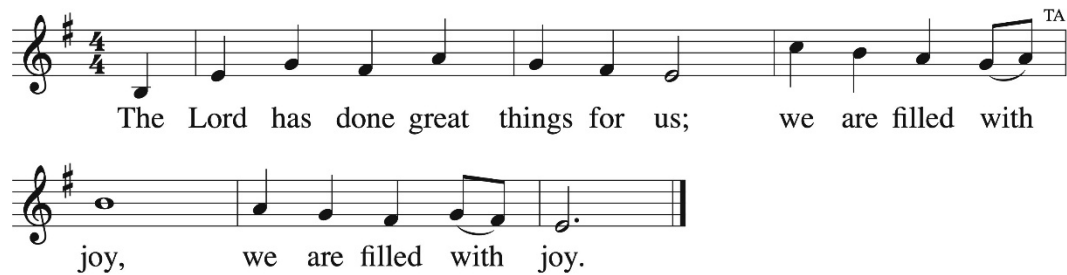
✠ The Lord be with you.  
All: And with your spirit.

#### PENITENTIAL ACT

#### COLLECT

## LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING | Baruch 5: 1-9



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

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

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

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

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

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION | Alleluia from *Missa de Lumine*

arranged by Kathleen Demny



## GOSPEL | Luke 3: 1-6

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!

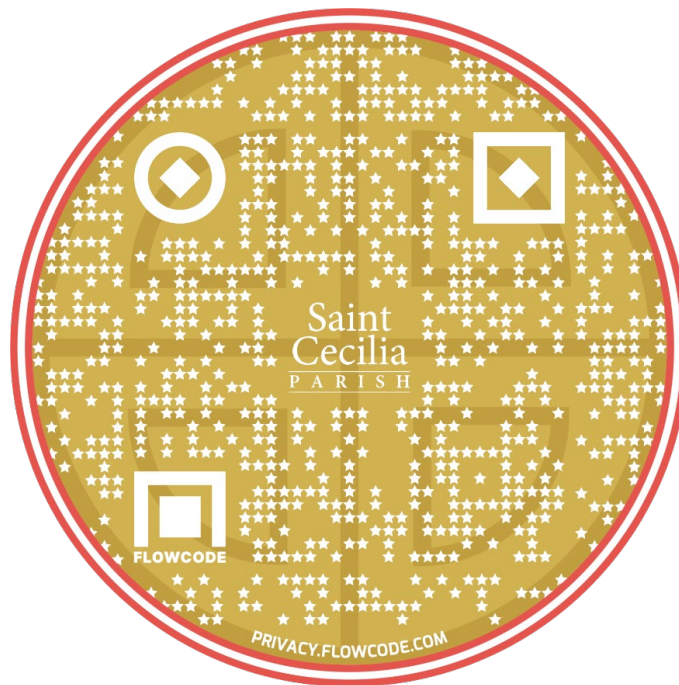
We are grateful for your ongoing support of Saint Cecilia. The easiest way to make a financial contribution to our parish is to use the parish Flowcode below.

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](http://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 | Praise to You, O Christ the Savior

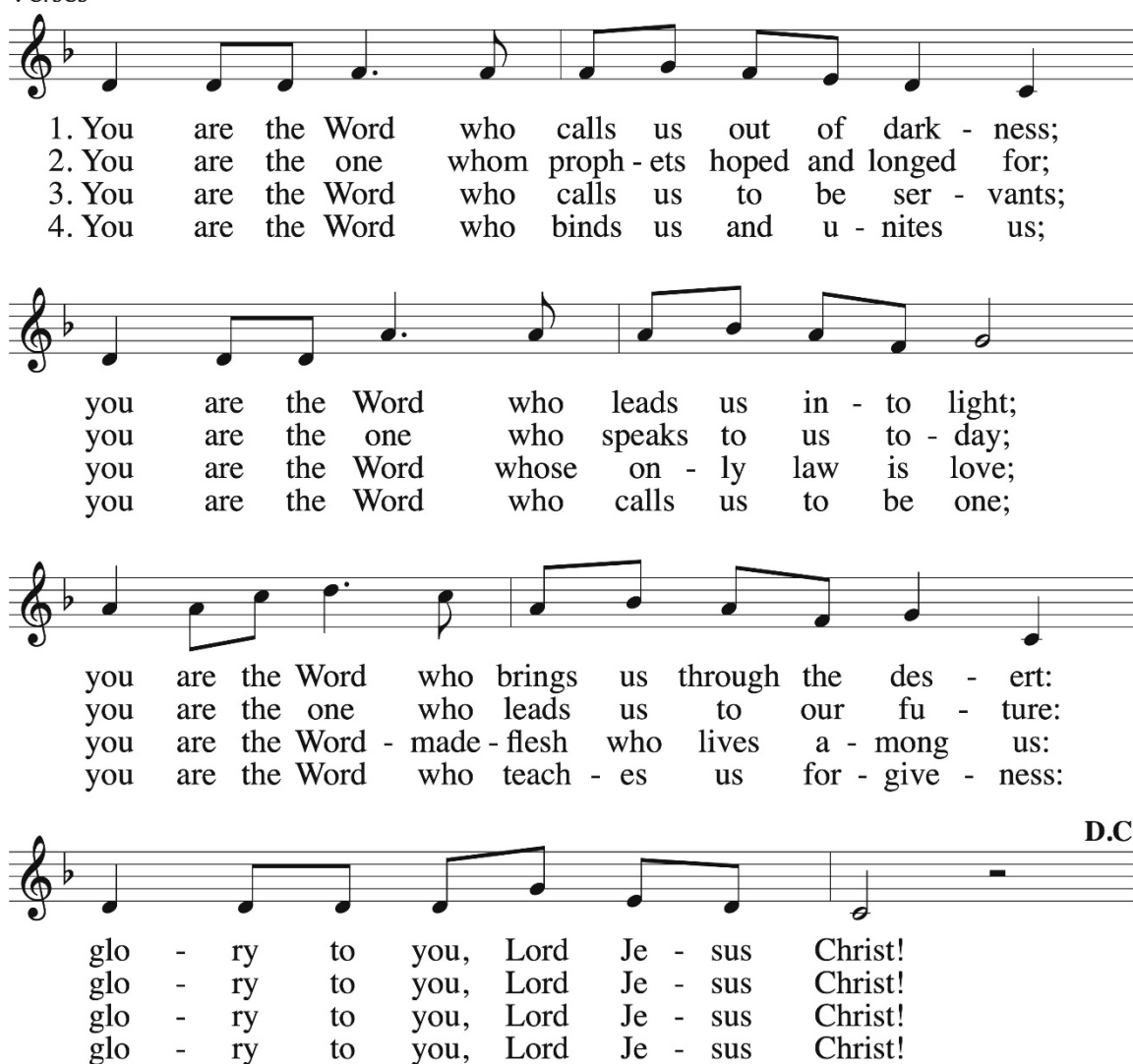
Bernadette Farrell

## Refrain



Praise to you, O Christ, our Sav - ior, Word of the Fa - ther,  
call - ing us to life; Son of God who  
leads us to free - dom: glo - ry to you, Lord Je - sus Christ!

## Verses



1. You are the Word who calls us out of dark - ness;  
2. You are the one whom proph - ets hoped and longed for;  
3. You are the Word who calls us to be ser - vants;  
4. You are the Word who binds us and u - nites us;

you are the Word who leads us in - to light;  
you are the one who speaks to us to - day;  
you are the Word whose on - ly law is love;  
you are the Word who calls us to be one;

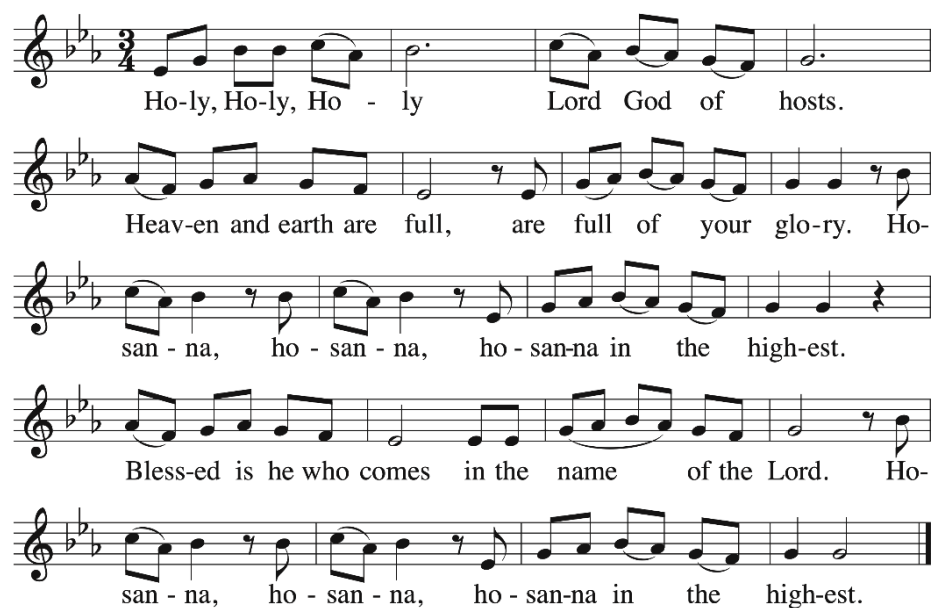
you are the Word who brings us through the des - ert:  
you are the one who leads us to our fu - ture:  
you are the Word - made - flesh who lives a - mong us:  
you are the Word who teach - es us for - give - ness:

glo - ry to you, Lord Je - sus Christ!  
glo - ry to you, Lord Je - sus Christ!  
glo - ry to you, Lord Je - sus Christ!  
glo - ry to you, Lord Je - sus Christ!

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

HOLY, HOLY | *Missa de Lumine*

arranged by Kathleen Demny



Ho-ly, Ho-ly, Ho - ly Lord God of hosts.

Heav-en and earth are full, are full of your glo-ry. Ho-

san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san-na in the high-est.

Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-

san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san-na in the high-est.

MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION | *Missa de Lumine*

arranged by Kathleen Demny

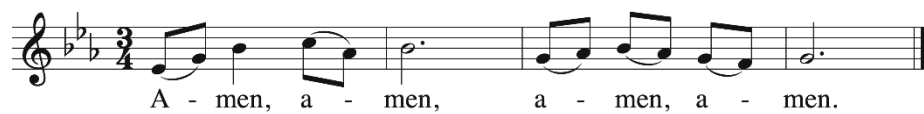


Save us, Sav-ior of the world, for by your Cross and Res-ur -

rec - tion you have set us free.

GREAT AMEN | *Missa de Lumine*

arranged by Kathleen Demny



A - men, a - men, a - men, a - men.

## 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

*Cantor or Choir:* *All:*

\*Lamb of God, you take a-way the sins of the world,

*To repeat* *Last time*

have mer-cy on us. grant us peace.

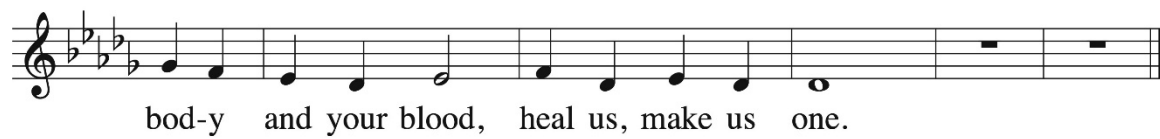
### SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

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:

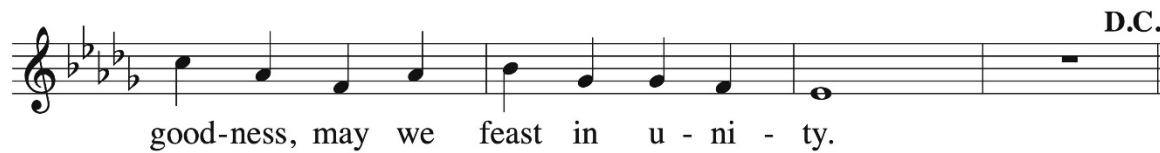
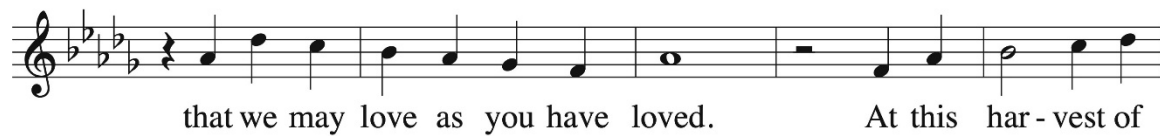
### ACT OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

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.

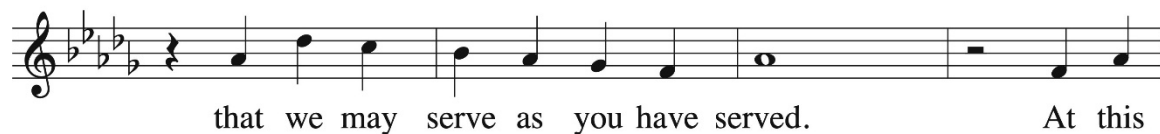




## Verse 1



## Verse 2



Verses 3–6



3. May our hearts be o - pen to your pres - ence,  
4. May this food be wel - come for the "oth - er,"  
5. May our hands bring com - fort to the sick,  
6. May this bread trans - form our hearts for peace,



that we may share as you have shared. At this  
em - brac - ing all hu - man - i - ty. At this  
em - pow'r - ing all who gath - er here. At this  
re - viv - ing hope for all our days. At this



gath - 'ring of na - tions, may we live in u - ni - ty.  
ban - quet of glad - ness, may we work for u - ni - ty.  
al - tar of heal - ing, may we sing for u - ni - ty.  
tem - ple of mer - cy, may we pray for u - ni - ty.

COMMUNION MEDITATION | Of the Father's Love Begotten

Ralph Johnson  
(b. 1962)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

## CONCLUDING RITES

BLESSING AND DISMISSAL



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



hail the dawn of grace. O come, Di - vine Mes -



si - ah! The world in si - lence waits the day When



hope shall sing its tri - umph, And sad - ness flee a - way.

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](mailto: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.

# ADVENT: GOOD NEWS FOR DARK TIMES AN ADVENT DAY RETREAT WITH STEPHEN POPE, PhD & FATHER JOHN UNNI

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14  
9:00 A.M. – 3:00 P.M.**

**SAINT CECILIA CHURCH**

Professor Stephen Pope is a professor of moral theology at Boston College. An expert on Catholic Social Teaching, Professor Pope's areas of interest include Catholic ethics and social thought; forgiveness and reconciliation; evolution and ethics; science and theology; moral theology and social ethics; preferential option for the poor; marriage and family; social and economic justice; the Church and politics; human rights; and war and peace.



A continental breakfast and lunch will be provided.

A \$25.00 contribution is requested. To register and make your contribution, please click on the Flowcode:

For more information, please email or call  
Scott MacDonald at the parish office.



**Saint Cecilia**  
P A R I S H

18 Belvidere Street | Boston | 617.536.4548 | [www.stceciliaboston.org](http://www.stceciliaboston.org)





### **BOSTON HEALTH CARE FOR THE HOMELESS**

The winter months are an especially difficult time for people experiencing homelessness who face severe weather and conditions including frostbite and hypothermia. BHCHP provides compassionate, comprehensive health care to over 11,000 patients at their main facility, shelters, clinics and on the street. Your donations of warm winter clothing will have a huge impact on patients' health and dignity.



### **CATHOLIC CHARITIES**

Each year Catholic Charities Boston provides resources to thousands of people in crisis across Eastern Massachusetts. You can choose one of three ways to help this holiday season, with 1) a toy, book or clothing item for a child at the Yawkey Child Care Center 2) clothing or toiletries for a child who will attend Sunset Point Summer Camp next year or 3) gift cards to help support the Market Pantry on the North Shore. All these gifts will help brighten their holiday season and alleviate some financial stress for parents.



### **FAMILIES IN TRANSITION**

The Huntington Avenue YMCA's Families in Transition program provides emergency housing shelter for 22 homeless families. Services include advocacy, skills training, employment support, and assistance to secure and sustain permanent housing. The parents and children are always grateful to receive a gift this holiday season.



### **HALEY HOUSE**

Haley House uses food with purpose and the power of community to break down barriers between people, empower individuals, and strengthen neighborhoods. This year we will help their work by providing warm clothing for their soup kitchen guests, most of whom are experiencing homelessness and food insecurity.



### **PROJECT HOPE**

For 40 years Project HOPE Boston has helped move families up and out of poverty. They provide low-income women with children access to education, jobs, housing, and emergency services. Your gift cards will help many families choose a special gift for their child this holiday season.



### LIVING WELL AT HOME

The Living Well at Home program (former Elders Program) at BMC provides high-quality housing and supportive services to people of all ages including older adults, many of whom are socially isolated. Gift cards are very helpful in ensuring that their purchases meet their needs, an experience that offers them a sense of independence and dignity. Through your donations, you can help build a healthier, more stable future for them, one home at a time.



### MARY ANN BRETT FOOD PANTRY

The Mary Ann Brett Food Pantry is a ministry of faith and love based at St. Teresa of Calcutta Parish. It is staffed by committed volunteers who help families and individuals in the Dorchester neighborhood. Each month more than 500 families receive groceries and clothing. Along with the weekly food donations from St. Cecilia parishioners, we will help again this year by providing toys for the children, offering them and their parents a moment of sheer happiness.



### PINE STREET INN

The goal at PSI is to move individuals out of homelessness as quickly as possible, and to ensure their long-term stability and success. Currently, Pine Street owns and/or manages buildings providing permanent housing for nearly 850 formerly homeless individuals. Your donations of new household items will support many people, enabling them to equip their new homes with basic furnishings, often an emotional, transformational experience for them.



### THE HOME - WALTHAM HOUSE

Managed by the Home for Little Wanderers, Waltham House provides a supportive living environment for LGBTQ+ youth ages 14-18. Residents are offered a safe and nurturing environment while they prepare for family reunification and future self-sufficiency. The holiday gifts we provide will send a message to these young people that we value them and support them.



### women's lunch place

### WOMEN'S LUNCH PLACE

WLP is just a few blocks from St. Cecilia's. Six days a week, staff and volunteers provide a hot delicious meal, warm showers, laundry and free medical care to over 2,200 women each year. Your gifts will remind them that they are not alone this holiday season.

# THE ADVENT GIVING TREES

Our beautiful Advent Giving Trees have arrived! Each year before Christmas, requests for assistance from agencies serving those in need are consolidated into one program—the Saint Cecilia Advent Giving Trees. The tags on the trees contain requests from ten agencies who have reached out to us this year. Parishioners may take one or more tags from one of the trees and return the gift(s) to the parish for delivery. Your generosity will help bring tidings of comfort and joy to many people in our neighborhood.

To learn more about the agencies we are supporting this year, please see pages 4 and 5 in this bulletin.

## HERE'S WHAT TO DO

- Select one or more gift tags and purchase the item(s).
- Please do not take a tag unless you know that you will be able to purchase the gift.
- The tag will indicate if the gift should be wrapped.
- 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 may add gloves or a scarf, holiday candy, etc. Remember—for some people, this is the only gift they will receive this Christmas.
- The recommended amount for gift cards is \$30, however, any amount will be appreciated.
- If the gift you are trying to find 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 misplace the tag, just let us know.
- Return your gift(s) to the church NO LATER than Sunday, December 15 at 6:00 p.m.

## VIRTUAL GIVING TREE INSTRUCTIONS

For those who would like to purchase a gift from our Virtual Giving Tree, please select a link below for the agency you wish to support and follow the instructions for shipping and delivery. Please be sure to order and ship the gift(s) to arrive at the agency or parish by Sunday, December 15 at 6:00 p.m. Any online seller can be used, or you may purchase a gift from the store and mail it. You may also bring the gift(s) to the parish—just be sure to let us know it is for the Virtual Giving Tree. 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."

<https://tinyurl.com/pinestreetinn> -or- <https://tinyurl.com/sunsetpointcamp>

## TO THE FAR-FLUNG FLOCK

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

# OUR COMMUNITY NEWS



## MINISTERS OF THE LITURGY

### **Saturday, December 7 | 5:00 p.m.**

Rev. Peter Grover, OMV, celebrant  
Elli St. George, lector

### **Sunday, December 8 | 8:00 a.m.**

Rev. John Predmore, SJ, celebrant  
Tom Skorupa, lector

### **Sunday, December 8 | 9:30 a.m.**

Rev. John Unni, celebrant  
Jen Kowieski, Maggie Giles, and  
Chika Offurum, lectors

### **Sunday, December 8 | 11:30 a.m.**

Rev. John Unni, celebrant  
Zachary Boutin, Virgen Palermo, and  
Kelly McClintock, lectors

### **Sunday, December 8 | 6:00 p.m.**

Rev. John Unni, celebrant  
Laura Melle, lector

## SPECIAL INTENTIONS

### **Saturday, December 7 | 5:00 p.m.**

Mary Botosh, *Memorial*

### **Sunday, December 8 | 8:00 a.m.**

John and Angelina Machado,  
*Memorial*

### **Sunday, December 8 | 9:30 a.m.**

Joseph Ford, *20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*  
Anastasia Toomey, *First Anniversary*  
Dan Mullin, *Memorial*  
Tom Griffin, *Memorial*

Patrick J. Corrigan, *7<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*  
John A. Zankowski, *Anniversary*

### **Sunday, December 8 | 11:30 a.m.**

Scott Iopatasky, *Memorial*

### **Friday, December 13 | 8:00 a.m.**

Jim Strauchon, *Special Intention*

# AOVENT

## TODAY'S READINGS

Baruch 5:1-9  
Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11  
Luke 3:1-6

## NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS

Zephaniah 3:14-18a  
Philippians 4:4-7  
Luke 3:10-18



The evergreen arrangement  
in front of the altar is given to  
the Glory of God and in loving  
memory of John A. Zankowski,  
by his sister Doreen Zankowski.

# PRAYERS & OCCASIONS

## **Our Sick**

Pray for all our sick and for those who are in need of our prayer, especially Peggie Breslin, Mark Brown, Joan Dunphy, Tom Franzago, Jacqueline Lavelle, Glenn Gallo, Marc Pelletier, Michele Maniscalco, and Fred Tufts.

## **The Rite of Acceptance at the 11:30 Liturgy**

After twelve weeks of prayer and discernment, our seven unbaptized RCIA inquirers enter a new phase of their journey and will be accepted into the Order of Catechumens. In addition to these seven individuals, we have nine candidates, already baptized in the Catholic Church or in another Christian denomination, who are preparing for the sacraments of confirmation and Eucharist—many of whom will be received into the full communion of the Catholic Church at Easter. We are privileged to support them with our prayer and are grateful for this sign of new life in the Church.

## **Be Sure to Take Home a Little Blue Book for Advent**

Six minutes a day. That's what you might consider giving to prayer during the seasons of Advent and Christmastide—November 30 to January 12. The Little Blue Book provides interesting information about people, traditions, and practices of our faith, followed by a reflection on a portion of the infancy narrative from Matthew's Gospel. These books are in baskets in the rear of the church, and can also be ordered directly from [littlebooks.org](http://littlebooks.org)—available with audio on their app or as a paper book (\$5), or in eBook format via Kindle and Nook.

## **Gaudete Sunday**

Next Sunday is the Third Sunday of Advent—a day traditionally known as Gaudete Sunday. Gaudete means "rejoice" in Latin and the liturgy is marked by a joyful anticipation of Christmas. Like Laetare Sunday in Lent, the optional liturgical color is rose. Help add to our celebration by wearing something rose-colored to Mass next Sunday.

## **Our Advent Giving Tree Deadline Approaches!**

Just a reminder that all Advent Giving Tree gifts are due back at the church by 6:00 p.m. next Sunday, December 15. But don't worry—our parish elves will be at the church working overtime on Monday and Tuesday for those who may be running a bit late.

## **Christmas Flowers**

You are invited to remember your loved ones by donating towards the flowers that will grace the church this Christmas. Please fill out this online form by this Tuesday, December 10 to participate:

<https://forms.gle/g8MXKSyvPFpRkQoL6>.

For those folks without smartphones or computers, you'll find envelopes in the rear of the church for this purpose. Please drop the envelope in the collection basket or bring it to the reception desk. The names of those remembered will be published in the Christmas bulletin. Please be sure to PRINT clearly.

## **Last 6:00 p.m. Mass of 2024**

Next Sunday, December 15, is the last 6:00 Sunday liturgy until January 5.

## **Parish Advent Day Retreat — Saturday, December 14**

Mark your calendar—we are having an Advent Day Retreat next Saturday, December 14. Our speakers will be Stephen Pope, PhD, a professor of moral theology at Boston College, and Father John. The retreat will begin at 9:00 a.m. and end at 3:00 p.m. The fee is \$25.00 and a continental breakfast and lunch will be provided. To register or for more information, please email Scott MacDonald ([smacdonald@stceciliaboston.org](mailto:smacdonald@stceciliaboston.org)).

## **A Festival of Lessons & Carols—Sunday, December 22**

Mark your calendar—On Sunday, December 22, the Saint Cecilia Choir will host A Festival of Lessons & Carols at 4:00 p.m. In this service of Scripture and song, lessons from Sacred Scripture are interspersed with Christmas carols, hymns, and choral music. This is a festive occasion to gather as a community and reflect on the joyous message of Christmas. Light refreshments will follow. This service will be livestreamed.

## **Welcome to Saint Cecilia**

We are pleased to welcome the following newly-registered parishioners: **Alex Minaglia** and **Cassidy Lefebvre**, **Maura Markus**, **Jayson Allison**, **Jessica Capwell**, **Lauren Joyce**, and **Cassie Clavin**, all of Boston; **James Moninger** of Honolulu, Hawaii; **Keola** and **Megan Park** of Clovis, California; **Catherine Dunn** of Denver, Colorado; **Cheryl McDevitt** and **Midge Hobbs** of Danvers; and **Andrea** and **David Attisani** of Wellesley Hills. If you'd like to register, you can do so online at [www.stceciliaboston.org](http://www.stceciliaboston.org).



## THE ADVENT WREATH

Advent wreaths were originally part of the folk traditions of Northern Europe. Wreaths of evergreens were decorated with candles to symbolize life and light during the dark months of winter. The circle of the wreath, which has no beginning or end, symbolizes the eternity of God. Evergreens stay green all year and so signify continuous life. Each of the four candles represents one of the Sundays of Advent. We needn't worry about the colors of the candles; traditionally, three violet candles and one rose candle are used, but you may prefer to use four royal blue candles, four violet candles, or four white candles. The symbol is the flame, not the color. Each Sunday, as the light of the wreath glows brighter, we are reminded that Christ comes into the darkness of our lives to bring newness, life, and hope. Tonight, light two candles, sing a verse of *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*, re-read part of today's Gospel, and say a brief concluding prayer. If you prefer, here is a prayer you can use.

### SECOND WEEK

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

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



## THE RITE OF ACCEPTANCE

### THIS SUNDAY AT THE 11:30 MASS

At this Sunday's 11:30 liturgy, we will celebrate the Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens. The following 16 men and women are preparing to be initiated (or to complete their Christian initiation) into the Church this Easter. Keep these individuals in your prayer.

### THOSE PREPARING TO ENTER THE CATECHUMENATE

- Mariam Fneiche
- Anna Gray
- Stephanie Lewellen
- Jen Liang
- Gina Miranda
- Matthew Patton
- Thomas van der Burg

### THOSE PREPARING FOR CONFIRMATION & EUCHARIST

- Cameron Lee Beath
- Robert Cline
- Allie Haynes
- George Hernandez
- Jessica Jeffers
- Denise McEwen
- Miranda Miller
- Sydney Mullin
- Maricarmen Rodriguez

*thank you*

Dear Friends,

This year's Saint Cecilia-Pine Street Inn Thanksgiving Meal Drive was a huge success. Over 300 meal kits were filled and given to residents of Pine Street Inn's permanent supportive housing. Additionally, nearly 200 grocery store gift cards were donated. A big and heartfelt thank you to the Saint Cecilia community that makes this annual giving event such a success. Your generosity makes it possible for us to extend kindness and care to many struggling individuals.

Karen Dunnett & Lisa Pickering



## THE SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 9 | MASS AT 8:00 A.M.**

Normally celebrated on December 8, this year the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception falls on the Second Sunday of Advent and is therefore transferred to Monday, December 9. The Immaculate Conception is the patronal feast day of the United States and is a holy day of obligation. Mass at Saint Cecilia will be celebrated on Monday at 8:00 a.m. This liturgy will not be livestreamed.

Many people confuse the Immaculate Conception with the doctrine of the Virgin Birth (Mary's virginal conception of Jesus). Monday's solemnity is not about the conception of Jesus. Rather, it celebrates Mary's Immaculate Conception—that is, our solemn belief that Mary, though conceived in the normal way, was preserved from original sin from the first moment of her conception. This solemnity occurs nine months before the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which is celebrated on September 8.



## THE FAR-FLUNG FLOCK ONLINE COFFEE HOUR

**THIS SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8**

**4:00–5:00 P.M. (EST) | ZOOM**

You'll want to tune in to this Sunday's online coffee hour, when our guests will be longtime parish leaders, Nancy Hanifin and Karen McMenemy. Nancy and Karen will be sharing reflections from their recent pilgrimages along the Camino de Santiago in Spain. This sacred journey includes rich cultural heritage, beautiful landscapes, and spiritual discovery. This is our chance to experience the journey vicariously and to consider pilgrimages in our own lives. We look forward to a rich conversation.

Those who haven't previously registered for a coffee hour are encouraged to sign up for the Far-Flung Flock email list using this link: <https://bit.ly/45pDVRa>. Those who have participated in an online coffee hour in the past have no need to re-register. If you are not receiving Far-Flung Flock notifications, please contact us using the Far-Flung Flock email address.

## DONATIONS FOR DORCHESTER FOOD PANTRIES

We hope you will consider participating in this important ministry during the holidays so that the volume of our donated food remains strong. 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 the Catholic Charities and Mary Ann Brett food pantries: Cheerios or corn flakes, peanut butter, white flour pasta/spaghetti, boxed macaroni & 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 donations are made from the staples listed above. Unfortunately, we are unable to accept donations of produce or baked items.

You may wish to follow the example of some parishioners and have some of the above items delivered to the parish via Amazon or a similar service. If you choose to order donations online, please have your items delivered to:

Saint Cecilia Parish  
18 Belvidere Street  
Boston, MA 02115





# Saint Cecilia

P A R I S H

AS WE LOOK TOWARD THE JUBILEE YEAR 2025,  
WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US ON THE  
FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT FOR

## A Festival of Lessons & Carols

DECEMBER 22 – 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 and the joyous message of Christmas.

Light refreshments will follow.

This service will be livestreamed.



# Saint Cecilia

P A R I S H



## CHRISTMAS LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Please note: liturgies that will be livestreamed are marked with an asterisk (\*) and can be viewed at [www.stceciliaboston.org](http://www.stceciliaboston.org).

### **Saturday, December 14 | Third Sunday of Advent**

Mass | 5:00 p.m.

### **Sunday, December 15 | Third Sunday of Advent**

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

*This is the last 6:00 p.m. liturgy until January 5.*

### **Saturday, December 21 | Fourth Sunday of Advent**

Mass | 5:00 p.m.

### **Sunday, December 22 | Fourth Sunday of Advent**

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

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

*There will be no 6:00 p.m. liturgy.*

### **Tuesday, 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.

### **Wednesday, December 25 | Christmas Day**

Mass | 9:30 a.m.\*

*This is the only Mass on Christmas Day. There will be no coffee hospitality today.*

### **Thursday, December 26 | Friday, December 27**

*There will be no 8:00 a.m. daily Mass on the Thursday and Friday following Christmas Day.*

### **Saturday, December 28 | Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph**

Mass | 5:00 p.m.

### **Sunday, December 29 | Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph**

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

*There will be no coffee hospitality today. There will be no 6:00 p.m. liturgy.*

### **Wednesday, January 1 | Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God**

Mass | 10:00 a.m. | *Today is a holy day of obligation.*

### **Saturday, January 4 | The Epiphany of the Lord**

Mass | 5:00 p.m.

### **Sunday, January 5 | 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.*







- Sustainable production and consumption
- Ethical investments
- Divestment from fossil fuels and any activity harmful to the planet and people
- Supporting circular economies
- Protecting the dignity and care of workers

Saint Cecilia Parish savings are kept in the archdiocese ethical investment fund which is committed to following the Guidelines for Socially Responsible Investing (USCCB) and has principles that include Saving Our Global Common Home.

*"Where profits alone count, there can be no thinking about the rhythms of nature, its phases of decay and regeneration, or the complexity of ecosystems which may be gravely upset by human intervention."*  
(Laudato Si' 190)

## CLIMATE JUSTICE MINISTRY

**MEETING THIS SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8**

**1:00 P.M. | CLASSROOM 1**

The Saint Cecilia Climate Justice Group will be meeting in Classroom 1 this Sunday at 1:00 p.m. and all are welcome to attend. Here are some initiatives we will be working on:

### PARISH CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

Each month, Saint Cecilia will focus on a different goal from the Laudato Si' Action Platform as part of our effort to create a Parish Climate Action Plan. The goals include:

- Responding to the Cry of the Earth and the Cry of the Poor
- Ecological Economics
- Adopting Sustainable Lifestyles
- Ecological Education
- Ecological Spirituality
- Building Community Resilience and Empowerment

### GOAL | ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS

This goal acknowledges that the economy is a sub-system of human society, which itself is embedded within the biosphere—our common home. Actions could include:



## SURVEY FOR BOSTON RESIDENTS

### PARTICIPATE IN THE BOSTON COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT (CHNA)

The Boston CHNA Survey is a citywide effort to hear from Boston residents about priority issues impacting the health of their neighborhoods and communities, access to vital resources to support their health and well-being, and opportunities to improve access to care. The survey is open to all Boston residents age 14 and up, and is available in nine different languages. By taking this quick, confidential survey, you will help guide health initiatives and funding and contribute towards making Boston a healthier city for all. You can access the survey here: <https://boston.gov/bphc-bostonchna>.





## A WELCOME WORD IN THE WILDERNESS

BY MICHAEL K. MARSH

Each one of us could tell a story about the wilderness. I am not talking about the scenic overlook along the highway, the unspoiled beauty of nature, or that quiet, back to nature, weekend getaway from the hassles of life. No. Our stories would be ones of struggles, ups and downs, highs and lows, stories of being lost and overwhelmed, stories of stumbling, falling down, and wondering when, how, or even if we will get up again.

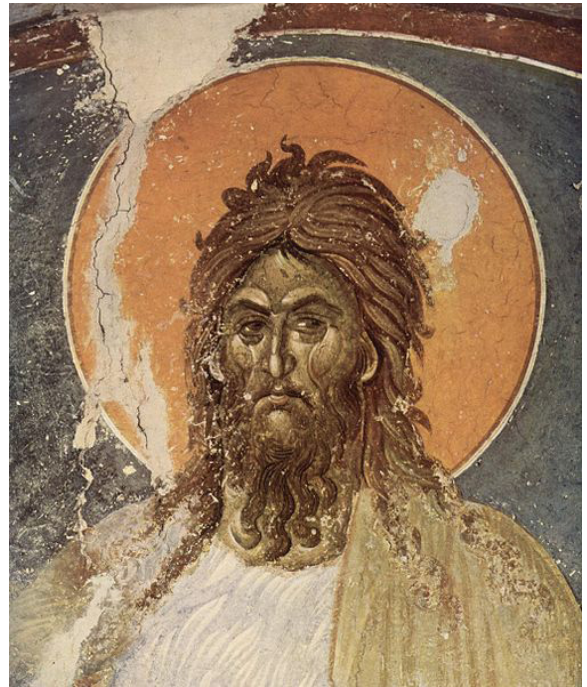
The wilderness of which I am speaking is not the geography around us but the landscape within us. This interior wilderness brings us to the limits of our own self-sufficiency, it leaves us feeling vulnerable and exposed, living on the edge. In the wilderness there are no distractions. There is no place to hide. In the wilderness we face the truth of who we are and what our life is like.

Sometimes we go to the wilderness, other times it comes to us. Either way it is hard work most of would rather avoid. There is, however, no quick fix. There is no way out of or around the wilderness. The only way is through the wilderness. That's what John the Baptist knows and proclaims in today's gospel. Before him it was Isaiah crying out, "Prepare the way of the Lord."

There's something about the wilderness. It's the place where our lives can be transformed, the place we are most open to changing and being changed. Hidden within every wilderness is the beauty of divine presence. That's why every year at this time the season of Advent takes us not just to the wilderness but to our wilderness. It is our preparation for the coming of the Christ.

God is always showing up, speaking, and acting in the wilderness places of our lives. That's our sacred story and it is the story of those who have gone before us. The word of God led the Israelites through the wilderness of bondage and slavery. The word of God raised Lazarus from the wilderness of death. The word of God fed the 5000 in the wilderness of hunger and emptiness.

The word of God and the wilderness always go together. There's something about the domesticated places, the



illusions of power and prestige, the distractions of the city that separate us from the word of God. The word of God did not come in the empire of Tiberius, the governing of Pontius Pilate, the ruling of Herod, his brother, Philip, or Lysanias, or the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas. The word of God comes in the wilderness. That was true for John the Baptist and it is true for us.

Name any wilderness of your life and there will be a corresponding word of God.

- In the wilderness of exile the word of God speaks of coming home.
- In the wilderness of broken relationships the word of God speaks reconciliation.
- In the wilderness of self-doubt the word of God speaks of your being beloved.
- In the wilderness of scarcity the word of God speaks generosity and abundance.
- In the wilderness of sin and guilt the word of God speaks mercy and forgiveness.
- In the wilderness of loss and sorrow the word of God speaks healing and joy.
- In the wilderness of emptiness and barrenness the word of God speaks fullness and fruitfulness.

- In the wilderness of death the word of God speaks resurrection.

For every wilderness there comes the word of God. The word of God comes in our wilderness because we are loved. It is the divine presence that sustains us in and carries us through the wilderness. It is not the final word but the first word, the creative word, the word that calls us to examine our lives, to turn around, to change our way of being, to see the world, one another, and our selves in a new way. It is the beginning of our preparing the way of the Lord. This is the repentance to which John the Baptist call us. Ultimately, it is the call to love and be loved.

We repent not because we are bad, defective, or deficient but because we are loved. We prepare the way of the Lord because we are loved and we shall see the salvation of God because we are loved.

—*The Rev. Dr. Michael K. Marsh is the rector of St. Philip's Episcopal Church in Uvalde, Texas—a parish in the Episcopal Diocese of West Texas. He has served there since 2005. Fr. Mike is also the owner and author of the blog, Interrupting the Silence, <https://interruptingthesilence.com>, a place for spiritual reflection, guidance, and growth, offering practical spirituality grounded in the contemplative tradition. We are always grateful to him for his gospel reflections and sermons.*



## WE ALL WANT SOMETHING MORE

By Joan Chittister, OSB

The function of Advent is to remind us what we're waiting for as we go through life too busy with things that do not matter to remember the things that do. When year after year we hear the same scriptures and the same hymns of longing for the life to come, of which this one is only its shadow, it becomes impossible to forget the refrains of the soul.

Advent relieves us of our commitment to the frenetic in a fast-paced world. It slows us down. It makes us think. It makes us look beyond today to the "great tomorrow" of life. Without Advent, moved only by the race to nowhere that exhausts the world around us, we could be so frantic with trying to consume and control this life that we fail to develop within ourselves a taste for the spirit that does not die and will not slip through our fingers like melted snow.

It is while waiting for the coming of the reign of God, Advent after Advent, that we come to realize that its coming depends on us. What we do will either hasten or slow, sharpen or dim our own commitment to do our part to bring it.

Waiting—that cold period of life when nothing seems to be enough and something else beckons within us—is the grace that Advent comes to bring. It stands before us, within us, pointing to the star for which the wise ones from the East are only icons of ourselves.

We all want something more. Advent asks the question, what is it for which you are spending your life? What is the star you are following now? And where is that star in its present radiance in your life leading you? Is it a place that is really comprehensive enough to equal the breadth of the human soul?

# 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](http://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 low-gluten 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 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 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.